



# Islamabad POST

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**Name of caretaker Prime Minister will be revealed soon**

Detailed News On Page-01

**Taliban issues Fatwa against militancy abroad**

Detailed News On Page-01



**Murray reaches last 16 of Canadian Open**

Detailed News On Page-06



## Briefs

**Pak, KSA to boost investment**

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan and Saudi Arabia have agreed to explore investment opportunities in energy, agriculture, desalination, IT and mining sectors. According to Foreign Office Spokesperson Mumtaz Zahra Baloch, the understanding was reached during a meeting between the outgoing Foreign Minister Bilawal Bhutto Zardari and Saudi Vice Minister for Foreign Affairs Eng. Waleed Abdulkarim El Khereji, who led a delegation to Pakistan. During the meeting, the two sides reviewed various aspects of bilateral relations and underlined the importance of Pakistan-Saudi Arabia historic and deep-rooted fraternal ties which have stood the test of time.

**CM to reward position-holders**

ABBAS HASHMI

ISLAMABAD: Punjab Caretaker Chief Minister Mohsin Naqvi will be the chief guest at a function to be held in honour of matric position-holding students at Faletti's Hotel in Lahore on Friday. Chief Minister Mohsin Naqvi will also distribute prizes among the matric position-holders. On this occasion, the chief minister will also meet parents of the position-holders of the children. The chief minister will also meet and address the position-holding students.

**Sanjrani calls on PM Shehbaz**

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Chairman Senate Muhammad Sadiq Sanjrani called on Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif in Islamabad on Thursday. During the meeting, a detailed discussion was held on the existing political situation in the country. The Chairman Senate presented a rich tribute to the Prime Minister for leading the coalition government in an able manner and prudently strengthening the country's economy.

## PM rejects alleged 'conspiracy' Massive crime if contents of 'cipher' true

Pakistan isolated in world during Imran Niazi's tenure: PM

SHUJAAT HAMZA

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif has said that if the alleged contents of a diplomatic cipher — which ex-premier Imran Khan cited as proof of a conspiracy to remove his government — published in a US-based news organisation were true, it was tantamount to a "massive crime". The purported cipher — sent to Islamabad last year by Pakistan's former ambassador to the US — contained an account of a meeting between US State Department officials, including Assistant Secretary of State for the Bureau of South and Central Asian Affairs Donald Lu, and Pakistani envoy Asad Majeed Khan, and was reproduced on Wednesday by The Intercept. As per the purported contents of the cable, the US objected to Imran Khan's foreign policy regarding the Ukraine war. Dawn was unable to independently verify whether the contents of the cable reported by the US-based publication were indeed authentic. But the US State Department — while refraining from commenting on the veracity of the published cable — said its contents did not show the US taking a position on who the leader of Pakistan should be. Although The Intercept has claimed in its report that they were provided with the document by an anonymous source in the Pakistani military "who said that they had no

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**No consensus yet on caretaker PM**

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif met outgoing Opposition Leader in the National Assembly (NA) Raja Riaz on Thursday in what was their first meeting to reach a consensus on the name for the caretaker premier, according to Radio Pakistan. Confirming the anticipated meeting, Riaz said: "With a consensus, we have decided that there will be another meeting tomorrow (Friday)." Talking to reporters outside the Prime Minister's House today, Riaz said the hour-long meeting with PM Shehbaz was held in a cordial and conducive environment. "I will deliberate on the names given by the PM, and similarly, the PM sahib will go through the names given by me ... a meeting will be held again on Friday," he said. While refusing to reveal any of the candidates under consideration for the caretaker PM's slot, Riaz said six names came under discussion during today's meeting and all of them were "respectable people". "We will hold further deliberations tomorrow and hope that things will become pretty clear after that," he added.

## Addressing Pak concerns

### Afghan leader issues Fatwa against cross-border militancy

The Supreme Leader's Fatawa made a strict prohibition of Afghan citizens and members of the Afghan Transitional Government from engaging in jihad and militancy beyond the borders of Afghanistan

KABUL: In response to recent acts of terrorism and heightened regional tensions, Afghan Supreme Leader Sheikh Haibatullah Akhundzada Thursday issued a Fatawa (Decree) and strict orders aimed at curbing cross-border attacks and militancy in Pakistan from Afghanistan. The Supreme Leader's Fatawa made a strict prohibition of Afghan citizens and members of the Afghan Transitional Government from engaging in jihad and militancy beyond the borders of Afghanistan. Sheikh Haibatullah Akhundzada underscored in the orders that those who venture into Pakistan for militant activities will not be deemed martyrs in the event of their demise. Instead, their deaths will be characterized as 'impure', he said adding that any individuals found to be in violation of these

directives will face the removal of their affiliation with the Afghan Transitional Government. Furthermore, the Afghan government has made it clear that it will not send representatives to attend the funerals of Afghan citizens who perish in Pakistan as a result of their involvement in militancy and external conflicts. To reinforce these measures, Defense Minister Mulla Yaqub visited the Ministry of Defense on August 5, 2023, and issued unambiguous instructions to ensure that Afghan nationals abstain from participating in any wars outside of Afghanistan's borders. Minister Yaqub also made it unequivocally clear that the mandates set forth by Afghan Supreme Leader Sheikh Haibatullah Akhundzada are to be strictly adhered to. — DNA

## Inordinate delay in appointment of the caretaker prime minister

Senate Chairman Sadiq Sanjrani also girds up his loins for the top slot



ANSAR M BHATTI

ISLAMABAD: The Chairman Senate Sadiq Sanjrani has intensified his efforts to clinch the top position of the caretaker prime minister. His name, as reports suggest, has been proposed by the Opposition leader Raja Riaz Ahmed. In order to muster support Sanjrani has already met with Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif and on August 10, 2023 he met with the PDM leader Maulana Fazal ur Rehman. The sources familiar with this situation maintain the viewpoint that both the PML-N and PPP harbor reservations about the potential elevation of Sanjrani to the esteemed position. This reluctance stems from their perception that managing him could prove challenging, given his perceived proximity to the Establishment.

The PPP has proposed names of two brothers Tassadaq Hussain Jilani the former Chief Judge of the Supreme Court and Jaill Abbas Jilani the former Foreign Secretary of Pakistan. The sole "drawback" associated with them is their nomination by a particular political party; aside from this aspect, they seem to be exceptionally suitable candidates for this position. The PML-N remains inclined towards the notion of Ishaq Dar assuming the role of caretaker prime minister, as this would serve to secure its influence over governmental affairs. Nevertheless, the prospects of Dar ascending to the position of Prime Minister appear rather dim, considering the substantial backlash that greeted this proposition a few weeks ago. Nevertheless, it is worth acknowledging that Pakistan's history is punctuated

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ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif meets outgoing Opposition Leader in the National Assembly (NA) Raja Riaz. — DNA

**Dissolution of NA, cabinet notified**

All committees also dissolved

FAISAL SHEIKH

ISLAMABAD: Ministry of Parliamentary Affairs and the Cabinet Division on Thursday notified the dissolution of the National Assembly and the Federal Cabinet, respectively. "In pursuance of clause (1) of Article 58 of the Constitution of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan, the President of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan has been pleased to dissolve the National Assembly with immediate effect," a notification issued by the Ministry of Parliamentary Affairs here on Thursday said. Meanwhile, the Cabinet Division also issued three separate notifications under which 33 Federal Ministers, 07 Ministers of State, 05 Advisers to the PM and 38 Special Assistants to the PM will cease to hold their offices, respectively, with immediate effects.

**At least two injured in Quetta blast**

DNA

QUETTA: At least two people were injured after an explosion took place on Quetta's Moti Ram Road, police and rescue officials said on Thursday. Firefighters were called in as fire erupted in a shop situated in the area following the explosion, rescue officials said. Police said the nature of the blast is being ascertained. According to the police, the roofs of two shops were caved in while an inferno erupted due to the blast in another shop had been doused. Arsalan, a shopkeeper and his helper

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**"No comment on authenticity" 'It proves that there was no conspiracy', US on cipher leak**

The US had expressed concerns privately and publicly Khan's Moscow visit

CENTRELINE REPORT

WASHINGTON: US State Department spokesman Matthew Miller has said the alleged text of the diplomatic cipher proved that there was no conspiracy. In March 2022, a news report was published on "The Intercept" about the cipher's text sent by the Pakistani ambassador to the United States Asad Majeed, which contained the purported text of the diplomatic letter written by former ambassador after a conversation with US Assistant Secretary of State for Central and South Asia Donald Lu. "I can't talk about the authenticity of this document, if what was reported was even 100 percent correct, it doesn't in any way show that the United States has taken a position on which leader should lead Pakistan," Miller said at a press briefing in Washington. Matthew Miller said that the US had expressed its concerns with Pakistan privately and publicly about

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**PTI renews call for judicial commission**

KHAYAM ABBASI

ISLAMABAD: The Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) has once again called for the establishment of a high-powered judicial commission to thoroughly investigate the matter of cipher and subsequently make its findings public. The demand follows a news report published by an international news outlet which, according to PTI, corroborates former prime minister Imran Khan's assertion that his government's removal was influenced by the encouragement of the US government. A press statement released by PTI emphasised

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## NA gone; PTI marks 'Thanksgiving Day'

Fascist, inept govt ruins country economically, politically: Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf

STAFF REPORT

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) observed "Thanksgiving Day and Salvation Day" on Thursday at the end of the dark era of the PDM fascist and inept 16-month-long rule, which not only ruined the country economically and politically but it also destroyed the hard-earned peace due to the sheer incompetence and self-centered approach of the gang of 13 ruling parties. PTI issued a brief overview of PDM's one-and-a-half-year brutal rule on the occasion.

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**Bushra meets Imran; PTI worried about Khan's safety**

STAFF REPORT

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) Core Committee expressed great concern over the authorities concerned non-serious attitude pertaining to PTI Chairman and former prime minister

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Pakistan contingent finalised for Asian Games — Page 06

Speaker analyses Indonesian regional economic integration — Page 07

Muslims flee Indian business hub after religious attacks — Page 08

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## Iran's Consul General for coop with Pak, China

LAHORE: Iran can cooperate with Pakistan and China in many sectors including energy, infrastructure projects, and many other fields by providing its manpower and skilled labor. These views were expressed by Mr. Mehran Movahed Far, Consul General (CG) of Iran to Lahore who visited Pakistan China Joint Chamber of Commerce and Industry (PCJCCI) on Thursday at PCJCCI Secretariat to discuss trilateral relations between Iran, Pakistan and China. Mehran Movahed Far, on this occasion, expressed that Iran and Pakistan enjoy good relations that should be transformed into growing business relations to achieve mutual economic benefits. He stressed the need for a delegation of China and Pakistan to visit Iran see the potential for business and investment opportunities and assured that his Embassy.—



ISLAMABAD: Workers of Anti Encroachment Cell of CDA clears the encroachments of restaurants on footpath at G-8 Markaz during Anti Encroachment Operation in Federal Capital.—Online

## Farewell celebrations held to honour Marri

ISLAMABAD: The Benazir Income Support Programme family acknowledged the unwavering dedication and efforts of the Federal Minister for Poverty Alleviation and Social Protection, Shazia Marri in championing the noble cause of welfare for marginalized segments of society. The officials came together at the BISP Headquarters on Tuesday to bid a heartfelt farewell to the outgoing minister, Shazia Marri who is also Chairperson BISP. The event marked an emotional yet celebratory moment as Shazia Marri shared her reflections on her time with the BISP team and the remarkable achievements accomplished under her leadership. In her address, Shazia Marri said that BISP has witnessed a substantial increase in funding, with the allocation growing from Rs. 235 billion in FY 2021-22 to an impressive Rs. 404.2 billion in FY 2022-23. This surge in resources allowed BISP to expand its reach, as the number of eligible households surged from 7.6 million to 9 million. Notably, the stipend for the Benazir Kafalat programme was raised by 25%, and the quarterly stipend for BISP beneficiaries was elevated from Rs. 7000 to Rs. 8750, she said. Shazia Marri also highlighted the successful implementation of transformative initiatives, including the Benazir Nashonuma programme, which provided crucial support to 770,000 lactating mothers and infants through 488 Facilitation Centers across Pakistan. Additionally, the Benazir Taleemi Wazaif initiative witnessed a remarkable surge in children's enrollment from 2.6 million to an impressive 7.52 million. Shazia Marri further said that this was the first time in the history of Pakistan that the Benazir Income Support Programme included Transgender Persons in the Benazir Kafalat Programme. Mobile Registration Vehicles have been introduced to reach the most vulnerable communities in remote regions of Balochistan and Sindh, she said.—APP

