



Islamabad POST

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Enemy failed to isolate Iran, drive nation to despair

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'No global issue can be solved without China'

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Azam has his sights set on the AC and WC

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Temporary relief for PTI chairman Imran's sentence suspended in Toshakhana case

IHC orders his release; conviction and disqualification to stay: experts



Shehbaz Sharif slams suspension of sentence

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) President Shehbaz Sharif on Tuesday slammed the Supreme Court and the Chief Justice of Pakistan (CJP) Umar Ata Bandial for "favouring" Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) Chairman Imran Khan after the Islamabad High Court (IHC) suspended the sentence awarded to him in the Toshakhana case. The IHC verdict today comes as a major legal victory for Khan who was sentenced to three years in jail and fined Rs100,000 in the Toshakhana case by Additional Districts and Sessions Judge Dilawar Humayun — after finding him guilty of corrupt practices related to the state gift repository — in a move that barred him from contesting elections due later this year. In his message on X, formerly Twitter, the former premier also wrote that the IHC had been influenced by the apex court's leniency toward the PTI chief. "The 'favourite's' sentence has been suspended, not terminated. "Chief Justice's message of "Good to see you" and "Wishing you good luck" reached Islamabad High Court. If everyone knows what the decision will

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

ISLAMABAD: The Islamabad High Court (IHC) on Tuesday suspended Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) Chairman Imran Khan's sentence awarded to him in the Toshakhana case. The IHC announced the short verdict that it reserved a day earlier wherein it directed the authorities to release the PTI chief on bail. The court said it would elaborate on the reasons for the suspension of the sentence in the detailed verdict to be issued later. According to sources, the PTI chief has been directed to submit a surety bond of Rs100,000 against the bail. The verdict comes as a major legal victory for Khan who had challenged his conviction and sentence awarded to him in the Toshakhana case. Earlier this month, a district and sessions court in the federal capital had sentenced Khan to three years in prison and imposed a fine of Rs100,000, after finding him guilty of corrupt practices related to the state gift repository — in a move that barred him from contesting elections due later this year.

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ISLAMABAD: IEA's Acting Ambassador, Sardar Ahmad Shakib, met Pakistan's new Foreign Secretary, Ambassador Muhammad Syrus Sajjad Qazi. The Afghan Cda extended his warm congrats to Mr. Qazi on his new role. — DNA

First foreign visit Kakar to visit Kenya next month

Business avenues to be explored during the visit

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Caretaker Prime Minister Anwaarul Haq Kakar is set to embark on a significant diplomatic mission to Kenya during the first week of September. This visit comes as a response to an official invitation extended by the Kenyan President, highlighting the strengthening ties between the two nations. During an official three-day visit, Caretaker Prime Minister Kakar will be accompanied by a delegation comprising members of the caretaker cabinet, advisers, and special assistants. Official sources have unveiled that visit will

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NAB amendment law Govt meddling in judiciary affairs: CJP

Justice Mansoor Ali Shah again suggests full court hearing of NAB amendment law



COURT REPORTER

ISLAMABAD: The Supreme Court on Tuesday echoed with the pleasantry "good to see you" as it heard PTI Chairman Imran Khan's plea challenging amendments to accountability laws. A three-member bench, comprising Chief Justice of Pakistan (CJP) Umar Ata Bandial, Justice Mansoor Ali Shah and Justice Ijazul Ahsan, took up the petition, which was filed last year in June. After coming to power in April last year, the then-PDM government passed the National Accountability (Second Amendment) Act 2022 — a move that was heavily

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ECP assures to hold free polls

KHAYAM ABBASI

ISLAMABAD: The Election Commission of Pakistan has assured to hold the upcoming elections peacefully and impartially as per Constitution and the law. Chief Election Commissioner Sikandar Sultan Raja gave this assurance, while chairing two separate meetings in Islamabad Tuesday. The meetings were aimed at reviewing the preparations regarding the upcoming General Election in the country. Members of the Election Commission, Secretary ECP, Chief Secretary Sindh, IG Sindh, Chief Secretary Balochistan, IG Balochistan, Provincial Election Commissioner Sindh and Balochistan, and other senior officers of ECP attended the meetings. During the meeting,

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Briefs

Elahi's physical remand extended

DNA

LAHORE: An accountability court on Tuesday extended the physical remand of former Punjab chief minister Parvez Elahi till Sept 2. The court heard the case of the National Accountability Bureau (NAB) which accused Parvez Elahi of being involved in corruption in various development schemes. Earlier in the day, accountability court judge Sajid Ali Awan reserved his ruling on a plea seeking physical remand of the PTI leader. He was produced before the court after completion of his physical remand in a case pertaining to alleged corruption worth billions of rupees in development projects.

Bushra meets foreign dignitary

ABBAS HASHMI

LAHORE: Pakistan Democratic Movement (PDM) spokesperson Hafiz Hamdullah on Tuesday alleged that Bushra Bibi, wife of PTI chief Imran Khan, met a 'foreign dignitary' and sought relief for her husband. In a statement, PDM spokesperson speculated if the suspension of Imran Khan's conviction in Toshakhana case was a result of Bushra Bibi's meeting with a dignitary from a "friendly Muslim country". "Why did Bushra Bibi meet an important personality of an Islamic country in a five-star hotel in Islamabad?" he questioned, adding: "Why is she seeking an NRO from a friendly Islamic country?"

Inflated electricity bills Govt undecided to provide relief

Protests against bills continue across Pakistan; traders threaten shutter down strike if issue not sorted out

MAHNOOR ANSAR

ISLAMABAD: The federal cabinet has failed to make a decision to provide relief on inflated electricity bills to masses. The cabinet meeting, chaired by Caretaker Prime Minister Anwaarul Haq Kakar, also could not decide on free electricity for the employees of the Water and Power Development Authority (WAPDA) and power distribution companies (DISCOs). The cabinet directed the Energy Division to formulate a procedure for relief in electricity bills. However, the meeting concluded without taking any decision on providing relief on inflated electricity bills. Sources said that in the federal cabinet briefing, it was discussed that IMF agreement should be consulted on this matter as it is main hurdle in giving relief to the masses on electricity bills. Yesterday, Energy Minister Muhammad Ali met the Caretaker Prime Minister

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PPP again calls for polls on time



FAISAL SHEIKH

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) tabled on Tuesday its concerns regarding the general elections in a meeting with the Election Commission of Pakistan's (ECP) Chief Election Commissioner (CEC) Sikandar Sultan Raja. The party has repeatedly expressed reservations regarding

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Petroleum prices to cross Rs 300 mark

MEHTAB PIRZADA

ISLAMABAD: Amid a recent increase in global oil rates along with depreciation in the value of the rupee against the US dollar — which has impacted the exchange rate impact by Rs12 — Oil and Gas Regulatory Authority (Ogra) is likely to recommend a hike in the petroleum products prices for the next fortnight, a Pakistan newspaper reported Tuesday. It is likely that the price of petrol will go up by Rs12 per litre, while diesel will see a

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India's SC seeks timeframe to restore IIOJK's status as state

The move allowed people from the rest of the country to have the right to acquire property in occupied Kashmir

NEW DELHI: India's Supreme Court has asked the Narendra Modi-led government if there was a "timeframe" and a "roadmap of progression" to restore the special status of held Kashmir, Indian media outlets reported on Tuesday. The remarks were passed by a five-member bench headed by Chief Justice of India (CJI) D.Y. Chandrachud during a hearing on a batch of petitions challenging the reading down of Article 370 of the Indian constitution, which bestowed special status on India-held Jammu and Kashmir. The move allowed people from the rest of the country to have the right to acquire property in occupied Kashmir and settle there permanently. Kashmiris, international organisations and critics of India's Hindu nationalist-led government had termed the move an attempt to dilute the demographics of Muslim-majority Kashmir with Hindu settlers. During the hearing today, The Indian Express quoted the CJI as asking Solicitor General Tushar Mehta: "We understand that these are matters of national security... the preservation of the nation itself is the overriding concern. But without putting you in a bind, you and the attorney general may seek instructions on the highest level— is there a timeframe in view? Is there a roadmap?" According to the publication, Mehta is representing the Indian

government and the administration of held Kashmir. In his arguments, Mehta touched on the reorganisation of states and told the bench about decisions taken with regard to held Kashmir in the aftermath of the Article 370 changes. "As we see the creation of UTs, you have on one hand, examples like Chandigarh, carved out of Punjab and remained a UT. Then you have a progression where certain areas become UTs... you can't immediately make them states," The Indian Express quoted the CJI as saying. Justice Chandrachud also asked if the Indian parliament should not be permitted to convert a state into a union territory for a limited period of time in view of national security needs. "Why was it not possible for the union to say that right now in the case of a state, we have such an extreme situation in terms of national security, that we want for a certain period that a UT should be created? But this is not permanent and this shall be back as a state... can a union not do that for a certain period, to bring stability? Because let's face it, whether it's a state or UT, all of us survive if a nation survives. "Should we not permit parliament to postulate that for a certain period, in the interest of

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IT sector should boost Pakistan's trade: IT minister

He explained the advantages of domestic mobile phone production, noting its capacity to meet the escalating demand for mobile devices and invigorate Pakistan's economy

MUHAMMAD ADIL

ISLAMABAD: Caretaker Minister for Information Technology and Telecommunication Dr Umar Saif on Tuesday highlighted the potential of the IT sector in addressing the country's trade imbalance. Talking to the media channel, the minister said that the IT sector held an almost 80 percent trade surplus, making it an attractive industry for boosting the country's economy. He emphasized that the untapped potential within the IT sector could significantly contribute to the country's economic advancement. Dr Saif pointed out that the current value of Pakistan's IT exports stood at \$2.6 billion, providing employment opportunities for around 150,000 individuals within the sector. He noted that software developers presently earned an annual income of approximately \$17,000 to \$18,000, whereas their Indian counterparts earned around \$30,000. Discussing the academic



landscape, the minister revealed that Pakistani universities currently produced 20,000 to 22,000 IT graduates, of which only 2,000 to 2,200 secured jobs. He mentioned a disparity in skills, often falling short of international standards. To bridge this skill gap, he stressed the necessity of collaboration between Pakistani IT experts and universities. Dr Saif proposed that several IT companies channel funds abroad out of which a significant amount could be repatriated to Pakistan by offer-

ing incentives to them. According to the minister, these incentives could potentially bring an additional \$1 to \$2 billion to the country. He also acknowledged Pakistan's global standing as the seventh-largest mobile phone market, boasting an impressive usage of 190 million mobile phones.

Dr Saif shared the government's vision of fostering local manufacturing of affordable, high-quality mobile phones. "This strategic step aims to diminish the reliance on imported phones, thereby mitigating the outflow of foreign exchange," Dr Saif said emphasizing that this initiative would a two-fold potential. Elaborating, he said it could generate employment opportunities at the local level while propelling the nation's high-tech industry. He explained the advantages of domestic mobile phone production, noting its capacity to meet the escalating demand for mobile devices and invigorate Pakistan's economy.

Dengue surveillance underway

LAHORE: An anti-dengue drive initiated by the district administration is in full swing under which surveillance is being carried out at various points in the provincial capital. Additional Deputy Commissioner (Revenue) Adnan Rasheed on Tuesday visited Union Council-10, where he inspected anti-dengue arrangements and instructed house owners about dengue preventive measures. He inspected houses, empty plots and commercial markets of the area and monitoring of dengue larva elimination. He observed the attendance and performance of the anti-dengue squad deputed on field duty in the area. Similarly, Additional Deputy Commissioner (Finance & Planning) Umar Maqbool visited UC-97 to inspect anti dengue arrangements at under-construction commercial buildings. He also reviewed dengue surveillance in the area and issued warnings to various property owners over larva presence. He directed the dengue teams deputed in the area to gear up pace of fumigation. Assistant Commissioner Model Town Sahbzada Yousaf inspected anti-dengue measures at UC-126 and 127 while other assistant commissioners also conducted inspection visits in their jurisdictions. Around 37 dengue patients were reported in the provincial capital during the last 24 hours while larva were found in 1,140 points. —APP

Three rescued from chairlift in Chitral

DNA

PESHAWAR: At least three people were stranded midair in a chairlift that went out of function in the Koragh area of Upper Chitral on Tuesday. Spokesman Rescue 1122 Upper Chitral, Bilal Ahmad Faizi said, the rescue team received information that three people have been stranded in a malfunctioning chairlift in Koragh. The disaster management team reached the site and started the rescue operation; he said adding that the team members approached the chairlift through a railing made up of a big steel ring.

China cargo boosts regional trade potential

PESHAWAR: President Frontier Custom Agents Association (FCAA), Zia-ul-Haq Sarhadi while welcoming crossing of first ever China cargo for Afghanistan via Khunjerab border, has termed it a good omen for enhancing trade in the region. In a press statement issued here on Tuesday, the President FCAA said that it was really heartening to know that Afghanistan bound China goods had started crossing through Pakistan. This development, Zia added, will not only increase volume of trade at regional level, but will also create a large number of livelihood opportunities for people associated with customs clearance, goods transportation, fuel business, daily wagers etc. It merits an insertion here that Pakistan Customs has recently facilitated the first ever cargo from China to Afghanistan

via Khunjerab border under the Transports Internationaux Routiers (TIR) Convention, which provides an easy and economical route for trade between countries across the world. The first consignment started its journey from Kasghar, China and after crossing over to Pakistan via the Khunjerab pass, it will reach Kabul in Afghanistan. This transit route will reduce the travel time to almost 70% and is also economical as it is expected to reduce the logistics costs by more than 30 percent, Zia opined. He said that presently, the flow of bilateral and transit trade between Pakistan and Afghanistan was not up to mark and inclusion of China cargo in the business would improve commercial activities in the region. A large number of custom clearing agents who have lost their earnings due to shrinking

of business will get new opportunities to revive its lost glory, he added. Zia Sarhadi who also holds the office of Director Pak-Afghan Joint Chamber of Commerce and Industry (PAJCCI), said that the utilization of silk route by China for transportation of its cargo goods to Afghanistan would also be beneficial for early operationalization of gigantic CEPC project. He appreciated the efforts made by Pakistan Customs for facilitating clearance of Afghanistan bound China good through Sost border under Transports Internationaux Routiers (TIR) Convention. The operationalization of TIR along with QTTA and other regional transit and trade arrangements like OBOR and CAREC corridors can help Pakistan become a major hub of trade and transit, he hoped.

