



# Islamabad POST

Tuesday, August 29, 2023

Pakistan's Credible Daily Newspaper

Price Rs. 25

**Arshad becomes first ever Pakistani to win silver medal in WAC**

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**Libya suspends Foreign Minister over Israeli talks**

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**Egypt supports UN peace efforts in Yemen: FM**

Detailed News On Page-07



## SIFC meeting held

# COAS reaffirms army's support to caretaker govt

Hundreds of people surrounded the Islamabad Electric Supply Company (IESCO) office in Rawalpindi as protests continue against inflated bills across Pakistan

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

ISLAMABAD: Chief of Army Staff (COAS) General Syed Asim Munir on Monday reaffirmed the Pakistan Army's all-out support to the caretaker government for the continuity of policies in a bid to revive the country's economy and steer Pakistan towards progress and prosperity. He expressed these sentiments during the fourth apex committee meeting of the Special Investment Facilitation Council (SIFC), the first one after the interim government assumed power earlier this month. The meeting was chaired by Caretaker Prime Minister Anwaarul Haq Kakar and attended by the army chief, the entire federal cabinet, chief ministers, provincial ministers and high-level government officials. The cabinet was given a wholesome review of SIFC initiatives encompassing progress in key areas and benchmarks achieved thus far in a short span of time. The prime minister appreciated the efficient functioning of SIFC through a collaborative "whole of government approach" for achieving horizontal and vertical synergy. The apex committee appreciated SIFC's outreach strategy to achieve global traction and ongoing engagements with brotherly and friendly countries including productive visits of high-level delegations from the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and the Islamic Organisation for Food Security (IOFS). The committee expressed confidence in SIFC initiatives and displayed its resolve and support in maintaining the positive trajectory towards revival of the country's economy. It also endorsed the projects, approved by the previous government, for attracting investments in key sectors of agriculture, livestock, mining and minerals, IT and energy. At the end, the premier directed to accelerate the realisation of

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## Power ministry finalizes proposals Relief in taxes may be granted

KHAYAM ABBASI

ISLAMABAD: The Ministry of Power on Monday finalised recommendations on the issue of skyrocketing electricity bills, causing a widespread outcry in the entire nation. The proposals will be presented to the federal cabinet for approval on Tuesday. A high-level meeting was held at the Ministry of Power to address the matter, during which officials discussed the performance of all power companies and proposed solutions to address the issue of inflated bills, said a statement issued by the ministry. According to the statement, the ministry has formulated the recommendations regarding the issue which will be presented during the federal cabinet meeting for final approval today. It said that the ultimate decision rests with the federal cabinet, as only the cabinet has the authority to endorse these proposals and make a final decision. A day earlier, Prime Minister Anwaarul Haq Kakar gave the authorities 48 hours to think of short- and long-term solutions regarding electricity theft, distribution and bills to alleviate the burden on

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ISLAMABAD: Caretaker Prime Minister Anwaar-ul-Haq Kakar chaired the 4th apex committee meeting of the Special Investment Facilitation Council (SIFC). - DNA

## Greek FM to visit Ankara on Sept 5

The two ministers will discuss issues related to bilateral relations, as well as regional developments



DNA

ATHENS: Foreign Minister Giorgos Gerapetritis will pay a working visit to Ankara on September 5, where he will hold talks with the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Turkish Republic, Hakan Fidan, according to an announcement by the foreign ministry. The two ministers will discuss issues related to bilateral relations, as well as regional developments.

## Toshakhana case IHC to announce verdict today

Supreme Court to hear case regarding policy on Toshakhana gifts today

COURT REPORTER

## Govt claims being generous with Imran

FAISAL SHEIKH

ISLAMABAD: The Islamabad High Court (IHC) on Monday has reserved a verdict on Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) Chairman Imran Khan's plea seeking suspension of sentence by the trial court's Additional District and Sessions Judge (ADSJ) Humayun Dilwar in the Toshakhana case. A two-member bench, comprising Chief Justice Aamer Farooq and Justice Tariq Mehmood Jahangiri, conducted the hearing, with Election Commission of Pakistan's lawyer, Amjad Parvez, who wasn't able to appear before the court due to ill health at the last hearing on Friday, presented his arguments in the case. The IHC will announce the verdict today (Tuesday) at 11am. Last week, the court had adjourned the hearing till Monday on the request of his assistant counsel and ordered the ECP counsel to present arguments today. It had also directed the electoral authority to make alternative arrangements due to the unavailability of the lawyer. PTI lawyer, Latif Khosa, completed his arguments in the last hearing. Earlier this month, a trial court had sentenced Khan to three-year in prison and imposed a fine of Rs100,000 earlier this month. Khan challenged

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ISLAMABAD: The Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) chief has been granted some facilities in the Attock Jail according to a report submitted by the Attorney General's office to the Supreme Court on Monday. The report shows that on the PTI chief's request, he is served traditional chicken cooked in desi ghee as well as mutton prepared in the same manner. It says the prisoner himself pays for these food items. The report adds that he has been provided facilities in accordance with the jail manual, rules and law. He is permitted to walk in the corridor outside his cell. Additionally, the report negates propaganda regarding the facilities offered to him, stating that he is held in the most secure high observation block, with the adjacent barracks also being emptied. His cell measures 9x11 feet

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## Briefs

### PM greets Arshad Nadeem

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Caretaker Prime Minister Anwaarul-Haq Kakar on Monday expressed gratification over Pakistan's first ever silver medal clinch by Arshad Nadeem at the World Athletics Championship, 2023. "What a day! What a moment of joy for Pakistan. Arshad Nadeem you've made the nation happy and proud for your excellent sportsmanship that won you—and the country—a silver medal at the World Athletics championship," he said on his social media account X (formerly known as twitter). Pakistan's javelin ace Arshad Nadeem won a silver medal in the Javelin Throw competition of the World Athletics Championship in Hungary's capital Budapest.

### Relief in electricity bills, govt's priority

MEHTAB PIRZADA

ISLAMABAD: Caretaker Minister for Information and Broadcasting Mur-taza Solangi on Monday said the complete focus of the government was on providing relief to the masses in electricity bills. "We are focusing on how to provide relief to the masses instead of delving into discussion that who is responsible for expensive electricity," the minister said while talking to a private TV channel. He said the caretaker government took the oath on August 17, and the consumers received inflated bills of the month of July. Caretaker Prime Minister Anwaarul-Haq Kakar had taken notice of inflated electricity bills, Solangi said.

## General Elections ECP consultation process underway with political parties

ECP assures MQM-P, JI of completing delimitation 'as soon as possible'

KHAYAM ABBASI

ISLAMABAD: The Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) on Monday said it would wrap up the delimitation of national and provincial assembly constituencies "as soon as possible" and ensure that polls were immediately held after the exercise. The assurance was held out to delegations of the Jamaat-i-Islami (JI) and the Mutahidda Qaumi Movement Pakistan (MQM-P), who had consultative meetings with the ECP on the roadmap to polls. Earlier this month, the ECP ruled out elections this year, following the notification of the latest 2023 digital census. Since the National Assembly was dissolved three days before the end of its constitutional term, Article 224 of the Constitution mandates that elections be held within 90 days of the dissolution of the assembly. But at the same time, Section 17(2) of the Elections Act states that "the commission shall delimit

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## PTI SG slams Shehbaz's stay in London

STAFF REPORT

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) General Secretary Omar Ayub Khan came down hard on Shehbaz Sharif for plunging the country into a quagmire of problems, who, he said, was now enjoying luxury life in London flats. Reacting over electricity prices and massive bills received by poor Pakistanis, PTI Secretary General asked that the countrymen to get ready, as electricity price was going to be more expensive by Rs 5.63 per unit in

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## Dollar busts previous record

NAZIR SIYAL

KARACHI: The US dollar hit an all-time high against dilapidating Pakistani rupee on Monday, setting a new record in the inter-bank market. Amid the economic meltdown and political instability, the local currency plummeted to an all-time low and breached the 300-rupee mark, reaching an all-time high of 302 rupees, while the open market witnessed the dollar's value hitting 300 rupees. This alarming spike in the dollar's value signifies the continuation of the rupee's devaluation trend, setting a challenging tone for the week ahead. Earlier today, at around 10:00 am, the Pakistani rupee continued

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## Ethiopia's first year in Pakistan: A journey of friendship and growth

OPINION

JEMAL BEKER ABDULA

As the sun rises on this momentous day, we mark the first anniversary of the Embassy of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia (FDRE) in the Islamic Republic of Pakistan. With immense pride and gratitude, I share my reflections on a year that has been nothing short of extraordinary - a year of cultural discovery, economic promise, and an unbreakable bond of friendship and solidarity. On August 29, 2023, I had the honor of presenting my credentials to H.E. Dr. Arif Alvi, President of the Islamic Republic as an Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the FDRE to Pakistan. His warm embrace of our embassy was embodied in his words: "We, Pakistan, welcome you with open-minded, open-hearted, and open-door policies." These words set the



tone for the journey that followed, and I have witnessed the embodiment of this spirit in every engagement with Pakistani government officials, politicians, business community, dedicated civil society members, and above all, the wonderful people who have shown boundless affection not just to me, but

to the entire Ethiopian nation. Allow me to encapsulate this remarkable year. From the moment I assumed the role of Ambassador to Pakistan, my foremost priority was to build the image of Ethiopia in this country. With unwavering dedication, I directed my efforts towards enlightening the Pakistani public, business leaders, media, and civil society about the vast potential for business, trade, and investment within the FDRE. Yet, I cannot emphasize enough the pivotal role played by Pakistani media and civil society. These dynamic forces have stood at the forefront, working to foster the Ethiopia-Pakistan friendship. Through an array of programs and events, they have illuminated the vast opportunities that lie in collaborative ventures between our two nations. Economic cooperation emerged as a vital avenue of exploration, for bilateral trade had been stood at a

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# President for measures to ensure financial inclusion

NAZIR SAYAL

KARACHI: President Dr Arif Alvi, on Monday, stressed the banking institutions of the country to take measures to further increase the financial inclusion of women as well as ensure gender equality in the banking sector. Besides the provision of easy and accessible financial services to women and differently-abled persons, he emphasized that the banking sector should also focus on providing more employment opportunities and financing facilities as well as providing on-the-job training to them. The President expressed these views while chairing a meeting with representatives of various banks held here at Sindh Governor House to review progress on initiatives aimed at financial inclusion of women and differently-abled persons as well as progress on the measures to ensure employment and financial opportunities for them.

The review meeting was attended by senior officials of the State Bank of Pakistan and Chief Executive Officers of different commercial banks. Terming meaningful participation of women in economic activities as vital for the progress and prosperity of the country, the President said that it was encouraging to see that the share of female account holders and their share in banking sector jobs has witnessed a surge in previous years. He added that more steps were needed to be taken to promote gender equality and inclusion of women and persons with disabilities in the banking sector and other economic activities. The President said that the jobs for people with disabilities could be tailored in the banking sector and the process of opening bank accounts should be further simplified. The President, while referring to the fast-paced growth of digital technologies across the world, said that the banking industry in Pakistan

has to keep pace with the changing circumstances by using the latest IT tools. He expressed concern over the rising incidents of banking fraud and emphasised the need to improve the safety mechanisms of banks to effectively protect the interests of banking customers. The President asked the banks to raise awareness about various facilities and financial products being offered to their customers as well as address their banking issues on a fast-track basis. The officials of SBP and heads of commercial banks informed the President that measures like branchless banking, easing the process of account opening, particularly for women and persons with disabilities, and banking on equality had resulted in an increased ratio of women having bank accounts as well as jobs in the banks. It was further informed that the 2% disability quota was also being ensured in the banking sector.



KARACHI: President Dr Arif Alvi chairs meeting on banking issues, initiatives and women empowerment in Pakistan.—DNA

## Hostile agencies linked to Jaranwala incident: IGP

LAHORE: Punjab Inspector General Police (IGP) Dr Usman Anwar on Monday revealed that "hostile agencies" were linked to the Jaranwala incident which involved violent attacks on a number of houses and churches of the Christian community over alleged blasphemy allegations. On August 16, a crowd vandalised several churches and set scores of houses on fire in Jaranwala town of the industrial district of Faisalabad after clerics made announcements in mosques inciting the mob to attack the Christian community under allegations of blasphemy. The attack sparked outrage on social media and among political and religious figures in the country, who condemned the incident, saying that there was no room for such extreme behaviour. "The Jaranwala incident has links to hostile agencies. We have arrested three main suspects involved in the attacks including about 180 other people," IG Anwar said while speaking during a press conference in Lahore. The law, he further said, became active against the Jaranwala incident and the victims of the Christian community are being aided while the construction of the damaged churches is underway. "We have already said that efforts are being made to create a rift between Muslims and Christians. The conspiracy was started from the Sargodha incident," the inspector-general of police said. Speaking about the Holy Quran desecration incident in Sargodha, IG Anwar said that the police have arrested three suspects involved in the incident. "We have dismantled the network of people involved in the desecration of the Quran. We assure that incidents like this will not happen anymore," he added.—DNA

## Chinese consulate inaugurates two dialysis machines

DNA

LAHORE: In connection with blossoming footprints of Chinese philanthropy in health sector Punjab, two dialysis machines have been inaugurated by Chinese Consulate Lahore at Jinnah Hospital, one of second largest hospital in Lahore. On onset of unveiling of both dialysis machines handed over by Chinese Consulate Lahore, Consul General Zhao Shiren addressed that China always stands by Pakistan in its public-centric services for those who directly needed medical care free of cost. "Board of Management and staff and faculty of Jinnah Hospital deserve for appreciation on their commitment and dedication to doing medical service to the general public in Lahore and the

Punjab province at large," he added, according to a report published by Gwadar Pro on Monday. "Many years ago, China helped build this hospital, which has now become a window of improving public health and showcased the ironclad and longstanding friendship between China and Pakistan," Zhao mentioned. Today, Zhao said that Chinese Consulate Lahore is pleased and honored to partner with the Jinnah Hospital again. The provision of two dialysis machines is a small step in this direction. It is also a token of the continuous love and care from China, he added, "in the backdrop of marking the 72nd anniversary of the diplomatic relations between China and Pakistan, and also the 10th anniversary of China-Pakistan Economic Corridor,

medical and healthcare cooperation is an important element of the CPEC, which may directly impact the well-being of the Pakistani people." "One of the paramount duties of the state and government is to provide quality healthcare and education to its citizens, especially to the underprivileged and poor families. The Consulate General is willing to further strengthen interactions and active collaboration with Jinnah Hospital in doing training and exchange programs for capacity building to better meet patients' needs," he added. On the occasion, Mr. Gohar Ejaz, Chairman Board of Management Jinnah Hospital, Prof. Dr. Nadeem Hafeez Butt, Principal of Allama Iqbal Medical College, Dr. Yahya Sultan, Medical Superintendent of Jinnah Hospital were present.