## Legislative business in 15th National Assembly witnesses 45% increase

ISLAMABAD: Legislative activity in the 15th National Assembly, which was dissolved on Thursday, witnessed an increase of 45% as it passed a total of 279 bills against 192 laws by the 14th National Assembly, according to an analysis by the Pakistan Institute of Legislative Development and Transparency (PILDAT). The biggest show of confidence in the 15th National Assembly came from its own membership in terms of their attendance. The Prime Minister, as Leader of the House, set that trend. According to the PILDAT analysis, Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif reflected a much better figure of 17% attendance of the Assembly sittings as against former prime minister Imran Khan who showed a dismal 11% attendance. Average attendance of members of the National Assembly (MNAs) in five years stands at 61% though it stood at 67% before the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf's (PTI) decision to quit the NA. The 15th National Assembly witnessed two governments: the first from August 18, 2018 to April 10, 2022 with PTI Chairman Imran Khan as PM, while the second was formed by a coalition of the Pakistan Democratic Movement (PDM) and the Pakistan Peoples Party Parliamentarians (PPPP) with Shehbaz Sharif as PM which lasted from April 11, 2022 to August 09, 2023. The PTI government relied heavily on ordinances for the purpose of legislation. Out of 75 ordinances laid in the National Assembly in five years, only three were promulgated by the coalition government while 72 were promulgated by the PTI government. Compared to the term of the 14th National Assembly when only 38 ordinances were promulgated, a 97% increase was witnessed in the number of ordinances passed by the 15th National Assembly. The 15th National Assembly also passed the largest number of laws as compared to the previous three assemblies starting from 2002. Just during the last three weeks of the 15th National Assembly, 73 bills were passed.—APP



KARACHI: Chairman Sindh Technical Education & Vocational Training Authority (STEVTA) Mr. Saleem Raza Jalbani, while after meeting with Daily "Islamabad Post and Centerline", Karachi Bureau Chief Nazir Siyal discuss about the Artificial intelligence and technological advancement in Education.—DNA

## President reaffirms vow to safeguard minorities' rights

ISLAMABAD: President Dr Arif Alvi on Thursday reaffirmed the nation's commitment to safeguarding the religious, social, political, and economic rights of minorities in Pakistan. "We assure all minority groups that Pakistan will continue to protect their rights as well as work for their well-being," the president said in his message on Minorities' Day observed in Pakistan on August 11. He called upon religious scholars and the media to educate society about the rights of minorities and promote a culture of love, tolerance, brotherhood, and unity in the country. He expressed the hope that through society's collective efforts, a stronger and more

prosperous Pakistan could be forged, where every individual could thrive and contribute their unique talents to the nation's development. The president highlighted the distinguished role played by minorities in the nation-building process and appreciated their role in the country's development. He expressed his pleasure that minorities in Pakistan enjoyed all political, economic, and social rights guaranteed by the Constitution of Pakistan. "The Constitution guarantees the political, economic, and social rights of all citizens, regardless of their religious beliefs or ethnicity. As Muslims, we find inspiration in the teachings of Islam, which

emphatically advocate for the protection of minority rights and equality among all people, fostering a spirit of harmony and unity within our diverse society," he remarked. The president said that Pakistan had consistently made efforts for the welfare and upkeep of minorities, including the reservation of a 5% quota in government jobs, and separate seats for minorities in both houses of the Parliament to encourage their active participation in the political and economic development of the country. Moreover, steps are being taken to provide grants, financial assistance, and scholarships to individuals and students from minor-

ty communities to support them in their educational pursuits, besides preserving their places of worship, he added. He said the aforesaid steps served as a testament to Pakistan's commitment to fostering an inclusive and representative society in Pakistan. The president said he had complete confidence that Pakistan's minorities would continue to play their pivotal role in the national development process. "On this occasion, I extend my warmest wishes to all minority groups in Pakistan, and I am sure that they would continue to contribute towards the socio-economic uplift of our beloved country," he remarked.

## SBP to issue Rs100 coin to commemorate 10 years of CPEC

KARACHI: To mark the 10th anniversary of the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC), the State Bank of Pakistan (SBP) to issue Rs 100 commemorative coin on Friday. The coin shall be issued through the exchange counters of SBP Banking Services Corporation from August 11, 2023, said a statement issued here on Thursday. The government of Pakistan has decided to issue a commemorative coin of Rs.100 in recognition of the significant contribution of the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor to country's infrastructure.—APP

# اقلیتیں با اختیار برابری کا حقدار

## اگست

قومی اقلیتی ڈے

"آپ آزاد ہیں، آپ آزاد ہیں اپنے مندروں میں جانے کے لیے،  
آپ آزاد ہیں اپنی مسجدوں میں جانے کے لیے اور ریاست پاکستان میں اپنی کسی بھی عبادت گاہ میں جانے کے لیے،  
آپ کا تعلق کسی بھی مذہب ذات یا نسل سے ہو، ریاست کا اس سے کوئی لینا دینا نہیں۔" 11 اگست 1947

حکومت پنجاب اقلیتوں کے شانہ بشانہ کھڑی ہے اور ان کے حقوق کے تحفظ اور فلاح و بہبود کیلئے ہمہ وقت کوشاں ہے

محکمہ انسانی حقوق و اقلیتی امور  
حکومت پنجاب

SPL-1112

## Revolutionising higher education quality Pakistan launches innovative quality assurance framework

DNA

ISLAMABAD: The Higher Education Commission (HEC), Pakistan has launched the revamped Quality Assurance Framework, "Pakistan Precepts, Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (PSG-2023) in line with HEC Vision 2025. With this Pakistan has taken a significant step forward in its pursuit of academic excellence with the official launch of the Revamped Quality Assurance (QA) Framework for Higher Education. The launching ceremony, held in Islamabad, in collaboration and support of British Council Pakistan, brought together esteemed dignitaries, education experts, and stakeholders from across the country. The Revamped QA Framework represents a paradigm shift in how higher education quality is assessed, maintained, and enhanced. Crafted through collaboration with international experts, the framework aligns with global best practices while addressing the unique needs of the Pakistani education landscape.

The framework introduces a comprehensive review mechanism based on 16 Institutional Quality Standards. Down the road, the Framework has the capacity to classify the Institutions into categorization based on their performance. The major categories accordingly are four colours - Green (most effective), Blue (progressive), Yellow (average), and Grey (unclassified) - determining their funding and customized policy interventions. The Institutional Quality Standards cover several key themes including, Academic Quality and Curricula, Research, Innovation and Entrepreneurship, Academia-Industry and External Linkage, Technology Infrastructure and Enhancement, Corporate Governance, Audit & Finance, Community Service & Engagement, and Graduate Quality and Employability. Institutions will undergo external accreditation reviews by the Quality Assurance Agency (QAA) and Accreditation Councils, along with internal self-assessment processes. This multi-faceted approach ensures a holistic evaluation of institutional quality. The Revamped QA Frame-

work aligns with international benchmarks, enhancing the recognition and reputation of Pakistani institutions on the global stage. It promotes collaboration, quality enhancement, and academic integrity. The launch ceremony witnessed the presence of high-ranking officials, including former Minister for Federal Education and Professional Training, Minister of Planning, Development & Special Initiatives, Mr. Ahsan Iqbal emphasised the Government's commitment to elevating higher education standards in the country. Distinguished speakers, including Speakers Vicki Stott, Chief Executive, and Christopher Bland QAA-UK (virtual participation), highlighted the transformative changes brought about by the framework and its potential to reshape the higher

education landscape. Chairman HEC Dr. Mukhtar Ahmed, expressed his enthusiasm for the new framework, stating, "The Revamped QA Framework is a testament to our dedication to providing quality higher education. It will foster collaboration, innovation, and continuous improvement, creating a strong foundation for our students' success." The event featured engaging discussions, interactive sessions, and insightful presentations about the framework's impact on universities, faculty, and students. Attendees were provided with a glimpse into how the Revamped QA Framework will revolutionize quality assurance practices, encourage academic progress, and promote excellence throughout the higher education sector. HEC's Quality Department Quality Assurance Agency (QAA) is the driving force behind the Revamped Quality Assurance Framework, working tirelessly to elevate higher education quality and empower the next generation of leaders.



## National Days and Armed Forces Days

### August

Aug 01/China  
Armed Forces Day

Aug 01/Switzerland  
National Day

Aug 01/Lebanon  
Armed Forces Day

Aug 01/Syria  
Armed Forces Day

Aug 4/Burkina Faso  
National Day

Aug 09/Singapore

Aug 15/DPR Korea  
Independence Day

Aug 15/India  
Independence Day

Aug 15/Poland  
Armed Forces Day

Aug 17/Indonesia  
Independence Day

Aug 24/Ukraine  
Independence Day

Aug 25/Uruguay  
Independence Day

Aug 30/Turkey  
Armed Forces Day

Aug 31/Kyrgyz  
Republic  
Independence Day

Aug 31/Malaysia  
National Day

### Hotels & Restaurants



Serena Hotel.....111 133 133  
Marriott.....051- 2826121  
Monal.....0334-5421812



Turkish Airlines.....8494949



### Emergency

Rescue (Police).....15  
Bomb Disposal.....15  
Fire Services Rawalpindi/  
Islamabad.....1122 & 16  
Emergency Ambulance.1122  
& Rescue Services.4451122  
Motorway Police.....9266044  
Motorway Police.9270601-20  
Women Police Stations  
Islamabad.....9222596  
Rawalpindi.....9270601-20



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Railway Inquiry.....117  
Railway Exchange 9270831-5  
WASA Rawalpindi.5555489  
CAA.....9281092



### Hospitals

CMH.....5611111  
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



### Departments

CDA.....9221334-43  
CDA.....9208301-04  
Met Office.....9250360-6  
RDA.....5555864  
TMA.....5770886  
Cantonment Board 9270151-3

### Water Tank

Islamabad.....0321-5744480

# Businessmen asked to control use of polythene bags

Ahsan Bakhtawari said that the rising heatwaves, droughts, floods and heavy rains are the outcome of changing climate and stressed that the government should take urgent measures to promote a healthy environment to save the country from more natural tragedies

MAHNOOR ANSAR

ISLAMABAD: Ms. Farzana Altaf Shah, Director General, Pakistan Environment Protection Agency (Pak-EPA) said that the polythene shopping bags pose serious threats to human health and the environment besides causing blockage of streams, nullahs and sewerage lines, therefore, the business community should cooperate in controlling their use in the federal capital to promote a healthy environment. She said this while addressing the members of Islamabad Chamber of Commerce & Industry during her visit to ICCI. Farzana Altaf Shah said that PAK-EPA needs the cooperation of ICCI and the Market Associations for proper implementation of plastic shopping bags laws and regulations to make Islamabad a plastic free city. She briefed the business community about the key features of the new regulations to prohibit the use of plastic shopping bags and hoped that as responsible citizens, they would extend full cooperation in complying with these regulations. Speaking on the occasion, Ahsan Zafar Bakhtawari, President, Islamabad



Chamber of Commerce & Industry assured that the business community would cooperate in controlling the plastic shopping bags in Islamabad in order to make Islamabad a clean & green and environmentally friendly city. However, he said that the government should ensure the easy availability of the alternatives of plastic shopping bags and adopt a gradual approach for the implementation of a ban on their use to

save the business community from unnecessary problems. He said that a national drive should be launched to promote tree plantation, green energy, recycling plans and waste management systems to save the environment from further deterioration. He said that strong measures should be taken to control illegal plastic bags production. He stressed that the government should subsidize the production of alterna-

tives of polythene bags. Khalid Iqbal Malik, ICCI Group Leader showed concerns over the changing climate and emissions of various hazardous smokes in Islamabad and stressed that PAK-EPA should take strong actions to control them. Zafar Bakhtawari, former President ICCI and Secretary General UBG said that the government should give awards to those businesses who fully comply with the environmental laws and contribute to promote a healthy environment. It would motivate others to implement such laws. He said that ICCI is ready to give award the Ms. Farzana Altaf Shah in recognition of her efforts to promote a healthy environment in the Capital. He said that reward and punishment is part of every society. He said that ICCI would also give awards to those businessmen who would promote environmentally friendly business activities to motivate them. Asad Aziz, Raja Hassan Akhtar, Zahid Qureshi, Akhlaq Abbasi, Khalid Chaudhry, Sardar Shabbir Abbasi, Abdul Rehman Siddiqui, Akhtar Abbasi, Shahid Gondal, Faseeh ullah Khan, Dr. Zaigham, Jamil Ahmed Qureshi, Malik Shabbir, Shah Anwar and others were present on the occasion.

## PM advises civil servants to work for country's welfare

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif on Thursday advised the civil servants especially those employed in the PM Office and PM House to work diligently for the betterment of the country. Addressing a gathering of the luncheon given in honour of staff of the PM Office and PM House, Shehbaz Sharif stressed the need to get united and put collective efforts to take the country towards sustainable development and

stability. "We all should endeavour to free the country from all domestic and international loans and put it on strong footing," he added. The prime minister said Allah Almighty had blessed the country with huge natural resources but the only thing that lacked was "the will to do". He said after rendering great sacrifices, Pakistan was formed for a certain cause. "We all have the duty to play our role in the development of the country and to fulfil the vision of the founder of

Pakistan Quid-i-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah and Allama Iqbal," he added. "We should also promise to follow the teachings of the Holy Prophet Hazrat Muhammad (PBUH), and fulfil the vision of Quid-i-Azam and Allama Muhammad Iqbal to make Pakistan and prosperous and peaceful country." He thanked the staff for their assistance during his stay in the office of the Prime Minister. "I thank you all for supporting and guiding me during my 16-month stay in the

office. Either they are my personal secretaries, military secretary, drivers, cook, telephone operators, deputy secretaries, PSOs, or others, all did their duties with due diligence and guided me on various matters," he added. He said due to economic challenges, the cabinet members voluntarily withdrew from perks and privileges and most of them did not draw their salaries. On the occasion the prime minister also distributed certificates of encouragement among the staff of grades 1 to 16.