Business Leaders call for focusing on hydro power

STAFF REPORT

ISLAMABAD: Ch. Abdul Majeed, Chairman, Faisal Town and the 3rd largest real estate developer in the country said that Pakistan has the potential to generate 100,000 MW of hydro power, which is very cheap, but has not been exploited as yet due to which the nation is in trouble on account of inflated electricity bills. He stressed that the government should build small and medium size dams to produce hydropower in order to provide cheap energy to businesses and industry that would help boost the economy. He said this while addressing a Business Role Model ceremony organized in his honor by the Islamabad Chamber of Commerce & Industry (ICCI). Ch. Abdul Majeed said that the government should ensure fair spending of tax money to improve the confidence of taxpayers and promote tax culture. He said that 90 percent of loans taken by the country have been spent on non-productive activities due to which



the Pakistanis now facing huge foreign debt of USD 140 billion and stressed that the loans taken by the country should be spent on productive projects that would generate economic activity and create jobs. He said that if CDA facilitates, he is ready to develop an iconic project in the Capital that would be unique in Pakistan. He said that facilitation of investors is the way forward for Pakistan to grow as a

strong economy. He announced to give 100 plots to ICCI for giving them to deserving members on concessional prices. He also announced to give Rs.10 million to ICCI for its welfare activities. Ahsan Zafar Bakhtawari, President, Islamabad Chamber of Commerce & Industry said that Ch. Abdul Majeed has delivered many mega real estate development projects including Faisal Town, Faisal Hills, Margalla City,

Islamabad Gardens, Multi Gardens, Tele Gardens, Multi-Residencia & Orchards, which have provided a quality living environment to the citizens. These projects have also generated a lot of business activities and provided jobs to thousands of people. He said that the real estate sector has the potential to revive the economy and stressed that the government should announce a package for this industry to steer Pakistan out of the current economic crisis.

Collective efforts to promote country's development

PESHAWAR: Governor Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Haji Ghulam Ali on Tuesday emphasized the need for collective efforts to promote the country's development, prosperity and peace. He said that those with intentions of weakening the state and spreading negativity, especially among the youth, cannot contribute positively. He urged the younger generation to foster a positive mindset, uphold traditions, and promote values. He expressed these views during a meeting at the Governor's House, where a delegation of 45 members from the

district of Dir Upper, led by former provincial minister Shafiqullah Khan, convened. The delegation included representatives from various political and social circles, such as ANP, PPP, JUI, and PTI, among others. The delegates discussed issues concerning the region's population, particularly related to notifications in Dir Central District, education, healthcare, gas supply, municipal representative powers, funds, and other challenges. The delegates appreciated the Governor's receptive approach and thanked him for being a public servant fo-

cus solely on addressing citizens' concerns without bias. They highlighted that this was the first time in history that a public-serving Governor was directly accessible to the province's people for dialogue and assistance. During the conversation, the Governor underscored his commitment to resolving public issues impartially and selflessly. He said that serving humanity was a significant form of worship and that the provision of non-discriminatory public service was a crucial aspect of his belief. The Governor acknowledged that engaging with the people and institutions dedicat-

ed to social service brings him immense joy. He assured the delegates that the problems faced by local governments would be resolved soon, allowing them to initiate developmental activities in their areas. Furthermore, Governor Ghulam Ali expressed his willingness to visit Dir shortly in response to the invitation extended by the delegation. The delegation from Peshawar Public School and College, headed by Principal Iftekhar Ahmed, also met with the Governor. The delegation discussed matters concerning institutional improvement and exchanged

ideas for enhancement. In a separate meeting, a delegation led by former provincial assembly member Israr-ul-Haq met with the Governor. The delegation discussed local issues, reaffirming the Governor's commitment to collaborate and assist in finding solutions. The Governor acknowledged the provincial government's initiative to provide funds for local institutions. In this manner, Governor Haji Ghulam Ali engaged with various delegations, highlighting his dedication to resolving public issues and fostering collaboration for the betterment of the region. — DNA



RAWALPINDI: RCCI President Qab Rafiq is addressing a protest rally against electricity bills and anti-business policies.—DNA

RCCI demands lower unit price of electricity

MEHTAB PIRZADA

RAWALPINDI: Addressing a protest rally organized by the Rawalpindi Chamber of Commerce against electricity bills, inflation, petrol diesel price hike and anti-business policies, Chamber President Saqib Rafiq said that due to brutal taxes and per unit price increase in electricity bills, the cost of doing business has increased manifold, industry has come to a standstill, businesses are now forced to close. RCCI has demanded to review the electricity prices and give relief, he said that traders should not be forced to shutter down; Saqib Rafiq said that the burden of electricity theft and line losses is being borne by the masses and traders. Instead of increasing investment, the government is collecting revenue by putting taxes in the bills. The anti-business policies will have to be stopped, he added. He thanked the participation of markets, bazaars and Anjuman Tajrans across the city in the rally. On this occasion, the group leader Sohail Altaf said that Today's large gathering at the rally was a demonstration of merchant unity. The dollar rate has risen above three hundred, neither importer nor exporter can do any business.

Seminar on closing of provincial level community uplift project held

PESHAWAR: A significant stride towards continued community upliftment supported by USAID and executed by SDPI in collaboration with the government departments and stakeholders was marked by the provincial-level closing seminar here on Tuesday. The seminar bore a comprehensive agenda, drawing a diverse spectrum of participants. From esteemed provincial seniors primarily from the Health Department and Population Welfare Department to Local Government officials, Social Welfare Department representatives, Civil Society Influencers (CSIs), Youth Ambassadors (YAs), SDPI-trained staff, and community members, the assembly encapsulated a cross-section of stakeholders. The scope extended even further to

encompass additional project contributors within Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, such as CUP, TWO, HDF, GSM, and FRD. Rana Nazir Mehmood, the Project Director of SDPI delivered a comprehensive overview of SDPI's project activities in Buner, painting a vivid picture of the project's contributions to the community's welfare. Waheed Zafar delved into the project's progress through a meticulously crafted presentation. His exposition included a presentation of quantitative data showcasing the engagement of various stakeholders. This data encapsulated contributions from CSIs, Lawyers, Local Government entities, educational institutions, and health awareness initiatives. A particularly resonant theme was the elucidation of the project's sustainability framework,

underscoring how these efforts had fortified the resilience of the community's foundational structure. Umar Farooq enriched the seminar by sharing reflections on the project's implementation in Buner. He expounded upon the journey, highlighting experiences, challenges, and milestones, besides addressing the cultural barriers that exist in the society, acknowledging the constraints imposed by linguistic sensitivities when discussing family planning and maternal and child health (MNCH). Representatives from NPI EXPAND HDA offered insights into their experiences collaborating with SDPI on family planning and MNCH awareness. They praised SDPI for its competitive and sound capacity, underscoring the project's successful realization of its objectives.—APP

Seminar on intellectual property awareness at UVAS

DNA

LAHORE: The University of Veterinary and Animal Sciences (UVAS) Lahore in collaboration with Intellectual Property Organization of Pakistan arranged a seminar on Intellectual Property awareness on Tuesday. Chairman Intellectual Property Organization of Pakistan Farukh Amil was the guest speaker who delivered a detailed lecture to enlighten participants regarding aim and objectives of IP, IP tools,

international trademark registration system, need for national IP strategy, importance of geographical indications, initiatives of IPO Pakistan for the assistance of applicants, future goals and importance of copyrights etc. Speaking on the occasion, Vice Chancellor Prof Dr Nasim Ahmad appreciated for arranging the seminar on informative topic and thanked Farukh Amil. He said it was an achievement of the UVAS for securing its first patent on pharmaceutical composition of polymeric biodegradable film for

diabetics wound healing developed by the UVAS Institute of Pharmaceutical Sciences scientist Dr Irfan Siddique while the second patent on process for the preparation of buffalo semen extending medium by using buffalo whole milk secured by another UVAS scientist from Department of Theriogenology Prof Dr Amjed Riaz. Director Dr Farhan Jamil, Assistant Controller of Patents Shakira Khurshid from Intellectual Property Organization (IPO) Pakistan and number of faculty members and students were also present.

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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/Bukino 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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Fire Services Rawalpindi/
Islamabad.....1122 & 16
Emergency Ambulance.1122
& Rescue Services.4451122
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Motorway Police.9270601-20
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Hospitals

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MH.....5611116
Cantt Hospital...9270907-11
DHQ.....5556311-4
RGH.....9290301-7
Holy Family.....9290322-7
PIMS.....9261170-79
Polyclinic.....9218300-09
Shifa International 4603666



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CDA.....9208301-04
Met Office.....9250360-6
RDA.....5555864
TMA.....5770886
Cantonment Board 9270151-3

Water Tank

Islamabad.....0321-5744480

Pak to submit VNR report at SDG summit next month

The aim of the session was to evaluate the performance and outcomes of SDGs implementation, identify the challenges faced and devise a roadmap for accelerated SDGs implementation

FAISAL SHEIKH

ISLAMABAD, Pakistan is all set to present its Voluntary National Review (VNR) report at a mid-term summit on Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), scheduled to take place in September 2023 in New York. According to a press statement, the SDGs Support Unit of the Ministry of Planning, Development and Special Initiatives conducted a multi-stakeholders consultative session here Tuesday to conduct a mid-term review

of goals. The aim of the session was to evaluate the performance and outcomes of SDGs implementation, identify the challenges faced and devise a roadmap for accelerated SDGs implementation. The consultative session was attended by representatives from various ministries, provincial governments, UN agencies, development partners, academia, private sector, civil society and media. On the occasion, the participants shared their inputs and feedback on Pakistan's progress on SDGs and agreed on a common vision and

strategy to accelerate SDGs implementation in light of the challenges faced. The session was convened by the SDGs Support Unit of the Ministry of Planning, Development and Special Initiatives while Chief SDGs, Dr. Ali Kemal presented an overview of Pakistan's progress on SDGs. He said that Pakistan was reporting on 133 out of 247 indicators and has integrated the SDGs into its national development plans and policies. He also highlighted the role of various stakeholders in advancing the SDGs agenda in Pakistan, such

as universities, private sector, civil society and media. Dr. Kemal also discussed the major challenges faced by Pakistan in implementing the SDGs, such as macroeconomic and political economy challenges, uncertain global economic and demand outlook, increased frequency of natural disasters and weak governance system. He stressed the need for an effective local government system, a consortium of non-government stakeholders to inform the government about their investments on SDGs and a better coordina-

tion mechanism among different actors. Talking about the way forward, Dr. Ali Kemal highlighted that the SDGs Support Unit has proposed investment action plans for climate challenges, social and economic inclusion of vulnerable groups, implementation of universal health coverage, prevention of stunting and malnutrition and harnessing emerging technologies for SDGs. He said that Pakistan will also conduct a consultative session with the provincial representatives to formulate a way forward on each goal of SDGs.

Minister condemns attack on Police Mobile

ISLAMABAD: Caretaker Interior Minister Sarfaz Bugti on Tuesday strongly condemned the attack on Police Mobile in Laki Marwat. The minister grieved over the martyrdom of two police constables in the attack during an exchange of fire and prayed for the departed souls, said a handout issued from the ministry. He appreciated the role of the police in the maintenance of law and order in the country. The interior minister said that the best medical aid should be provided to the injured policeman, adding that such incidents cannot demoralize the brave police.—APP

Govt to utilize all available resources for polio-free country

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Caretaker Federal Health Minister Dr. Nadeem Jan said on Tuesday that the interim government was committed to actively implementing a special emergency response plan to eradicate all forms of polio in the country and reach children in remote areas. Talking to a private news channel, he said that the polio vaccination campaign in remote areas and Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA) was considered a major reason for the significant reduction in the number of polio cases in the country. "All the provinces would ask to pay special attention to ensure that every child is reached by the polio programme," he added. He said that the Ministry of Health is actively involved in the polio program and we will ensure that the focus on polio remains unwavering. In response to a question, he said that the present government will maintain zero tolerance regarding the provision of quality medicines to patients in government hospitals. He further said that our major agenda is to focus on improving the overall system and it is an initiative to improve the quality, availability, accessibility and affordability of state-of-the-art healthcare services across the country. The government was making all-out efforts to improve the health sector, he added.



RAWALPINDI: A painter busy in paint the part of truck at his workplace at Pirwadahi. —APP

Drone-based ring of drug traffickers unearthed

RAWALPINDI: Anti-Narcotics Force (ANF) has unearthed a gang of drug smugglers using drones to smuggle drugs into different parts of Punjab and seized a drone and 10 kg of heroin. According to an ANF Headquarters spokesman, acting on a tip-off, ANF conducted a raid and intercepted a car near DHA Lahore.

The driver tried to escape from the spot. The spokesman informed that the ANF team chased the car and managed to get the accused namely Fayyaz Hussain, resident of Lahore and recovered 10 kg heroin and a drone from the vehicle. A packet of one kg of heroin was attached to the drone. The accused arrested

during the operation was also wanted in other cases. During the investigation, the accused confessed to involvement in drug smuggling through the drone. He informed that further investigation is underway and efforts are being made to arrest other members of the group.—APP

Traffic accident claims 5, injures six

ISLAMABAD: Five persons were killed and six others injured in a horrific collision between a Van and Trailer in Rawalpindi on Tuesday morning.