## Relief activities going on in flood-hit areas: PDMA DG

LAHORE: Provincial Disaster Management Authority (PDMA) Punjab Director General (DG) Imran Qureshi said on Monday that low-lying areas adjacent to Sutlej River were under flood since August 17, and relief activities were under way in the flood-affected areas. In a statement, he said that more than 95 medical camps were providing facilities to people in the affected districts, while 20 ambulances were available to help in emergency situations all the time. More than 36,000 people had been provided treatment facilities so far. Apart from medical, 178 relief camps were also functioning in the affected districts. Around 100,000 people had been shifted to safe places, he said and added that more than 200,000 people had been provided emergency transport facility. The DG said that cooked food was had been provided to 70,000 people in the affected districts. One-and-a-half lakh cattle had been given preventive veterinary medicine and vaccination. Twenty-five thousand cattle had been moved to safe places. Relief activities would continue until the issue of flood was resolved completely. All the resources were being utilised for rehabilitation of flood-affected areas, he added.—APP

## Independent candidates sweep local govt by-polls in Hazara Division

ABBOTTABAD: Independent candidates have won nine seats in the Local Government by-polls held in five districts of Hazara division while JUI-F secured two seats in Battagram district. According to the unofficial results, in the Abbottabad district, Village Council (VC) Chamba of Tehsil Havelian Nisar Khan, an independent candidate, secured a victory with 1267 votes. The runner-up, Gulistan, another independent candidate, got 687 votes. Similarly, in VC Mohri, Tehsil and District Haripur, the General Council seat was claimed by Shahzad Iqbal Malik, an independent candidate, who secured 956 votes. His closest rival, Shoukat Nawaz, also an independent candidate, managed to garner 590 votes. In VC Phagal in Tehsil Balakot of district Mansehra, the General Councilor position was clinched by Qari Ejaz, running as an independent candidate, with 646 votes. The runner-up,

Abdul Jaleel, another independent contender, secured 589 votes. In VC Thakar Maira of Tehsil Mansehra, the Peasant Worker category witnessed Irshad's victory as an independent candidate, who secured 796 votes. Sajjad, another independent candidate, closely followed with 743 votes. In VC Dada Bada of Tehsil Dhornera, the General Councilor slot was secured by Amru Rasheed, an independent candidate, with 513 votes. The runner-up, Zahir Syed from PML-N, managed to gather 430 votes. Additionally, the Woman Councilor slot was claimed by Gul Aro, an independent candidate, with 508 votes, while Umar Hayat, another independent contender, secured 442 votes. The momentum continued in VC Banian, Tehsil & District Battagram, where the General Councilor position went to Abdullah from JUI-F, amassing 656 votes. Muhammad Sajjad from PTI came in

second with 417 votes. For the Youth Councilor slot, Irfan Ullah from JUI-F emerged victorious with 647 votes, closely followed by Asif Iqbal from PTI, who secured 411 votes. In VC Kuza Banda of Tehsil and District Battagram, the Youth Councilor seat was secured by Muhammad Zia U Deen, an independent candidate, who garnered 641 votes, while Kamran Khan, another independent contender, secured 295 votes as the runner-up. The Neighborhood Council (NB) Chapargram of Tehsil and District Battagram saw Tahir Rehman, an independent candidate, triumph in the Youth Councilor category with 908 votes. Ahmed Zia, also an independent candidate, secured 814 votes as the runner-up. In NC Tamai of Tehsil and District Battagram, the Peasant Worker slot was claimed by Islam Sarwar, an independent candidate, with 387 votes. Nawab Khan, another independent contender, secured 305 votes.—APP

## Indonesian consul general calls on mayor Karachi

KARACHI: Indonesian Consul General June Kuncoro called on the Mayor Karachi Barrister Murtaza Wahab at the head office of Karachi Municipal Corporation (KMC) here Monday and discussed with him issues of mutual interest. Indonesian Consul for Economic Affairs Minister Consul General Ahmed Sufian was also accompanying the Consul General on the occasion. Murtaza Wahab congratulated the Indonesian Consul General on performing Umrah. He said that Indonesia was the largest Islamic country and had fraternal relations with Pakistan. Murtaza Wahab informed the Indonesian Consul General about the

local government system in Karachi and said that there are three levels of local government in Karachi and KMC is the largest local body whose responsibilities include providing basic facilities to the citizens. He said that there were many talented youths in Karachi who were showing significant performance in various fields and if the Indonesian government wanted, it could be provided with doctors, nurses, IT-trained youth and experts in other fields. The Mayor Karachi said that there were wide investment opportunities in Karachi. There are 200 beautiful islands near Karachi that can be developed and converted into recrea-

tional areas, especially the coastal areas there is KMC land on the Hawke's Bay beach. He said that Indonesian investors should build resorts and hotels here and the KMC would support them in this regard, by expanding business links between Karachi and Jakarta to benefit both countries. The KMC is always ready to support Indonesian investors and entrepreneurs in Karachi with an open heart, he said. The Indonesian Consul General said that the Indonesian government valued Pakistan and Indonesia had given the most scholarships to Pakistani students. The Mayor's offer for investment in Karachi will be conveyed.—APP



ISLAMABAD: Workers of Capital Development Authority (CDA) are busy in tree shaping on green belt along the express way in federal capital.—Online

## Women should be recognized on merit, not gender

Ms. Hai advised the women audience that they should not box themselves up, but must arm themselves with the required knowledge, laws, and regulations if they want to change their surrounding environment

DNA

KARACHI: Musharaf Hai, the former CEO of Unilever and L'Oreal, has said that the entry of women into the Corporate Sector and Trade Associations should be based on merit and not because of their gender. Biases, prejudice, and preconceptions make it difficult for women to come forward. Women should be courageous and not succumb to conforming to what others say. Women should exhibit their knowledge, expertise, and competence to counter negativity in their march forward. As Chief Guest, she was addressing a large audience at the National Conference on Gender Equality hosted by Global Compact Network Pakistan (GCNP). Ms. Hai advised the women audience that they should not box themselves up, but must arm themselves with the required knowledge, laws, and regulations if they want to change their surrounding environment. If strong women were not

visible, then their very purpose would face setbacks. "She advised that three important qualities are important for women to excel, progress, and scale. Women must have confidence in themselves and their professions or careers. They must possess integrity of purpose and for this, they have to be fearless. Moreover, it is crucial that they move ahead with perseverance and face any adversity in their way."

She added that in her career, she had been mentoring and motivating women subordinates, and today a large number of women are climbing the ladder of hierarchy in enterprises. She opined that despite the misogynistic environment in many corporations, those women who are determined to achieve their objectives continue to prove their merit and hence they are more positioned to succeed and be recognized.

Majyd Aziz, President Global Compact Network Pakistan (GCNP), in his welcome address, said that the theme of the Conference is "Breaking the Ceiling in Pakistan's Misogynistic Ecosystem" and the purpose of the Conference was to advocate a balanced entrepreneurial ecosystem for the present and future generations. He said, "During his four decades of involvement in Chambers and Associations, he learned the

power of saying "I can" and he hoped that more and more women would also say, "I can". He also narrated many instances of his leadership in KCCI, the Employers Federation of Pakistan, and GCNP, through which he assisted in breaking the ceiling for women." Majyd Aziz added that in the Islamic tradition, a woman has an independent identity, she is a responsible person in her own right.



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## National Days and Armed Forces Days

### August

Aug 01/China  
Armed Forces Day

Aug 01/Switzerland  
National Day

Aug 01/Lebanon  
Armed Forces Day

Aug 01/Syria  
Armed Forces Day

Aug 4/Burkina Faso  
National Day

Aug 09/Singapore

Aug 15/DPR Korea  
Independence Day

Aug 15/India  
Independence Day

Aug 15/Poland  
Armed Forces Day

Aug 17/Indonesia  
Independence Day

Aug 24/Ukraine  
Independence Day

Aug 25/Uruguay  
Independence Day

Aug 30/Turkey  
Armed Forces Day

Aug 31/Kyrgyz Republic  
Independence Day

Aug 31/Malaysia  
National Day

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Marriott.....051- 2826121  
Monal.....0334-5421812



Turkish Airlines.....8494949



### Emergency

Rescue (Police).....15  
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Islamabad.....1122 & 16  
Emergency Ambulance.1122  
& Rescue Services.4451122  
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### Hospitals

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DHQ.....5556311-4  
RGH.....9290301-7  
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PIMS.....9261170-79  
Polyclinic.....9218300-09  
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### Water Tank

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# Indus to become 'seasonal river', amid glaciers melting

The experts during the panel discussion were of the view that water availability was not an issue for the country but rather its governance and conservation was highly significant

ISLAMABAD: The experts at one-day conference on Monday underlined that if the glaciers continued melting at a faster pace in the northern areas of the country then the mighty River Indus would dry and become a seasonal river leaving over 240 million lives in jeopardy. The International Water Management Institute (IWMI-Pakistan) in collaboration with the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), organized a comprehensive workshop and panel discussion titled "Climate Change: Implications for the Water Sector here with a wide range of participants including experts, academics, researchers, students and the media. The experts during the panel discussion were of the view that water availability was not an issue for the country but rather its governance and conservation was highly significant. The weather patterns and rain spells were shifting and increasing in magnitude that provided a potential opportunity to embrace rainwater harvesting, and preservation as an alternate to urban flooding

and water scarcity to recharge groundwater aquifer, they added. Commencing the workshop, Chief of the Party of the Water Management for Enhanced Productivity initiative (WMFEP) at IWMI Pakistan, Dr. Azeem Ali Shah in his opening remarks highlighted the achievements and challenges associated with water governance and productivity initiatives in the region. Development Specialist, USAID-Pakistan, Muhammad Nawaz emphasized that the policy frameworks and legislation intended to address water and climate change issues should be based on scientific evidences and thorough studies as otherwise it would be shooting arrows in the dark. "In 2022, initially temperature shoot up and suddenly dropped resulting in heavy downpour that was 87 percent heavier than country's average rainfall. These abrupt changes refer to climate change," he added. During the panel discussion, Researcher IWMI Dr Novaira Junaid said Pakistan was the fifth largest country in terms of population with

a growth of 2.4 percent per annum and after its first ever digital census the total population accounted for 241.49 million masses. The growing population at an alarming scale was aggravating the global warming impacts in the region, she added. Dr Novaira said increasing population was putting pressure on the environment and livelihoods leading to economic breakdown which demanded the country to opt for the short, medium and long-term efforts to mitigate climate change impacts. Dr Azeem Ali Shah discussed water governance issues and termed it a triple looming process, however, the 6th Sustainable Development Goal (SDG-6) was related to Water and Sanitation. "Water is crucial for achieving SDGs targets as the Chair of UN-Water said, "If we failed to achieve SDG-6 by 2030; we would risk the success of all other SDGs." Dr Shah noted that the government's ambition and plans needed to be long-term for yielding positive outcomes in the domain of water management and

governance. Gender Expert, Khadija Begum said the differential impact of climate change on countries and people is impacting both nations and states variably. "Women more vulnerable during climate-induced disasters as women roles and responsibilities enhance with increased workload during disasters leading to education drop out of girls, risk to sexual violence rise against girls and many other associated threats," she said, "Women comprised of 68 percent of agricultural workforce of Pakistan that loose their livelihoods during floods and disasters. Women should have a strong voice in climate adaptive policies which would enhance their access to resources and build climate resilience," she said. Water Management Expert, Dr Shahid Iqbal said the country had 2.4 percent population growth rate which demanded the country to expand its agriculture and water resources. However, since 1950-2020 a 0.89 degree Celsius temperature had

already increased in Pakistan, along with a degree Celsius temperature rise in its glaciated region in the north. He insisted that the country never focused low hanging fruits like carbon credits to trade its sequestered carbon stocks as an alternate tool to enhance the country's climate resilience. He underscored that the Indus River would lose its might and grandeur if all glaciers melt by 2050. "Pakistan has the world's largest river water of Indus and it only stores 10 percent of its total water whereas in the US, almost 467 percent of the Colorado River's total water conserved which is huge," he added. Climate Remote Sensing Expert, Prof. Dr Hammad Gillani said there was a need to bridge gap between researchers and policy makers for well-informed legislation. The world has changed and there were knowledge sharing platforms, access to data through open data sets had increased which provided ample opportunity to hold international standard researches, he added.—Agencies

## Islamabad's Dolphin Squad playing crucial role in crime prevention

ISLAMABAD: The Dolphin Squad of the Islamabad Capital Police has become a formidable force in the fight against crime and this elite unit is operating within the centralized Safe City Islamabad system to ensure law and order. Under the guidance of Islamabad Capital City Police Officer (ICCP) Dr. Akbar Nasir Khan, the Dolphin Squad has been stationed across various city areas to bolster patrolling and deter criminal activities. Over recent months, a police spokesman said that the Islamabad Capital Police Dolphin Squad has been actively engaged in combating criminal elements. During routine checks, the squad has screened more than 10,000 individuals, inspected over 3,000 vehicles, and scrutinized nearly 7,000 motorcycles. These efforts have resulted in the recovery of 12 firearms with ammunition and the retrieval of a stolen vehicle. In addition to these accomplishments, the Dolphin Squad has successfully tracked down 21 snatched vehicles and apprehended 24 individuals involved in car and motorcycle theft activities. They have also detained two individuals on suspicion of criminal activity and one drug dealer, all of whom have been handed over to the concerned police stations for further legal action. Furthermore, the squad has impounded seven motorcycles due to a lack of proper documentation, transferring them to various police stations for verification. In their extensive patrols throughout Islamabad's diverse zones, the Dolphin Squad has also enforced regulations against vehicles with tinted windows. Zonal officers have received directives to intensify their ongoing crackdown efforts against criminal elements within the federal capital. The Islamabad Capital Police Dolphin Squad has proven to be highly effective in ensuring the arrest of numerous individuals involved in various criminal activities. The Islamabad Capital Police remain fully committed to enhancing the safety and security of the city's residents.—APP



ISLAMABAD: Brazilian Ambassador to Pakistan Olyntho Vieira called on the Caretaker Federal Health Minister Dr. Nadeem Jan. Secretary Health Iftikhar Ali Shallwani was also present.—DNA

## Meat exports grew by 37.22% in first month of FY 2023-24

ISLAMABAD: Meat and meat preparations exports from the country during the first month of the current financial year increased by 37.22 per cent as compared to the exports of the corresponding period of last year. In July 2023, about 8,910 metric tons of meat and meat products valued at \$9.926 million were exported as compared to 5,705 metric tons worth \$25.408 million in the same period last year, according to the data of the Pakistan Bureau of Statistics. Meanwhile, 10,284 metric tons of fish and fish products valued at \$18.980 million were also exported during the period under review as compared to the exports of 8,084 metric tons worth \$18.572 million in the same month of last year. During the first month of the current financial year, seafood exports grew by 2.20 per cent, whereas the exports of fruits increased by 4.61 per cent. In July 2023 food commodities valued at \$329.156 million were exported as compared to the exports of \$356.073 million of the same month last year, which was down by 7.56 per cent. It is worth mentioning here that the trade deficit witnessed a decline of 41.16 per cent during the first month of the current fiscal year (2023-24) as compared to the corresponding month of last year. The trade deficit during the month under review was recorded at \$1.607 billion against the deficit of \$2.731 billion in July 2022, a decline of 41.16 per cent. The exports during the month were recorded at \$2.057 billion against \$2.250 billion last year, showing a decline of 8.57 per cent. On the other hand, the imports witnessed a sharp decline of 26.44 per cent falling from \$4.981 billion last year to \$3.664 billion during July 2023.—DNA

## "Zong 4G now charging just 3 Paisas

DNA

ISLAMABAD: With its commitment to making communication affordable and accessible for all, Zong 4G has improved its Beep Call Service, making it the market's most economical missed call solution at just 3 paisas plus tax per beep. With the Beep Call Service, customers can stay connected in times of need without requiring a balance top-up. This feature allows users to effortlessly send a "beep" to their friends and family when they do not have the balance to make a call enabling uninterrupted communication. The service is being offered at a minimalistic rate keeping the customer's affordability in mind. Zong 4G has always been focused on its customers' evolving needs and this service is a testament to ensuring that individuals can maintain connections with their loved ones, irrespective of their available balance.