## Brands offering Independence Day discounts to customers

ISLAMABAD: With only a few days left in the Independence Day celebrations, falling on August 14, different fashion brands and outlets in the federal capital have started offering good discounts on dresses, shoes, and other accessories to attract buyers, especially women. Every year, famous brands offer good sales and discount offers on the occasion of Independence Day giving an opportunity to the people to buy good stocks for the next whole season. "Buying summer dresses and other seasonal accessories at full price has become difficult for the working class during the prevailing inflation so we wait for such occasions to come", Aisha Naz, a mother of three children said. Talking to APP, she said that "We always buy clothes for ourselves and kids at the sales offered on Independence Day and other such occasions for the next season". Sajida Noreen, a government employee said, "I follow all the brands' pages on the social media platforms and whenever receive notification of discounts and sales on summer stuff, I rush immediately to buy these in bulk". However, online sales have also made the shopping hassle-free while saving us from visiting markets during humid weather conditions, she added. —DNA

## Around 32,430 assets distributed

ISLAMABAD: A total of 32,430 assets have been distributed among 112,973 households during May 2022-March 2023 under the National Poverty Graduation Initiative (NPGI) being executed by the Ministry of Poverty Alleviation and Social Safety. According to an official source, the NPGI is supported by the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) and the government. The assets distributed among the households consist of livestock and agricultural as well as technological assets e.g. dairy animals, fattening animals, hand-tractors, digital skills, customized small vehicles for carriage and transportation in rural areas, milk collector's motorbikes and enterprises. About the livelihood trainings component, the source revealed that as many as 83,237 households received livelihoods trainings during the period while total 111,726 trainings were provided on enterprise development, asset management and functional literacy to help them effectively utilize the given assets and interest-free loans for business purposes. About the interest-free loans, the source said that a total of 362,487 interest-free loans were provided during the period.—APP

## PML-N leadership hopes to see Nawaz back

ISLAMABAD: Senior leader of Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz Mian Javed Latif on Thursday said that without Mian Nawaz Sharif it is impossible to turn around the country back to the path of prosperity and economic growth. He said the PDM-led government under the leadership of Shehbaz Sharif tried its best to make a prosperous Pakistan during its 15 months' tenure. "Mian Nawaz Sharif will come back to Pakistan in mid-September to participate in the elections and lead the country towards an affluent path after winning the elections", said Javed Latif. Addressing a press conference, he said the former PTT's government had plundered the country during three and half year tenure with the enormous support of an institution however the PDM government led by Shehbaz Sharif tried hard to improve the economy and foreign relations. He said people sitting in institutes, the general public and CPEC opponents have realized that a prosperous Pakistan is impossible without Nawaz Sharif's coming back on the political spectrum. Today, the nation is facing the results of a conspiracy hatched against Nawaz Sharif in 2015 because all characters of the 2017 elections were part of an international conspiracy, said Javed Latif.—APP

## SP Potohar holds 'Khuli Kutchery'

RAWALPINDI: Superintendent of Police (SP) Potohar, Muhammad Waqas Khan on the directives of City Police Officer, Rawalpindi Syed Khalid Hamdani held a 'Khuli Kutchery' here on Thursday in Police Lines Headquarters to address grievances of the people. According to a Police spokesman, Police Officers under Punjab's open door policy are holding 'Khuli Kutcheries' to provide relief to the citizens. He informed that the SP issued directives to the officers concerned to take action and submit a report on the complaint submitted by the citizens in 'Khuli Kutchery'. The SP on the occasion said, the 'Khuli Kutcheries' were being held to provide the citizens immediate relief and addressed their complaints besides it also helped improve standards of policing. The SP issued orders to the officers concerned to complete inquiries and send reports within given time frame. He said, all-out efforts were being made to ensure dispensation of speedy justice purely on merit to the people and improve service delivery standard.—DNA

## National Minority Day would be observed today

ISLAMABAD: The National Minorities Day would be observed on Friday (August 11) in the federal capital and across the country with the aim to highlight their religious and socio-economic rights. The declaration to mark National Minorities Day was adopted as part of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights to help and secure those belonging to religious, linguistic, national or ethnic minority groups. Pakistan being the Islamic state and its Constitution guarantees the rights of minorities as white color in our flag also represents the minorities. The Muslim population in Illegally Indian occupied Jammu and Kashmir (IIOJK) is brutally treated by Indian security forces. Over one hundred thousand Kashmiris have been martyred so far. The purpose of observing the Day is to highlight the message of Father of the Nation Quaid-e-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah, who had pronounced equal rights to all citizens of Pakistan. The Government of Pakistan declared 11 August as the National Minority Day in 2009. It has always been the endeavor of the government to safeguard the fundamental rights, safety, security, honors, life, liberty and prosperity of minorities in line with the historic speech of the founder of the nation Quaid-e-Azam Mohammad Ali Jinnah at the Constituent Assembly on August 11, 1947. Nonetheless, the National Minorities Day not only expresses gratitude for the contributions, made by these religious communities, but also professes that future development of Pakistan hinges crucially on their efforts. On this occasion, different events and seminars would be held all over the country and in this regard, Shaheed Bhutto Foundation would also organize "National Minority Day".—APP

## Governance challenges, environmental concerns

ALTAF KUMAIL



In recent years, Gilgit-Baltistan (GB), a region in Pakistan, has been grappling with the profound impacts of climate change. The area has witnessed a surge in detrimental effects, including frequent river floods, landslides triggered by glacial lakes, unseasonal rains, and unprecedented snowfalls. Unfortunately,

the governance system in GB is plagued by weaknesses, and outdated bureaucratic measures are being employed to protect the economic interests of powerful elites and influential investors. As a result, both the inhabitants and the biodiversity of the region are facing significant threats, with continued investments contributing to the destruction of the local ecology and environment. The deterioration of the ecology and environment in Gilgit-Baltistan can be attributed to the diminishing government structure and feeble governance. This decline is characterized by environmental pollution, socio-economic injustices, and complex political problems. Moreover, the lack of awareness and consciousness among the general public exacerbates the threats to the region's

natural environment. Gilgit-Baltistan operates under a colonial-style system of government, where the privileged elite class utilizes various tactics, including bureaucracy and non-governmental organizations, to exploit and plunder the region's natural resources. One alarming example of this can be seen in the proposed GB Land Reforms Bill, which aims to exploit the natural resources of the area most affected by climate change. Such practices endanger both the people and biodiversity residing in this region. The members of the Gilgit-Baltistan Assembly and the government find themselves at the mercy of the devolved bureaucracy and the privileged class associated with the ruling federal political parties. This colonial-style governance exemplifies the environ-

mental, political, social, and economic challenges faced by Gilgit-Baltistan. Over the past seventy-five years, the ruling elite of Pakistan has undermined the democratic political rights of the people. Rather than prioritizing the protection of economic interests in the face of escalating climate change, the government focuses on personal and short-term gains, lacks administrative capacity, and fails to adopt a holistic national perspective. These factors further contribute to the worsening environmental, political, social, and economic conditions of Gilgit-Baltistan. When examining Pakistan's climate change policies, it becomes evident that the country is a signatory to numerous international agreements aimed at safeguarding the natural environment and mitigating the threats posed by climate change,

such as the Paris Agreement. Pakistan has national responsibilities, including the development and implementation of National Adaptation Plans (NAPs), as part of its commitment to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) and the Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs). Recognizing Pakistan's vulnerability to natural disasters, the country has also acknowledged the need to address the situations caused by such disasters and protect the most vulnerable groups. This commitment is reflected in Pakistan's endorsement of The Hyogo Framework for Action (HFA), which focuses on rehabilitating individuals adversely affected by disasters and preventing climate change drivers. However, despite the severe environmental chal-

lenges faced by Gilgit-Baltistan, both the central and regional governments appear to be supporting anti-environmental activities in the region. It is crucial for environmental organizations and the Gilgit-Baltistan government to clarify their objectives and actions taken to mitigate climate change. A thorough understanding is needed as to why mineral mining and investments in the region most affected by climate change are prioritized over environmentally friendly initiatives. Additionally, it is important to identify laws promoting sustainable tourism that hinder the enforcement of existing environmental protection laws. Steps should be taken to prevent glacier melting due to environmental pollution caused by mountaineering and conservation activities, as well as to reduce pollution caused by transportation within the tourism industry.



## Briefs

## Pakistani and Chinese institutes sign MoU

DNA

ISLAMABAD: The Institute of Plant Protection, Chinese Academy of Agricultural Sciences (IPPCAAS), and the Department of Entomology at the University of Agriculture have signed an agreement in Beijing to establish the Pakistan-China Joint Research Facility for 'Trim Brother Administration.' The ceremony took place at IPPCAAS. The letter of intent was duly signed by IPPCAAS Executive Director Lu Yanhui and UAF Vice Chancellor Professor Dr. Iqbal Ahmad Khan, as stated in an official statement issued here, according to Gwadar Pro. As per the agreement, both sides will establish the joint research facility to address the prevention and control of crop pests in Pakistan and China. This collaboration involves conducting tests, demonstrations, and joint research on integrated disease control strategies for common crop ailments. It also encompasses workforce training and exchange programs.

## UoS signs intents of coop with two Chinese varsities

DNA

ISLAMABAD: The University of Sargodha (UoS) signed separate intents of cooperation with two Chinese universities to pave the way for the exchange of knowledge, academic collaboration, knowledge economy, and mutual growth. As per a statement issued on Wednesday, UoS extended its global outreach by forging a collaborative bond with the Shenyang Urban Construction University, China. This partnership aims to synergize efforts in establishing joint campuses on both sides. The intent of cooperation outlines faculty exchanges, collaborative research projects, and potential joint degree programs to address the challenges of rapid urbanization and architectural evolution. Moreover, UoS signed an intent of cooperation with the Liaoning Communication University, China.

## Caretaker PM to hold transparent elections

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Central Information Secretary of Pakistan People's Party (PPP) Faisal Karim Kundi Thursday hoped that the caretaker prime minister will hold transparent elections which would lead towards a new chapter of prosperity in the country. "PML-N and the PPP had shortlisted three final names for the slot of caretaker prime minister and all of them were politicians", he said while talking to a private news channel. He said Prime Minister Shahbaz Sharif had taken all opposition leaders in confidence, adding, names of Ishaq Dar, Hafeez Sheikh and Jalil Abbas Jilani among others have emerged for the interim premier's slot but Prime Minister Shahbaz Sharif will disclose and confirm the name.



ISLAMABAD: Laborers are busy in carpeting of the road during the construction of E-11 Flyover in Federal Capital.—Online

## Senators briefed about Pak strategy about climate change

FAISAL SHEIKH

ISLAMABAD: Senate Standing Committee on Climate Change convened at the Parliament House, with Senator Seemee Ezdi in Chair. During the meeting, the committee members were provided with an insightful briefing by Ministry officials regarding Pakistan's holistic strategy in addressing Climate Change. The officials expounded on the intricacies of the "National Adaptation Plan" (NAP), a meticulously crafted blueprint resulting from extensive consultations at both Federal and Provincial levels. The NAP stands as a visionary pathway, aimed at bolstering Pakistan's resilience to climate challenges and fostering robust communities. Among its primary objectives, the NAP seeks to galvanize financial resources and

establish a global fund pipeline. It centers on the formulation of adaptive strategies and the delineation of sectoral priorities. The plan encompasses a multitude of crucial facets, including Disaster Risk Management, the National Clean Air Policy, the expansion of Green Pakistan, directives on National Hazardous Waste Policy, regulations addressing Single Use Plastic, the 2023 Climate Change Gender Action Plan (CCGAP), and more. The NAP also unveils a spectrum of transformative initiatives, such as the Living Indus Initiative, Recharge Pakistan, Scaling Up of Glacial Lake Outburst Flood (GLOF) Risk Reduction (GLOF-ID), RED++ Readiness Initiative, Pakistan Blue Carbon Ecosystems, and Snow Leopard Conservation. Additionally, the Ministry officials briefed the Committee on the preparations for the up-

coming COP-28, set to convene in the UAE. They emphasized Pakistan's focal points during COP-28, including Global Financial Architecture Reforms, an expanded scope for grant-based global financing, leveraging the Loss and Damage Fund, doubling adaptation finance, accelerating the commitment of providing 100 Billion USD annually for climate initiatives, ensuring access to the Just Energy Transition Work Programme, and the establishment and funding of early warning systems and risk reduction mechanisms for highly vulnerable countries. The committee lauded the ministry officials for their effective advocacy on Pakistan's behalf at the international stage. On the consideration of point of public importance regarding the flood mitigation measures in Pakistan raised by Senator Rubina Khalid in the Senate sitting, the

committee decided to summon provincial forest departments and the federal flood commission for the next meeting. A comprehensive update was furnished to the committee regarding the news of a golf course construction within Margalla Hills National Park (MHNP) near Sinyari village. Rina Saeed from IWMB stated that ongoing demarcation of the National Park Boundary was following court directives, adding that 138 acres of land had purportedly been allocated by CDA for the golf course construction, a move contested as encroaching upon Margalla National Park Land. CDA officials argued that the 138-acre was part of Chonhra village, not the National Park—an assertion contradicted by IWMD officials. Committee members expressed deep concerns about the encroachment on National Park Land in Islamabad.