According to Rescue 1122, a trailer collided with a van near Old Toll Plaza in T-Chowk area of Rawalpindi, as a result, five people died on the spot. The injured were shifted to the nearby hospital, a PTV news channel reported. The dead include four men and a woman while four women and two men also sustained injuries in the accident, rescue sources added.—APP

Islamabad police chief conducts online open forum

ISLAMABAD: Islamabad Capital City Police Officer (ICPO) Dr Akbar Nasir Khan organized an online open forum, providing residents with direct access to senior police officials and ensure the resolution of public problems. During this interactive session, ICPO Dr Akbar Nasir Khan personally addressed public inquiries while AIG (Operations) Saud Khan was also in attendance. Dr. Akbar Nasir Khan attentively listened to callers' concerns and promptly directed relevant officers to find im-

mediate solutions. Many of the issues raised by the callers were of a personal nature and related to police station matters. Addressing the citizens, ICPO Dr Akbar Nasir Khan underscored the police force's unwavering commitment to promptly resolve public issues. He emphasized that initiatives like this one aimed to bridge the gap between the police and the public. Residents from across the city presented their suggestions and concerns to ICPO Dr Akbar Nasir Khan. The majority of these concerns revolved

around personal matters, ongoing investigations, the expedited handling of cases, and other related issues. The Chief of Capital Police highlighted that the federal capital has witnessed a significant reduction in crime incidents due to effective policing measures, the dedication of police personnel, and swift responses to calls on the 'Pucar 15' helpline. He also informed citizens that the heightened security alertness in Islamabad had played a pivotal role in averting potential disasters. The establishment of various police pickets throughout the city has contributed significantly to crime prevention. Citizens were further urged to cooperate with the Islamabad Capital Police and report any suspicious activities through the 'Pucar-15' helpline.—APP

IT sector has potential to address Pakistan's trade imbalance

ISLAMABAD: Caretaker Minister for Information Technology and Telecommunication Dr Umar Saif on Tuesday highlighted the potential of the IT sector in addressing the country's trade imbalance. Talking to a private TV channel, the minister said that the IT sector held an almost 80 percent trade surplus, making it an attractive industry for boosting the country's economy. He emphasized that the untapped potential within the IT sector could significantly contribute to the country's economic advancement. Dr Saif pointed out that the current value of Pakistan's IT exports stood at \$2.6 billion, providing employment opportunities for around 150,000 individuals within the sector. He noted that software developers presently earned an annual income of approximately \$17,000 to \$18,000, whereas their Indian counterparts earned around \$30,000. Discussing the academic landscape, the minister revealed that Pakistani universities currently produced 20,000 to 22,000 IT graduates, of which only 2,000 to 2,200 secured jobs. He mentioned a disparity in skills, often falling short of international standards. To bridge this skill gap, he stressed the necessity of collaboration between Pakistani IT experts and universities. Dr Saif proposed that several IT companies channel funds abroad out of which a significant amount could be repatriated to Pakistan by offering incentives to them. According to the minister, these incentives could potentially bring an additional \$1 to \$2 billion to the country. He also acknowledged Pakistan's global standing as the seventh-largest mobile phone market, boasting an impressive usage of 190 million mobile phones. Dr Saif shared the government's vision of fostering local manufacturing of affordable, high-quality mobile phones.—APP

Progress on 5G action plan soon

ISLAMABAD: Caretaker Federal Minister for Information Technology and Telecommunication on Tuesday said that the forthcoming ten months would witness substantial progress in the execution of the 5G action plan. During a meeting with Pakistan Telecommunication Authority (PTA) Major General (Retd) Hafeez Ur Rehman, the minister discussed in detail the upcoming plans related to telecommunications, the rollout of the 5G spectrum, and strategies for optimal spectrum utilization. Dr Umar Saif, the Minister, shed light on the paramount importance of optimal spectrum utilization and the coordinated deployment of the 5G network. One of the central tenets of the plan is the prioritized removal of obstacles that could impede the smooth execution of the 5G strategy. Dr. Umar Saif expressed unwavering determination to eliminate hurdles by establishing a priority-based criterion.—APP

Masses ran out of patience with power bills

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Chairman of National Business Group Pakistan, President Pakistan Businessmen and Intellectuals Forum, and All Karachi Industrial Alliance, and former provincial minister Mian Zahid Hussain said on Tuesday that the people are tired of inflated power bills. The electricity tariff should be revised downward immediately; otherwise, the ongoing protests across the country will intensify, which will destroy law and order and cause great damage to the unstable economy, he said. Mian Zahid Hussain said that electricity has become so expensive that it is not possible to run industry, trade, or any kind of business activity. Talking to the business community, the veteran business leader said that taxes on electricity bills should be moderated and rationalized. The issue of capacity payment should be resolved, and interest-free loans should be provided to people for installing solar systems. He said that increasing the cost of electricity to meet the deficit of trillions of rupees in the power sector is like filling water in a broken bucket. Instead of increasing the price of electricity, electricity theft, line losses, and non-payment of bills should be controlled, and no one should be given free electricity. The business leader said that laws should be made stringent to discourage electricity theft so that the burden of stolen electricity is not passed on to the people. He demanded that the electricity generation and distribution system and the entire infrastructure should be improved. Mian Zahid Hussain said that WAPDA wants the recovery of electricity bills, but the police do not help it because its priority is not recovery but maintaining law and order, and if the police do not cooperate, there will be no response. Similarly, cases are not registered against electricity thieves, and if they are, they are not properly investigated and arrested. Even if someone is arrested, he is released with a minor punishment. Until the punishment and penalty for electricity theft are drastically increased and fully implemented, the loss of electricity theft will continue to be borne by the bill-paying public. Mian Zahid Hussain said that instead of continuously increasing the cost of electricity, free electricity distribution should be stopped to reduce the circular debt, WAPDA and the police should be brought on the same page to increase the recovery, or a separate force should be raised for the recovery of outstanding bills. Mian Zahid Hussain further said that at present, the demand to end the provision of free electricity among government employees, senior officers, politicians, etc.



Oil & Gas Regulatory Authority

Government of Pakistan

REQUEST FOREXPRESSSION OF INTEREST

Under Regulation 3(B) of The PPRA Regulations of Consultancy Services Regulation 2010

SELECTION OF CONSULTANT FIRMS FOR UNDERTAKING STUDY ON STRATEGIC STORAGE/STOCKS

1. Oil & Gas Regulatory Authority (OGRA), formed under the OGRA Ordinance, 2002 regulating Oil and Gas Sector in Pakistan and dealing with licensing of Oil Infrastructure/Logistics vis, Refineries, Storages, Oil Pipeline, Installation oil testing facility, undertake marketing of refined oil products and the related issues. As advised by the GOP, OGRA intends to carry out a study to develop an overall framework for the development of Strategic Petroleum Reserve (SPR) for crude oil and refined oil products, consistent with the government's energy security considerations in line with prevailing international best practices.
2. OGRA invites reputable consultant firms who are on Active Taxpayers List of the Federal Board of Revenue for the services of conducting studies/research, having minimum of ten years' experience of carrying out study/research on strategic reserves requirement, specifically Crude oil and Refined Oil Products. The firm must have strong knowledge of the international practices of SPR, as well as the local factors like a country's geographical/geopolitical and economic position in addition to the technical/financial knowledge i.e. local refineries' configuration, capacities, consumption centers, lead time, mechanism for replenishing the stocks, its control, monitoring and cost of SPR etc.
3. Interested consultant(s) must provide detailed CV(s) of member(s) of core team highlighting relevant experience.
4. The applicant consultant firm and/or its personnel must not be incumbent employee of OGRA licensees in mid and downstream oil sector, or have any direct/or indirect relation with OGRA, Petroleum Division or Ministry of Defense, in addition to not having any business, rendering it in conflict of interest with the above assignment as per section 4 of the PPRA Regulation of Consultancy Services Regulation 2010. The Applicant to provide the undertaking in the form of an affidavit to the above effect.
5. The applicant has not been declared blacklisted or debarred by any local procuring agency and/or foreign country, international organization, and/or other foreign institutions. The Applicant to provide the undertaking in the form of an affidavit to the above effect.
6. Method of selection will be Quality and cost basis in line with section 3 (b) of the PPRA Regulations of Consultancy Services Regulation 2010. The Financial Bid should contain a lumpsum figure, inclusive of all charges. Conditional bids shall not be accepted.
7. The Technical and Financial Proposals shall be received in separate sealed envelopes within 30 calendar days i.e. till 11:00 AM on 2nd October, 2023 and only Technical Proposals shall be opened in the first instance for technical evaluation on same date at 11:30 AM in the presence of the bidders, or their authorized representatives, who may like to present bids to the Senior Executive Director (OSC) in OGRA office.
8. The financial proposals of the technically responsive/ or qualified applicant, under regulation 3(B) of the PPRA Regulation of Consultancy Services Regulation 2010, shall be opened in the presence of the bidders on a date and time to be communicated to them in advance. The financial bids should be valid for three months from date of opening of technical bids.
9. Each envelopes containing the proposals, shall clearly be marked separately, "Technical Proposal" and "Financial Proposal".
10. OGRA reserves the right in its sole discretion to accept or reject any bid without assigning any reason thereof.
11. Scope of work/TORs and evaluation criteria can be obtained from the OGRA website www.ogra.org.pk and PPRA website www.ppra.org.pk.
12. In case bid opening date is falling on a holiday, the bid will be opened on next working day at same time. This advertisement is also available on OGRA and PPRA website at www.ogra.org.pk and www.ppra.org.pk.

Senior Executive Director (OSC)
Oil & Gas Regulatory Authority
Plot No 54-B, Fazl-e-Haq Road,
Blue Area, Islamabad Pakistan.
Email: asajjad@ogra.org.pk

PID (I) No. 1308/23

Briefs

'IK's three-year sentence not abolished'

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Deputy Secretary General of Pakistan Muslim League Nawaz (PML-N), Atta Tarar said on Tuesday that the Islamabad High Court (IHC) had suspended three-year sentence of PTI Chairman Imran Khan in the Toshakhana case, without abolishing it. During his interaction with the media persons, he clarified that the suspension of Imran Khan's disqualification was a temporary measure, as his legal team had solely lodged an appeal for the suspension of the sentence.

He pointed out that the decision to terminate the sentence would depend on the case's merits.

"The release of Chairman Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) appears unlikely because of his existing judicial remand in another case, and his association with events like May 9, which is a unique situation in history," he added. He believed that Imran Khan had openly admitted to participating in purchase and sale of gifts. This stance was backed by his lawyer's acknowledgment before the Election Commission, he added. The PML-N leader said despite the norm that heads of state generally could sell such gifts, these items were not just sold but also employed for business activities.

MoU between PAAPAM and CPBC signed

DNA

ISLAMABAD: An impressive signing ceremony of the MoU between the Pakistan Association of Auto Parts & Accessories Manufacturers (PAAPAM) and the Canada-Pakistan Business Council (CPBC) was witnessed here at PAAPAM office today. The MoU was aimed to enhance and develop business and investment relations between the two countries. Pakistan's auto part industry is seeking globalization and partnerships, including Canada and North America. The President of CPBC, Samir Dossal, and the Chairman of PAAPAM, Munir Bana, were the signatories to the document. Athar Khan, Trade Commissioner at Canadian Trade Service, and Ghulam Ali Shah Pasha, a board member of Pakistan Trade Development Authority (TDAP), also witnessed this jubilant occasion along with the PAAPAM managing committee and stalwarts. Referring to the need for strong bilateral cooperation between the Canadian and Pakistani SME sectors, especially in engineering goods and services, Dossal underscored the opportunities that could be leveraged for trade flow in both directions, including joint ventures and acquisitions. Bana appreciated the proactive approach of CPBC and expressed the MOU would open many new avenues of bilateral trade.

EU ambassador meets caretaker health minister

The European Union will hold a meeting with the Nutrition Cell of the Ministry of Health to cooperate in the nutrition program, the ambassador added

DNA

ISLAMABAD: The ambassador of European Union Rina Kionka met with the caretaker Minister for Health Dr. Nadeem Jan and discussed issues related to the health sector and mutual interest. During the meeting, the ambassador congratulated the minister on assuming the portfolio of federal minister. The ambassador EU said, "The world appreciates services of Jan in efforts to eradicate polio." The EU ambassador appreciates practical steps on Global Health Security Agenda. The European Union will hold a meeting with the Nutrition Cell of the Ministry of Health to cooperate in the nutrition program, the ambassador added. D. Nadeem Jan said that the European Union provided full support in the rehabilitation of the flood victims. The eradication of polio is the top most priority of the caretaker government. Health ministry is in contact with Afghanistan for joint integrated strategy at the border to eliminate polio." He said that Pakistan will soon host a high-level meeting on the Global Health Security Agenda. Experts and stakeholders from all over the world will participate in the meeting. The EU ambassador will also be invited to participate in the Global Health Security Summit.