## 5.2 magnitude earthquake jolts Peshawar, nearby areas

ISLAMABAD: A strong earthquake measuring 5.2 on the Richter scale hit Peshawar, and other adjoining areas on early Monday morning. According to the National Seismic Monitoring Centre, a moderate earthquake having 5.2 magnitude on Richter scale jolted Peshawar, Nowshera, Mardan, Swabi, Malakand, Lower Dir, Mardan and other adjoining areas, Private news channel reported. The earthquake's epicentre was the Afghanistan's Hindukush region, the depth of the earthquake was 184 km. The people left their houses and offices in panic and started recited Kalam-Tayaba.—APP

## BISP officials holds khuli kuthcery

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Addl. Secretary Benazir Income Support Programme (BISP), Dr. Muhammad Tahir Noor, held an E-Kachehri today at BISP HQ. This virtual event aims to directly engage with beneficiaries and address their concerns in real-time, reinforcing BISP's unwavering commitment to the welfare of the people. The E-Kachehri, received an overwhelming response from beneficiaries all across the country. This enthusiastic participation underscored the importance of

such platforms for the people who rely on the vital support provided by BISP. During the E-Kachehri, Dr. Muhammad Tahir Noor and his team tried to promptly address majority of the complaints. For the remaining grievances that required further attention, the Additional Secretary BISP directed the relevant authorities to ensure their resolution within one day, further emphasizing BISP's commitment to responsive governance. The Benazir Income Support Programme, through its flagship initiative Benazir Kafalat, provides quarterly financial assistance of Rs 9,000

to 9 million registered beneficiary families. Additionally, registered families also benefit from stipends under the Benazir Taleemi Wazaif and Benazir Nashonuma Programme, which collectively contribute to improving the socio-economic conditions of the most vulnerable segments of society. In case of any complaint, BISP encourages beneficiaries to reach out to the nearest BISP Tehsil Offices or contact the tollfree helpline at 0800-26477. It is essential to note that official communication from the Benazir Income Support Programme only originates from the number 8171.

## Pakistan to host UN Peacekeeping Ministerial Preparatory

ISLAMABAD : A two-day Preparatory Meeting of the forthcoming United Nations Peacekeeping Ministerial under the theme of "Safety and Security of UN Peacekeepers" is being held in Islamabad on Wednesday. The meeting will be held under the theme of "Safety and Security of UN Peacekeepers." Japan is a co-host of the meeting being held at the Centre for International Peace and Stability (CIPS), Pakistan's premier training institute offering courses, workshops and seminars to UN peacekeepers from all over the world, Foreign Office Spokesperson said in a press release on Monday. The foreign minister and the defence minister will deliver keynote addresses at the preparatory meeting. Member States represented in the UN Special Committee on Peacekeeping Operations – comprising 156 countries – will participate along with local and international experts, besides senior officials from the UN Secretariat including the Under-Secretary-General for Peace Operations, the Under-Secretary-General for Operational Support, and the UN Police advisor will also attend it. Panel discussions will be held during the two-day meeting on various sub-themes to deliberate on capacity-building needs; safety and security of UN peacekeepers from the perspective of international law; enhancing medical capacity of UN peacekeeping missions; and leveraging technology and strategic communication. The meeting will also feature an expert talk on the threats posed by improvised explosive devices (IEDs) and a briefing on the system.—APP

# 30 tons of relief goods reach Kabul

MAHNOOR ANSAR

ISLAMABAD: In a remarkable demonstration of solidarity and humanitarian spirit, Pakistani NGO SHARP and Effendi Consortium of NGOs's undertook a significant relief effort by sending 30 tons of relief goods to Kabul on August 24th, 2023. This compassionate initiative, spearheaded by Chairman SHARP Mr. Banuri and Chairman Effendi Consortium of NGOs, Brigadier (Rtd) Azam Effendi, underscores the unwavering commitment of Pakistan's civil society to support their neighbors in times of need. The relief goods, which included essential items such as life-saving medicines, food supplies, surgical equipment, wheelchairs, elbow sticks, folding walkers, lab test kits, and blankets, were transported to Kabul via a dedicated charter flight. Air Bridge Relief International provided the chartered aircraft services along with medical aid. The gesture of brotherhood and humanitarian assis-

tance embodied in this endeavor is a reflection of the deep-rooted ties between the people of Pakistan and Afghanistan. SHARP Pakistan, a registered NGO renowned for its philanthropic work, collaborated closely with the Effendi Group to ensure the seamless execution of this relief mission. The Effendi Group,

well-known for its contributions to humanitarian causes, provided a comprehensive list of essential relief items that were deemed crucial for the well-being of the Afghan population. Mr. Effendi, expressed his heartfelt sentiments regarding the mission, stating, "At times of crisis, borders become inconsequential in

the face of shared humanity. Our organization is privileged to be able to extend a helping hand to our Afghan brothers and sisters. We firmly believe that through collective efforts, we can alleviate suffering and contribute positively to the lives of those in need." This collaborative effort highlights the power of bilat-

eral relationship both countries share and emphasizes the significance of non-governmental organizations in addressing regional and global challenges. As the relief goods reached Kabul, they not only embodied material aid but also carried with them a message of hope, unity, and unwavering solidarity.





## Briefs

## HEC's scholarship program for students of Gilgit-Baltistan

ISLAMABAD: Higher Education Commission (HEC) has announced a Scholarship Program for students of Gilgit-Baltistan to study in top Pakistani universities or institutions. According to an official of HEC, the applications have been invited from outstanding students of Gilgit-Baltistan who intend to pursue undergraduate studies (four/five years BS programs) from HEC recognized public sector universities/degree awarding institutions (DAIs). The scholarships are being offered for the academic year 2023-24 in all areas of study or disciplines under the project titled, "Undergraduate Scholarship Program for the Students of Gilgit-Baltistan in Top Pakistani Universities/Institutions (Batch-III)". About the eligibility criteria, the official informed that the applicants must domicile or local certificate of Gilgit-Baltistan and have completed Higher Secondary School Certificate (HSSC)/Equivalent. The applicants who are already availing any other scholarship are not eligible to apply while the maximum age limit is 22 years as on closing date of application submission. The candidates will have to meet HEC and university criteria for admission in BS programs.

## Pak earns US \$947m from travel services' export during FY2023

ISLAMABAD: The country earned US \$947.040 million by providing different travel services in various countries during the fiscal year 2022-23. This shows a growth of 74.68 per cent as compared to the US \$542.170 million worth same services provided during the corresponding period of the last fiscal year 2021-22, the Pakistan Bureau of Statistics (PBS) reported. During the period under review, personal travel services increased by 74.11 per cent, from US \$539.120 million last year to US \$938.670 million during July-June 2023. Among the personal services, the exports of health-related expenditure surged by 36.01 per cent to US \$4.570 million from US \$3.360 million while the education-related expenditure also rose by 7.70 per cent from US \$ 10.780 million to US \$11.610 million. Meanwhile, the PBS data revealed that the exports of business services grew by 174.43 per cent, from US \$ 3.050 million to US \$ 8.370 million. It is pertinent to mention here that the exports of services from the country, witnessed a decrease of 8.09 per cent during the first month of financial year (2023-24) as compared to the corresponding period of last year, it added. The exports of services during July (2023-24) were recorded at US \$ 2,068 million against the exports of US \$ 2,250 million during the same month of last year. The imports of the country witnessed a decline of 25.62 per cent, falling from US \$ 4,981 million last year to US \$ 3,705 million. —APP

Rights violations in Kashmir  
Mashal Malik urges world to hold India accountable

FAISAL SHEIKH

ISLAMABAD: Caretaker Human Rights Minister Mashal Malik Monday urged that the international community should hold India accountable for human rights violations in Jammu and Kashmir. "Kashmiris must be given the right to decide for their fate like all other nations" she said while talking to a Private news channel. "India has to respect democracy, the United Nations (UN) resolution, and the will of the people, she said, adding, that the time is not far when India will become the victim of its own agenda and aggressive policies." She further said, "The permanent members of the UNSC and the civilized world must play a role to ensure the smooth implementation of the UN resolutions on the Kashmir dispute." Minister said, "Kashmiris have been struggling to get their right to self-determination



for the last many decades as per UN charter, adding, that this struggle will continue until and unless the Kashmiris are given the right of plebiscite. "The International community is well aware of the importance of the Kashmir issue in the region and also aware of Indian atrocities on innocent Kashmiris," she said. "Unfortunately, the world is hesitant to force India to stop its aggression in the occupied valley," she added. "The entire Hurriyat leadership is under house arrest, she said. "The Kashmir valley has turned into the largest prison in the world," she added. "The world needs to take concrete measures and force India to stop its human rights violations in the valley," she said. "Sooner or later, the Kashmiris will get their fundamental right to self-determination." Replying to a question, she said, "Pakistan will remain firm on its stand on Kashmir and will continue to support the Kashmir cause at all international forums."

## 13 drug peddlers netted with over 20 kg charras

DNA

RAWALPINDI: Rawalpindi police in an action against suspected drug peddlers conducted raids in different areas and rounded up 13 accused on recovery of over 20 kg charras. According to a police spokesman, Rattaamral police rounded up Raheel for having 2400 grams charras, Imran with 1600 grams charras and Sajid for carrying 1250 grams charras. Civil Lines police netted Ajmal with 1230 grams charras, Zulfiqar for having 1260 grams charras and Kamal Ahmed for possessing 1310 grams charras. Mandra police netted Samar Majeed for possessing 2500 grams of charras. The spokesman informed that Gujjar Khan, Morgah, Naseerabad, Saddar Baroni, City and Waris Khan police arrested Haq Nawaz with 2200 grams charras, Faisal for having 1150 grams charras, Abid on recovery of 1250 grams charras, Muhammad Nasir for carrying 1520 grams charras, Talha with 1350 grams charras and Salman for possessing 1420 grams charras.

Separate cases have been registered against all accused while further investigations are underway. City Police Officer, Rawalpindi had directed the police officers to accelerate ongoing operations against drug peddlers, bootleggers and other law-breakers, he added.

## Police arrested husband for killing ex wife

DNA

RAWALPINDI: Police have arrested a man who had shot his ex-wife dead over a domestic dispute in the jurisdiction of Dharmyal Police station here on Monday. Police have arrested the accused Sher Gul who had shot and killed his ex-wife Saba Gul. The case of the incident was registered in Dharmyal police station last month on the complaint of the victim's father. Dharmyal Police traced and arrested the accused Sher Gul with the help of modern technology and human intelligence. The accused Sher Gul is also wanted in the Nowsheera murder case. SP Saddar Muhammad Nabil Khokhar said the arrest of such elements involved in heinous crimes is important in providing justice to the victim's family members, he added.

## ANF seizes 75 kg drugs; arrests seven accused

RAWALPINDI: Anti-Narcotics Force (ANF) Pakistan while conducting seven operations across the country, managed to recover 75 kg drugs and arrested 7 accused including a woman, said an ANF Headquarters spokesman here on Monday. He informed that in an operation at Islamabad International Airport, 1.6 kg heroin and 344 grams Ice

drug were recovered from the possession of a passenger, resident of Mustang who was leaving for Qatar on flight number PK-287. In two operations near Motorway Toll Plaza Islamabad, 2 kg hashish was recovered from the bag of a woman resident of Mirpur travelling in a passenger bus and 11 kg hashish concealed in secret cavities of a vehicle.

During the operation, three accused residents of Peshawar were also arrested. In an operation at a courier office in Karachi, Ice drug adsorbed in pillow covers was recovered. The parcel weighing over 24.3 kg was booked for Saudi Arabia. A drug smuggler, resident of Qilla Abdullah was netted from Hazar Ganji Chowk, Quetta and ANF recovered

26 kg hashish from his possession. In seventh operation, 9 kg hashish concealed in a deserted area of Zakha Khel in Khyber for smuggling was recovered. He informed that cases have been registered against the accused under the Anti-Narcotics Act while further investigations are under process.—APP

## Pak to participate in 19 trade exhibitions in China

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Aligned with the Trade Development Authority Pakistan (TDAP) Annual Business Plan (ABP) for the year 2023-24, Pakistani officials, experts, as well as importers and exporters, are poised to take part in a series of 19 promotional trade exhibitions and fairs hosted across various cities in China over this specified duration. These exhibitions promise to encompass an array of themes, ranging from textiles and leather to agro and food sectors. Among the wide variety of attractive products, key exports such as mangoes and meat, which Pakistan is proud of, will receive high attention. But that's not all—the authority's ambitious agenda extends beyond exhibitions. Brace yourself for a whirlwind of export-promoting conferences, engaging webinars, immersive workshops, and dynamic delegations shuttling to and from Pakistan throughout this vibrant period. As per the plan, the financial year began with the China-Eurasia Expo, Urumqi under the category of International Markets Development Division (IMDD) on August 25, followed by the China-Northeast Asia Expo in Changchun on August 23-27 under the same category. Intertextile Shanghai Apparel Fabrics, under the category of Textile & Leather, is scheduled for August 28-30 in China while All China Leather Exhibition Shanghai under the same category is to take place on August 29-31. The Seafood and Fisheries Expo, China will take place on September 15-17 under the category of Agro & Food in Guangzhou. Pakistan experts have the opportunity to showcase Agriculture, forestry, food, and beverages. This will be followed by the China - ASEAN Expo, Nanning on September 16-19 in the category of IMDD. The China International Import Exhibition will take place on November 5-11 in Shanghai in the category of IMDD and will be followed by China High-Tech Fair Shenzhen on November 15-19 in the category of IT and IT services. Pakistani experts in the fields of tourism, travel, and hospitality in China outbound Tourism and Travel market Expo in Beijing on November 15-17. On November 21-25, the China Yiwu Import Commodities Fair will take place in Yiwu with Pakistani experts to represent their country in the category of IMDD. From March 21-24, Pakistani delegates will take part in APLF, HONGKONG to showcase leather products in the exhibition, and during the same month from March 19 to 21 APLF Fashion Access, Hong Kong will also take place. On March 28-30, the Inter Textile Shanghai Fabric, China is scheduled in Shanghai. Pakistani team will participate in showcasing apparel and fabrics in the category of textile and leather. The China Canton Fair will take place on April 16, 2024, in Guangzhou in the city. Pakistani team will participate in IMDD as per TDAP's plan.