Climate Change Minister Sherry Rehman emphasized the need for a clear demarcation of the National Park Boundary to prevent further encroachments. She also shared her efforts to address the construction of a road through the National Park Land, having contacted relevant authorities to halt the unauthorized activity. IWMB officials noted that road construction was still ongoing based on their information. The committee made recommendation for immediate ceasure of unlawful construction. Attending the committee meeting were Senators Taj Haider, Mushahid Hussain Sayed, Rubina Khalid, Imamuddin Shouqeen, Keshoo Bai, Dr. Mohammad Humayun Mohmand, Federal Minister for Climate Change Senator Sherry Rehman, and officials from the Ministry of Climate Change, CDA, and IWMB.

## Preparations for 14 August celebrations

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Preparations for the upcoming 76th independence day (14 August) are at its peak as the country has worn its national flag color with a display of a number of seasonal foot-path stalls carrying attractive colourful accessories and clothes. Like every year, this year too Jashan-i-Azadi stalls carrying national flags, bunting, pin badges, green and white dresses, toys, and other accessories set up at the main avenues, markets and roads of the cities, said a report aired by PTV news channel. A trader selling national flags shared his views to APP scribe that there is much enthusiasm among youngsters, adding, the public is excited and buying tri-colored clothes and accessories. "Our sales have already gone up by over 100pc. —APP

## Pakistan-China welding school help locals lighten up future

So far 124 students have received training, of which 61 students have graduated and all got successfully employed. "The employment rate has reached 100%," source from CCCC noted, according to China Economic Net (CEN).

DNA

ISLAMABAD: A Karachi-based "Welding School" under the Greater Karachi Water Supply Scheme - also known as K-IV - has trained several technical talents locally, helping the locals receive both training and jobs. According to the school, it was jointly launched by Pakistan Water and Power Development Authority (WAPDA) and China Communications Construction Company Limited (CCCC) and each training session lasts for seven days. So far 124 students have received training, of which 61 students have graduated and all got successfully employed. "The employment rate has reached 100%," source from CCCC noted, according to China Eco-

nomics Net (CEN). K-IV is a vital project for Karachi, as it would help address the issue of water supply to the cosmopolitan city and economic hub of Pakistan. However, the city is facing a shortage of well-trained welders. To tackle this, the management of K-IV established a "Welding School" specifically for local employees. This school can not only solve the shortage of welders in the local market but also provide advanced technical support from China to local employees. The "Welding School" is a technical training center led by professional Chinese welding masters, specifically providing practical training and technical guidance for local employees. This school is dedicated to helping the locals improve

their welding skills. After training, the project will greenlight outstanding trainees' employment by allowing them to join the project or they can also choose to work for other companies. Pakistani Federal Minister for Water Resources Syed Khurshid Ahmed Shah highlighted that the completion of the K-IV project will effectively alleviate the water shortage in Karachi, and so to improve people's lives and promote economic development in the region. K-IV is the largest livelihood project in Pakistan to date, and upon completion, it will solve the water problem for over 20 million people in Karachi. The reporter learned that the project has been underway for one year and 39% construction has already been completed.

## Pak honors overseas Chinese

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Government of Pakistani honors overseas Chinese for their commitment to shared prosperity through CPEC. In a remarkable commendation ceremony for the shared prosperity through CPEC held here as one of the series of celebrations to

mark the 10th anniversary of CPEC. On this occasion, the Pakistani government extended its gratitude and recognition to the overseas Chinese for their unwavering commitments to CPEC project. The event, attended by high-ranking officials from both countries, highlighted the significant contribution made by the overseas Chinese in Pakistan

towards fostering shared prosperity and strengthening bilateral ties. Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif appreciated Lahore Overseas Chinese Association (LOCA) for its commitment to shared prosperity through CPEC, according to a report published by Gwadar Pro on Thursday. He pointed out that over

the past decade, CPEC has made such tremendous achievements, which not only promoted the socio-economic development of Pakistan and created a large number of jobs, but also further enhanced the 'iron iron' friendship between China and Pakistan, and is a 'game changer' in Pakistan and South Asia.



ISLAMABAD: vendors displaying National flags along Islamabad Expressway to attract customers as nation starts preparation to celebrate Independent Day in befitting manners.—APP

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## Investment weaponization to create barriers

**G**IVEN the absence of the media noise, as well as the messaging remarks that usually accompany a typical executive order by the president of the United States, Wednesday's order may indeed have had a "low-key" rollout. That much of what it says had been anticipated is partly attributable to the lack of fanfare. Also, it has been substantially narrowed and toned down, according to reports, which is likely another contributing factor. Still, President Joe Biden's order restricting US investments in certain Chinese technology sectors is a fresh blow to bilateral ties.

The pretext is again national security. The new executive order is aimed at denying China, as a "country of concern", access to "sensitive technologies critical to national security". Semiconductors and microelectronics, quantum information technologies, and artificial intelligence are those identified.

Such a "narrowly targeted" national security action, according to the White House, seeks to "prevent US investments from helping accelerate the indigenization of these technologies", the White House stated in its news release. As a result, some investments will be subject to strict scrutiny; others will simply be prohibited. Coupled with the export controls already in place, the newly proposed control on US investments in China will be a major blow to the overall Chinese start-up ecosystem and US efforts to share China's development dividends. But on top of such a lose-lose scenario for the world's largest two economies themselves, it poisons the global market with harmful geopolitical factors and has the potential to render the current international economic and trade regime dysfunctional. But with the next US presidential election looming on the horizon, Biden doesn't want to be perceived as being soft on China.

Although the White House argues it is "de-risking", the Chinese Foreign Ministry made no bones about Beijing viewing the move as "decoupling" under the guise of "de-risking" in the field of investments". While the moves against Chinese tech companies such as Huawei are intended to limit the use of their products or services, so as to protect US companies by providing a lifeline in the market. The investment restrictions are more than "protecting technologies that are critical to the next generation of military innovation".

The White House claims they are a "small yard, high fence" approach intended to hinder China "advancing" the development "of such sensitive technologies". But while the executive order is couched in terms of national security, it is essentially economic protectionism aimed at directing capital, the lifeblood of research and development, away from China by means of coercion.

This will have a domino effect on other countries, reducing their economic growth. It will also further fuel the tensions between Beijing and Washington and likely lead to escalating frictions beyond the economic sphere.



## World burns on US' stake of political correctness

**T**HERE is apparently no need for politicians in Washington to have any evidence to raise questions about a "threat" to the national security of the United States from China. It has become political correctness. Such a mindset has found fresh expression in a recent letter to the chair of the Federal Communications Commission, asking the FCC to address questions about potential security concerns involving cellular modules made by Chinese companies including Quectel and Fibocom Wireless. The Republican chair of the House of Representatives China Select Committee, Mike Gallagher, and the panel's top Democrat, Raja Krishnamoorthi, in a letter to FCC Chair Jessica Rosenworcel raised the alarm that US medical equipment, vehicles and farm equipment could be accessed and controlled remotely from China if they use Chinese-made cellular modules, according to Reuters. FirstNet officials and sources close to Chinese device manufacturers said that the way Chinese modules are built into FirstNet-certified devices locks them down, and that no data is sent to China. FirstNet Authority Communications Director Ryan Oremland told Newsweek in a written response to questions that ensuring the security of the FirstNet network is paramount for the company. He said there was "a robust process", including extensive testing, to ensure "the highest levels of security are maintained on the network and any equipment or devices that are used on the network."

However, in Washington, given the current national narrative and political discourse, it is not a question of whether technological equipment made by Chinese companies really does pose a threat to US national security. It is a question of whether politicians in Washington can raise questions about them to show that they have their finger on the pulse to safeguard the vital organs of the US. "Threat or potential threat to national security" has become a virtue-signaling grab bag for politicians in Washington. In September, the FCC named Chinese telecom companies Pacific Networks, along with its wholly owned subsidiary ComNet (US), and China Unicom (Americas) as threats to US national security under a 2019 law aimed at protecting communications networks. In March 2021, the FCC initially designated five Chinese companies under its "Covered List", including Huawei Technologies, ZTE, Hytera Communications, Hangzhou Hikvision Digital Technology and Zhejiang Dahua Technology. The FCC did not have any evidence to support its decision, which is essentially a witch-hunt targeting the Chinese companies. What Washington has done to these Chinese companies for political reasons has twisted market rules and fair competition. The unfair treatment of Chinese telecommunications companies is detrimental to the global industry and supply chains, and will undoubtedly do a disservice to the development of the US economy. Nor will China just stand by when its companies are unfairly treated. The tit-for-tat between the world's largest two economies, instigated by Washington, bodes ill for the global economy.

## Our startups, our great hope

Qamar Bashir



Smart Helmet is a safety venture that employs the IoT to detect poisonous gases and guide illiterate miners to safety. Tawazun is a fintech venture that offers microloans to rural Pakistani women

**H**OW can a country not have hopes and dreams for a better future if its startups have the grit, tenacity, and determination to successfully produce jet engines, energy-efficient air conditioners, bioplastic, 3D high-tech computers, and drones? I learned this while watching dinnertime television beginning at 8:00 p.m., where high-profile, lucid, and professional anchors with fat salaries dig up one issue after another, or if there is no issue, they create one and create a molehill to spread as much despair as possible. My resistance gave up, and my fingers on the remote shifted away from doomsday scenarios and towards prime time entertainment channels for some relief. PTV home made me pause when I saw a young man in his twenties presenting his start-up proposal to a jury lead by none other than the planning minister himself in a reality show. The joy on his face, his confidence in himself, and his command of his subject gave my mind what it craved: "hope." My impulse to change stations lost way, and I found myself glued to the TV. The young man was presenting his pilot project, an indigenously designed air conditioner that does not use gas for cooling and thus is more environmentally friendly, consuming 80% less energy than standard air conditioners, resulting in lower electricity bills and less environmental degradation without sacrificing cooling quality.

All parts and design were made from locally available materials with the assistance of Pakistani technicians and expertise, and an outdated Russian technology that was available copyright free was used as a base, and the product was further improved, upgraded, and state-of-the-art features were added with indigenous research and development in a garage. The prototype was evaluated and authorised by a sector expert. The four-tonne AC, priced at Rs. 400,000,

was initially intended for commercial use, and the newly founded company hoped to patent it not only in Pakistan, but also in the United States. They asked Rs. 20 million in seed funding from the Prime Minister's Kamyab Jawan Programme to scale up the project, which was immediately granted. I was now hooked to the screen, eagerly awaiting the next candidate. A young lady in her late twenties entered the room, filling it with her cool and composed demeanour, confident and daring appearance, and modest dress. She surprised the jury by stating that she had successfully created a jet engine using indigenous and locally made parts to power heavy duty drones capable of transporting heavy cargo from one location to another in a safe and secure manner, which the battery-powered drone cannot do. She claims to be a daredevil pilot herself, and being the daughter of scientists and researchers, she believes that making flying objects was in her blood.

She claimed that this locally made jet engine will revolutionize drone manufacturing in the country and solve most of the country's logistic and transportation issues by transporting heavy cargo to remote areas that are difficult or expensive to reach by other means. It can deliver medical supplies to people in disaster areas and to bring food to people in remote villages. They are ideal to monitor infrastructure, such as power lines and pipelines, for damage or defects and locate missing people or objects in difficult-to-reach areas. The prototype of the engine has successfully been tested by sector experts and is ready to start commercial production soon after her request for finance is approved. The jury was spellbound. The Minister said that she was a role model for our young entrepreneurs, especially women. The jury with the sparks in their eyes and full of admiration approved the project.

She claims that this domestically manufactured jet engine will revolutionise drone production in the country and address the majority of the country's logistic and transportation problems by transporting heavy items to remote places that are impossible or expensive to reach by other methods. It may transport medical supplies to disaster zones as well as food to rural settlements. They are great for detecting damage or flaws in infrastructure such as electrical lines and pipelines, as well as locating missing individuals or things in difficult-to-reach regions.

The engine prototype has been successfully tested by industry specialists and is ready to begin commercial manufacturing as soon as her request for financing is approved. The jury was transfixed. The Minister described her as a role model for our young entrepreneurs, particularly women. The project was approved by the jury, who were filled with admiration and had sparkles in their eyes.