ISLAMABAD: Ambassador of European Union Riina Kionka meeting with the Federal Minister for Health at his office, on Wednesday.—DNA

Pak needs to invest more in flood management

ISLAMABAD: Caretaker Federal Minister for Water Resources Ahmed Irfan Aslam on Tuesday said the country during the 2022 monster monsoon floods bore \$30 billion in economic and infrastructure losses that demanded to invest more resources in flood management and early warning systems for better disaster preparedness. The Interim Minister delivered his keynote address at the launching ceremony of the National Master Plan on Flood Telemetry and National Consultation on Updated National Flood Protection Plan-IV which was supported by the Asian Development Bank (ADB). Minister Ahmed Irfan Aslam said globally some \$2.93 trillion was lost due to natural disasters whereas during the 2022 monsoon floods, Pakistan faced huge economic losses as mentioned above and these were staggering statistics. He said, "If we are to grow as

a nation, as an economy we need to have strategic flood management plans. Water-related natural disasters can be managed through informed forecast which is not possible without modern flood telemetry systems," he added. Aslam said the flood-related departments were silently working without any recognition like the Federal Flood Commission (FFC) which should be acknowledged and appreciated. He also extended his gratitude to the ADB for supporting the upgradation of the National Flood Protection Plan-IV as the government had initiated the endeavour based on the lessons learned during the floods of 2022. He said the exchange of knowledge and information had a long way aiming to protect more lives which would significantly contribute to the implementation of the updated Plan. The Caretaker Minister also lauded the Secretary

Water Resources for his dedication to the subject matter and termed it helpful in taking informed steps at the Division. Secretary of Water Resources Division Syed Ali Murtaza in his opening remarks said that the country was highly vulnerable due to floods. However, the recurring floods had incurred huge economic losses to the country whereas information and prevention of floods was a key driver for the country to ensure convincing flood management strategies on the ground. The Pakistan Meteorological Department (PMD), Irrigation Departments of respective provinces, and other relevant departments realized the proactive role and devised the flood management plan. He added that it would help take endeavours that were informed and the telemetry systems were to help monitor river flows. He informed that the implementation process would include a total of 707 telemetry systems and some 457 systems would be installed in all the provinces and federating units of the country. The Secretary thanked the technical and financial support to develop the master plan for telemetry systems and updated Flood Protection Plan-IV. He felicitated all stakeholders on the success of the intervention. Country Director of Asian Development Bank (ADB) Yong Ye said it was a remarkable milestone for launching the National Master Plan on Flood Telemetry and National Consultation on Updated National Flood Protection Plan-IV. He mentioned that the ADB was on the top as a close collaborator of Pakistan on flood risk management, and the collaboration between ADB and FFC was a continuation of shared commitment to Pakistan's most pressing development challenges.—DNA

PIAF to join protests if govt doesn't cut bills

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Chairman Pakistan Industrial and Traders Associations Front (PIAF) Fahimur Rahman Saigol, while addressing the reception organized by the representatives of Disposable Packaging Association, said that PIAF will carry on its commitment of raising the voice of the business community. Traders are the backbone of the economy and the caretaker government should take immediate steps to reduce electricity rates otherwise the PIAF will also join the protest

movement. The government should reframe the policies in consultation with the relevant stakeholders and the issues of the business community should be resolved immediately. Fahimur Rahman Saigol said that the business community along with PIAF is strengthened by joining various business organizations in PIAF. On this occasion, along with Disposable Packaging Association, trade organizations of Science Market, Abakari Road and Anarkali Market along with their officials along with hundreds of members announced their affiliation with PIAF in the presence of the

media. President FPCCI Irfan Iqbal Shaikh, former presidents Muhammad Ali Mian Abuzar Shad, Senior Vice Chairman Nasrullah Mughal, Vice Chairman Tahir Manzoor Chaudhary, Senior Vice President Lahore Chamber Zafar Mahmuru and others visited Abkari Road, Science Market, Anarkali, Urdu Bazar and Hundreds of traders from adjacent markets were welcomed and congratulated for joining the PIAF. On this occasion, Mian Anjum Nisar, Fahimur Rehman Saigol and others said that the daily joining of various parties in PIAF is a proof of the effectiveness of PIAF for businessmen.

Jamal Shah inquires after Firdous Jamal

ISLAMABAD: Caretaker Federal Minister for National Heritage and Culture Jamal Shah Tuesday visited the residences of legends Ustad Bashir Ahmed Eminent Miniature Painter and Firdous Jamal veteran actor and inquired after their health. "I am happy and proud of two Icons who contributed a lot to the country miniature painting, film and drama industry", said the minister during his visit. Jamal Shah said that the whole nation was proud of the contributions made by the two legends.—APP

LAJA, UN Women hold first national conference

DNA

ISLAMABAD: The Legal Aid and Justice Authority (LAJA) and UN Women has successfully conducted the first-ever National Conference of Service Providers. The event brought together a diverse network of Criminal Justice stakeholders to engage in cross-learning and exchange of best practices, with an aim to establish standards of care for survivors and to strengthen the implementation of Gender-Based Violence (GBV) laws across Pakistan. While addressing the audience, Ehsan Sadiq, Director General of the National Police Bureau, proclaimed the importance of this collaborative effort and said, "This Conference represents a paramount stride in addressing GBV comprehensively. By connecting professionals across various domains, we are creating a robust network poised to build a more coordinated response to GBV, ensuring survivors receive the support they rightfully deserve." Ayesha Raza Farooq, Chairperson of the Special Committee on Anti-Rape Law at the Ministry of Law and Justice highlighted the transformative potential of the conference: "Our commitment to enhancing GBV laws is intrinsically linked to improving mechanisms for supporting survivors. This conference acts as a cornerstone in aligning our legal framework with the specific needs of survivors, driving a survivor-centric approach." This historic conference marks a significant step toward advancing the standards of services and response for survivors of Gender-Based Violence (GBV) in Pakistan. Sharmeela Rassool, Country Representative of UN Women, emphasized the country-wide significance of this initiative: "Ending gender-based violence requires a united national effort, where every individual becomes a voice against silence. Let us join hands and work together tirelessly until every corner of our nation is free from the shadows of GBV. The National Conference of Service Providers serves as a pivotal endeavour in fostering collaboration and knowledge exchange on a national scale, contributing to the broader international mission to eradicate GBV." Supreme Court Justice Syed Mansoor Ali Shah lauded the efforts of all stakeholders in making the conference a reality.—APP

PHA directed to complete renovation work

RAWALPINDI: Director General (DG) Parks and Horticulture Authority (PHA) Rawalpindi, Ahmad Hasan Ranjha here on Tuesday directed the authorities to complete ongoing renovation work of all the parks. The DG also instructed to repair faulty lights, swings and walking tracks as soon as possible besides improving the security of the parks. He ordered the officers to utilize all available resources to ensure the provision of the best recreational facilities to the public in all the parks of the town. The DG said that PHA was trying to complete the ongoing renovation work as soon as possible to facilitate the citizens.—APP

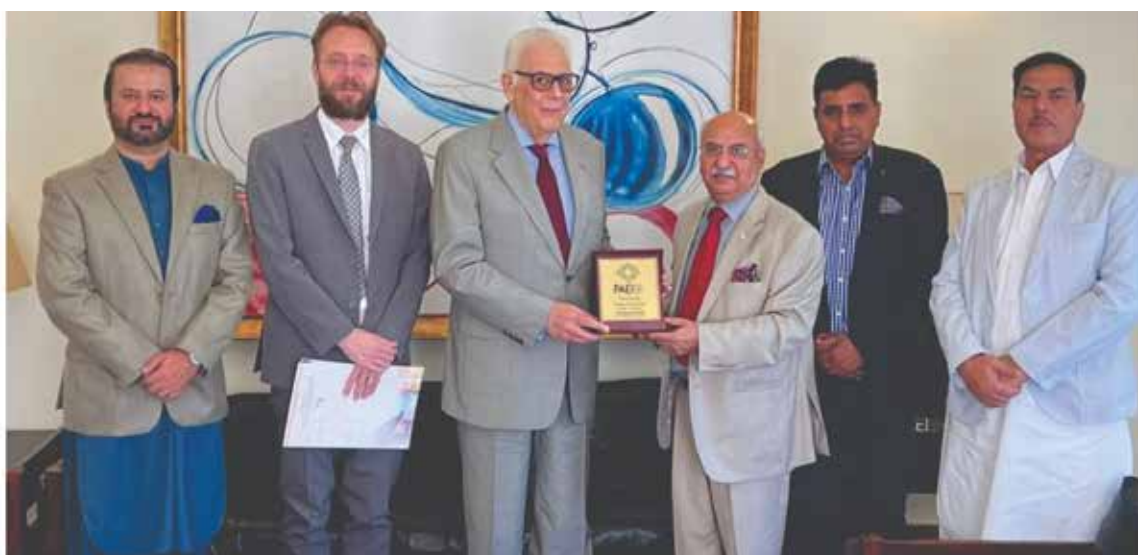
APHC reiterates 'Hyderpora Chalo' call on Friday

ISLAMABAD: The All Parties Hurriyat Conference has reiterated its call for the 'Hyderpora Chalo' on the 2nd martyrdom anniversary of veteran Kashmiri leader Syed Ali Gilani on Friday in Indian illegally occupied Jammu and Kashmir. The conference leaders Muhammad Ramzan, Shahid Saleem, Ghulam Nabi Sumjhi, Muhammad Iqbal, Mukhtar Waza, Engineer Hilal Ahmad War, Farida Behanji, Syed Saleem Gilani, Khadim Hussain, Syed Sibte Shabbir Qummi, Ghulam Nabi War, Waseem Ahmed, Ghazi Manzoor, Muhammad Shafi Lone, Jameel Ahmed, Peezada Atta Uallah in their statements issued in Srinagar urged the Kashmiris living across the Line of Control and abroad to hold protest demonstrations on the day to expose Indian crimes in the occupied Jammu and Kashmir, Kashmir Media service reported. They said that Syed Ali Gilani who dedicated his entire life and sacrificed everything for the sacred cause of freedom is the role model for the generation to come. The leaders said that India can kill Kashmiris but cannot defeat their spirit of freedom. They appealed to the UN, OIC and international human rights organization to take cognizance of human rights violations by India in Kashmir and take immediate and concrete steps to stop Indian state terrorism. Meanwhile, posters have been once again pasted on walls, pillars and electric poles in different areas of the occupied territory by APHC, Wareseen-e-Shuda, Jammu and Kashmir Political Resistance Movement, JK Justice and Peace Initiative.—APP

Brazil is keen to increase investment and trade in Pakistan

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Founder Chairman of Pakistan Association of Exhibition Industry Khurshid Barlas along with the delegation including Fahad Barlas Convener Exhibition, Amin-ur Rehman, Shamriz Iqbal EC member along with the Ambassador of Brazil to Pakistan His Excellency Mr. Olenho Vera and Felipe Salguero. Lerman met with the Head of Trade Sector Brazil at the Embassy. In the meeting, Chairman Khurshid Barlas informed the Ambassador of Brazil and Head of Trade Sector "Third Pakistan International Property Housing and Construction Exhibition 17-19 November 2023" Pak China Friendship. In the three-day exhibition, a large number of prominent builders, developers, allied construction industry from all over the country, including bank projects and various business




community associated with tourism industry will participate. Highlighting the exhibition, Chairman Khurshid Barlas said that the expo is a trade fair known as where property developers set up their stalls to introduce their latest property developments as well as upcoming projects to property buyers and investors. During


the conversation, the Brazilian ambassador said that the Brazilian government is now more interested in Pakistan than in the past and is serious about investing in Pakistan and increasing trade. There are deep and strong relations between Pakistan and Brazil. The Center said that the excellent cooperation between the two coun-

tries on trade relations and multilateral forums is having a profound impact on the global economy from which Pakistani investors can benefit substantially. Chairman of Pakistan Association of Exhibition Industry Khurshid Barlas presented a special invitation to the Brazilian ambassador in the third Pakistan International Exhibition. The Brazilian

ambassador assured that he would definitely attend the exhibition. Finally, Chairman Khurshid Barlas also presented the shield to the Brazilian Ambassador Olenho Vera on behalf of Pakistan Association of Exhibition Industry. Fahad Barlas Canonier Exhibition, Amin-ur Rahman, Shamriz Iqbal were also present on this occasion.



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Tokyo can't pass the buck

DESPITE strong condemnation from the international community, Japan started to discharge nuclear-contaminated wastewater from the Fukushima Daiichi nuclear power plant on Thursday. Knowing clearly that it is doing the world a wrong, the island country has abandoned rational communication and crafted various plots to shift the blame onto others. According to Japanese media reports, Deputy Foreign Minister Masataka Okano has summoned China's Ambassador to Japan Wu Jianghao to protest a series of harassing phone calls coming from China over Fukushima. Yet it is the Chinese embassy and consulates in Japan that have been the targets of harassing phone calls from inside Japan. This is just the tip of an iceberg as the Fumio Kishida government has devoted most of its energy to smearing other countries for criticizing its move. It has shown no inclination to reflect upon why it is subject to criticism, let alone heed the legitimate concerns over the potentially disastrous consequences of it dumping the toxic water into the ocean.

The Fukushima nuclear accident is one of the world's most serious nuclear disasters. As a result, the toxic water is known to be contaminated with more than 60 kinds of radioactive elements. No existing viable technology can remove all these nuclides. Those that remain will be dispersed by the ocean currents, posing risks to the marine ecology and human health. Even though the International Atomic Energy Agency said in a review in July that Japan's plan was "consistent with international safety standards," Japan cannot take this as a green light to proceed with its flaw-ridden plan. In fact, the IAEA report has raised further questions and doubts rather than quelling concerns. Japan has yet to prove the legitimacy and legality of its ocean discharge decision, the long-term reliability of the purification facility, and the authenticity and accuracy of its nuclear-contaminated water data. Even though there are other viable options for dealing with the wastewater, the Japanese government has obviously chosen the most irresponsible way, which is cost-efficient for itself but poses the severest danger to others. It is only natural that Tokyo should face the current wave of opprobrium even from its own people. The Japanese government plans to dump more than 1.3 million tons of nuclear-contaminated water at the defunct nuclear plant into the sea, meaning human beings, Japanese people included, will live under the dark shadow of its actions for over 30 years; even countries that are far away from Japan will be affected. By shifting its own troubles onto others, Tokyo is seriously infringing upon the rights of people in all countries to health, development, and a safe environment. The Japanese government must return to sense and listen to the concerns of all stakeholders. Otherwise, the current backlash is just a beginning.