## TIR route between Pak, China set to revolutionize regional trade

DNA

ISLAMABAD: The International Road Transport (TIR) route between Pakistan and China is poised to revolutionize trade connections in the region. This was stated by Caretaker Minister for Planning, Development, and Special Initiatives Muhammad Sami Saad in an interview with Gwadar Pro. He emphasized that the newly launched route will significantly enhance trade between Pakistan and China, while also providing an efficient and secure land route to connect the landlocked Central Asian states. "This marks another win-win situation, as our cooperation



with China continues to expand," he remarked. The inaugural convoy of cargo trucks is already en route from China to Pakistan via the new TIR route. Cross-border transportation of goods has commenced

for the first time under the United Nations International Road Transport Convention, in collaboration with Pakistan's National Logistics Corporation and CEVA Logistics, a prominent Chinese company. This significant milestone

occurred on the occasion of the 10th anniversary of the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) project. A ceremony was conducted at Kashgar Yuanfang International Logistics Port Company to officially launch the TIR service. The event was attended by representatives from NLC, Kashgar Customs, Municipal Committee officials, CEVA Logistics, and the Cross-Border E-Commerce Association. During the ceremony, speakers underscored the importance of the TIR transport route from Kashgar to Islamabad, shedding light on future plans for the transportation of goods under the TIR arrangement between the two countries.

## Water supply will start in Gwadar free zone on Aug 30

DNA

ISLAMABAD: The Gwadar Port Authority (GPA) is set to commence the establishment of the water supply network for the Gwadar Free Zone North on August 30th. According to the plan, GPA is preparing to initiate an open bidding process. An official from GPA informed Gwadar Pro that it is expected that the work orders for this project will be released in the first week of September. GPA intends to simultaneously install two water supply pipeline networks from two different water sources to the Gwadar North Free Zone. One of these water sources is the Sawar Dam and the Shadi Kor Dam. The second source will be the newly constructed Chinese-funded desalination plant with a daily production capacity of 1.2 million gallons. Both of these projects will span a length of 6 kilometers

each. Project Director Abdul Wahid Baloch has expressed optimism that the water supply plan will be completed by November of this year. The operator of the Gwadar Free Zone, the Gwadar Free Zone Company, will be responsible for extending the water supply pipeline network from the entry point of the zone to the factories currently under construction within the zone. In addition to the water supply project, GPA has also allocated funds for the provision of electricity from the Deep-sea Port Grid Station to the North Free Zone. The Ministry of Maritime Affairs has redirected the funds to the Ministry of Energy for the establishment of the distribution network. Both of these projects are progressing rapidly under the supervision of the GPA Chairman. Previously, the lack of basic public infrastructure has been a major obstacle to the industrialization of the Gwadar Free Zone, according to Gwadar Pro.

## 4 arrested for allegedly selling counterfeit goods

RAWALPINDI: The police arrested 4 counterfeiters for allegedly selling fake goods during crackdown in jurisdiction of Ganjmandi here on Monday. During the operation, the police seized various types of surf, shampoo, soap, nail, leaf, harpic, mortain, wet cream, lotion and dishwashing liquid from their custody. The arrested accused were identified as Khurshid, Aman Ali, Faisal Iqbal and Imran. A case was registered after the police received complaint from a private company.—APP

## Chairman Senate invites UK investors for business in Pakistan

Pakistan's newly designated High Commissioner to the United Kingdom, Dr. Muhammad Faisal, called on Chairman Senate

MEHTAB PIRZADA


ISLAMABAD: Pakistan's newly designated High Commissioner to the United Kingdom, Dr. Muhammad Faisal, called on Chairman Senate Muhammad Sadiq Sanjrani here at the Parliament House. During the meeting, Chairman Senate warmly congratulated Dr. Faisal on his recent appointment, expressing his good wishes for his tenure. Chairman Senate expressed that Dr. Faisal's role as the Pakistani High Commissioner would further enhance the already strong bilateral ties between Pakistan and the United Kingdom. Emphasizing the importance of collaboration between the two nations, the Chairman Senate urged Dr. Faisal to actively promote cooperation in the fields of environment, trade, IT, education and other sectors. Highlighting the potential for

economic growth and stability, Chairman Senate exhorted British businessmen to explore investment opportunities in Pakistan. He underscored that the confidence of investors would contribute significantly to the country's economic stability. Additionally, Chairman Senate

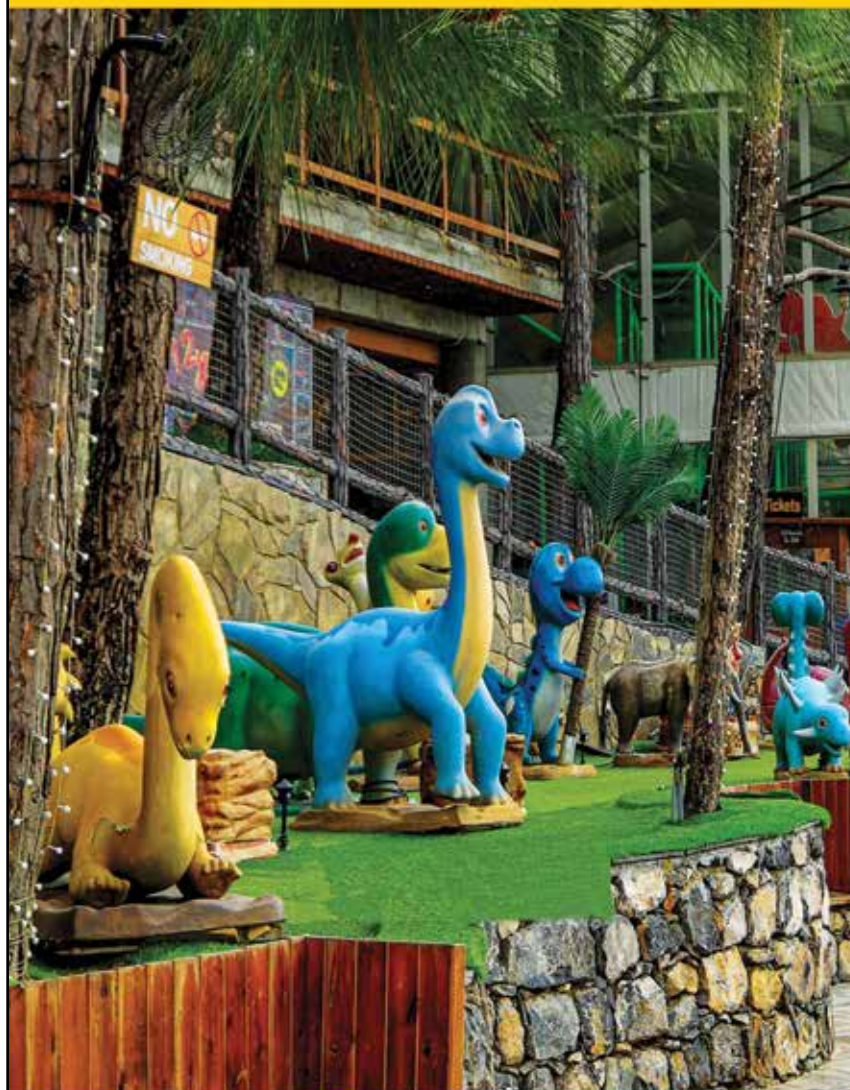
emphasized that strong business and economic ties would serve to strengthen the bond between the people of both nations. Chairman Senate acknowledged the vital role played by Pakistanis residing in Britain as bridges between the two countries. He urged immediate attention to the chal-

lenges faced by these expatriates and stressed the need for swift resolution. In closing, Chairman Senate expressed his confidence in Dr. Muhammad Faisal's capabilities and extended his best wishes for his endeavours as the Pakistani High Commissioner to the United Kingdom.





## 10 Minutes Drive From The Monal



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Pakistan's First And Only Diplomatic Daily

Editor-in-Chief: Ansar Mahmood Bhatti  
Deputy Editor: Abid Raza

Member APNS / ABC Certified

Vol: 03 Issue: 328

Email: [dailyisbpost@gmail.com](mailto:dailyisbpost@gmail.com)

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## Washington needs to brave

**T**AKEN hostage by irrational populist propensities in the United States, overall China-US relations continue to deteriorate, seemingly with each passing day. Yet despite the escalated "bullying", Beijing has remained consistent in seeking to preserve the mutual benefits of healthy bilateral economic, trade and business ties. Unfortunately, like proverbial frogs in the well, many in Washington have a very narrow and simplistic view of the world and appear unwilling or unable to comprehend the broad scope of bilateral relations and the nexus of relationships that form the fabric of ties. However, unlike those in the US House of Representatives or Senate who would consider any abrupt turnaround out of the question, as it would contravene their conviction that their well-tunneled vision gives them extraordinary acuity, President Joe Biden and his administration have to be more circumspect and consider those who say there is a sea of opportunity outside the well. Therefore, despite Biden's recent erroneous portrayal of China's economy as a "ticking time bomb", he has sent his commerce secretary to China to explore what lies beyond the well, so to speak. Thus, Gina Raimondo arrived in Beijing late on Sunday for a four-day visit in which she will have, what is widely hoped will be, constructive discussions on issues relating to the US-China commercial relationship, the challenges facing US businesses in China and Chinese businesses in the US, and areas for potential cooperation. Raimondo, who met with her Chinese counterpart on Monday, has put her goal as "actionable, concrete steps" whereby the two sides can move their commercial relations forward. One of those steps is expected to be promoting Chinese travel and tourism to the US. According to the US commerce chief, if China returned to 2019 US tourism levels, it would add \$30 billion to the US economy and 50,000 US jobs. This may be an easy point on which to find agreement as the two governments agreed earlier this month to double the number of flights, which were cut drastically because of the COVID-19 pandemic. The scarcity of available passenger flights has been an outstanding choke point for bilateral exchanges. Chinese Commerce Minister Wang Wentao told Raimondo that Beijing is ready to work with the Biden administration to "foster a more favorable policy environment for stronger cooperation" and "bolster bilateral trade and investment". But the US government's approach appears different from that of China's. While Beijing anticipates discussions aimed at a healthy overall relationship for constructive engagement, the Biden administration seems reluctant to stray too far from the familiar certainty of the view from the well. Such divergence calls not only for due awareness on the part of Beijing with regard to the differing perspectives of the two sides, but also for it to encourage the US side to hop onto a higher vantage point for a clearer view of the world beyond the well.



## No excuse to wink at Japan's move

**T**HE wide protests in the Republic of Korea before and after Japan began discharging nuclear-contaminated water from the tsunami-destroyed Fukushima nuclear power plant into the Pacific Ocean should serve to prompt the Yoon Suk-yeol government to rethink its stance. However, the Yoon government is not the only party that has chosen to put politics above science and facts. Although the Joe Biden administration has praised Japan for handling the matter in a transparent and responsible way, Japan's seafood exports to the United States have experienced the largest reduction over the past half a year among all countries, mainly due to US consumers' safety concerns. The attitudes of the two governments apparently do not reflect the mainstream view of the public in the two countries. It is a similar situation among other countries taking part in the US' "Indo-Pacific" strategy. Apart from manipulating the International Atomic Energy Agency to give the nod to its water discharge plan, Japan had also done tremendous work from March to August to take advantage of multilateral platforms, particularly the G7 Hiroshima summit, following which a de facto Quad summit was also held, and the recent Camp David summit, to lobby other countries to at least seal their mouths over its toxic water discharge arrangements. The words of Washington and Tokyo on how they care about the well-being of people in Southeast Asia and the Pacific island countries still ring in people's ears. But the outcries of these nations against the move of Japan, which treats the ocean as a sewer, has clearly fallen on the deaf ears of the honeymouthed US and Japanese politicians. It is a shame that having pledged generous indemnities to Japanese fishers for their losses as long as the water discharge lasts, the Fumio Kishida government has not mentioned any compensation for the fishing communities and related industries of other countries that will also be impacted by its selfish decision. It is the collective silence of the US-led club that has not only emboldened Tokyo to ignore the outcries of neighboring countries but also encouraged it to go so far as to level unfounded countercharges against the justified concerns raised by China, and other non-US club countries, over its irresponsible and dangerous move. By smearing other countries for criticizing its move, it is trying to muffle any opposition to its wrongdoing. Nuclear security, nuclear-related emergency responses, food safety, protection of the marine environment and other environmental issues, all are brandished by the US-led club as priority safety issues calling for consultation and cooperation. However, none of the club's members have taken a firm position in opposition to Japan's irresponsible and risky move. Their unwillingness to stand against the US on the issue will nail them to history's pole of shame.

## Choosing darkness over electricity

Qamar Bashir



The call to action extends beyond mere reforms; it necessitates the creation of an entirely novel paradigm for electricity generation. This paradigm shift is imperative to sidestep the inertia and inefficiency of our nation's prevailing, outdated, and unresponsive infrastructure. Through this audacious initiative, individuals will be granted the empowerment to govern their own electricity consumption, steering towards a future of responsiveness and compassion. Across the globe, nations are increasingly transitioning away from electricity generated by fossil fuels and even nuclear energy

**T**HE nation is on the edge of turmoil. Unlike those who were part of the disgraceful events on May 9th and come from wealthy backgrounds, the current protestors taking to the streets nationwide belong to a segment that has little to lose. Even if they face punishment or imprisonment, their circumstances are such that they have already depleted their savings to cover hefty electricity bills, school fees, and basic necessities. Now, all they have left is their diminishing sense of self, with children crying due to lack of food, clothing, shelter, and a safe haven. These individuals are burdened with sorrowful and anguished spouses who struggle to provide food and drink for their crying, underdressed children. Meanwhile, the husbands return home weary and disheveled, without anything to bring back. A significant number among them are choosing to embrace darkness within their homes, reminiscent of an era long past, where concerns about shelter, clothing, education, electricity, gas, water, computers, cell phones, and other such essentials of modern life fade into insignificance. Their protest is not solely directed at the issue of exorbitant electricity bills; rather, it stems from the collective sense that our society has deprived them of the basic right to exist. For them, life is not a source of joy but an enduring state of anguish and suffering, devoid of any promising future or relief. The interim prime minister, operating under a limited mandate and constrained by time, displayed visible empathy and distress in response to the cries of the impoverished echoing throughout the nation. In response, he convened a meeting involving all relevant departments to explore potential solutions. However, during this meeting, the well-to-do elite with substantial incomes, dressed in expensive, immaculate suits, conversing fluently in English, arrived in chauffeur-driven luxury vehicles. Instead of offering practical resolutions, would have inundated the caretaker prime minister with meticulously prepared presentations, accompanied by a barrage of persuasive statistics and data, much of which was likely fabricated. They skillfully diverted the attention of the prime minister from the issue at hand. Charged with the vital mission, the prime minister has entrusted them with the responsibility of formulating a comprehensive array of solutions—ranging from short-term remedies to long-term strategies—to alleviate the burdensome weight of electricity bills. However, the reality stands stark: no amount of remedies can bring about a substantial change if we persist within the confines of the current electricity system. The call to action extends beyond mere reforms; it necessitates the creation of an entirely novel paradigm for electricity generation. This paradigm shift is imperative to sidestep the inertia and inefficiency of our nation's prevailing, outdated, and unresponsive infrastructure. Through this audacious initiative, individuals will be granted the empowerment to govern their own electricity consumption, steering towards a future of responsiveness and compassion. Across the globe, nations are increasingly transitioning away from electricity generated by fossil fuels and even nuclear energy

viduals will be granted the empowerment to govern their own electricity consumption, steering towards a future of responsiveness and compassion. Across the globe, nations are increasingly transitioning away from electricity generated by fossil fuels and even nuclear energy. The recent remarkable advancements in the development of cost-effective and efficient solar cells have brought about a transformative shift in power production. Responsible and responsive governments have introduced a variety of initiatives aimed at reducing the electricity expenses for household consumers.