My typical tense and jittery state of mind was almost cheering, as I waited in excitement for the next candidate. They were two young ladies who claimed to have invented a plastic out of indigenous plant wastes that has a shelf life of over six months, is biodegradable, and can be transformed into manure after decomposition. They claimed that this would eliminate our long-standing problem of littering in our villages, towns, cities, ponds, rivers, and oceans. They proudly stated that their product is unique because no ingredients are imported, the manufacturing unit is created locally with parts that are fully manufactured in Pakistan, and they are in

contact with hypermarkets, large markets, and sales outlets that have expressed an interest in purchasing user-friendly and environmentally friendly plastic bags. All they needed to do now was scale up their production facility to manufacture enough biodegradable plastics for a range of items. Since the concept made a lot of sense, the jury happily approved it, and the two young ladies departed the platform with a brilliant glow on their faces and a mighty spark of hope for themselves and their country in their eyes.

When I waited for the next candidate, my mood had entirely changed. They were two, one teacher and one student, who created a 3-D printer for the construction industry, allowing the construction of highly durable houses in a fraction of the time compared to conventional house building processes, at a cost that is 35% less, and will give the designer the flexibility of choosing any design of the walls, the rooms of any dimensions that one can imagine, adding innovation and unique design to each house and each room. A layer of material, such as concrete or plastic, will be deposited on top of another layer via the computer-controlled construction process. This procedure is repeated till the object is finished. They stated that they had developed the prototype, but that it now needed to be scaled up to satisfy the requirements of large-scale construction. The concept made so much sense that it was approved without any thought.

Two young men were the next candidates. One of them, who was in the lead, confidently showed their indigenously made application capable of analysing the area in terms of texture, composition, and rock formation type. It will also identify the water pathways in the land parcel and will confidently propose the water channel required to remove rain water in the event of urban flooding. According to them, this application is unique, indigenously built, and particularly cost effective for the end user in terms of producing sound plans and designs for large-scale building and housing projects. They had already launched the programme, which was used by the construction business in Pakistan. They were also planning to promote it to the rest of the globe as a unique and cost-effective application that will aid in the construction of safe, secure, reliable, and long-lasting structures and housing projects. They needed to improve the application's effectiveness, efficiency, and usability. They requested funds for the project, which was quickly granted.

One competitor after another presented innovative products and services that demonstrated innovative solutions to complex problems. Indeed, they are evidence of the creativity and innovation of the Pakistani people. My eyes were filled with floods of pure joy, and my heart was brimming with optimism and hopes for a better future. It was the first time in my lifetime that such a transparent and merit-based system was adopted to approve high-value startup projects based on indigenous research and innovation while utilising locally available goods, services, and expertise. This prompted me to explore the Prime Minister's Kamyab Jawan (PMKJ). It is a government-backed program that aims to provide financial assistance to the young entrepreneurs at subsidized rates starting from Rs. 5 million to help them start and grow their businesses without having to worry about high-interest rates. The program also provides training and mentorship to young entrepreneurs to help them start and grow their businesses and to learn the skills they need to be successful in business.

It gives the young entrepreneurs access to government resources, such as land, licenses, and permits to overcome some of the challenges they face when starting a business in Pakistan. The financial details were disclosed by the State Bank of Pakistan. Under PMKJ, financing is available to all Pakistani citizens between the ages of 18 and 45 who have entrepreneurial potential and a valid CNIC. There are options for both long-term and working capital loans. The funding is divided into three categories. Under tier-1, loan limits range from Rs 100,000 to Rs 1,000,000, under tier-2, from Rs 1,000,000 to Rs 10,000,000, and under tier-3, from Rs 10,000,000 to Rs 25,000,000. Markup rates for tier-1 loans are 3 percent, tier-2 loans are 4 percent, and tier-3 loans are 5 percent. It is indeed encouraging that the startup ecosystem in Pakistan is expanding rapidly and that startups are making significant contributions to the country's economy by creating jobs for both skilled and unskilled workers, developing new technologies, exporting goods and services to international markets, and attracting venture capital and other foreign investment.

Careem, a ride-hailing app, Bykea, a motorbike taxi service, Foodpanda, a food delivery service, Tapmad, a mobile payments platform, Airlift, a logistics company, and Byonyks, a biotechnology startup that develops affordable healthcare devices, are just a few of the companies already making their mark in the country.

Mera Maweshi is an agriculture startup that utilises artificial intelligence (AI) to provide smartphone-based diagnostics for cattle diseases to small producers. Smart Helmet is a safety venture that employs the Internet of Things (IoT) to detect poisonous gases and guide illiterate miners to safety. Tawazun is a fintech venture that offers microloans to rural Pakistani women. Edunext is an EdTech venture that provides Pakistani students with online courses and resources. Befiler, a tax and business advisory services, AdalFi, a credit-scoring platform for digital lending, Swag Kicks, a pre-owned e-commerce startup, Trukkr, a managing logistics and financing for trucking companies, and Maqsad, a seed funding platform, are recent market entrants. During my assignments in Malaysia and France, I was able to examine their educational systems. In Malaysia, 25% of their enormous budget is allocated to Education. In France, there is only one school system, in the Public Sector, to which all school-aged children, regardless of socioeconomic status, are required to attend. As a result, the school system produces outstanding students, and both countries excel in all sectors. Creating a supportive regulatory environment, providing funding and mentorship, promoting entrepreneurship education, connecting startups with investors, attracting foreign investment, and building a strong startup community are a few additional steps that must be taken. Work ethic, entrepreneurial skills, a desire for research and development, and the ability to create straightforward solutions to complex problems are unquestionably assets. We must establish a critical mass of Startups to become one of the largest growth engines. They are few, but give the nation great hope. We must create a large number of them, which is only possible if, as a nation, we recognise the importance of imparting quality education throughout the country and ensure that every school-aged child attends school and receives quality education and proper upbringing.

## Women's World Cup: Morocco 1, Western media 0

Ahmed Twajj

The Qatar World Cup last year was similarly bombarded with criticism, much of it laced with Orientalism and racism. Such concerns are raised with other Arab nations looking to promote their own sport sectors. Somehow, however, there has been little backlash to the US, Canada and Mexico hosting the 2026 men's World Cup. No questions on structural racism, ongoing forced labour, immigration rights, devastating gun violence and more have been posed to the US camp

**I**T'S a historic moment for Morocco and, in particular, for the country's women. Eight months after their male counterparts made history in reaching the semi-finals of the men's World Cup, the Moroccan women's football team have shaken up the sport's traditional hierarchy. The first Arab and Muslim-majority nation to qualify for the ongoing Women's World Cup, the Moroccan side has stunned football pundits, defeating Colombia and South Korea to reach the final 16. Yet, it's not just opposing football teams that the Atlas Lionesses, as the team is called, have had to dribble past to get where they have.

One incident, in particular, has stood out. Ahead of the World Cup, one BBC journalist felt it appropriate to pose a question, wholly unrelated to football, to the Moroccan team captain, Ghizlane Chebbak.

"In Morocco, it's illegal to have a gay relationship. Do you have any gay players in your squad and what's life like for them in Morocco?" asked the BBC reporter during the pre-match press conference in Melbourne before Morocco's clash with Germany.

Chebbak looked perplexed by the line of questioning and a FIFA official moderating the press conference immediately interjected: "Sorry, this is a very political question so we will just stick to questions relating to football." The BBC journalist, however, doubled down on his line of interrogation. In Morocco, homosexuality can result in three years imprisonment and for that reason alone, it was utterly irresponsible to put pressure on the Moroccan captain to out anyone who may be gay. Nor was it the correct platform for players to be forced to come out as gay (if there are any gay players on the team) if they had not chosen to do so themselves. But the question also revealed problematic biases. The Moroccan men's team - also targets of racism - have not been asked this question. Did the BBC journalist

fall into the trap of gender stereotyping that only gay women play football, an issue which the BBC itself has previously campaigned against? Hosted in Australia and New Zealand, the Women's World Cup - like the men's edition last year - has witnessed a range of firsts from Morocco, whose team also includes the first-ever hijabi player to compete in the tournament. Questions surrounding these achievements would have been entirely suitable but to focus on the one Arab nation in the event and attempt to shed a negative light on the country reeks of the sense of moral superiority Western media also demonstrated when Qatar hosted the 2022 men's World Cup. No journalist has gone around asking Lindsey Horan or Alex Morgan, the US women's national team co-captains, what life is like for the Black American players in their team considering the racist police brutality that persists in the US.

They haven't been asked questions about abortion rights being overturned in the US or the illegal invasion of Iraq and its compounding consequences two decades later. These are important political debates to have but to choose whom to ask selectively, at a sporting event, especially when the players have not campaigned on the issues themselves, suggests prejudice at best and an agenda at worst.

Asking Colin Kaepernick, for example, about police brutality is logical considering he fronted the 'take a knee' movement. But you would never go to a kneec to ask a medical question.

It has become a pattern to show moral superiority over Arab nations. When no other nation is receiving questions about LGBTQ rights or any other political issue, to single out Morocco indicates this tendency to enforce Western perspectives worldwide. The Qatar World Cup last year was similarly bombarded with criticism, much of it laced with Orientalism

and racism. Such concerns are raised with other Arab nations looking to promote their own sport sectors. Somehow, however, there has been little backlash to the US, Canada and Mexico hosting the 2026 men's World Cup. No questions on structural racism, ongoing forced labour, immigration rights, devastating gun violence and more have been posed to the US camp. This sense of moral superiority is not limited to football either. Movies selected for Oscar nominations that have storylines based in the Middle East have all, in recent years, been ones that show the region either through a lens of war, terrorism or oppression. Films like The Hurt Locker and Zero Dark Thirty, which both won the Academy Awards, showed the region as violent, without questioning the role of US wars in Afghanistan and Iraq in fuelling that violence. It's been the same with the films from the region nominated for Oscars, such as Capernaum, Omar and Paradise Now. They are all excellent movies in their own right but for only them to be selected for Academy Award nominations and other, non-violence-related stories to not be shortlisted, points to the perpetuation of negative stereotypes of the Arab world. We should be celebrating the region's achievements and progress. Let's not forget, this World Cup has been one of many firsts for Moroccan women.

Among the earliest universities in the world was founded by Fatima al-Fihriya, a Moroccan woman, over a millennium ago. Since the question on LGBTQ rights was posed to the Moroccan captain, the BBC has apologised after receiving widespread backlash. But it is the Western media as a whole that must reflect. Sport, and football in particular, is supposed to be a unifying factor across the world. The World Cup is a great occasion to deliver on that promise. By using that platform to demonstrate deep-rooted biases against the Arab world, the Western media only exposes itself.

Courtesy: Al Jazeera



## Briefs

## At least two injured in Quetta blast

**FROM PAGE 01**  
Nazir Ahmed were injured in the blast and were shifted to the trauma centre of the Civil Hospital of Quetta. One of the injured is said to be in critical condition. The bomb disposal squad launched an investigation to ascertain the nature of the blast. Balochistan Chief Minister Mir Qudus Bizenjo condemned the blast saying that anti-state elements wanted to create an atmosphere of fear ahead of Independence Day on August 14.

## 'It proves...

**FROM PAGE 01**

former prime minister Imran Khan's visit to Moscow on the day of Russia's invasion of Ukraine, but at that time Pakistan's former ambassador to the US had said that these allegations are not true.

"If the contents of this letter are viewed in context, it appears that the US government is expressing its concern over the policy choice of former prime minister Imran Khan and not expressing its priority about who should be the leader of Pakistan," the State Department spokesperson said. Matthew Miller said that in the conversation of the US State Department official with the Pakistani ambassador who formed the basis of the cipher, the words of the US official were used for political purposes out of context. It may be recalled that Imran Khan had said in 2022 that there were details of the meeting between US Assistant Secretary of State for South Asia Donald Lu and Pakistani Ambassador Asad Majeed in Cypher and Donald Lu had warned the ambassador that if Imran Khan remained in power, there would be consequences.

## PTI renews..

**FROM PAGE 01**

that the report further solidified the accuracy and authenticity of Imran Khan's statements regarding the cypher. The PTI spokesperson remarked that the report's revelations indicated that the ousting of Imran Khan's government was orchestrated through a conspiracy involving a no-confidence motion. Highlighting the sequence of events, the spokesperson underscored that the former premier had presented the cypher during a National Security Committee (NSC) meeting.

## Bushra meets Imran...

**FROM PAGE 01**

Imran Khan's safety and wellbeing, who was kept in a terrible condition in Attock Jail, vowing that no compromise would be made on his health and safety come what may. The PTI core committee in its meeting voiced strong apprehension the delay in allowing PTI Chairman to provide home-made food and water. They demanded that the former prime minister should be transferred from Attock to Adiala Jail instantly. The PTI core committee expressed its non-satisfaction over the non-serious behavior of the rulers regarding the health and safety of Imran Khan in the guise of being imprisoned as a result of a controversial and biased court verdict. Meanwhile, former first lady Bushra Bibi Thursday met her husband and Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) Chairman Imran Khan in Attock jail for the first time after he got arrested on August 5 in connection with the Toshakhana case. Bushra Bibi, along with the former prime minister's lawyers, reached the Attock jail where she was allowed to meet Khan. The one-to-one meeting between the two went on for about an hour without the ex-first lady's legal team. However, lawyers Naeem Panjotra, Sher Afzal Marwat and Ali Ijaz Buttard did not get permission to visit the deposed prime minister who was removed from power via a parliamentary vote in April last year.