Ideology should not impede engagement

WHEN he arrives in Beijing on Wednesday, United Kingdom Foreign Secretary James Cleverly will become the first top diplomat of the UK to visit China since Jeremy Hunt in July 2018. Whatever the result of his talks with his Chinese counterpart Wang Yi, the visit sends a message that both sides attach importance to engagement. Despite the fact that UK Prime Minister Rishi Sunak said in November last year that the "golden era" of relations with China was over, he also said that China's significance in world affairs could not be ignored. Whatever Cleverly's personal opinion on UK-China relations may be, he said in a speech at London's Mansion House in April that it is his department's task to shape the course of future events, not succumb to fatalism. Given that, he must understand that it is an inescapable fact that no significant global problem – from climate change to pandemic prevention, from economic instability to nuclear proliferation – can be solved without China.

It goes without saying that, despite appearances to the contrary, Cleverly is not alone in the UK government in believing that it is important to develop good relations with China, or that at least the UK should rebalance its ties with Beijing, demonstrating more strategic autonomy as a key player on the world stage. China, on its part, has never changed its stance and it is willing to develop relations with all countries on the basis of equality and mutual respect. The UK is no exception to that. The once-heralded "golden era" of Sino-UK ties has been prematurely and unilaterally terminated because the UK has been unable to accept that the world has changed. It is the UK that has failed to realize the risk of sticking to the outdated Cold War mentality in developing ties with countries with which it has differences. The world faces grave common challenges such as climate change, the anemic post-pandemic economic recovery and the distorting and breaking of the global industry and supply chains. The international community will not be able to deal with these challenges without the concerted endeavors of all countries, especially the joint efforts of major countries. China has put forward the Global Development Initiative, Global Security Initiative and Global Civilization Initiative with the aim of pooling global efforts to respond to the challenges standing in the way of sustainable development, and promote the well-being of humanity. It is hoped that the UK foreign secretary can pay a visit to China with an equally problem-solving mentality and make due efforts to develop healthy and sustainable relations with China.

Collective responsibility for energy conservation

Aydaan Aali

Solar Energy Adoption should be promoted urgently. Pakistan has abundant sunlight throughout the year, making solar energy an excellent option.

Encouraging the installation of solar panels on rooftops and in rural areas can reduce the reliance on fossil fuels and ease the burden on the national grid. Implement building codes and standards that encourage energy-efficient construction.

Proper insulation, orientation, and use of energy-efficient materials can reduce the energy needed for heating and cooling.

Public transportation and carpooling must be adopted. Promote the use of public transportation systems and carpooling to reduce individual energy consumption. Investments in efficient public transport infrastructure can also help ease traffic congestion and reduce pollution

THE ongoing electricity crisis is not to be blamed on the government as is done always. Rather, some other factors are needed to be looked upon as well. It is time that traditional ways of using/consuming electricity must change and efficiency be brought in the system.

A significant challenge in improving electrical energy efficiency in Pakistan is the lack of awareness and knowledge among the general public. Most people in Pakistan are not aware of the benefits of energy-efficient appliances and practices. There is a need to educate the public on the importance of energy conservation and the steps they can take to reduce their energy consumption. This can be achieved through public awareness campaigns, educational programs, and workshops.

Energy conservation measures can significantly contribute to improving electrical energy efficiency in Pakistan. The adoption of energy-efficient lighting, such as LED lights, can reduce energy consumption by up to 80% compared to traditional incandescent bulbs. Additionally, the implementation of building codes that mandate energy-efficient design and construction can also contribute to energy conservation.

Conserving energy in Pakistan is a critical concern due to the country's growing population and increasing energy demands. Energy conservation not only helps reduce the burden on the national grid but also has environmental and economic benefits. Implementing effective energy-saving strategies is essential for sustainable development in Pakistan.

We have to promote the use of energy efficient appliances at homes. Encouraging the use of energy-efficient appliances,

such as LED bulbs, energy-efficient air conditioners, and refrigerators, can significantly reduce electricity consumption. Government incentives and awareness campaigns can drive the adoption of these appliances among the public. Upgradation in the infrastructure is extremely important. Invest in modernizing the electricity grid to minimize energy losses during transmission and distribution. This reduces wastage and ensures that the available energy is efficiently utilized.

Solar Energy Adoption should be promoted urgently. Pakistan has abundant sunlight throughout the year, making solar energy an excellent option. Encouraging the installation of solar panels on rooftops and in rural areas can reduce the reliance on fossil fuels and ease the burden on the national grid. Implement building codes and standards that encourage energy-efficient construction. Proper insulation, orientation, and use of energy-efficient materials can reduce the energy needed for heating and cooling.

Public transportation and carpooling must be adopted. Promote the use of public transportation systems and carpooling to reduce individual energy consumption. Investments in efficient public transport infrastructure can also help ease traffic congestion and reduce pollution.

Industrial audits can be a great step. Conducting regular energy audits in industries to identify areas of energy wastage and implement energy-efficient technologies and practices is the need. Incentives for industries that reduce their energy consumption can further motivate them. Launching nationwide awareness campaigns to educate the public about the importance of energy conservation and how small changes in their daily routines can make a significant

difference can help a lot.

Offering tax incentives and subsidies for businesses and individuals who invest in energy-saving technologies and practices is a good idea. This can make these options more affordable and attractive.

Efficient Water Management can help contribute in electricity conservation. Implement water-saving technologies in agriculture, which accounts for a significant portion of energy consumption in Pakistan. Drip irrigation and water recycling systems can reduce the energy needed for irrigation. Investing in research and development of innovative energy-saving technologies and solutions tailored to Pakistan's specific needs and climate conditions is a good method. Encouraging the use of energy-efficient vehicles, such as electric and hybrid cars is important. Developing charging infrastructure to support electric vehicle adoption is a must. Encouraging communities to take ownership of energy conservation efforts is the need. Community-based projects like tree planting, waste reduction, and local renewable energy generation can have a positive impact.

In conclusion, conserving energy in Pakistan is not just a choice; it's a necessity for sustainable development. By implementing a combination of policy measures, public awareness campaigns, and technological advancements, Pakistan can reduce its energy consumption, lower greenhouse gas emissions, and ensure a more reliable and affordable energy supply for its growing population. It's a collective responsibility that requires the active participation of the government, industries, communities, and individuals to secure a brighter and more sustainable energy future for the country.

Traditional ways of using electricity will have to change

Zahiruddin Babar

The IMF has already committed that it will not try to control the dollar artificially but its value will be determined in the open market, now the main question is how to get out of the energy crisis that Pakistan is facing.

Economists agree that work on alternative energy projects in the homeland should be started on an emergency basis, the encouragement in this regard is that the PDM government has started work on many such projects during its tenure. For example, 10,000 megawatts of additional electricity...

PEOPLE are protesting about the increase in electricity bills, of course the government is well aware of the difficulties of the common man in this matter, but the question is how the price of electricity is increased, what are the hidden factors in this decision, actually. It is important to keep in mind that Pakistan has to depend on furnace oil, coal, diesel or other imported fuels from abroad to meet its energy needs, so when the prices of these commodities increase in the global market, inevitably the price of electricity has to increase, another major reason is the expensive dollar, we need to understand that whatever Pakistan imports from abroad, it has to be paid in dollars. As the government has to increase the price of unsolicited cloud power, another difficulty is that the power generation plants (IPPs) are also paid in dollars, which inevitably makes electricity more expensive. An important aspect that should not be ignored is that current caretaker government is forced to fully implement the agreements made by the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf government with IMF during its tenure. It can be understood that when an international organization makes an agreement with any government of Pakistan, it is guaranteed by the state of Pakistan. The result is that the State Bank is now free from government influence, the question now is what options are left for the government to deal with the challenge, one solution for the caretaker government is to ar-

tificially devalue the dollar. try to control it, but according to economic experts, it may result in a burden on the country's foreign exchange reserves, which will further increase our economic problems, this is also a big problem.

The IMF has already committed that it will not try to control the dollar artificially but its value will be determined in the open market, now the main question is how to get out of the energy crisis that Pakistan is facing. Economists agree that work on alternative energy projects in the homeland should be started on an emergency basis, the encouragement in this regard is that the PDM government has started work on many such projects during its tenure. For example, 10,000 megawatts of additional electricity from solar energy is now available to the National grid. The Work on the plan to add to the grid is in progress, but the challenge is that more time is still required to complete the said project, on the other hand, the problem of electricity theft has been going on in the country for decades, which has not been controlled despite efforts. The truth is that dishonest electricity users are being punished by honest consumers who not only use electricity without any manipulation but also never commit any delay in paying the bill, the bitter truth is that the government is still unable to recover the cost of power generation and transmission, as a result of which the government has to do load shedding on the one hand, while on the other hand the deficit of the power sector i.e. circular debt also in-

creases. Is. Undoubtedly because of the global climate the temperature has increased in most areas of the country, in such a way that the use of electricity by consumers has also increased, which has inevitably resulted in an increase in bills. The question is that in the above situation, what the common Pakistani wants to do now, of course, the nation has to act sparingly in the use of electricity while recognizing the ground realities, both the common citizens and the business community have to adopt the ways of the citizens of developed countries regarding the use of electricity, e.g. In the modern world, it is preferred to deal with more and more issues in the sunlight, but unfortunately, the situation is completely reversed in our country, For example, most of the bazaars open from 11 am to 12 pm and close from 12 pm to 1 am. Ironically, we Pakistanis are not willing to understand that we should minimize the use of electricity from 5 pm to 11 pm so that not only electricity can be saved but bills can also be significantly reduced. In order to facilitate the public, the government is also considering the proposal to privatize the electricity distribution companies so that an environment of competition can be created on the one hand while on the other hand, there may be a decrease in the habit of always declaring Pakistan responsible. We have to collectively act in order to minimize the issues of electricity going on. This is how nations get out of the crises always.

Briefs

Imran's sentence...

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The former prime minister, who has been disqualified from holding any public office due to the conviction, was arrested immediately after the trial court's ruling on August 5 and has since been incarcerated in Attock jail. Subsequently, Khan petitioned the high court against the Additional District and Sessions Judge (ADSJ) Humayun Dilwar decision to convict him in the Toshakhana case filed by Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP). On Monday, a division bench comprising IHC Chief Justice Aamer Farooq and Justice Tariq Mehmood Jahangiri concluded the proceedings on the plea and reserved the verdict. Before the conclusion of proceedings, the counsel representing the Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) Anjad Pervaiz presented his arguments opposing the pleas by the PTI chief.

Shehbaz Sharif...

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before the decision comes, it should be a moment of concern for the justice system," the former premier wrote. He further stated that when a "clear message" was received from the higher judiciary, the subordinate court would follow suit. "A monitoring judge was appointed to ensure Nawaz Sharif's punishment, [and now] the chief justice himself [has become] a monitoring judge to save the 'favourite'," he wrote, slamming the courts for giving Khan relief. Taking issue with the overturning of the sentence, Shehbaz's tweet further read: "This role of the justice system will be written as the dark chapter of history. Scales tilted to one side and a justice system that undermines justice are not acceptable."

India's SC seeks...

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the preservation of the nation itself, we want for a certain period that this particular state shall go in fold of UT — on the clear understanding that this shall revert back to a state," the CJJ was quoted as saying. He added that "the government also has to make a statement before us that progression has to take place. It can't be a union territory permanently". Mehta, the Indian publication said, told the bench that a similar statement was made by a minister in the parliament as well. Separately, the Hindustan Times reported the solicitor general as saying that there was "enough material to show that the constitution of held Kashmir is subordinate to the constitution of India and the constituent assembly of [held] Jammu and Kashmir was in reality a legislative assembly making laws".

Government meddling...

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criticised by the PTI, which termed the legislation an attempt to turn the National Accountability Bureau (NAB) into a "toothless" organisation. Imran had challenged the amendments to the National Accountability Ordinance, arguing that it was a violation of fundamental rights. The petition argued that the amendments would "virtually eliminate any white-collar crime committed by a public office holder". During today's hearing, Advocate Khawaja Haris appeared before the court as the PTI chief's counsel while Makhdoom Ali Khan represented the federal government. Noting that the Supreme Court (Practice and Procedure) bill "interferes in the Supreme Court's jurisdiction" to hear the matter, CJP Bandial said he was of the view that current bench should continue hearing case.

Kakar to visit Kenya...

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encompass a diverse range of topics, with a particular focus on bolstering the bilateral relations between Kenya and Pakistan. Discussions will center on trade matters, mutual cooperation initiatives, and avenues to enhance diplomatic ties.