- They provide incentives for upgrading to energy-efficient appliances, promoting LED lighting, and offering home energy audits to identify areas of improvement.
- They educate the public about energy-saving habits that can lead to behavioral changes that reduce electricity consumption like turning off lights when not needed, unplugging devices, and using programmable thermostats.
- They Enforce stringent energy efficiency standards for appliances and electronics to ensure that only energy-efficient products are available in the market which reduces energy consumption without requiring any changes in consumer behavior.
- They provide financial incentives, such as subsidies or rebates, for purchasing energy-efficient appliances, solar panels, and insulation materials to encourage households to make energy-saving upgrades.
- They implement time-of-use pricing for electricity to encourage households to shift energy-intensive tasks to off-peak hours when electricity rates are lower to help in better load distribution and reduce strain on the power grid during peak times.
- They encourage the adoption of renewable energy sources like solar panels and wind turbines to reduce dependence on traditional electricity sources and lower bills over the long term.
- They Implement demand response programs that reward households for reducing electricity usage during peak demand periods to help stabilize the grid and lower electricity costs.

The Caretaker Prime Minister holds the prerogative to select a combination of these measures, whether it be all or just a few, to extend relief to the populace. The beauty lies in the fact that many of these solutions are inherently cost-effective and can be swiftly put into practice.

Leveraging the Benazir Income Support Program presents a direct and immediate route for granting electricity subsidies to registered households, thereby offering urgent relief to the impoverished and lower-middle class segments. Meanwhile, the affluent strata of society have already taken initiatives to tackle the issue, as evident in the widespread adoption of solar systems. For instance, in locales like Bahria

Enclave, Islamabad, solar installations have become commonplace, with even those who haven't yet adopted solar energy contemplating its adoption.

Drawing inspiration from our neighboring country India, where the target of achieving 50% renewable energy generation by 2030 is a prime objective. India's Jawaharlal Nehru National Solar Mission, initiated in 2010, aimed to attain 20 GW by 2022. Remarkably, India's progress has exceeded expectations, with the nation having already achieved an installed solar capacity of 64 GW by early 2023. On a global scale, renewables are set to comprise a staggering 84% of all new power plant additions by 2022.

To harness these transformative possibilities, Pakistan must initiate a grassroots movement to popularize solar energy. Launching innovative strategies that engage households across all economic strata, rich and poor alike, is paramount. The Shakti program stands as a shining example of successful intervention, having subsidized the adoption of solar energy systems for households and businesses since 1996. This initiative employs a unique approach, wherein borrowers are organized into groups of five to ten individuals. The journey commences with modest monthly payments, allowing participants to gradually transition into the program. The Grameen Shakti model has been emulated in multiple nations, extending financial support to households and enterprises to facilitate their switch to solar energy.

In the pursuit of easing the plight of underprivileged households grappling with surging utility bills, immediate attention becomes paramount. The weight of exorbitant electricity expenses disproportionately burdens those who are least equipped to cope. To combat this pressing concern, it is incumbent upon governments to implement potent measures aimed at alleviating the fiscal stress endured by vulnerable families. This multifaceted approach might encompass targeted subsidies, enhancements in energy-efficient infrastructure, and the launch of public awareness campaigns fostering responsible energy consumption. However, to bring about lasting change, it is essential to contemplate a fundamental shift in the way we generate and distribute electricity. The prevailing electricity production and distribution system often suffers from inefficiencies and sluggish response, leaving households at the mercy of unstable service and skyrocketing bills. The establishment of a comprehensive parallel system for electricity generation, one that harnesses cutting-edge technologies like solar, wind, and microgrids, can circumvent these limitations. This new approach promises greater reliability, reduced costs, and a sustainable energy future for all. By boldly embracing innovation and sustainability, we have the opportunity to liberate households from the shackles of escalating utility bills and pave the way for a more equitable and prosperous society.

## The rise and fall of nations: an academic perspective

AVM M Z Faisal (Retd)

The veracity of the above theories can be evaluated by studying the history of the great nations that endured for centuries. A few examples include the Romans, Persians, Babylonians, Ottomans and, lately, the British Empire. The rise of these nations to glory and grandeur may not be as captivating as their gloomy collapse from such heights. The defeat of the once all-powerful Roman Empire, not by any organised army but rather by the scattered tribes, has lessons for the modern-day world

**M**ANY nations and civilisations have been born from the dwindling fire within the ashes, struggling through the craziest storms; they ultimately reached the glorified apex of supreme authority and control. However, disillusioned by blind faith in treacherous power, nations fail and then tumble in the ashes they had risen from; many die in the darkness of history. As if, like a living cell, nations seem to have a life cycle embedded with seasonal transformations: spring of birth and identity, summers of development and growth, autumn of uncertainty and challenges, and winters of decline and decay. Many resilient would fight back to rise again, but for many others, the winters will be eternal. Whereas there are no scientific models to describe how a nation rises and when it falls, there are various scholarly frameworks on factors that influence national trajectories and destinies. For instance, the Marxist Theory says these are the economic changes driving the national course. The Modernisation Theory says that the level of its modernisation, industrialisation, and technological advancement will dictate its rise and fall. A nation stagnated in traditional practices and outdated developmental formulae will get buried in the dust. Then there is the Dependency Theory, which concludes that part of the underdevelopment of developing countries is because of their political and economic dependencies on the developed world. The cost between national sovereignty and international subservience is sometimes too heavy to pay. Similarly, the Institutional Theory emphasises that solid governance structures and legal systems contribute to the stability and prosperity of nations. The Conflict Theory concludes that there will always be a conflict over limited resources, and class divisions and social inequalities contribute to the rise and fall of nations. In its endeavour to maintain its power and resources, the bloated elite class may even repress those with less power and fewer resources, resulting

in an anarchical situation. Ibne-Khaldun, in his book "Muqaddimah", has mentioned a cyclic pattern of rise and fall. According to him, a group with a conservative background but solid social cohesion, 'Asabiyyah', will rise to power and strength and establish their civilisation. However, over time, their strong identity and unity will erode due to complacency, rendering them weak and vulnerable to being overpowered by another group with stronger social cohesion....and the cycle continues. Ibne-Khaldun also believed that effective governance, just administration, social cohesion and sound economic policies contribute to the life of a civilisation. Another religious scholar, Maulana Maududi, giving a spiritual perspective on nations' rise and fall, said, "It is impossible that a nation, by adopting the path which warrants decline according to the Divine Law, can rise to glory".

The veracity of the above theories can be evaluated by studying the history of the great nations that endured for centuries. A few examples include the Romans, Persians, Babylonians, Ottomans and, lately, the British Empire. The rise of these nations to glory and grandeur may not be as captivating as their gloomy collapse from such heights. The defeat of the once all-powerful Roman Empire, not by any organised army but rather by the scattered tribes, has lessons for the modern-day world. Rome once controlled infinite territories in Europe, North Africa and the Middle East, and their rule lasted for many centuries. The reasons for their splendid success resided in multiple factors, such as a robust and disciplined army, institutionalised governance, economic prosperity through trade, agriculture and mining, innovations and inventions, infrastructure development, and all this under the rider clause of 'Proud and Patriotic Roman'. But then, how did this godly nation decline and perish from the peak of its splendour? Like its rise, there are multiple reasons for its fall. The foremost reason was political instability, power struggles and leadership changes. The disbelief with which Caesar said 'Et Tu Brute' was one of

many such tales of betrayal and conspiracies. Moreover, national unity, social coherence, and respect for central authority declined. The economy was ailing and was stained with high inflation and taxes, which, in turn, had weakened the army and other governing institutions. The eroding military prowess invited invasions from individual groups and Germanic tribes, leading to instability. Rome did not fall in days or months, but in all these declining years, Rome could not find its saviour. Steve Madison also commented on the fall of Rome in his book 'The Quality Agenda: The Search for Excellence' and said, "The Roman people started thinking of their personal salvation rather than their collective strength. Once the poison of individualism spread among the people, Rome's fate was sealed—Once the cohesion of the people has gone, everything fails."

The great Ottoman Empire, founded by Osman I and raised to glory by the lionheart leaders like magnificent Suleiman, Mehmed II and the die-hard Jannissari troops, had a life of about 600 years. This great nation also fell to administrative inefficiency, corruption, military imbalance with the West, economic decline, and nationalist movements seeking independence. The final nail in the coffin was the defeat in WWI, leading to the signing of the Treaty of Sevres in 1920. The historical evidence and perpetual studies by scholars and philosophers find a delicate interplay between leadership, politics, economy, defence, justice, ethics, and national cohesion in the rise and fall of nations. History is not cruel to have put so many powerful nations on the gallows without assigning reason and giving them sufficient alerts. But nothing can erase the sealed destiny if the nations ignore these warnings and do not make the course corrections. And it is wrong to apportion blame on the leadership....nation fall because of its people....

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## Briefs

## COAS reaffirms army's support...

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identified projects by capitalising the enabling environment already achieved through SIFC. Meanwhile, Jamaat-e-Islami (JI) Emir SirajulHaq on Monday equated the inflated power bills with the "drone attacks". Addressing a press conference, MrHaq assailed the caretaker government, saying, "The people have been compelled to commit suicide due to the inflated power bills. About 48 per cent of the taxes have been imposed along with the original power price." He asked the government to end the additional taxes on electricity bills. MrHaq made it clear that his party will stage a protest against the exorbitant power bills on September 1 in Rawalpindi. He announced a nationwide strike and shutdown on September 2. Earlier on Saturday, the Jamaat-e-Islami (JI) announced that it would stage a protest against the exorbitant electricity bills. Addressing a seminar in Lahore, JI Emir SirajulHaq lashed out at the political opponents and caretaker government, saying, "The caretaker government is following the footsteps of the previous governments in terms of taking wrong decisions for the sake of the country."

## Govt claims being generous with Imran

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and is equipped with a whitewashed interior, a fan and a concrete floor. The washroom has a 7x4 feet dimension and a six-foot high wall. As a better-class prisoner, the PTI chairman is provided with a mattress, an air cooler, four pillows, a table and a chair. He also has access to four copies of the English translation of the Holy Quran and 25 historical books, says the report. Furthermore, he enjoys the privilege of a 21-inch television and receives daily newspapers. Staff members are assigned to clean his cell, washroom and clothes. These details were requested by the Supreme Court to assess the facilities provided to the PTI head in jail. Meanwhile, the Islamabad High Court is hearing the PTI leader's appeal against his sentence in the Toshakhana criminal case. The court on Monday reserved verdict which it will announce at 11am on Tuesday.

## ECP consultation process underway...

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constituencies after every census is officially published." In line with this requirement, the ECP last week said that the process of fresh delimitation was expected to be completed by December 14 – over a month beyond the constitutionally mandated deadline for conducting general elections. The development had caused President DrArifAlvi to invite Chief Election Commissioner (CEC) Sikandar Sultan Raja for a meeting to "fix an appropriate date" for general elections. Responding to the invite, the CEC had said participating in such a confab would be of "scant importance" after changes to the election law. Meanwhile, the election commission is currently involved in consultations with political parties to construct an effective election plan. Apart from JI and MQM-P, delegations from PTI, PML-N and JUI-F have also engaged with the ECP as a part of the ongoing process. Today's meetings with JI and MQM were presided over by Chief Election Commissioner (CEC) Sikander Sultan Raja. In a press release issued later in the evening, the ECP said the JI delegation, headed by AmeerulAzeem, was of the opinion that the consultation process should have commenced at an earlier stage.