## Pakistan contingent finalised for Asian Games

AFZAL JAVED

ISLAMABAD: The Pakistan Sports Board (PSB) has approved 305 member Pakistan contingent for the 19th edition of Asian Games starting from next month in China. The Director General of Pakistan Sports Board Shoaib Khoso chaired important meeting which attended by the Secretary General of Pakistan Olympics Association (POA) Mohammad Khalid Mahmood and officials from PSB and POA discussed important matters in a meeting held at the Pakistan Sports Board. The focus of this discussion was to ensure the seamless participation of the Pakistan contingent in the prestigious 19th Asian Games set to take place in



Hangzhou, China. Around 305 athletes both male and female will be participating in the 19th Asian Games. To support the talented athletes, the contingent has been thoughtfully divided into three groups.

The first group is receiving full support from the PSB, the second is partially supported by PSB, and the third group benefits from the backing of the POA. This comprehensive approach aims to provide

the best possible resources and assistance to our athletes as they represent our nation on this grand stage. A noteworthy aspect of our contingent is the significant participation of women ath-

letes, a source of immense pride for our country. Their dedication and achievements inspire us all. The Asian Games, commencing on September 23, 2023, will witness a strong representation from Team

Pakistan, with the volleyball team being the first to depart on September 14, followed by teams in kabaddi and hockey.

Our athletes are no strangers to success, with many having secured medals in previous competitions, showcasing their exceptional talents. Our shooting, kabaddi and athletics teams have great potential to secure medals in the 19th Asian Games. The Pakistan Hockey team, in particular, is under the spotlight, carrying the hopes of the nation with the potential to secure a victory that would propel them toward the highly esteemed Paris Olympics. The cricket and volleyball teams also hold a high chance of clinching victory, adding to our nation's pride.

## PCB reveals details about Hanif Mohammad Trophy

DNA

LAHORE: The Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) has rebranded grade-II four-day event as the Hanif Mohammad Trophy as a tribute to one of the pioneers of the early era of Pakistan cricket. The tournament will be contested by 10 regional teams from the 2023-24 domestic season.

Hanif Mohammad Trophy will serve as pathway for the regional sides to qualify for the Quaid-e-Azam Trophy, premier first-class tournament. The team that wins this tournament is promoted to the Quaid-e-Azam Trophy, and the side that finishes at the bottom of the first-class tournament is relegated to the grade-II event. "This step is a homage to a true cricket legend whose grace, dedication, and timeless contributions to the sport have left an indelible mark on the hearts of cricket enthusiasts in Pakistan and around the world," PCB Management Committee Chairperson Zaka Ashraf said. "It is of utmost importance that we remember our greats and take steps that keep their memories alive."

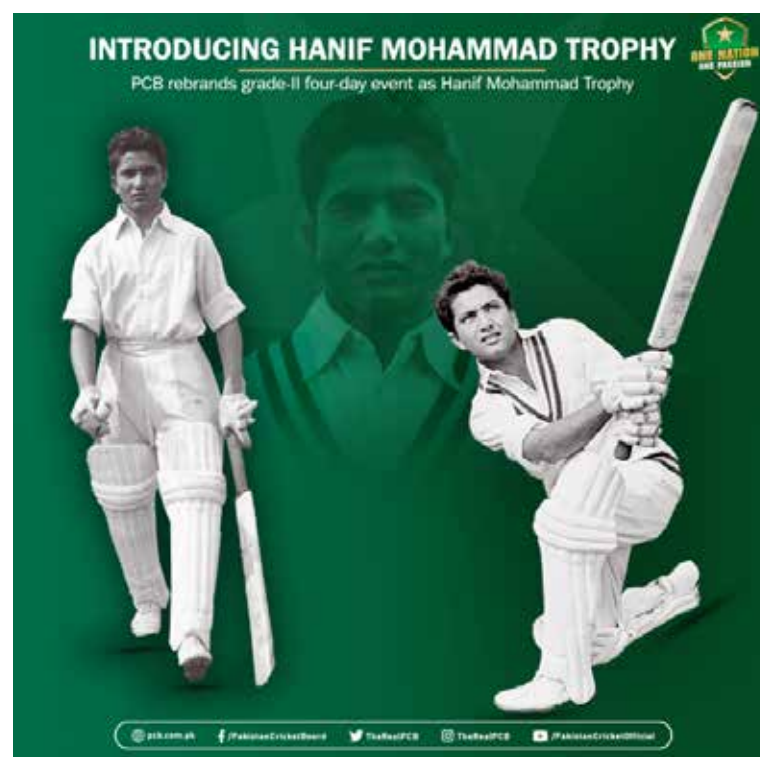
Meanwhile, Son of Hanif Mohammad and former Pakistan Test cricketer, Shoaib Mohammad said: "My family and I are thankful to Zaka Ashraf and the Pakistan Cricket Board for honouring my father's contributions to the game of cricket."

"It is an amazing feeling to know that the board continues to remember the sacrifices and hard work of cricketers

of the early days who played a pivotal role to put Pakistan on the world map. I hope our young domestic cricketers get inspiration from his career and go on to serve Pakistan."

The 'Little Master' Hanif Mohammad opened the innings for Pakistan in the inaugural cricket Test against India in Delhi in 1952 and accumulated 3,915 runs, which includes 12

centuries and 15 half-centuries, at an average of 43.98 in 55 Tests. He played the longest Test innings at Bridgetown in 1958 when he batted for 970 minutes for his 337 - still the highest score for a Pakistani in the format - against the West Indies. He also led Pakistan in 11 Tests from 1964 till 1967 before bringing the curtain down on his career in 1969.



## Tottenham Hotspurs accept Munich's offer for Kane

LONDON: Tottenham Hotspurs and Bayern Munich have reached an agreement for the fee of Harry Kane's transfer, reported The Athletic on Thursday.

The clubs have been in talks for weeks but never came closer to an agreement as two of Bayern's initial bids of £70 and £85 million were refused by Tottenham's chairman Daniel Levy. However, Bayern



upped their bid and as per the details, a deal close to £100m is agreed.

Although Levy values Kane around £120m as he is arguably the greatest player in Tottenham's history but with just a year left in his contract, a £100m deal is likely to take place in order to avoid losing him for free next summer. Everything now depends on the footballer, it is up to him if he wants to leave his boyhood club and join Bayern where he can compete for the UEFA Champions League (UCL) title or not.

Bayern, who sold their primary striker Robert Lewandowski to FC Barcelona in 2022, spent the entire previous season with only one natural striker in Eric Maxim Choupo-Moting.

With the signing of the Englishman, Bayern will be able to fill the hole that was left wide-open by the departure of the Polish striker who scored 344 goals in 375 matches for the German club while also winning the UCL title in 2020 where they defeated Paris Saint Germain (PSG) in the final 1-0 at Estadio da Luz, Portugal. Kane notched up 307 goals and 80 assists in 514 club appearances, so far, over the course of his career. He also became the first player to score in 25 different matches in a 38-game Premier League in the 2022-23 season. It must be noted that Kane is the second-highest goal scorer in the Premier League (PL) history. With 213 goals, he is only 47 goals behind the top scorer Alan Shearer who scored 260 goals in his staggering career. However, as it stands, it is likely that Kane will give up on his dream of becoming an all-time PL goalscorer. - Agencies

## Mbappe expected to stay at PSG: report

PARIS: French striker Kylian Mbappe has told Paris Saint Germain that he will stay at the club next season, according to Le Parisien. However, the club still insists that Mbappe signs a contract renewal in order to ensure that he doesn't leave for free next season. The PSG high-ups believe that Mbappe already has a contract in place with Real Madrid and he will join the Whites in the summer of 2024. To push the striker out of the club, the French club has already gone to extremes. Last month, Mbappe was excluded from the club's squad for their Asian pre-season tour. PSG did not only exclude Mbappe from the pre-season squad, they also decided to send him to train with discarded players, who are no longer part of the project. PSG President Nasser Al-Khelaifi has said that Mbappe will be re-integrated into the first team after extends his contract. PSG have also told Mbappe that he won't play for the club this season if he stays to run out his contract. - Agencies

## Joshua suggests solution to doping problem

LONDON: Random drug tests should be done frequently in order to tackle the issue of doping, according to former world heavyweight champion Anthony Joshua said after Dillian Whyte failed a doping test ahead of their fight.

The two British boxers were set to clash at London's O2 Arena in a rematch of their 2015 bout, when Joshua clinched victory, but the fight was called off after the Voluntary Anti-Doping Association (VADA) said Whyte had returned adverse analytical findings in a random dope test. Whyte, who was banned for two years from 2012 to 2014 after testing positive for a banned stimulant, said he had not taken the reported substance after the latest test. It must be noted that Finn Robert Helenius replaced Whyte to fight Joshua. "There's a doping problem in the sport, definitely," Joshua told reporters on Wednesday. "It happens in boxing. It's not the first (time) and won't be the last." Professional boxing does not follow the World Anti-Doping Agency (WADA) code, and VADA

offers regulatory services for certain boxers or promotions. "But how can people get away with doping if you're getting random drug tests? I get drug-tested all year round," the 33-year-old Joshua said. "Every quarter, I have to submit my whereabouts; where I'm going to be, every day, for a 60-minute time slot) so they can turn up randomly."

"I've submitted that every day of my life since 2011, so I don't know why I'm under this pressure but all these other boxers aren't. When you sign up to a promoter they should all have that in the deal." Apart from Whyte, former light-welterweight world champion Amir Khan was also slapped with a two-year ban in April after a prohibited substance was detected in his sample following his fight against Kell Brook. British welterweight Conor Benn also failed two voluntary drug tests last year and only resumed his career last month. The result of the Joshua v Whyte bout could have put either fighter in line for a lucrative clash with former WBC champion Deontay Wilder. - Agencies

## Coles quits as Pakistan women's team head coach

"The PCB would like to extend its gratitude to Mark Coles for his brief stint with the women's side and wishes him well in his future endeavors," PCB sated

LAHORE: The Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) announced Thursday that Mark Coles, the head coach of the women's team, has resigned due to personal reasons.

In a press release, the PCB stated that Coles will not be available with the women's side for the upcoming white-ball series against South Africa, which is scheduled to begin from September 1 in Karachi. Coles was appointed in April this year and had previously served as head coach of the women's team from 2017 to 2019.

"The PCB would like to extend its gratitude to Mark Coles for his brief stint with the women's side and wishes him well in his future endeavors," the PCB sated. "The replacement of Mark Coles will be announced in due course," it added. After the South Africa series, Pakistan women's team will take part in the Asian Games in China.

Pakistan women's team will be looking to complete a hat-trick of gold medals in the Asian Games after clinching the top prize in the last two editions, held in Guangzhou, China in 2010 and Incheon, South Korea 2014. As per the ICC T20I rankings and tournament's regulations, Pakistan women's team will feature in the event from the quarter-finals scheduled to take place from September 22-24. The semi-finals will be held on September 25. Meanwhile, the final and the match for the bronze medal will take place on September 26. Squad: Nida Dar (captain), Aliya Riaz, Anousha Nasir, Diana Baig, Fatima Sana, Muneeba Ali, Najjha Alvi, Nashra Sundhu, Nataliya Parvaiz, Omaira Sohail, Sadaf Shamas, Shawaal Zulfiqar, Sidra Amin, Syeda Aroob Shah and Umm-e-Hani. - DNA

## Murray reaches last 16 of Canadian Open in Toronto

Purcell, 25, went a break up early but three-time Grand Slam winner Murray held his serve at 4-2 down to start his fightback. At 5-5, Murray was able to hold again and edge ahead before breaking Purcell's serve in the 12th game of the set to win the match

TORONTO: Andy Murray fought hard to overcome Australian qualifier Max Purcell to reach the last 16 at the Canadian Open. The 36-year-old Briton beat Purcell 7-6 (7-2) 3-6 7-5 in two hours and 47 minutes in Toronto. Murray will face Italian seventh seed Jannik Sinner for a place in the quarter-finals. Also through to the next round is Wimbledon champion Carlos Alcaraz, 20, who defeated American Ben Shelton 6-3 7-6 (7-3) in his second-round tie. The Spanish world number one will face Poland's Hubert

Hurkacz after coming through a competitive encounter with 20-year-old Shelton.