Azam has his sights set on the AC and the WC

Babar Azam said that the job is not done yet for the top-ranked ODI side as they aim to win the upcoming ACC Men's Asia Cup 2023 and ICC Men's World Cup in India

OUR CORRESPONDENT

MULTAN: Pakistan's all-format captain Babar Azam said Tuesday that the job is not done yet for the top-ranked ODI side as they aim to win the upcoming ACC Men's Asia Cup 2023 and ICC Men's World Cup in India. Babar Azam-led Pakistan enter the Asia Cup with momentum on their side. They topped the ICC rankings for ODI teams on Saturday after securing a 3-0 whitewash over Afghanistan in Sri Lanka. This is the second instance of the team surmounting the chart since April. Pakistan also boast the best win/loss ratio of 2.750 with 22 wins in 31 matches since

in this World Cup cycle. Reflecting on whether there is an added pressure for being the top-ranked side, Babar Azam said, "I would not say that there is a pressure. Rather, we enter this tournament with more confidence. "This team has put in a lot of hard work and effort over the last few years and we are achieving the top spot is a testimony of it. The job, however, is not done as we want to win the Asia Cup and the World Cup. "We have some competitive and exciting next few months lined up and we are eager to do well for our country. "Every player in this side wants to win matches for his country and raises their hand. They are always ready to put in the hard yards and



never shy away from tough and difficult situations. We have had some amazing last few months and now it is time to build on the momentum." The much-anticipated Men's ODI Asia Cup 2023 is finally here and it begins tomorrow with Pakistan, the top-ranked One-

Day International side, taking on Nepal in the Group-A clash at the Multan Cricket Stadium. The contest marks many firsts as Nepal, as a team, and Multan, as a venue, make their debuts in the continental tournament. It is also a maiden contest between Pakistan

and Nepal at the top level. Pakistan's last outing in Multan in the format was in June last year and the home side enjoyed resounding success over the West Indies by thrashing them 3-0 in the three-match series. The team has played 10 ODIs here and won seven. "It is always a great feeling to play in front of the passionate Multan crowd and we all are very excited that the Asia Cup is beginning from this city," Pakistan captain Babar Azam said on the eve of the contest. "I want to congratulate Nepal for qualifying for the Asia Cup and I hope that their participation will give a boost to the development of the sport in the country. We are looking forward to

playing Nepal and I am sure it will be a good contest," he added. Pakistan will fly to Sri Lanka on 31 August to play India in the second Group-A match on 2 September at Kandy. The venue will also host the third and final match of the group between India and Nepal on 4 September. Pakistan squad for Asia Cup 2023: Babar Azam (captain), Shadab Khan (vice-captain), Abdullah Shafique, Faheem Ashraf, Fakhr Zaman, Haris Rauf, Iftikhar Ahmed, Imam-ul-Haq, Mohammad Haris (wk), Mohammad Nawaz, Mohammad Rizwan (wk), Mohammad Wasim Jnr, Naseem Shah, Salman Ali Agha, Saud Shakeel, Shaheen Afridi and Usama Mir.

Novak Djokovic back on top after US Open return

OUR CORRESPONDENT

NEW YORK: Novak Djokovic ensured he will return to the top of tennis's world rankings with an emphatic first-round victory at the US Open. Djokovic, chasing a record-extending 24th Grand Slam singles title in New York, shrugged off a late-night start on the Arthur Ashe Stadium to demolish France's Alexandre Muller 6-0, 6-2, 6-3 in just 1hr 35min. The win means Djokovic is guaranteed to replace defending US Open champion Carlos Alcaraz as world number one when the tennis rankings are next updated after the tournament. Djokovic is playing in New York for the first time since suffering an agonising defeat in the 2021 final in New York. He was barred from entry to the United States in 2022 for his refusal to get vaccinated against COVID-19, meaning he was unable to play in the US Open. On Monday the 36-year-old played like a man making up for lost time, reeling off 32 winners and breaking Muller eight times in a lopsided encounter that finished at around 12.40 am local time. Djokovic, who will face Spain's Bernabe Zapata Miralles in the second round, said he was unfazed by the late start to his game. "I didn't care if I started after midnight because I was looking forward to this moment for a few years, to be out on the biggest stadium in our sport, the loudest stadium in our sport, playing night session," Djokovic said. "It was



a great joy to be stepping out on the court. "I think the performance explains how I felt tonight, particularly in the first two sets. It was kind of lights-out tennis really, almost flawless, perfect first set. "Overall I'm very, very pleased with the way I feel, with the way I'm playing. Hopefully, I can maintain that level." Djokovic's arrival on court had been delayed after a gruelling three-set battle between American teenager Gauff and Germany's Laura Siegemund in the preceding night game. The 19-year-old Gauff, tipped by many as the biggest threat to defending US Open champion Swiatek, was forced to dig deep before winning 3-6, 6-2, 6-4 in 2hr 50min. An ill-tempered clash was marked by tetchy confrontations by both players with chair umpire Marijana Veljovic. Gauff accused the Serbian official of failing to properly enforce time violation rules against Siegemund. "I felt like the rules were being bent," Gauff said. "That's why a lot of players get mad when these time violations are called because one ref is letting them go over, the other is more strict on the time." Siegemund, 35, meanwhile voiced disgust at the partisan New York crowd, describing them as "respectless" for the way they cheered every error or missed first serve. "They had no respect for me, no respect for the way I played, no respect for the player that I am, they had no respect for good tennis," Siegemund said. — Agencies

Inter Milan ease past Cagliari to continue winning start

PARIS: Inter Milan stayed perfect in Serie A as they won 2-0 at Cagliari in the last match of the second round on Monday. Inter Milan dominated the first 30 minutes and scored the goals they needed for the win. Right wing-back Denzel Dumfries ran onto a cunning through ball by Marcus Thuram after 21 minutes and placed a low cross-shot past goalie Boris Radunovic. After 30 minutes, Lautaro Martinez, who had earlier hit a post, leapt to control a pass from Federico Dimarco with his toe, sidestepped two defenders and left Radunovic flat-footed with a low shot inside near the post. With three goals in two matches, the Argentina striker joined Olivier Giroud of AC Milan and Victor Osimhen of Napoli at the top of the scorers' charts. In the second half, Inter Milan successfully slowed the game down until the final minutes when Claudio Ranieri's Cagliari took more risks. Yann Sommer made a spectacular save from Cagliari substitute Paulo Azzi and Hakan Calhanoglu hit the Cagliari post on a counter-attack. It was a second straight 2-0 victory for Inter and leaves them third in the standings. AC Milan lead on goal difference. Champions Napoli are second, ahead of Inter on goals scored. Verona lie fourth also on six points. — Agencies

KL Rahul ruled out of AC match against Pak

NEW DELHI: Indian wicketkeeper-batter KL Rahul has been ruled out of group stage matches of the upcoming ACC Men's Asia Cup, against arch-rivals Pakistan and Nepal in Pallekele, as he failed to achieve full fitness. India's head coach Rahul Dravid during India's pre-departure press interaction in Bengaluru confirmed that KL Rahul is "progressing really well" however he won't be ready to participate in the games against Pakistan and Nepal. The 31-year-old Rahul has not played any competitive cricket since he was injured during the Indian Premier League in April-May. He has developed an injury niggle unrelated to the original thigh problem. "KL has had a good week here [at India's conditioning camp] with us. Trained well and done a lot of things. He's progressing really well on the route that we want

to take. But he will be unavailable for the Kandy leg of the trip," Dravid said. "The NCA [National Cricket Academy] will be looking after him for the next few days while we are travelling. We will reassess on September 4 and take it from there. But signs are looking good and he's progressing really well." KL Rahul will hopefully be fit in time for the Super 4 stage games of the Asia Cup, meanwhile, Ishan Kishan is expected to keep wickets in the group stage matches in Rahul's absence. **India's Squad:** Rohit Sharma (captain), Shubman Gill, Virat Kohli, Shreyas Iyer, KL Rahul, Suryakumar Yadav, Tilak Varma, Ishan Kishan, Hardik Pandya (vice-captain), Ravindra Jadeja, Axar Patel, Shardul Thakur, Jasprit Bumrah, Mohammed Shami, Mohammed Siraj, Kuldeep Yadav, Prasidh Krishna. — DNA



PCB announce central contracts for women cricketers

PCB awarded central contracts to 20 women cricketers, divided into four categories

SPORT DESK

KARACHI: Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) on Tuesday awarded central contracts to 20 women cricketers, divided into four categories A, B, C and D being an emerging category. The uncapped trio of Anosha Nasir, Eymen Fatima and Shawaal Zulfiqar are among the four players who are awarded central contracts for the first time. Umm-e-Hani, who made her debut last year against Ireland, is the fourth player to earn her maiden central contract. The 20 players were offered central contracts last week for a duration of 23 months, commencing from 1 August 2023 to 30 June 2025. The performances of players will be assessed after a year. The contracts were signed by 19 players in Karachi during the series camp for South Africa. Eymen Fatima, who is not part of the white-ball series against South Africa, signed the contract in Lahore. Captain Nida Dar and experienced Bismah Maroof have been retained in the A category, which sees a 19 per cent increase in their retainers. Sidra Amin, who is currently second in the list of top run-getters of ICC Women's Championship 2022-25 with 535 runs from nine matches has jumped to the A category from C. The B category, which sees an increase of 32 per cent in players' retainers, is occupied by four play-

ers. Muneeba Ali, who scored a century in this year's ICC Women's T20 World Cup, has been promoted from C to B category. Fast bowler Fatima Sana, who also captained Pakistan's emerging women's team in this year's ACC Women's Emerging Teams Asia Cup 2023 has been retained in the B category along with left-arm spinner Nashra Sundhu. Aliya Riaz has been demoted from A to B category. In the C category, wicketkeeper-batter Sidra Nawaz has retained her position, while spinners Gulam Fatima and Sadia Iqbal have been promoted from the D to the C category. Diana Baig, who missed out on most of the

last year due to a shoulder injury and later a finger injury has been demoted to C from B category. Omaina Sohail has been placed in the C category compared to the B category she was in last year's central contracts list. The C category has a 19 per cent increase in player retainers. The D category, also known as the emerging category, features a total of eight players. Leg-spinner Tuba Hassan and right-handed batter Sadaf Shamas have retained their spots in the category which will see them register a 21 per cent increase in their retainers. Left-arm spinner Anosha Nasir, right-handed batters Eymen Fatima and Shawaal Zulfiqar, all of whom represented

Pakistan U19 in the inaugural ICC U19 Women's T20 World Cup this year, have earned their maiden contracts. Wicketkeeper-batter Najiha Alvi and off-spinner Umm-e-Hani, both of whom represented Pakistan's emerging team in the ACC Women's Emerging Teams Asia Cup, are also part of the D category. Syeda Aroob Shah, who captained Pakistan U19 in the ICC U19 Women's T20 World Cup, makes a comeback in the central contract after missing out last year. Anam Amin, Gull Feroza, Iram Javed, Javeria Khan and Kainat Imtiaz are the five players who have failed to retain this year's central contract. All five players have been awarded the first-ever 11-month domestic contracts. Meanwhile, Ayesha Naseem, who retired from international cricket, is the sixth player to be left out from the contract. Meanwhile, there is a 100 per cent increase in the match fee of players involved in an ODI match (playing and non-playing both). Also, there is a 50 per cent increase in match fees of players in a T20I match (playing and non-playing both). Tania Mallick, Head of Women's Cricket: "The extended contract duration reflects our anticipation of an action-packed international cricket calendar. We want our women cricketers to be fully prepared, physically and mentally, to face every challenge and celebrate every triumph that comes their way.



ECP assures to hold...

FROM PAGE 01

The Chief Secretary and IG Sindh briefed the Election Commission on preparations for the upcoming general elections and assured full cooperation. The Election Commission emphasized on the Chief Secretary and IG Sindh that conducting transparent and impartial elections are fundamental responsibility of ECP. In this regard, the first step is the transfer and posting of all officers and officials who are important in the perspective of impartial elections. The Election Commission has issued directives in this regard, because transfer and posting is the first step towards transparency. After that, there will be appointments of District Returning Officers, Returning Officers, Assistant Returning Officers, and Monitoring Teams will be made. The Election Commission assured full support and cooperation to Chief Secretary and IG Sindh.

Government undecided...

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Anwaarul Haq Kakar in which they discussed the overall situation after the national received inflated electricity bills. They held consultations on options to provide relief to the power consumers. The caretaker premier summoned another session which was attended by the representatives of the Ministry of Water and Power and power distribution companies. On Sunday, Caretaker PM Anwaarul Haq Kakar gave a 48-hour deadline for the formation of a strategy amid mounting public outcry over electricity price hikes. In the emergency meeting convened over the increasing electricity prices, the caretaker PM was briefed on the rise in July electricity bills. He said such measures should be taken, which will not exert burden on the national exchequer, and provide convenience to the consumers.

PPP again calls for...

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the polls' date, saying that they should be held within the 90-day period as per the Constitution. On August 17, the electoral body announced the schedule of new delimitations to be carried out as per the new census approved by the Council of Common Interests (CCI) earlier this month. The ECP schedule showed that fresh delimitation will take nearly four months, meaning the general elections in the country cannot be held within 90 days of the dissolution of the provincial and national assemblies. "We had a meeting with the ECP in a pleasant environment during which we put all our reservations," said PPP Vice President Sherry Rehman in a post-meeting press conference.

Petroleum prices to...

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rise of Rs14.83 per litre from September 1, 2023. "This would expose the masses to a further surge in inflation making the lives of the masses more miserable. At present the inflation rate is at 28%," told a senior official of the Energy Ministry reported newspaper. "However, the government which is already under tremendous pressure because of the countrywide protests over the inflated electricity bills, may reduce the increase or stop it," the official added. But doing so would put the caretaker government in a tight spot. "If the government does that it would be considered that the caretaker government has defaulted on the IMF terms and conditions for its \$3 billion standby agreement (SBA) loan under which the government is bound to pass fluctuation in prices of the POL products. The dollar's value has reached Rs301.75 in the interbank while it is selling at around Rs319 in the open market," the official said. As per the data, over the month of August, petrol prices have already increased by Rs37.50 while diesel has gone up by Rs40 per litre. "However, the authorities last time worked out the POL prices at the value of the dollar at Rs287 and now they have decided to calculate the prices of POL products from September 1, 2023, at Rs299.