## Asia Cup to start in Pak, Sri Lanka from Aug 30

Most awaited Asia Cricket Cup to start in Pakistan, Sri Lanka on Aug 30. Pakistan is going to face arch-rival India on Sept. 2 at Kandy

OUR CORRESPONDENT

PESHAWAR : The most awaited Asia Cricket Cup is commencing simultaneously in Pakistan and Sri Lanka under the aegis of the Asian Cricket Council with Pakistan being the host finalising all arrangements for the smooth conduct of the prestigious event. Pakistan is going to face arch-rival India on September 2 at Kandy, Cricket fans from all over the world, including Pakistan and India, are watching and a large number of fans are eagerly waiting to see them face the toughest battle, as expected. The biggest match of the Asia Cup is going to be played between India and Pakistan with cricket fans waiting for the actual battle. The entire Asia Cup was to be played in Pakistan but due to India's stubbornness, only four matches were played in Pakistan and nine matches in Sri Lanka. On August 30, Pakistan will play its first match against Nepal in Multan (Pakistan). On August 31, Bangladesh and Sri Lanka will face each other at the Kandy ground. There will be a match against Afghanistan

and Bangladesh on September 3. On September 4, India will play its second match against Nepal in Kandy and on September 5, Afghanistan will play against Sri Lanka in Gaddafi Stadium in Lahore. One match of the Super Four will be played in Lahore and the remaining matches will be played in Colombo. The final will also be played in Colombo. India has won the Asia Cup (One Day) six times and the T20 Cup once. Sri Lanka has won the Asia Cup six times while Pakistan has won the Asia Cup twice. Sri Lanka is the only team that has participated in all the previous Asia Cups. India, Pakistan and Bangladesh have participated in the Asia Cup cricket tournament 14, 14 times. Sri Lanka has participated in almost 50 matches, out of

which Sri Lanka has won 34 matches and lost 16 matches. India has won 31 matches out of 49 matches and 16 matches have been lost. In third place is the Pakistan team which has won 26 matches out of 45 matches while Pakistan had to face failure in 18 matches. Sri Lanka's Jayasuriya has made the most 1220 runs in batting. Jayasuriya scored 1220 runs in 25 matches at an average of 53.04. He scored six centuries and 3 half-centuries in the Asia Cup. The best innings was 130 runs. In second place is Kumar Singara of Sri Lanka who scored 1075 runs at an average of 48.86. His best innings is 121 runs. The third number is India's Sachin Tendulkar, who has scored 971 runs at an average of 51.10. The best innings is 114 runs. The fourth number is Sri Lanka's Ranatunga. He has made 741 runs from Sri Lanka Jayawardene who has scored 674 runs at an average of 29.33. In bowling, Sri Lanka's Muralidharan is the most successful bowler with 30

wickets. He got these 30 wickets by playing 24 matches. His best bowling performance is five wickets for 31 runs. Sri Lanka's Malinga is in the second position with 29 wickets at an average of 20.55. His best bowling is 5 wickets for 34 runs. Sri Lanka bowler Ajantha Mendis is also in third place in bowling. Mendis has taken 26 wickets at an average of 10.42 in just eight matches. Saeed Ajmal of Pakistan is in third place, he has taken 25 wickets at an average of 19.40 in 12 matches. He is also in fifth place. The Sri Lankan bowler is Chaminda Vas Brajman who took 23 wickets in 19 matches. The national selection committee, which includes Inzamam-ul-Haq, team Director Mickey Arthur and head coach Grant Bradburn, has finalized the team after consulting with Captain Babar Azam. Captain Babar Azam, Abdullah Shafiq, Fakhr Zaman, Imamul Haq, Salman Ali Agha, Ifukhar Ahmed, Tayyab Tahir, Mohammad Rizwan, Mohammad Haris, Shadab Khan (Vice Captain), Mohammad Nawaz, Saud Shakeel, Osama Mir, Faheem Ashraf, Haris Rauf, Mohammad Wasim Junior, Naseem Shah and Shaheen Afridi are included.



## BCCI President are coming to Pakistan: PCB

DNA

LAHORE: Zaka Ashraf, Chairman of the Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) Management Committee on Monday shared that BCCI President Roger Binny and Vice President Rajiv Shukla will visit Pakistan this week for the opening ceremony of ACC Men's Asia Cup commencing from August 30. While talking to the media at Gaddafi Stadium during the national men's team's jersey unveiling ceremony for the upcoming ICC Men's Cricket World Cup 2023, Zaka Ashraf welcomed the players and officials who are visiting Pakistan for the Asia Cup. "BCCI President and Vice President are coming to Pakistan for the opening ceremony of Asia Cup," Zaka Ashraf said. "We welcome everyone who is coming to Pakistan [during Asia Cup]." He also showed confidence and faith in the Pakistan team and expressed his hope that the national team will continue the recent good form and perform well at the Asia Cup as well as the upcoming ICC Men's World Cup in India.



KARACHI: President Dr Arif Alvi meeting with the special athletes of special olympics pakistan. – APP

## Mancini named as SA national team coach

RIYADH :Roberto Mancini was announced as the new head coach of Saudi Arabia's men's team on just two weeks after resigning as manager of his native Italy. In a post on X, formerly known as Twitter, Mancini wrote that he was "honored to be selected for such a prestigious role" and that he will "proudly continue to bring our Italian culture to the world." He continued to say he has "accepted to embrace such an exciting new project, grounded on a shared vision and purpose to grow the national football sector as well as the young talents and the future generations." Both Mancini and the official Saudi national team shared a video on X showing the 58-year-old wearing a green tie and drinking a coffee. At the end of the video, Mancini says, "I made history in Europe. Now it is time to make history with Saudi." Mancini was head coach of Italy for five years, winning the men's European Championship with the team in 2021. However, Italy failed to qualify for the Qatar World Cup in 2022 under his stewardship and currently sits third in its group for the 2024 edition of the European championship, behind England and Ukraine. At club level, Mancini has managed Inter Milan and Manchester City most notably, as well as a stint with Zenit St. Petersburg in Russia. He won Manchester City's first English Premier League title in 2012 in dramatic fashion. – Agencies

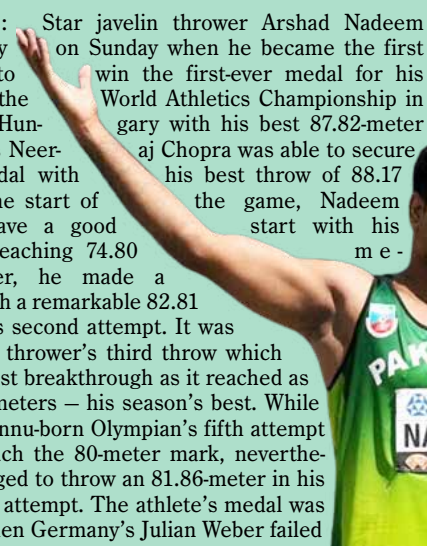
## Djokovic and Alcaraz renew rivalry at US Open

WASHINGTON: The stage is set for another epic showdown between Novak Djokovic and Carlos Alcaraz at the US Open which starts on Monday. The pair have thrilled tennis fans this season with two special matches, first in the Wimbledon final and then most recently at the Cincinnati Open. Djokovic described last Sunday's Cincinnati Open final victory over Alcaraz as "one of the toughest matches" of his career and the three-set, nearly four-hour clash will surely go down as one of tennis' all-time great encounters. World No. 1 and No. 2 respectively, Alcaraz and Djokovic played some otherworldly tennis in Cincinnati as the sport's burgeoning rivalry continues to enthrall fans in the absence of Roger Federer and Rafael Nadal. In truth, it's almost impossible to see a US Open winner beyond Alcaraz, the defending champion, and Djokovic with the pair simply in a league of their own compared to the rest of the draw. Men's tennis has been reliant on the epic rivalries between Nadal, Federer and Djokovic over the years and while it may be hyperbole to say Alcaraz's emergence has saved the sport, the Spaniard's rise certainly makes the transition into the next era significantly smoother. The 20-year-old has enjoyed a remarkable season in 2023, winning six titles that include Wimbledon – his second grand slam – and two Masters 1000 events. After his stunning five-set win over Djokovic in the Wimbledon final, Alcaraz's form briefly deserted him in a shock quarterfinal defeat to Tommy Paul at the Canadian Open but he bounced back brilliantly to play some of his best tennis of the season in his run to the final in Cincinnati. Alcaraz enters the tournament as the top seed, and faces a possible quarterfinal rematch with Jannik Sinner, a year after their epic five-set classic which saw Alcaraz win at 2.50 a.m. setting a record for the latest finish for a match at the US Open. He is also in the same side of the draw as third seed Medvedev who he could face in the semifinals. "What Alcaraz has done in the last year is unbelievable," seven-time grand slam champion John McEnroe told Eurosport. "[He's] the best I've ever seen at this age. "Novak is incredible how good he still is, to see the all-time great play against the young superstar is incredible. I'd love to see that match played again." The last couple of matches have been close and incredible matches, let's hope it lasts." Djokovic's win over Alcaraz in Cincinnati was his fourth title of the year, including victories at the Australian Open and French Open to take his grand slam tally to 23. – Agencies

## WAC: Arshad becomes first Pakistani to win silver medal

LAHORE : Star javelin thrower Arshad Nadeem made history on Sunday when he became the first Pakistani to win the first-ever medal for his country at the World Athletics Championship in Budapest, Hungary. Nadeem won the gold medal with his best throw of 88.17 meters. At the start of the game, Nadeem could not have a good start with his throw only reaching 74.80 meters, however, he made a comeback with a remarkable 82.81 meters on his second attempt. It was the Pakistani thrower's third throw which was the biggest breakthrough as it reached as far as 87.82 meters – his season's best. While the Mian-Channu-born Olympian's fifth attempt could not reach the 80-meter mark, nevertheless he managed to throw an 81.86-meter in his sixth and last attempt. The athlete's medal was confirmed when Germany's Julian Weber failed

to surpass his mark of 86.79 as his final throw fell short of 80m. A foul by Jakub Vadlejch in his final attempt confirmed that Nadeem will be in the final two. In his fourth attempt, the 26-year-old could only reach 87.12m, much less than he was expected. Earlier Saturday, Nadeem qualified for the final of the World Athletics Championship with his best throw of 86.79 meter. The Olympics was 85.50m, Nadeem managed to cross successfully. The latest win comes after Nadeem came into the spotlight when he finished fifth in the Tokyo Olympics, a feat that changed the entire life of the athlete, marking a great influence on his personality. Last year, Nadeem also finished fifth in the World Championship in the US. Soon afterwards he recorded his best throw of 90.18 metres in the Commonwealth Games in Birmingham which is also a record throw of the quadrennial event. – DNA



## Ethiopia's first year in Pakistan: A journey of friendship and growth

FROM PAGE 01

mere 78 million US dollars due to the lack of robust institutional ties. Identifying this challenge, I endeavored to bridge the gap by advocating for the establishment of strong institutional linkages. In February 2022, we celebrated a milestone as both nations signed a groundbreaking trade agreement, laying the foundation for the expansion of commercial and business relations. In the following month, a historic delegation of 75 Pakistani businessmen embarked on a transformative journey to Addis Ababa. This marked a watershed moment as the realms of business, trade, and investment were explored like never before. My heart swells with gratitude for the Pakistani business community, whose resounding response not only made this delegation a resounding success but also resulted in the signing of pivotal Memorandums of Understanding in the realm of trade and investment. The momentum was perpetuated as a 50-member high-level delegation from Ethiopia graced Pakistan's shores, arriving on the maiden flight of Ethi-

opian Airlines. The gracious reception by the Sindh Chief Minister's Cabinet, in the middle of night, exemplified the sincere warmth and brotherhood between our two nations. Under the guidance of H.E. Ambassador MisganuArega, Minister of State of Foreign Affairs of Ethiopia, these collaborative efforts culminated in the signing of multiple Memorandums of Understanding in fields spanning trade, science, and technology. Subsequently, distinguished delegations from the health and textile sectors participated in various expos and exhibitions in Pakistan. The business chambers of Pakistan emerged as pivotal players in fostering closer ties, organizing the "Ethio-Pakistan Business Forum" across key cities. This platform has magnificently facilitated a tighter integration of our business communities. In fostering people-to-people connections, the focus laid on the launch of Ethiopian Airlines operations in Pakistan. Beyond mere travel, this marked a gateway not only to Ethiopia but to the entire African continent. Pakistani universities extended a hearty welcome, planning to start a special quota for Ethiopian students, thus furthering the

academic partnership. In retrospection, I feel compelled to touch upon the avenues that remain unexplored. The economic landscape beckons the Pakistani business community to consider Ethiopia as a novel economic destination – a gateway to the vast expanse of Africa. Ethiopia's demand for pharmaceutical, surgical, sports equipment, and construction materials perfectly aligns with Pakistan's expertise, while in return, Ethiopia's agricultural treasures, such as coffee, tea, pulses, oilseeds, and vegetables, beckon Pakistan. Ethiopia's remarkable journey towards a double-digit economy is a testament to the transformative power of reforms initiated in 2018. With focused efforts to address bottlenecks in FDI, trade, and business services, progress is evident across pivotal sectors such as agriculture, manufacturing, mining, tourism, and ICT. A shared commitment to combat climate change has united our nations. Ethiopia's Green Legacy Initiative, conceived by Prime Minister Dr. Abiy Ahmed, stands as a beacon of hope and launched here in Pakistan by the FDRE Embassy. Having witnessed Pakistan's vulnerability firsthand during the devastating flood

of 2022, I embarked on a mission to distribute relief items to affected regions, a memory etched forever in my heart. The manifestation of our union is underscored by a mutual demand made by our heads of state at COP27 – a call for a climate fund that stands as a testament to our shared responsibility. In the realm of security, collaboration against terrorism holds immense promise, safeguarding not only our nations but the global community. Looking ahead, Ethiopia is resolute in advancing our bilateral relationship with Pakistan. The Embassy of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia envisions a future brimming with potential across various domains including the economy, education, tourism, and culture. As I conclude, I extend my heartfelt gratitude to the people and government of Pakistan for their unwavering support. Your solidarity during Ethiopia's non-permanent candidacy in the United Nations and your unwavering stand in the UN Human Rights Council reaffirms the strength of our bond. We stand by Pakistan, just as Pakistan stands by Ethiopia. Together, we shall tread the path of shared history, united in our resolve. Ethiopia-Pakistan Dosti Zindabad!

## Power ministry finalizes proposals

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the public. Amidst nationwide protests and fervent outcry over soaring electricity costs in the midst of runaway inflation, Kakar's rallying cry for action arrived in the midst of broader political, economic and constitutional uncertainties. While the first meeting yielded no definitive actions, Kakar had expressed the need for a roster of individuals and entities benefiting from free electricity, urging the concerned ministries and departments to provide this information. Additionally, he instructed power distribution companies to outline a strategy for tackling electricity theft. The emergency meeting, which extended for almost two hours, also emphasised the necessity of implementing reforms and establishing viable short, medium-, and long-term strategies within the power sector. Kakar deemed such measures crucial for alleviating the challenges burdening the populace.

## IHC to announce verdict...

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the verdict and approached the IHC for his release and suspension of the conviction. ECP, meanwhile, had filed a private complaint against Khan in the same case. Under the rules governing Toshakhana – a Persian word meaning "treasure house" – government officials can keep gifts if they have a low worth, while they must pay a dramatically reduced fee to the government for extravagant items. The Toshakhana has been under a microscope ever since the emergence of the allegations that Khan purchased the gifts he received as prime minister at throwaway rates and sold them off in the open market for staggering profits. The 70-year-old cricketer-turned-politician was accused of misusing his 2018 to 2022 premiership to buy and sell gifts in state possession that were received during visits abroad and worth more than Rs140 million (\$635,000).

## PTI SG slams Shehbaz's...

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September. Omar Ayub said that all this thanks to PML-N and PDM fascist government during which the power tariff was increased from Rs. 16 to around Rs. 50 per unit. He revealed that the biggest defaulters of power distribution companies' dues were the government departments themselves that were in billions of rupees. Omar Ayub Khan demanded that the defaulting government departments' electricity should be cut instantly. "The electricity amount is budgeted every year, so why are not they paying up," he asked, adding that the Secretary and Principal Accounting Officer of the defaulting departments under him and her should be held responsible. PTI Secretary General stated that if a poor persons meter was cut and taken away, then the same should be applied to all the government departments.

## Dollar busts previous record

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its losing streak against the US dollar, hitting an all-time low of 301.75 in the interbank market during the intraday trade. The American currency's upward trajectory against the Pakistani rupee shows no signs of slowing down as at the start of the new business week, the dollar surged by 75 paise, reaching a staggering 301.75 rupees, according to currency dealers. Last week, the rupee demonstrated consistent weakness, recording losses in all five trading sessions and ultimately reaching an unprecedented low of 301 against the US dollar. This resulted in a 1.7% decline in the currency's value relative to the greenback.