There was little to separate Murray and Purcell in the opening stages and although Murray took the first set on a tie-break, world number 78 Purcell rallied in the second to force a deciding set. Purcell, 25, went a break up early but three-time Grand Slam winner Murray held his serve at 4-2 down to start his fightback. At 5-5, Murray was able to hold again and edge ahead before breaking Purcell's serve in the 12th game of the set to win the match. Meanwhile, Murray has spoken of his enjoyment at watching Alcaraz in action - especially when he is taking risks. "The thing that I love about watching him is the freedom that he plays with, and part of that is youth, I think. I just hope he doesn't lose that," Murray told the ATP website. "Sometimes it looks a little bit kamikaze, but he just is totally instinctive. And I love that." Both Murray and Alcaraz are preparing for the US Open, which starts on 28 August in New York. Alcaraz is reigning champion after beating Norwegian Casper Ruud last year to win his first Grand Slam title. - Agencies



## NA gone

**FROM PAGE 01**

PTI spokesperson further said that the PDM piled up the country's debt alarmingly while the income has remained negligible, adding that the government coalition consisting of 13 parties, which was created on the narrative of steering the country out of bankruptcy, had made record of the largest cabinet in history.

## Inordinate delay...

**FROM PAGE 01**

by unexpected turnarounds, underscoring the nation's propensity for surprises. Hafeez Shaikh, the former Finance Minister in the PTI government, has consistently demonstrated his proficiency and dedication in handling economic matters, not only during his tenure in PTI but also in other governments. His track record as a capable economist and financial expert sets him apart as a strong candidate for leadership roles in economic policy. One of the significant factors contributing to Hafeez Shaikh's credibility is his strong rapport with international financial institutions such as the IMF. His strong affiliation with the Establishment further underscores his suitability as a candidate. Nevertheless, an obstacle arises as both the PML-N and the PPP express reluctance towards endorsing him for the role of caretaker prime minister. The MQM has put forward Kamran Tesori, the incumbent Sindh Governor, as their proposed candidate. The ongoing power struggle among different stakeholders could potentially create an opportunity for an unexpected candidate to emerge, often referred to as a "dark horse," adding an element of surprise for everyone involved.

## Massive....

**FROM PAGE 01**

Inordinate delay in appointment of the caretaker prime minister by unexpected turnarounds, underscoring the nation's propensity for surprises. Hafeez Shaikh, the former Finance Minister in the PTI government, has consistently demonstrated his proficiency and dedication in handling economic matters, not only during his tenure in PTI but also in other governments. His track record as a capable economist and financial expert sets him apart as a strong candidate for leadership roles in economic policy. One of the significant factors contributing to Hafeez Shaikh's credibility is his strong rapport with international financial institutions such as the IMF. His strong affiliation with the Establishment further underscores his suitability as a candidate. Nevertheless, an obstacle arises as both the PML-N and the PPP express reluctance towards endorsing him for the role of caretaker prime minister. The MQM has put forward Kamran Tesori, the incumbent Sindh Governor, as their proposed candidate. The ongoing power struggle among different stakeholders could potentially create an opportunity for an unexpected candidate to emerge, often referred to as a "dark horse," adding an element of surprise for everyone involved.

The Prime Minister and Raja Riaz are scheduled to meet once more today, with hopes of making significant progress. Raja Riaz has expressed optimism that a breakthrough might be on the horizon. However, should these talks not result in a consensus, the issue will be escalated to the Election Commission. The Commission will then be tasked with reaching a decision within a span of three days. In such an event, there is a possibility that Shehbaz Sharif could take the lead in overseeing the August 14 celebrations as the Prime Minister. by unexpected turnarounds, underscoring the nation's propensity for surprises. Hafeez Shaikh, the former Finance Minister in the PTI government, has consistently demonstrated his proficiency and dedication in handling economic matters, not only during his tenure in PTI but also in other governments. His track record as a capable economist and financial expert sets him apart as a strong candidate for leadership roles in economic policy. One of the significant factors contributing to Hafeez Shaikh's credibility is his strong rapport with international financial institutions such as the IMF.



## Briefs

## Iran, South Africa FMs meet

PRETORIA: The top Iranian and South African diplomats have exchanged views on important bilateral and international issues on the sidelines of the 15th Joint Commission for Economic Cooperation. The meeting took place between Iran's Foreign Minister Hossein Amir-Abdollahian and South Africa's Minister of International Relations and Cooperation Naledi Pandor in Pretoria on Thursday. The joint commission is being held after a three-year hiatus due to the coronavirus pandemic. Prior to the trip, Amir-Abdollahian said he would follow up on bilateral and international issues in his meetings with South African officials. Coinciding with the meetings, a team comprising Iranian deputy ministers and representatives from the private sector, would hold talks with South African Foreign Ministry officials on finalizing matters related to bilateral cooperation and preparing documents for Iranian President Ebrahim Raisi's upcoming visit, he added. Amir-Abdollahian also noted that Raisi is expected to pay two visits to South Africa, one on August 24 to attend the summit of the friends of BRICS and the other in the fall to discuss bilateral ties.—Agencies

## US, UK, Canada sanction Lebanon's Salameh

WASHINGTON: The United States, Britain and Canada on Thursday announced sanctions against the former governor of Lebanon's central bank, Riad Salameh, accusing him of corrupt actions to enrich himself and his associates. Salameh, in messages to Reuters, denied the allegations made by the three sanctioning countries and said he would challenge them. Some of his assets had already been frozen in previous investigations, he said. The U.S. Department of Treasury said in a statement that Salameh's "corrupt and unlawful actions have contributed to the breakdown of the rule of law in Lebanon". It had also sanctioned four others close to him, including relatives, close associates and his primary assistant, it said. "Salameh abused his position of power, likely in violation of Lebanese law, to enrich himself and his associates by funneling hundreds of millions of dollars through layered shell companies to invest in European real estate," the U.S. Treasury said. Britain and Canada also sanctioned Salameh, who served on the central bank from 1993 until July 31, 2023 on Thursday. Lawyers for Raja Salameh and his assistant, Marianne Howayek, did not immediately respond to requests for comment. Once feted as a financial wizard, he left his post last month with his legacy in tatters amid the collapse of Lebanon's banking sector and corruption charges at home and abroad.—APP

## Ongoing wildfires in Hawaii leave 36 dead

WASHINGTON: At least 36 people have died and many were injured in the US state of Hawaii due to ongoing wildfires ravaging the island of Maui, according to county officials. "As the firefighting efforts continue, 36 total fatalities have been discovered today amid the active Lahaina fire," the county of Maui said on its website on late Wednesday. The US Coast Guard has rescued more than a dozen people who jumped into the ocean to escape the blazes and search and rescue crews are looking for more people who may have become stranded amid the chaos. The three separate wildfires have been spurred by 60-mile-per-hour (96 kilometer-per-hour) gusting winds from Hurricane Dora in the Pacific Ocean and firefighters are being hampered by downed power lines and trees on roads. Sharing a video that vividly portrays the wreckage in Kihei and Lahaina, Acting Governor of Hawaii Sylvia Luke took to Twitter to express her emotions, saying.—APP

## Speaker analyses Indonesian regional economic integration

Dr. Winanti continued that Indonesia's top export destinations were China \$54.5B, United States \$26.5B, Japan \$18B, India \$14.5 and Singapore \$13B

ISLAMABAD: The Online Internship Program on the Contemporary Dynamic of Indonesia which is a collaboration between Indonesian Embassy and Bahria University, Islamabad, held its Session-8 on August 10, 2023. At the session Dr. Poppy Winanti, Faculty of Political Science, University of Gajah Mada Yogyakarta, Indonesia, delivered a lecture on the topic of "Indonesia and Regional Economic Integration". "ASEAN makes South East Asia even more appealing for commerce and investment for countries outside the region by creating an integrated market of 623 million people" Dr. Winanti underlined while examining the Indonesian regional economic integration as a development strategy. The speaker examined the proliferation of Free Trade Agreements in the region and the scope how ASEAN members could benefit from the recently adopted Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP), which in addition to ASEAN member countries also included China, Japan, Republic of Korea, Australia, and

New Zealand. "Indonesia was 16th in terms of GDP, 27th in total exports and 30th in total imports economy in the world" the speaker said while highlighting Indonesia's economic features. In her presentation, she also shared statistics on the top exports of Indonesia that include Coal Briquettes \$28.4 B, Palm Oil \$27.3B, Petroleum Gas \$8.8B, Ferroalloys \$7B and Large Flat-Rolled Stainless Steel \$6.6B. Regarding Indonesian imports, she informed that the top imports of Indonesia included Refined Petroleum \$14.5B, Crude Petroleum \$6.3B, Petroleum Gas \$4.2B, Vaccines, Blood, Antisera, Toxins and Culture \$3.4B and Motor Vehicle parts and accessories \$3.19B. Dr. Winanti continued that Indonesia's top export destinations were China \$54.5B, United States \$26.5B, Japan \$18B, India \$14.5 and Singapore \$13B. About the Indonesia's top import origin she mentioned that it was led by China with \$60.4B and followed by Singapore \$18.4, Japan \$13.2B, Malaysia \$9.5B and United States



\$9.6B. Enlightening the participants, the guest speaker went into details and stated that RTA have more flexibilities as compare to large multilateral trade negotiations as it allowed like-minded countries or interested countries to decide to establish among themselves a common set of rights and obligations to deal with a particular subject matter or sector. "A deeper integration is much easier at the regional level than it is at the multilateral level and RTA's are deemed as the better place to achieve consensus for sets of rules that cannot be accom-

plished within the WTO framework" Dr. Winanti observed. Regarding the strategies to gain the benefits of RTA, the speaker said they were two pronged namely offensive and defensive. Offensive strategy is about to have market access while ensuring safeguard measures in place to maintain domestic competitiveness and regional supply chain, she added. "Indonesian market was huge and growing which makes the local producers to seek market access in other countries less attractive" She explained while discussing Indonesian offensive strategy. However, on the other hand, Palm oil and other producers who seek international market access to expand their businesses have non-tariff barriers to deal with such as regulations, subsidies and standards, she added. She cited an example of Australia which maintains standards not easy to comply with and therefore required Indonesian producers to improve their products standards to be able to penetrate Australian markets. Similarly, she described that Indonesia being a largest

Muslim populated country has its own sets of standards such as Halal certification that our trade partners within RTA framework should meet for Indonesian market access. She said the economic profiles of the ASEAN countries were competitive rather than complementary and therefore it came up with initiative of ASEAN+3 and the scope has been further expanded with RECP initiative to make the regional trade agreement more diverse and complementary. "It create winners and losers but the potential gains from the RTA's necessarily requires policy adjustments to ensure that the advantages outweigh the disadvantages to the economy as a whole, the speaker concluded. The Online Internship Program brings eminent scholars and experts to share their insights with participants on the various developments that Indonesia is going through as an emerging economy and Middle Power. The next session will spotlight the topic of "RCEP and Trade Connectivity for Indonesia" to be held with Dr. Kiki Verico as the speaker on August 15, 2023.

## Tunisia, Libya to provide shelter to migrants

TUNIS: Tunisia and Libya announced Thursday they had agreed to share responsibility for providing shelter for hundreds of migrants stranded at their border, many of them for over a month. The migrants, primarily from sub-Saharan African countries, had been driven to the desert area of Ras Jedir by Tunisian authorities and left there to fend for themselves, according to witnesses, rights groups and UN agencies. Aid groups said three groups of about 300 migrants in total remain stranded there. A spokesman for Tunisia's interior ministry, Faker Bouzghaya, said during a joint meeting with Libyan authorities in Tunis that "we have agreed to share the groups of migrants who are at the border". "Tunisia will take charge of a group of 76 men, 42 women and eight children," Bouzghaya told AFP. He said the groups were transferred on Wednesday to reception centres in the cities of Tataouine and Medenine and provided with health and psychological care, with the help of the Tunisian Red Crescent. Under the agreement, Libya will take charge of the remaining 150 migrants, humanitarian sources said. The Libyan interior ministry earlier on Thursday announced the bilateral agreement to "put an end to the crisis of irregular migrants stranded in the border area". Racial tensions had flared in Tunisia's second city of Sfax after the July 3 killing of a Tunisian man following an altercation with migrants. Up to 1,200 black Africans were "expelled, or forcibly transferred by Tunisian security forces" to desert border regions with Libya and Algeria, Human Rights Watch said. Humanitarian officials have reported at least 25 deaths of migrants abandoned in the Tunisian-Libyan border area since last month. Mediterranean Sea crossing attempts from Tunisia had multiplied in March and April following a incendiary speech by President Kais Saied who had alleged that "hordes" of irregular migrants were causing crime and posing a demographic threat to the mainly Arab country.—Agencies

## Ecuador presidential candidate assassinated

BOGOTA: Ecuador presidential candidate Fernando Villavicencio was shot dead Wednesday while leaving a campaign rally in the capital Quito. The attack took place at 6.20 p.m. (2320GMT) as he was leaving the Anderson School. Villavicencio, who most polls put in fourth place among the eight candidates competing to fill the spot to be left early by current President Guillermo Lasso in elections on Aug. 20, had built his campaign around the fight against corruption and organized crime. The candidate, a 59-year-old journalist, was struck by three bullets after a gunman fired at least 40 shots, wounding other people, who have been taken to various health centers. In a video circulating on social media, a burst of gunfire is heard right as Villavicencio is getting into a car, and he is later seen on the ground, badly wounded. The country's Public Prosecutor's Office said on Twitter that the suspect in the attack, who was wounded during an exchange of gunfire with security personnel, was arrested and died shortly after. The attack comes 11 days before elections in a country experiencing an unprecedented security crisis. On July 17, National Assembly candidate Rider Sanchez was murdered in the coastal province of Esmeraldas, and days later, the mayor of Manta, Agustín Intiagu, was killed in an armed attack. Villavicencio had criticized the role of the authorities in combating organized crime and had reported threats against him.—APP