Briefs

Japan needs US nuclear weapons for defense

TOKYO: Japan must develop its domestic arms sector if it is to provide for its own security, a top Japanese general has said, arguing that Tokyo currently relies on American nuclear weapons for "deterrence" against regional rivals. Speaking to Nikkei Asia for an interview on Monday, General Yoshihide Yoshida, the chief of the Joint Staff for Japan's Self-Defense Forces, outlined Tokyo's defense needs, highlighting its close military cooperation with Washington. "We cannot maintain Japan's security with our current capabilities," the general said, adding: "First, we must fundamentally strengthen our defensive capabilities so that we are not underestimated. Second, we need to do what we can to sustain extended deterrence, including through strategies involving US nuclear weapons." Yoshida went on to explain that Japan has engaged in "deep dialogue" with the United States for more than a decade on "extending the US nuclear umbrella over Japan," noting that a deal was struck in June for additional information-sharing, joint training and joint missile response.

Japan is the only nation in history to have been targeted with atomic weapons. A US Army Air Force bomber dropped a nuclear bomb over Hiroshima on August 6, 1945, killing up to 126,000 people, most of them civilians. Another atomic bomb was detonated over the city of Nagasaki on August 9, killing up to 80,000 people, almost all of whom were civilians.—APP

Palestine hails Libya's stance on Israel

RAMALLAH: Palestine thanked Libya for reiterating its refusal to normalise ties with Israel.

Earlier in the day, Libyan Prime Minister Abdul Hamid Dbeibeh sacked Foreign Minister Najla al-Mangoush after she held a secret meeting last week with her Israeli counterpart Eli Cohen in Rome. Dbeibeh also visited the Palestinian Embassy in Tripoli to reiterate his government's support for the Palestinian struggle against the Israeli occupation.

He "reiterated his absolute support for the Palestinian people in their legitimate quest to regain their full rights and for the establishment of their independent state with Jerusalem as its capital," the Palestinian Foreign Ministry said in a statement. The ministry said it "appreciates the positions expressed by Dbeibeh and his personal attendance at the embassy." The first-ever public meeting between the Israeli and Libyan foreign ministers has triggered a storm of anger and protests in Libya. The Libyan Foreign Ministry said the meeting was "informal" and "impromptu" and did not involve any discussions, agreements or consultations.—APP

Kim calls for boosting North Korea's navy

Kim has declared North Korea an "irreversible" nuclear power and has called for ramped-up arms production, including tactical nuclear weapons

NEWS DESK

PYONGYANG: Kim Jong Un has called for boosting North Korea's navy, saying the country's waters brimmed with "the danger of a nuclear war," state media reported Tuesday, as Seoul, Washington and Tokyo carried out joint naval drills. Kim slammed growing trilateral cooperation between the "gang bosses" of the United States, South Korea and Japan, saying they had recently "closeted with each other," the official Korean Central News Agency reported, in an apparent reference to this month's Camp David summit. He accused Washington of being "more frantic than ever before" by conducting joint naval exercises and deploying nuclear strategic assets in the waters around the Korean peninsula on a permanent basis, the report said. "Owing to the reckless confrontational moves of the US and other hostile forces, the waters off the Korean Peninsula have been reduced into the world's biggest war hardware concentration spot, the most unstable waters with the danger of a nuclear war,"



Kim said, according to KCNA. "To achieve the successes in rapidly developing the naval force has become a very urgent issue in view of the enemies' recent aggressive attempts." Kim acknowledged that the North's navy "had not been armed with up-to-date weapons and combat equipment" but said that even so, it had managed "great achievements of more weighty significance" than the country's better-funded army. He also promised that the navy would be given new weapons as part of North Korea's policy for "expand-

ing the tactical nuclear weapons operation". The navy will become a "component of the state nuclear deterrence," he added. Photos carried by the official Rodong Sinmun newspaper showed Kim, accompanied by his young daughter, inspecting the navy command and taking photos with scores of naval officers. "South Korea, the United States and Japan agreed to strengthen military cooperation and decided to conduct joint military exercises on a regular basis at the Camp David summit," Cheong Seong-chang, researcher

at the Sejong Institute, told AFP. "Therefore, North Korea may feel an urgent need to strengthen its naval power," he said, adding that some intelligence reports suggested Russia and the North were considering holding joint naval training. "For that North Korea would need a naval vessel but the country's navy is very weak, so I think Kim Jong Un is showing off his will to strengthen the naval forces," Cheong added. The United States, South Korea and Japan held a joint naval missile defence exercise on Tuesday

to counter Pyongyang's growing nuclear and missile threats. The exercise in international waters off South Korea's southern island of Jeju involved destroyers equipped with Aegis radar systems from the three countries, the South Korean navy said in a statement. Tuesday's trilateral naval exercises marked the first such drills since the Camp David summit and followed similar ones in July, April, and February this year, according to the Yonhap news agency. Seoul, Washington and Japan have beefed up their defence cooperation in recent months in response to increasing missile provocations by the North. The United States and South Korea are also holding their annual Ulchi Freedom Shield exercises, which always infuriate Pyongyang. North Korea has conducted a record number of weapons tests this year, and last week carried out its second attempt to put a spy satellite into orbit, although it ended in failure. Kim has declared North Korea an "irreversible" nuclear power and has called for ramped-up arms production, including tactical nuclear weapons.

Taipei reports Chinese military activity near Taiwan

TAIPEI: Taiwan's defense ministry has reported Chinese military activity near the self-ruled island, warning of a possible "sharp increase" in tensions. The ministry claimed that it spotted 12 Chinese military aircraft in its air defense identification zone on Tuesday morning, adding that seven of them, including six J-10 fighters and a single drone, crossed the median line of the Taiwan Strait. According to the statement, five Chinese ships also conducted "combat readiness patrols". The ministry, however, has not given a location. "The continued military harassment by the Communist military in the region may lead to a sharp increase in tensions and worsen regional security," the ministry said, adding Beijing should "immediately stop such unilateral acts." Beijing regards the island as part of its own territory under the "One-China" principle. Under the internationally recognized policy, nearly all countries recognize Beijing's sovereignty over the island, including the United States. However, in violation of its own stated policy and in an attempt to irritate Beijing, Washington continues to court the secessionist government in Taipei, supporting its anti-China stance and supplying it with massive caches of armaments. China often conducts military drills around the island as a warning to Taiwan's separatist forces and their collusion with the US.—Agencies

180 killed in clashes in Ethiopia since July

New York: At least 183 people have been killed since July in clashes in Ethiopia's Amhara region, the United Nations said Tuesday as it appealed for the killings, violence and rights abuses to end. "We are very concerned by the deteriorating human rights situation in some regions of Ethiopia," UN Human Rights Office spokeswoman Marta Hurdado told reporters in Geneva. "In Amhara region, following a flare-up in clashes between the Ethiopian military and the regional Fano militia, and the declaration of a state of emergency on August 4, the situation worsened considerably." "At least 183 people have been killed in clashes since July, according to information gathered by the UN Human Rights Office." Tension in the Amhara region ratcheted up this year after the end of a devastating war in neighbouring Tigray that also drew in fighters from Amhara. In April the federal government announced it was dismantling regional forces across the country. The move triggered protests by Amhara nationalists who said it would weaken their region. Clashes erupted in early July between the national army and local fighters known as Fano, prompting the authorities in Addis Ababa on August 4 to declare a six-month state of emergency. The status gives the authorities broad powers to arrest suspects without a court order, impose curfews and ban public gatherings.—APP

Role in Israeli talk Libya's PM under fire, some call for his ouster

TRIPOLI: Libya's internationally recognised prime minister has come under scrutiny for his reported role in attempting to normalise relations with Israel, analysts have said, with some calling for his dismissal. Abdul Hamid Dbeibah, the head of the Tripoli-based Government of National Unity (GNU), sacked Foreign Minister Najla al-Mangoush after her meeting with her Israeli counterpart Eli Cohen in Rome last week was leaked to the media. She has since fled the country. On Sunday evening, a statement from the Israeli foreign ministry said al-Mangoush and Cohen had discussed ways to have "great relations" between their nations. The meeting sparked protests Sunday night in Tripoli and other cities, with demonstrators blocking roads with burning tyres and waving Palestinian flags.

Libya's rival parliament in the east, which rejects the GNU, said on Sunday it would hold hearings into the meeting while the Tripoli-based Presidency Council asked Dbeibah for clarification and the High State Council, another important body, condemned it. Under a 1957 law in Libya, it is illegal to have formal relations with Israel. Analysts say al-Mangoush has taken the fall for decisions made by Libya's rival leaders, linking the meeting with the United States' efforts to pressure more Arab countries to normalise ties with Israel. Libya expert Anas El Gomati of the Sadeq Institute said Dbeibah, his rival military strongman Khalifa Haftar and the eastern-based parliament that backs him "have used Libya's first female foreign minister as the fall person for decisions they all parroted in." "It's not about

politics, it's blatant scapegoating," El Gomati told AFP. Last January, Dbeibah met with US CIA director William Burns in Tripoli to discuss normalising relations with Israel, two Libyan officials told The Associated Press. He gave initial approval for joining the US-brokered Abraham Accords but was concerned about public backlash in a country known for its support for the Palestinian cause, one of the officials said. Omar Turbi, a former adviser to Libya's transitional government after the overthrow of Muammar Gaddafi, said: "Dbeibah needs to go and he knows that he's been under pressure in the last couple of weeks." Dbeibah is "squarely responsible" for the meeting, Turbi said, adding that the PM had met with the Israeli Mossad even before speaking to Burns, and "continued to do so

with frequency". "The US should have better sense than trying to normalise a relationship between Libya and Israel," he told Al Jazeera, describing Libya as "dysfunctional". The dispute over the meeting has fed into Libya's internal political crisis, giving further ammunition to Dbeibah's internal critics at a moment when the future of his interim government was already in question. Jalel Harchaoui, an associate fellow specialising in Libya at the London-based Royal United Services Institute for Defence and Security Studies, said Dbeibah "tried to play at diplomacy but failed because he did not evaluate correctly" the response of Libyans opposed to ties with Israel. Harchaoui also said the meeting was spurred by pressure on Libya from both the United Nations and the US to push ahead.—APP

'No significant global problem can be solved without China'

DNA

LONDON: "No significant global problem can be solved without China," the British foreign secretary reiterated on Tuesday, a day before his China visit. James Cleverly, who will be the first British foreign secretary to visit China in five years, said it is important to manage the UK's relationship with China. The visit to Beijing is "to strengthen channels of communication to further and protect British interests," according to a statement from the Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office. "No significant global problem — from climate change to pandemic prevention, from economic instability to nuclear proliferation — can be solved without China," Cleverly said. He added: "China's size, history, and global significance means they cannot be ignored, but that comes with a responsibility on the global stage. That responsibility means China fulfilling its international commitments and obligations." In his Mansion House speech in April, Cleverly had set out the UK's "multi-faceted approach to China across three pillars," which are "to protect national security whenever Beijing poses a threat to UK people or prosperity, to align cooperation with friends and allies in the Indo-Pacific and across the world to uphold international law, and to engage directly with China to promote stable relations." Cleverly will hold bilateral meetings with China's Minister of Foreign Affairs and Director of the Office of the Central Foreign Affairs Commission Wang Yi, and Vice President Han Zheng, according to the statement. It also said: "Issues such as climate change cannot be tackled without China — as the world's largest investor in sustainable energy and the largest emitter of carbon, the choices that China makes are critical to our collective ability to tackle this global problem." Cleverly is also expected to underline China's responsibility for international security to provide assistance to end the war in Ukraine, diffuse tensions in the South China Sea, and cease malign activity in cyberspace. "During his visit, the foreign secretary will raise Beijing's human rights obligations, including in relation to communities in Xinjiang and Tibet. He will also challenge China on the erosion of autonomy, rights, and freedoms in Hong Kong under the Beijing-imposed National Security Law, as well as other UK interests including the sanctions placed on UK MPs." The statement also said that it is "important to have discussions face to face and raise these issues directly with the center of the Chinese system, making clear the UK's position with the decision makers in Beijing." "This approach is in line with that of international partners, such as the recent visits of Five Eyes and European partners."



ISLAMABAD: Women are taking interest in precious plants during exhibition by Floral Art Society of Pakistan, in Federal Capital.—Online

Air pollution cuts life expectancy in South Asia

The region accounts for more than half of the total life years lost globally to pollution, University of Chicago's Energy Policy Institute says

MONITORING DESK

LONDON: Rising air pollution can cut life expectancy by more than five years per person in South Asia, one of the world's most polluted regions, according to a report which flagged the growing burden of hazardous air on health. The region, which includes the world's most polluted countries of Bangladesh, India, Nepal, and Pakistan, accounts for more than half of the total life years lost globally to pollution, the University of Chicago's Energy Policy Institute (EPI) said in its latest Air Quality Life Index published on

Tuesday. Rapid industrialisation and population growth have contributed to declining air quality in South Asia, where particulate pollution levels are currently more than 50 percent higher than at the start of the century and now overshadow dangers posed by larger health threats. People in Bangladesh, the world's most polluted country, stand to lose 6.8 years of life on average per person, compared to 3.6 months in the United States, according to the study, which uses satellite data to calculate the impact of an increase in airborne fine particles on life expectancy. India is

responsible for about 59 percent of the world's increase in pollution since 2013, the report said, as hazardous air threatens to shorten lives further in some of the country's more polluted regions. In the densely populated New Delhi, the world's most polluted megacity, the average life span is down by more than 10 years. Reducing global levels of lung-damaging airborne particles, known as PM 2.5, to levels recommended by the World Health Organization (WHO) could raise average life expectancy by 2.3 years, or a combined 17.8 billion life years, the report said.