## Briefs

Rains leave  
13 dead in  
Tajikistan

DUSHANBE: At least 13 people were killed after heavy rains lashed central Tajikistan, the latest natural disaster to hit the mountainous Central Asia country, the presidency said Monday.

The deaths occurred in areas just south and east of the capital Dushanbe, where storms on Sunday had caused "mudslides, falling rocks and landslides" in around a dozen districts, a spokeswoman for the country's emergencies ministry told AFP. "Because of the heavy rains, a natural catastrophe happened yesterday and caused the deaths of 13 people, including 11 in Vahdat and two in Rudaki district," the office of President Emomali Rahmon said in a brief statement.

Risks of further landslides "remain high", the ministry spokeswoman said. Tajikistan, the poorest of ex-Soviet nations in Central Asia, is vulnerable to natural catastrophes. In February, dozens of avalanches as well as landslides and rockfalls struck Upper Badakhshan, an autonomous region in the south bordering Afghanistan, China and Kyrgyzstan that is surrounded by the Pamir Mountains. —DNA

Former US  
CG employee  
charged with  
espionage

MOSCOW: Russia's Federal Security Service (FSB) on Monday charged a former employee of the US Consulate General in Vladivostok with espionage, according to a state news agency report.

Russian state news agency TASS reported that the FSB charged Robert Shonov with "cooperation on a confidential basis with a foreign state" under Article 275.1 of the country's criminal code.

The report further said that the FSB found Shonov working for Jeffrey Sillin and David Bernstein of the political department of the US Embassy in Moscow, collecting information on the course of the country's "special military operation" in Ukraine between September 2022 and May 2023 "for material reward." —Agencies

EU ready  
for more  
expansion  
before 2030

LONDON: The EU should focus on enlargement as one of its strategic goals in the coming years, European Council President Charles Michel is set to declare, according to the Financial Times.

The British daily claims to have obtained an exclusive preview of what the Council chief will propose at a speech in Slovenia on Monday. Michel will reportedly call on the bloc to be ready to add new members by 2030 while "the window of opportunity is open." "If we want to be credible, we must talk about timing," Michel's speech notes say, according to the FT.

"As we prepare the EU's next strategic agenda, we must set ourselves a clear goal... we must be ready, on both sides, by 2030 to enlarge."

"We must now address enlargement as one of our major challenges." —DNA

96-hour Saudi visa for  
BD, Pakistani travelers

Saudi Arabia has broadened its e-visa services. Now, individuals possessing valid visas from countries such as the UK, US, and those in the Schengen zone, as well as residents from the US, UK, EU, and GCC, can benefit from this streamlined process

DNA

RIYADH: Saudi Arabia, the spiritual heartland of Islam, is initiating pivotal changes to enhance the experience for millions of Muslim pilgrims worldwide. Dr. Tawfiq al-Rabiah, the Saudi Minister of Hajj and Umrah and Chairman of the Pilgrim Experience Program, unveiled an array of streamlined visa services during his official visit to Bangladesh and Pakistan.

One of the most notable introductions is the 96-hour Stopover visa, specially designed for citizens of

Pakistan and Bangladesh. This visa not only facilitates easier transit but also allows these travelers to integrate Umrah, a significant Islamic pilgrimage, into their short stays. Rapid processing times are at the forefront of these changes. Rabiah proudly announced that the issuance of Umrah visas would now be expedited within just 24 hours. This fast-tracking emphasizes Saudi Arabia's intent to make the spiritual journey as seamless as possible for devotees. During discussions with top officials from Pakistan and Bangladesh, including their

respective presidents, Rabiah underscored the deep, enduring bonds between these nations and Saudi Arabia. The collaborative vision is evident in their shared commitment to fortifying these ties further. Highlighting the monumental efforts to uplift the pilgrimage experience, Rabiah drew attention to expansive projects. These include the majestic expansion of the Two Holy Mosques, the inauguration of the ultra-modern Haramain High-Speed Railway, and the massive transformation of the King Abdulaziz Airport in Jeddah, positioning it as a central

gateway for Islamic pilgrims. Furthermore, Saudi Arabia has broadened its e-visa services. Now, individuals possessing valid visas from countries such as the UK, US, and those in the Schengen zone, as well as residents from the US, UK, EU, and GCC, can benefit from this streamlined process. A significant leap in their tourism outreach, the newly enhanced visa program permits visitors to immerse themselves not only in the sacred ritual of Umrah but also to delve deep into the country's rich tapestry of culture, history, and natural

beauty. Capping off the slew of announcements was the extension of the Umrah visa duration, now set at 90 days. This move, as detailed on the Visit Saudi website, allows a more extended pilgrimage window, even during the coveted Hajj season. With these sweeping changes, Saudi Arabia reaffirms its dedication to simplifying and enriching the pilgrimage experience. The kingdom's strides in modernizing Hajj and Umrah journeys, as noted by Arabian Business, mark a significant milestone in the history of Islamic pilgrimage.

Police officers assure to  
provide safe environment

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Ahsan Zafar Bakhtawari, President, Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry (ICCI), said that due to the inflated electricity bills, citizens and traders are protesting in Islamabad like the rest of the country and stressed that instead of being harsh with the protestors, police should deal with them with a soft approach and try to keep them peaceful so that the situation in the federal capital remains undisturbed and business activities are not affected. He said this while talking to Syed Ishtiaq Hussain Shah,

SHO Sumbal Police Station (G-13) and Muhammad Saleem Raza, SHO Shams Colony Police Station (H-13) during their visit to ICCI. Ahsan Bakhtawari said that traders always want to remain peaceful because their business can develop better only in an environment of peace and tranquillity, but the massive hike in electricity bills has angered the people and traders are also feeling the heat of these heavy bills. However, he hoped that the SHO of all the police stations in Islamabad would avoid any harshness on the protestors and try their best to keep them peaceful with a gentle attitude. He also demanded the government to take war-footing steps to provide

adequate relief to the people in electricity bills in order to prevent the situation from getting out of control in the country. He assured the two SHOs that ICCI will cooperate with the police in its efforts to provide better security to the traders. Speaking on the occasion, Syed Ishtiaq Hussain Shah, SHO of Sumbal Police Station (G-13) and Muhammad Saleem Raza, SHO Shams Colony Police Station (H-13) assured that they would try their best to provide a safe environment for the business activities to flourish. They said that the purpose of their visit to ICCI was to consult with the leadership of the Chamber to deal with the prevailing

situation triggered by inflated electricity bills so that the law and order in the city can be further improved. They also apprised the leadership of ICCI of their strategy to control crimes and provide security to the citizens including traders within the limits of their respective police stations and welcomed the suggestions of ICCI to make these efforts more effective. Former President ICCI and Secretary General of UBG Pakistan Zafar Bakhtawari, Saifur Rahman Khan, Raja Imtiaz, Shahid Zaman Shinwari, Khalid Chaudhry, Aslam Khokhar, Abid Khan, Maqsood Tabish, Babar Chaudhry and others were also present on the occasion.

Biden 'too old'  
to be effective  
president: Poll

WASHINGTON: US President Joe Biden's advancing years are viewed by an overwhelming majority of Americans as a stumbling block to him securing a second term in the White House, according to a recent poll.

The Associated Press-NORC Center for Public Affairs Research study conducted this month found that some 77% of Americans believe Biden, who turns 81 in November, is too old to be a fully capable president should he be re-elected next year. This view is held by 89% of Republican respondents as well as 69% of Democrats, according to the poll. "Biden just seems to be very compromised by age-related conditions," Eric Dezenhall, a former staffer in Ronald Reagan's White House, said via the Associated Press in comments published on Monday. "Even people who like him see him as being frail and not altogether 'there.'" Dezenhall added: "Whatever Trump's negatives are, I don't think most people see them as being disabled in an age-related way." Around half of Americans, though, consider Trump's age (77) as a negative factor to his own chances at regaining the US presidency according to the study. The results appear broadly reflective of US voter desires to seek a younger generation of lawmakers in Washington — with around two-thirds calling for age-limits for the office of president and members of Congress. Similarly, 67% of respondents to the poll also support imposing mandatory retirement ages on Supreme Court justices. "They're too old overall," Noah Burden, a 28-year-old communications professional told the AP, adding that veteran politicians on either side of the aisle represent "a sense of values and a sense of the country and the world that just isn't accurate anymore." Additionally, the poll detailed that words such as "slow" and "confused" were frequently used by around 15% voters while describing Biden. The same number (15%) described Trump as "corrupt" and "crooked," according to the poll of 1,165 adults conducted between August 10-14. Trump currently holds a significant polling advantage in the race to secure the GOP nomination to challenge presumptive Democrat candidate Joe Biden in the US presidential election, scheduled for November 5, 2024. —Agencies

US  
commerce  
chief meets  
Chinese  
counterpart

BEIJING: US Commerce Secretary Gina Raimondo began her visit to China with a meeting with Chinese Commerce Minister Wang Wentao on Monday. It is the first trip to China by a sitting US commerce chief in seven years.

Discussions between the US and Chinese sides are expected to cover all issues including attempts to decrease tensions between the world's top two economies. Raimondo, who arrived in Beijing on Sunday night, is also expected to meet Chinese Premier Li Qiang and Vice Premier He Lifeng, and is scheduled to visit Shanghai on Tuesday and Wednesday, daily South China Morning Post reported. Early this year in May, Raimondo and Wentao met for two days in Washington. The two had discussed trade, investment and export policies during their meeting on the sidelines of the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation forum in Detroit, Michigan. Wang and Raimondo had agreed to "strengthen exchanges on specific economic and trade concerns and issues concerning cooperation," according to the Chinese Commerce Ministry. —APP

Egypt supports  
UN efforts to  
solve Yemeni  
crisis

CAIRO: Egyptian Foreign Minister Sameh Shoukry said on Monday that Egypt is committed to supporting the role of the United Nations in resolving the Yemeni crisis. Shoukry made the remarks during his meeting in the Egyptian capital of Cairo with UN Special Envoy for Yemen Hans Grundberg, the Egyptian Foreign Ministry said in a statement. During the meeting, Shoukry stressed the importance of an inclusive political process for all parties that preserves Yemen's unity and stability. He also stressed Egypt's commitment to support the UN efforts towards seeking a political solution to the Yemeni crisis and alleviating the humanitarian sufferings of the Yemeni people. For his part, the UN envoy expressed his appreciation for the Egyptian efforts to resolve the crisis in Yemen. —APP

KCCI Chief appeals  
immediate relief in  
electricity bills

NAZIR SIYAL

KARACHI: President Karachi Chamber of Commerce & Industry (KCCI) Mohammed Tariq Yousuf has said that although the Caretaker Prime Minister convened an urgent meeting on Sunday wherein the concerned authorities were directed to devise concrete measures within 48 hours to alleviate extraordinary burden of inflated electricity bills but the Karachi Chamber was under tremendous pressure being exerted by all its members particularly the SMEs and Small Traders. "We, therefore, appeal the Caretaker government to immediately decide about the desperately needed reduction in electricity bills by tomorrow as the poor masses and the members of business community are highly frustrated and it is becoming very difficult for us to control the agitation", he added in a statement issued. Tariq Yousuf said, "The entire business community of Karachi and also the rest of Pakistan will be very grateful, if the Caretaker PM announces relief without any further delay by tomorrow so that the people could calm down and get back to their work." He also requested the Caretaker Prime Minister and Energy Minister to hold a meeting with KCCI even on Zoom facility which, besides providing us an opportunity to give relevant suggestions, would also acquaint the business community of Karachi about the steps being taken by government to deal with the situation.

India to  
launch its  
first solar  
mission on  
Sept. 2

NEW DELHI: The Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) on Monday formally announced that it would launch "Aditya-L1", the first space-based Indian observatory to study the Sun, on Sept. 2 from the Satish Dhawan Space Center located in Sriharikota of India's southern state of Andhra Pradesh, off the Bay of Bengal. "The Aditya-L1 will be the first Indian space-based observatory-class solar mission to unlock the mysteries of the Sun," added the ISRO. According to the Indian space agency, the mission's distance would be 1.5 million km from the Earth, which is about four times farther than the Moon, and the spacecraft would carry out an observatory-class solar probe. —APP

TRNC President Ersin Tatar  
slams UN 'double standards'

FOREIGN DESK

ANKARA: The Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus (TRNC) President Ersin Tatar lamented the "double standards" of the United Nations in its treatment of Turkish and Greek Cypriots on the divided island amid controversy over the construction of a road. Since mid-August, Turkish Cyprus and its guarantor Turkey have been at odds with the world body and the Greek Cypriot administration over a project to expand the road connecting Pile, a village inside the U.N.-controlled buffer zone, to Yitler (Asos) village in the island's north.

Pile itself is home to Greek and Turkish Cypriots and falls in territory surrounded by a patchwork of jurisdictions, from the U.N. buffer zone to British sovereign bases and areas controlled by opposing communities. At present, people from the area wanting to travel to Turkish Cyprus have to cross a checkpoint in the British bases, then another checkpoint controlled by Turkish Cypriot authorities. The Turkish Cypriot demand for a road to facilitate travel from Pile to the nearby community of Yitler has been longstanding. On Aug. 18, after a confrontation with U.N. peacekeeping forces who tried to intervene, Turkish Cypriots

scaled back the construction work but vowed to continue it. Last week, the U.N. Security Council condemned what it called an "attack on peacekeepers" and "unauthorized construction" of the road, which drew the ire of Ankara and TRNC. The Turkish side accused the council of "distorting facts" and stressed the road was a humanitarian project aiming to facilitate direct access of TRNC citizens in Pile to their own homeland. The notification for the roadwork was made in advance and it was the U.N. forces' intervention that caused the tension, a statement from the Turk-

ish Foreign Ministry said while Foreign Minister Hakan Fidan accused the U.N. of "losing neutrality" on the issue. Similarly, as he received Türkiye's Chief of General Staff Metin Gürak on Sunday, Tatar cried out at the U.N.'s persistent attitude, saying, "Where was the United Nations when Greek Cypriots were massacring Turks in villages?" Greek Cypriots have constructed roads, houses and universities in Pile but when the Turkish side wants to build a road, their reaction is outrageous, Tatar said, stressing that it was a "double standard" against the island's northern inhabitants.



BAKU: President Ilham Aliyev and First Lady Mehriban Aliyeva participated in "Lachin City Day" festivities.—DNA

AUGUST 2023

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## Briefs

### Israel strikes force closure of Aleppo airport

DNA

ALEPPO: Syria says a new Israeli aerial aggression has targeted Aleppo international airport in northwest Syria, putting the facility out of service. Citing a military source, the official Syrian Arab News Agency (SANA) said the air raid was conducted at around 04:30 a.m. local time (0130 GMT) on Monday. "The Israeli enemy carried out an air aggression from the direction of the Mediterranean, west of Latakia, targeting Aleppo International Airport," the source added. "The aggression caused material damage to the airport runway and put it out of service." There were no reports of casualties so far. Back in May, the Tel Aviv regime staged a similar attack on the Aleppo airport, killing one Syrian soldier and wounding several other people. It also struck the airport on two different occasions in March and put it out of commission for several days. Israel frequently attacks the positions of Syria's military and its allies since 2011, when the Arab country found itself in the grip of rampant foreign-backed violence and terrorism.

### India school shut down over slapping row

WEB DESK

NEW DELHI: Authorities in India's Uttar Pradesh state have sealed a private school after its teacher asked students to slap their Muslim classmate. Officials said Neha Public School was shut down as it "did not meet the education department's criteria." The school's students would be shifted to a government school or other nearby schools, officials said. Meanwhile, the teacher - Tripta Tyagi - has told NDTV news channel that she was "not ashamed" of her actions. The child's family has said he was beaten up for getting his times tables wrong. A video of Ms Tyagi telling her pupils to slap their seven-year-old Muslim classmate at a small private school in Muzaffarnagar district went viral on social media at the weekend. "Why are you hitting him so lightly? Hit him harder," the teacher is heard telling the children, as the boy stands crying. "Hit him on the back... His face is turning red, so hit him on the back now," she added. The victim's father reported the incident to police and took him out of the school. But he did not press charges. The video sparked outrage on social media, with several users saying that action should be taken against the teacher.

### 4 dead after boat sinks off Lesbos

ATHENS: Four asylum seekers have died and 18 others rescued after their boat capsized off the Greek island of Lesbos, according to Greek authorities. A patrol picked up 22 people in the Aegean Sea, but four of them were dead, the Hellenic Coast Guard said on Monday in a brief statement. The survivors were transferred to Mytilene, the main city on Lesbos. No details were officially given about the nationalities or the condition of those rescued. According to local media reports, the survivors included Yemenis, Palestinians and Somalis. Greece has been one of the preferred entry points into Europe for many people from Africa and Asia, seeking refuge from conflict and poverty. According to the United Nations, more than 15,000 people have reached Greece by sea and land so far this year and authorities in Athens have been heavily criticised for their handling and management of asylum applications. Only 104 survivors were found and inquiries continue over the Greek government and coastguards' slow response towards rescuing drowning refugee boats along its coastline. - Agencies

# French envoy will stay in Niger despite ultimatum

France also seeks to be a "trusted partner" on the geopolitical front, added Macron. Faced with global challenges, including security challenges, climate change and cyber threats, "our diplomatic efforts should keep it simple. We should protect our interests

NEWS DESK

PARIS: France needs to consolidate its diplomatic strategies as the international context was becoming more "complex", Macron told French ambassadors at a meeting in Paris on Monday. The world order is changing, with the situation getting "tougher" and "more complicated", said Macron. This runs the risk of "weakening the West and our Europe in particular", he said. "Our international order is being challenged," said Macron. "War has returned to European soil, anti-French sentiment is rife, fuelled by anti-colonialism or a perceived anti-colonialism that a double standard is being employed," he said. "We need to be clear, without being excessively pessimistic," he said, citing the rise of "new forms of protectionism" and democratic backsliding due to a rise in illiberal powers. Faced with these risks, Macron said France's diplomatic efforts should focus on security policy in the context of the war in Ukraine and in bolstering European independence and strategic interests. The French president also stressed the need to "avoid partitioning the world" over the Ukraine war, at a time when many countries from the Global South have refused to condemn Russian aggression. We must "avoid a narrative that claims, 'this is Europe's war, it doesn't concern us'", he said. France also seeks to be a "trusted partner" on the geopolitical front, added Macron. Faced with global challenges, including security challenges, climate change and cyber threats, "our diplomatic efforts should keep it simple. We should protect our interests. We should also stand for our principles and our values, which are universal," said Macron. Macron denounces detention of French nationals in Iran in a wide-ranging foreign policy speech, Macron called for the release of four French nationals detained "in unac-



PARIS: Macron calls for strengthening diplomacy to tackle changing world order. - DNA

ceptable conditions" in Iran. "Nothing justifies the detention of French nationals in prisons and in unacceptable conditions in Iran," said Macron. The four French citizens detained are Louis Arnaud, who was arrested in September 2022; French teacher Cécile Kohler and her companion Jacques Paris, arrested in May 2022 for "espionage"; and another French national whose identity has not been revealed. France and its allies have denounced what they call Iran's "hostage diplomacy", which consists of arresting Western nationals in order to obtain concessions such as the release of its own nationals abroad. Addressing the issue of Middle East security, Macron said

a conference on security in the region will be held in late November in Baghdad. Amid new moves by Arab states to welcome Syrian President Bashar al-Assad back into the international fold, Macron called on regional powers to demand "greater cooperation" from Syria in the fight against terrorism if they want to reintegrate Damascus into regional bodies. This reintegration must include "cooperation in the fight against terrorist groups" and the possibility for Syrian refugees to return to their country with a certain number of "guarantees", he stressed. Macron also praised the work of French diplomats working in difficult conditions. He mentioned the situation in Niger, where the French ambassador to the West African country is still in his post, despite a military coup last month. The French ambassador has not left Niger, a former French colony, despite the junta calling for his departure. The ambassador is "staying put" in the post despite the junta's pressure, said Macron. "France and its diplomats have been confronted in recent months with particularly difficult situations in certain countries, whether in Sudan, where France has been exemplary, or in Niger," said Macron. "I salute you and your colleagues who are listening from their posts," he told ambassadors. The military personnel who seized power in Niger on July 26 have been holding the ousted president, Mohamed Bazoum, prisoner in the presidential palace. During a major foreign policy speech to ambassadors gathered in Paris, Macron confirmed that French envoy Sylvain Itte was listening in from Niger capital Niamey despite being given a 48-hour deadline to leave the country last Friday. "France and its diplomats have faced particularly difficult situations in some countries in recent months, from Sudan, where France has been exemplary, to Niger at this very moment and I applaud your colleague and your colleagues who are listening from their posts," he said.

### Zelensky admits he fears being abandoned by West

FOREIGN DESK

KIEV: Kiev would risk losing international support if its conflict with Moscow spilled over into Russian territory, Ukrainian President Vladimir Zelensky has claimed. Russian officials have accused Ukraine of launching numerous "terrorist attacks" inside their country, including on Moscow. In a TV interview on Sunday, Zelensky insisted that Ukraine is prepared for a "long fight" against Russia, provided it could mitigate the level of casualties. When asked by journalist Natalia Moseichuk if the conflict should "move to the territory of Russia," the Ukrainian leader responded: "That would pose a great risk that we would be left alone." Kiev insists that it only attacks military targets inside regions that it claims sovereignty over, such as the Crimean Peninsula, and denies conducting strikes on Russian territory. That stance contradicts regular attacks on border regions as well as kamikaze drone raids deeper inside Russia, which Moscow has blamed on Kiev's forces.

### Imaan arrested soon after leaving jail

STAFF REPORT

RAWALPINDI: Human rights activist Imaan Mazari - daughter Shireen Mazari who had earlier announced leaving PTI and politics forever after the May 9 violence - was arrested again on Monday as she left the Adiala jail after obtaining bail in a case containing threat, incitement and sedition charges. Mazari was arrested from outside the prison in another case registered with the Barakahu Police Station in which she has been accused levelling allegations against the sensitive organisations. Commonly known as Adiala jail after the area in which it is located, the prison is officially named as the Central Jail Rawalpindi. Earlier in the day, an anti-terrorism court of Islamabad accepted the bail application of Ali Wazir, a leader of the Pashtun Tahaffuz Movement (PTM) and Mazari for surety bonds of Rs30,000 each. On Aug 24, the court had sent them to the prison on a 14-day judicial remand.

# PM meets Lord Aamer, discuss Pakistan-UK ties



SAIFULLAH

RAWALPINDI: ISLAMABAD: Caretaker Prime Minister Anwaar-ul-Haq Kakar Monday here held a meeting with Member of House of Lords British Parliament Lord Aamer Sarfraz and discussed matters of mutual interest. They discussed ways to expand cooperation between the two countries in trade, investment, developmental planning and other fields.

The prime minister appreciated the services of Pakistanis living in Britain, particularly their contribution to the British political system. He said the Pakistanis residing in Britain were playing an important role in further improving ties of Pakistan and the United Kingdom (UK). Lord Aamer Sarfraz congratulated the prime minister for assuming the office and assured full cooperation from the British political leadership and the Pakistanis living in Britain. Prior to being appointed to the House

PM appreciated the services of Pakistanis living in Britain, particularly their contribution to the British political system

of Lords, Lord Sarfraz was a Treasurer of the Conservative Party and an advisor to the party leadership on outreach. On joining the House of Lords, he became one of the youngest peers in parliament. Lord Sarfraz is involved in a number of not for profit initiatives. Current board and advisory roles include at Texas A&M University, Panthera, WWF Pakistan and the Pardee School. He is also engaged in a wide range of philanthropic activities in Pakistan, where he was raised. He graduated from Boston University with a BS in Management, and received an MSc in Information Systems (with Distinction) from the London School of Economics.

# Pakistan to host UN Peacekeeping Ministerial meeting

MEHTAB PIRZADA

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan will host a preparatory meeting of the forthcoming United Nations (UN) Peacekeeping Ministerial in Islamabad on August 30-31. The meeting will be held under the theme of "Safety and Security of UN Peacekeepers." Japan is co-host of the meeting being held at the Centre for International Peace and Stability (CIPS), Pakistan's premier training institute offering courses, workshops and seminars to UN peacekeepers from all over the world, Foreign Office Spokesperson said in a press release on Monday. The foreign minister and the defence minister will deliver keynote addresses at the preparatory meeting. Member States represented in the UN Special Committee on Peacekeeping Operations - comprising 156 countries - will participate along with local and international experts, besides senior officials from the UN Secretariat including the Under-Secretary-General for Peace Operations, the Under-Secretary-General for Operational Support, and the UN Police advisor will also attend it. Panel discussions will be held during the two-day meeting on various sub-themes to deliberate on capacity-building needs; safety and security of UN peacekeepers from the perspective of international law; enhancing medical capacity of UN peacekeeping missions; and leveraging technology and strategic communication. The meeting will also feature an expert talk on the threats posed by improvised explosive devices (IEDs) and a briefing on the system of pledging. The UN Peacekeeping Ministerial is the seminal high-level event for UN peacekeeping, held biennially with the participation of foreign and defence ministers.

# Amid angry protests Libya suspends FM over Israeli talks

TRIPOLI: Libyan Prime Minister Abdulhamid Dbeibah says he has suspended the North African country's top diplomat after Israel's foreign ministry said their foreign ministers had met the previous week. Najla el-Mangoush has been "temporarily suspended" and will be subject to an "administrative investigation" by a commission chaired by the justice minister. Dbeibah said on Sunday evening in an official decision posted on Facebook. The Libyan foreign ministry sought to play down the matter, and described it as a "chance and unofficial encounter", but news of the meeting had already led to street protests in several cities. The political row broke out Sunday after the Israeli foreign ministry said the two top diplomats had met the previous week. The ministry said Israeli foreign minister Eli Cohen and Mangoush, his Libyan counterpart in the Tripoli-based Government of National Unity, spoke at a meeting in Rome hosted by Italian Foreign Minister Antonio Tajani. "I spoke with the foreign minister about the great poten-

tial for the two sides from their relations," Cohen asserted in a statement. The Libyan foreign ministry, however, announced on Sunday evening that Mangoush had "refused to meet with any party" representing the Israeli regime. "What happened in Rome was a chance and unofficial encounter, during a meeting with his Italian counterpart, which did not involve any discussion, agreement or consultation," the ministry said in a statement. In the encounter, the statement said, Mangoush had reiterated "in a clear and unambiguous manner Libya's position regarding the Palestinian cause". The ministry also criticized Israel for attempts to "present this incident" as a "meeting or talks". On the streets of Tripoli and its suburbs, protests erupted Sunday evening to condemn any normalization with Israel. The protests spread to other cities where young people blocked roads, burned tires and waved the Palestinian flag. The protesters set fire to the Israeli flag during demonstrations in the northwestern cities of al-Zawiya and Tajoura. In Tajoura, demonstrators closed a major street in protest against the meeting. They threatened to escalate their actions, including blocking railway access to Tripoli. Under the so-called Abraham Accords, the United Arab Emirates, Bahrain, Sudan and Morocco signed US-brokered normalization deals with the Israeli regime in late 2020. Palestinians have denounced the deals as a "betrayal" to their cause. - DNA

# Scholarships in Dubai Taliban stop female Afghan students to leave country

KABUL: "After the Taliban shut universities for women, my only hope was to get a scholarship which would help me study abroad," says 20-year-old Afghan student Natkai. Natkai's name has been changed for her own safety. The Taliban have cracked down hard on women who oppose them. Natkai says she kept studying even though there was little chance of her ever attending university in her homeland. Then she was granted a scholarship to study at the University of Dubai in the United Arab Emirates (UAE) from Emirati billionaire businessman Sheikh Khalaf Ahmad Al Habtoor. The scholarships for Afghan women were announced in December 2022 after the Taliban banned women from university. The BRITISH STATE MEDIA understands a total of 100 Afghan women have been successful in gaining these scholarships. Some Afghan students living abroad have already travelled to Dubai. On Wednesday 23 July, Natkai said goodbye to her family and set off for the airport. But her hopes were soon dashed. "When the Taliban officials saw our tickets and student visas, they said girls are not allowed to leave Afghanistan on student visas," she tells me, her voice breaking. Natkai is one of at least 60 girls who were turned away from the airport. Photos seen by the BRITISH STATE MEDIA show young girls wearing black hijabs or headscarves standing next to their luggage in a state of shock and devastation. The Talib-

an has banned solo travel for women and only allow them to go abroad with their husbands or a related male companion such as a brother, uncle or father, known as a mahram, a male escort. But even this was not enough. "Three girls who had a mahram were inside the plane," says Natkai. "But officials from the Vice and Virtue ministry took them off the plane." The rest of the students were too frightened to talk to the media. A young man we're calling Shams Ahmad, accompanied his sister to the airport and described the distress. "The scholarship gave new hope to my sister after the universities were closed here. She left home with hope and returned in tears," he says. "All her rights have been taken away." Mr Ahmad says some of the women even borrowed money to pay for a visa for a male companion to accompany them but were still stopped. "Some of these girls are so helpless and poor. They don't even have 400 Afghani (£4; \$5) for the document verification fee requested by the foreign affairs ministry." The Taliban impose many restrictions on women and girls which make it difficult, if not impossible, for them to learn and earn. The University of Dubai and Mr Al Habtoor have confirmed the girls were stopped. Mr Al Habtoor posted a video message in English on X, formerly known as Twitter. In it, he criticises the Taliban authorities, saying men and women are equal under Islam. The video also contains a voice note in English from an Afghan girl who was stopped at the airport. - Agencies

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