An average resident of Pakistan would gain 3.9 years from meeting the WHO guidelines of limiting average annual PM 2.5 concentration to 5 micrograms per cubic meter, while someone in Nepal would live 4.6 years longer if the guideline was met, according to the report. China, meanwhile, has worked to reduce pollution by 42.3 percent between 2013 and 2021, the report said, highlighting the need for governments to generate accessible air quality data to help bridge global inequalities in accessing tools to combat pollution.

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Briefs

UK air travel disruption to last for days

FOREIGN DESK

LONDON: British Transport Minister Mark Harper has said it would take days to resolve the widespread disruption to flights into and out of the country after air traffic control systems were hit by a technical problem. Hundreds of flights were cancelled or delayed on Monday – one of the country's busiest travel days – after air traffic controllers were forced to switch to manual systems. Harper added that government officials did not believe the technical problem was the result of a cyberattack. "There is going to be some knock-on impact today and I suspect for another few days as airlines get their planes and get their services back to normal," Harper told the BBC on Tuesday. "I know how frustrating this is for passengers, I've had flights cancelled myself before. It is very frustrating, and the airline does have a responsibility to look after their passengers and accommodate them and get them on another flight if necessary," he added. Aviation analytics firm Cirium said that by Monday afternoon, 232 flights due to leave UK airports and 271 arriving flights had been cancelled.

Sudan general visits Egypt as violence grips Darfur

CAIRO: Sudan's army chief travelled Tuesday to Egypt on his first trip abroad since the outbreak of war in April, with the latest violence killing dozens of civilians in battle-scarred Darfur. As Abdel Fattah al-Burhan departed, medics and witnesses said 39 civilians were killed, most of them women and children, in shelling of Nyala, Sudan's second city in South Darfur state where fighting between the army and paramilitary forces has intensified. The general was to hold talks with Egyptian President Abdel Fattah al-Sisi, a key ally, on the developments in his war-ravaged country and bilateral ties, said the Sovereign Council, Sudan's highest authority. Burhan, who traded his trademark military fatigues and green beret for a suit and tie, was greeted by Sisi in Egypt's northern coastal city of El Alamein after flying from Port Sudan, Egyptian media reported. The war between Burhan and his former deputy turned rival Mohamed Hamdan Daglo, who commands the paramilitary RSF, has raged since April 15. It has spread from Khartoum and the western region of Darfur to Kordofan and Jazira state, killing thousands and forcing millions to flee their homes. For months, the RSF had besieged Burhan inside military headquarters in Khartoum, but last week the general made his first public foray outside the compound to review troops in parts of the country. – APP

Enemy failed to isolate Iran, drive nation to despair

Throughout the country, they tried to anger the people by creating problems, but people carried on vigilantly and with insight and disappointed the enemy

NEWS DESK

TEHRAN: President Ebrahim Raeisi says efforts by the enemies to isolate Iran and drive the Iranian people to despair have failed, whereas all indicators attest to growth and progress in the country. Raeisi told a news conference in Tehran that while Iran has forged strong relations with Islamic and like-minded countries, its enemies are also knocking on the door after initially trying to ditch the country when riots broke out following the death of a young woman last September. "The enemy tried to follow two strategies of isolating Iran in the world and disappointing the people inside, which it failed in both. "That is because we follow numerous agendas in our foreign policy all at the same time, one of which is the JCPOA," the president said, referring to the 2015 nuclear deal which is on life support after the US withdrawal. "We've followed relations with the neighboring countries as well as Islamic and aligned states, and improved the level of political, economic and commercial relations where commercial ties have grown 14 percent compared to the previous government," he said. "In the area of regional trade ties and business measures which some believed little can be done, the government broke the record and it turned out that there are many



capacities in the country," Raeisi added. "Relations with Latin America, Africa and many Asian countries and becoming active in the Eurasian Economic Union and membership in the Shanghai Cooperation Organization and recently in BRICS all show that ... the enemy did not succeed in its policy to isolate Islamic Iran and our political, commercial and economic situation shows the failure of the enemy in this strategy." President Raeisi also touched on the enemies' project to disappoint the Iranian people. "Not a few months had passed when a nationwide cyber attack was launched on gas stations," he said.

"Throughout the country, they tried to anger the people by creating problems, but the people carried on vigilantly and with insight and disappointed the enemy." When the enemy realized that the people are with the government and the country is progressing, it turned to stoking unrest, the president said. "It thought that it could follow through with agitation. Even the Westerners left the negotiation table and pinned their hope on riots," he said. "They thought that they could achieve their goals in riots, but the people let them down, after which, they immediately messaged that they wanted to go back to the

negotiating table and start negotiations," Raeisi said. "They sought to disappoint the people in various sectors, and the Iranian people disappointed them, instead." The president said the people's effort and hope has increased day by day, as shown by production, science and technology indicators and knowledge-based initiatives of the Iranian youths. "Today is the day when Islamic Iran is known as an advanced and technological country," he said. "All indicators show growth, effort and progress." US media reports have said the Biden administration has been negotiating quietly to open diplomatic channels with Iran. The indirect talks, they say, reflect a resumption of diplomacy between the United States and Iran after the collapse of more than a year of negotiations to restore the 2015 nuclear deal. The Iranian side has not commented on such claims, but President Raeisi said on Tuesday that "We have not abandoned the negotiating table for removing the sanctions". "The other side left the negotiation table and now they regret it, stating that they are ready to negotiate." Apart from pushing the envelope on the removal of sanctions through reviving the nuclear agreement, the president said, the Islamic Republic is "pursuing other files", such as Iran's membership in regional and extra-regional alliances, such as the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO).

PTI lambasts PDM govt for plunging country into worst crises

Directs party workers, office-bearers to fully participate in anti-inflation protests

MEHTAB PIRZADA

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) Core Committee lashed out at the PDM government, imposed on the nation through a conspiracy, for plunging the country into the worst political and economic crises and announced that the party would fully participate in the country-wide protest against soaring inflation, making life of the countrymen miserable. PTI Core Committee, in its important meeting on Tuesday, announced that the party would fully support the nationwide protests against the worst inflation and unbearable electricity bills. During the meeting, they directed the party workers and office-bearers to ensure participation in the peaceful public protest across the country with full force. The participants of the meeting stated that the constitution and laws did not give the rulers the right to suck the blood of the citizens, adding that the doors of this disaster was opened some 16 months ago when undemocratic forces conspired against the elected democratic government of Prime Minister Imran Khan and imposed inept and incompetent criminals on the nation. The PTI Core Committee recalled that Imran Khan, during his government, successfully saved the people from inflation and the economy from meltdown despite the global epidemic crisis, soaring oil prices in international market and the IMF program. They said that when a conspiracy was hatched against Imran Khan, the price of petrol was Rs 150 per liter while electricity was provided at Rs 16 per unit. In addition, the participants stated that during his tenure, Imran Khan started work on ten major hydropower projects in a bid to attain self-sufficiency in energy. In the meeting, they said that the PTI government made attempts to minimize the financial loss by easing terms and conditions of the absurd contracts signed with the most expensive IPPs.



ISLAMABAD: Ayesha Tanzeem, Head of South & Central Asia Division, Voice of America called on Caretaker Prime Minister Anwaar-ul-Haq Kakar. Caretaker Minister for Information and Broadcasting Murtaza Solangi and VOA Correspondent Ali Furqan are also present on the occasion. – DNA

Regarding polls delay No concern raised by any country: FO spox

KHAYAM ABBASI

ISLAMABAD: After reports of some senior diplomats expressing reservations regarding the delay in polls in Pakistan surfaced, the Foreign Office said it has not yet received any such communication from any capital. If a country raises any doubts and concerns, the FO said, the authorities can address them. The FO's response came after reports floated about some senior diplomats suggesting that a delay in the elections could have negative effects on Pakistan's relationships with democratic nations. It was also reported that a few countries have engaged with the authorities concerned about the electoral process to gauge the possibility of any unwarranted

postponement of the polls. On Monday a Pakistani newspaper reported citing Highly placed sources within the FO that the Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) has already unequivocally stated there are no plans to postpone the elections. Meanwhile, FO Spokesperson Mumtaz Zahra Baloch clarified that she has no knowledge of any messages from any capital on this matter, as the positions of Pakistan and other countries on the issue are already known. The report revealed that the government is well aware of the European Union's (EU) stance and the International Monetary Fund's (IMF) perspective on the matter. If parliamentary elections are deferred without valid reasons, the Generalised System of Preferences Plus (GSP+) trade facility

could come under scrutiny. It has been reported that the United States Ambassador to Pakistan, Donald Blome, and some other senior Western diplomats had held meetings with high-ranking officials in Pakistan, including caretaker Prime Minister Anwaar-ul-Haq Kakar and Chief Election Commissioner (CEC) Sikandar Sultan Raja. These meetings were aimed at gaining first-hand assessments of the situation. It is understood that these countries have closely followed the developments in Pakistan regarding election preparations and maintained communication with relevant parties to emphasise the preservation of a democratic environment. These nations have consistently supported and promoted democratic norms in countries of interest to them.

Indian forces commit heinous acts in IIOJK

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister's Special Assistant for Human Rights and Women Empowerment Mushaal Hussein Mullick Tuesday stressed the need for bridging gap between women empowerment laws and practice for lessening the gender discrimination and violence against them in the society. She was addressing at a national conference of service providers on gender based violence here. Representatives of different stakeholders participated in the conference and shared their valuable views on this occasion. Highlighting the deplorable condition of women of Indian Illegally Occupied Jammu and Kashmir (IIOJK), the Special Assistant said that Indian armed forces had been committing heinous crimes especially, against women in the IIOJK for the last seven decades. She said, rape was being used as a ferocious tool of weapon against Kashmiri women in order to demoralize them and suppress Kashmiris' just cause for the right to self-determination. Indian state authorities not only condone such condemnable acts but also encourage such nefarious crimes as a state policy, she added. Mushaal Mullick said that being the daughter of Kashmir, she had the true realization of the state of women rights in IIOJK which led her decision to become powerful voice of Kashmiri women. She further said that she has also been advocating for rights of children and women in Pakistan for last many years. The advisor expressed her satisfaction that a lot of progress had been made regarding women empowerment in terms of policy making and formulation of different laws, however narrowing the gap between policy and implementation was key to end gender based violence and discrimination in the society. She said there was need to create conducive environment for women where she could exercise her rights with free will. The special assistant also encouraged electric and print media to come forward and play their pivotal role in creating awareness among masses and society for discouraging gender based violence and discrimination especially against women in the society. – DNA

Massive wildfire in northeastern Greece persists for 11th day

ATHENS: A massive wildfire was burning unabated in northeastern Greece for the 11th day Tuesday despite the efforts of hundreds of firefighters and a fleet of water-dropping aircraft. After burning across vast tracts of land, the blaze in the Alexandroupolis and Evros region was mainly concentrated deep in a forest near the border with Turkey, in an area difficult to access. The wildfire has been blamed for 20 of the 21 wildfire-related deaths in Greece last week. Six planes and four helicopters were assisting 475 firefighters on the ground, backed by 100 vehicles, the fire department said. Another 260 firefighters and one helicopter were tackling flare-ups of another major fire burning for days in a forest on the southern slopes of Mount Parnitha, on the fringes of the Greek capital. Authorities are investigating the causes of the fires, which over the past week has destroyed vast tracts of forest, scorched homes and triggered the evacuation of thousands of people. In Athens, Prime Minister Kyriakos Mitsotakis was holding a government meeting on how to rehabilitate the burnt forests in Evros and Parnitha. With firefighting forces stretched to the limit, Greece has called for help from other European countries, receiving aircraft and hundreds of firefighters from across the continent. France and Spain were sending additional aircraft to join those already sent from Germany, Sweden, Croatia, Cyprus and the Czech Republic under the European Union's emergency response mechanism. "In total, we have mobilized 12 aircraft stationed in seven member states. This is the biggest rescEU aerial firefighting operation to date" since the emergency response mechanism was launched in 2019, the EU Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid authority said Monday on X, the social media platform formerly known as Twitter. More than 350 firefighters have also been sent to Greece from Romania, France, the Czech Republic, Bulgaria, Albania, Slovakia and Serbia. The Alexandroupolis and Evros wildfire, which broke out on Aug. 19, had scorched more than 80,000 hectares (197,000 acres) of land by Monday night, according to the European Union's Copernicus Emergency Management Service. Copernicus is the EU space program's Earth observation component and uses satellite

imagery to provide mapping data. EU officials have described it as the largest single blaze recorded in the block since the European Forest Fire Information System began recording data in 2000. – Agencies

'Largest wildfire ever recorded in EU'

BRUSSELS: A forest blaze in Greece is "the largest wildfire ever recorded in the EU" and the bloc is mobilising nearly half its firefighting air wing to tackle it, a European Commission spokesman said Tuesday. Eleven planes and one helicopter from the EU fleet have been sent to help Greece counter fires in the Dadia National Park, north of the city of Alexandroupolis, along with 407 firefighters, spokesman Balazs Ujvari said. Greece's fire service told AFP that "the fire is still out of control" in the reserve, a major sanctuary for birds of prey. It is raging across a nearly 10-kilometre (six-mile) front. The EU currently calls on a fleet of 28 aircraft – 24 water-dumping planes and four helicopters – supplied by member countries to help battle blazes in the bloc and in nearby neighbours. It is working on creating a standalone, EU-funded air wing of 12 aircraft that will be fully in place by 2030. "We do know that fires are getting more severe," Ujvari noted. "If you look at the figures every year in the past years, we are seeing trends which are not necessarily favourable, and that calls for of course more capacities at the member states' level." Greece has been ravaged by numerous fires this summer which the government attributes to climate change. The EU air deployment "underscores our commitment to swift and effective collective action in times of crisis," the EU's commissioner for crisis management, Janez Lenarcic, said. – APP

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