TOKYO: Ambassador Raza Bashir Tarar met Itaru Nakamura, Chief Representative for Pakistan, Marubeni Corporation. Detailed discussion was held about possibility of increasing and diversifying Marubeni's investment portfolio in Pakistan.—DNA

## Turkiye 'neutralized' nearly 1,000 terrorists

ANKARA: Turkiye has "neutralized" a total of 995 PKK/YPG terrorists since Jan. 1, including ones hiding out across the border in Iraq and northern Syria, the National Defense Ministry said on Thursday. "Fifty-three terrorists have been neutralized in the last week, including ones in Iraq and northern Syria, with the strategy of eliminating terrorism at its source, which we resolutely implement," a National Defense Ministry official told reporters in a background briefing in the capital Ankara. The total number of terrorists "neutralized" during the year has now reached 995, he added. Turkish authorities use the term "neutralize" to imply that the terrorists in question surrendered or were killed or captured. His remarks came a day after five Turkish soldiers were killed in harassment fire by the terrorist PKK in northern Iraq, where Turkiye launched Operation Claw-Lock last year in April to root out terrorists hiding in the border region. The ministry official said: "586 terrorists have been neutralized so far in the Claw-Lock Operation in northern Iraq." On Wednesday's harassment fire, National Defense Ministry sources, who asked not to be named due to restrictions on speaking to the media, said anti-terror operations continue in the region. "Harassment and attacks may be carried out by the terrorist organization during search and scanning activities. The necessary response is given immediately," a source added. "Large-scale operations continue in the region. Each cave in the Operation Claw-Lock area will be entered, and these activities will continue until that area is completely cleared of terrorism." In Syria, the official said, all necessary measures are taken to maintain security and stability in the operation areas, and terrorist attacks are responded to in kind.—DNA

## Korean leader calls for sharpen war plans

PYONGYANG: North Korean leader Kim Jong Un ordered his military to sharpen its war plans and signed off on expanding combat operations of frontline units, state media said Thursday, as the United States and South Korea prepare for a large-scale combined military exercise. Condemning the allies' expanding drills as invasion rehearsals, Kim has used them as a pretext to further accelerate his weapons demonstrations, which have included the testing-firings of more than 100 missiles since the start of 2022, driving tensions on the Korean Peninsula to their highest point in years. Experts say Kim's nuclear push is aimed at forcing the United States to accept the idea of the North as a nuclear power so he can eventually negotiate economic and security concessions from a position of strength. Thursday's meeting of the North Korean ruling Workers' Party's central military

commission, which Kim controls as chairman, was to discuss advancing his military's war readiness and establishing offensive countermeasures plans to deter his adversaries, which state media said were getting more blatant in their "reckless military confrontation" with the North. After talks of boosting North Korean frontline units and stepping up war drills to incorporate new strategies and weapons, Kim signed an order to implement unspecified "important military measures," Pyongyang's official Korean Central News Agency said. During the meeting, Kim stressed that the military must acquire "more powerful strike means" to bolster his nuclear deterrent and make speedier deployments of those weapons to combat units. He called for the country's munitions industry to step up mass production of various weapons and systems, and for the military to actively conduct "actual war drills" to digest those systems and enhance its war-fighting capabilities, KCNA said. Photos of the meeting published by state media showed Kim pointing to spots in a blurred map of the Korean Peninsula. The spots appeared to be the metropolitan region surrounding the South Korean capital of Seoul, where half of the country's 51 million people live, and an area around the central city of Daejeon, the location of South Korea's army headquarters. Kim also made personnel changes during the meeting, appointing Vice Marshal Ri Yong Gil as his new chief of general staff to replace Gen. Pak Su Il, KCNA said. Since he began his rule in late 2011, Kim has shown a tendency to swiftly replace senior government and military officials if he was unhappy with their performances or needed to hold them responsible for broader policy failures, which the North

## China slams US restrictions on investments

BEIJING: Beijing Thursday criticized new US restrictions on investments in the country as a move towards "de-globalization and a move to phase China out." China firmly opposes the US "single-minded rollout of restrictions" on investments in China, said a Foreign Ministry statement, adding that Beijing has filed a "serious" protest with the US. The statement followed US President Joe Biden signing an executive order Wednesday to curb some US investments in China's technology sector. Washington's new move is narrowly tailored to prohibit US firms from funding investment in Chinese firms that develop advanced technologies "sensitive" to national security. That includes "technologies that are critical to the next generation of military innovation.—APP

## Empowering change - Team save dreams visits Adiala Jail

HAYAH BAHRONI  
Team Save Dreams' journey has been one of empowerment, fueled by the desire to make a meaningful difference in the lives of those who often stand on society's margins. This time, our journey took an inspiring turn as we joined hands with Women Aid Trust (WAT), an organization that shares our unwavering commitment to a positive change. This project was driven by a shared vision – a vision that encompassed compassion, advocacy, and a heartfelt desire to uplift the lives of the marginalized. Under the guidance of Director WAT, Madam Shaheena Khan, and with the mentorship & support of WAT's advocates, Madam Kausar, Madam Fauzia and Madam Rafia, we embarked on a journey that held the potential to create ripples of change far beyond our imagination. At its core, Women Aid Trust (WAT) is a beacon of hope for incarcerated women, dedicated to empowering them with a spectrum of opportunities and tools for a brighter future. This remarkable organization extends a helping hand to women in prison by providing

them with legal assistance to fight for their rights and justice. However, WAT goes beyond legal aid, offering a holistic approach that encompasses education within the prison walls. Through various programs women have provided with an opportunity to seek education, learn new skills like stitching, embroidery, bag-making, painting, calligraphy, and gain proficiency in using computers & technology. WAT's commitment to financial independence is showcased through initiatives that equip women with skills they can leverage to create sustainable livelihoods. By championing their rights, education, and skills, Women Aid Trust not only breaks the cycle of adversity but also paves the path towards empowerment and transformation for these incarcerated women.

Our journey with WAT led us to an unforgettable experience – a series of interviews with the very advocates who truly champion the cause of women empowerment. Through candid conversations, we delved into the heart of WAT's mission, gaining insights into the tireless efforts put forth by individuals who seek to make a difference. Their stories resonated with a passion that ignited our own resolve. Our conversation with Di-



rector Madam Shaheena was an eye-opening revelation. Her vision and dedication were truly inspiring, underscoring the impact that a strong leadership can have on driving change within a community. Yet, perhaps the most impactful moments of our project came from our interactions with ex-inmates. Their stories, fraught with challenges and triumphs, painted a vivid picture of the complexities faced during and after incarceration. These first-hand accounts

highlighted the pressing need for rehabilitation, reintegration, and the need to break the cycle of despair that often plagues those who have faced the prison system. The culmination of our project brought my team consisting of myself (Hayah Bahroni), Rafia Ali, Omana Basit, Noor-ul-Huda, Emman-Sarfraz and ZohaHabib, to Adiala Jail, a place where realities are stark and challenges are profound. This visit was coordinated by Sir AsadWariach, the superintendent

at Adialajail, and his team. It was here that we had the privilege of sharing insights on mental health, resilience, and coping strategies through a heartfelt lecture in the women ward. The inmates' receptiveness and engagement were a testament to the power of knowledge and understanding. Our compassion extended to the innocent faces of the children of the prisoners, as we distributed goodies that aimed to bring a moment of joy and hope to their

lives. The warmth and gratitude in their eyes reaffirmed the importance of our mission. Moreover, the distribution of essential items and heartfelt goodies to the inmates themselves sent a powerful message – that they are valued members of society, deserving of empathy, respect, and care. In the end, through the lens of compassion and empowerment, we found ourselves at Adiala Jail, igniting a spark of hope and understanding that has the potential to create lasting change. As we move forward, our commitment to making a difference burns brighter than ever. With the enlightenment of Women Aid Trust, we're dedicated to continuing our journey of empowerment, advocating for change, and fostering a society where compassion and understanding prevail – a society that WAT embodies so beautifully. Together, let's be the change-makers, spreading compassion and empowerment to create a world where every individual's dreams have the chance to flourish and thrive. Let's join hand together for yet another noble cause i.e. to SAVE DREAMS.



## Briefs

### ECP bans transfers, postings

DNA

ISLAMABAD: The Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) on Thursday banned transfers and postings on the federal level until the formation of a caretaker setup. The development came following President Dr Arif Alvi's assent to the premature dissolution of the National Assembly after Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif forwarded the summary. In a letter sent to the Establishment Division, the electoral body said that the National Assembly has been dissolved, adding that all the transfers and postings should be stopped until the formation of a caretaker setup. The ECP's letter also said that the interim government will take charge soon. "It has been learnt that transfer and postings of officers have been planned in ministries and divisions on a large scale," said the ECP, urging that any such decision should be avoided until the interim government comes. The transfers and postings can take place as per the law and policy after the interim government takes charge, added the letter. With the dissolution of the lower house of parliament, the federal cabinet also stood dissolved. **Caretaker formation** After the dissolution of the National Assembly, a process to appoint a caretaker prime minister will begin under Article 224-A of the Constitution. PM Shehbaz and Leader of the Opposition in the NA Raja Riaz will hold consultations to finalise the name of the interim prime minister.

### Sweden embassy in Lebanon attacked

DNA

BEIRUT: An assailant threw a Molotov cocktail — a bomb that consists of a bottle filled with flammable liquid — at Sweden's embassy in Beirut, causing no casualties, Stockholm's foreign minister and a diplomatic source said on Thursday, amid anger over recent incidents of the Holy Quran's desecration. "We confirm that there was a Molotov cocktail thrown at the facade of our embassy last evening, which did not explode," a diplomat source at the embassy said, requesting anonymity as they were not authorised to talk to the media. The "perpetrator managed to run away", the source added. Tensions have flared between Sweden and Muslim countries following several protests involving public desecrations of the Holy Quran in Stockholm — including setting pages alight. Multi-confessional Lebanon saw protests at mosques, while the head of the powerful pro-Iran Muslim group Hezbollah has called for the Swedish ambassador to be expelled. Lebanese security forces had bolstered measures around the embassy in downtown Beirut for fear of attacks.

### Torture case: Bail plea of civil judge's wife rejected

DNA

ISLAMABAD: An additional district and sessions court Thursday rejected the bail plea of judge Asim Hafeez's wife, Somia Asim, in a case pertaining to the alleged torture of a teenage house help in the federal capital. The harrowing case of brutal treatment of the child surfaced late last month when her parents shifted her to a hospital in Lahore with serious injuries, alleging the judge's wife had inflicted severe torture on the girl, Rizwana. During the proceeding, Somia was produced before judge Shaishta Kundi's court wherein her lawyer Qazi Dastgir informed the court the date of the incident was not mentioned in FIR. "According to a CCTV footage, the girl was handed over to her mother by my client."

# Muslims flee Indian business hub after religious attacks

## Muslim families in Haryana slums forced out due to recent incidents of stone-throwing, arson, and shrine vandalism

GURUGRAM: Over 3,000 poor Muslims have fled a business hub outside New Delhi this month, fearing for their lives after Hindu-Muslim clashes and sporadic attacks targeting them, residents, police and a community group said. Shops and shacks owned or run by Muslims and their houses in two large slum areas were padlocked when Reuters visited them more than a week after seven people were killed in clashes in Nuh and Gurugram districts in Haryana state, adjoining the Indian capital. The violence began on July 31 after a Hindu religious procession, organised by groups ideologically aligned with the ruling Hindu nationalist Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), was targeted and a mosque attacked in retaliation. Police quelled the unrest in 48 hours. But minor attacks targeting Muslims have continued for days, scaring families who had moved to

the new urban centre of Gurugram - where 250 of the Fortune 500 companies have offices - in search of a livelihood. Stone-throwing, arson and vandalism of two small Muslim shrines in the slum districts forced hundreds of Muslim families to abandon their single-room houses and seek shelter at a train station before heading out, witnesses said. "Many of us spent the entire night on a railway platform because it was much safer there," Raufullah Javed, a tailor who fled to his home village in the eastern state of Bihar, told Reuters by phone. The Gurugram president of Jamiat-Ulema-e-Hind (Council of Indian Muslim Theologians) Mufti Mohammed Salim estimated that more than 3,000 Muslims had left the district after the violence. Four Muslim shopkeepers who also fled to their villages in eastern India said by phone

that members of hardline Hindu groups had questioned them about their businesses and families. "Some Hindu men came in a large group and started asking questions such as how much money I earn," said Shahid Sheikh, a barber who fled from Tigr village, home to over 1,200 Muslim families. "Many Muslims decided it's best to leave for a while," said Sheikh, adding that some Hindu owners of shops rented out to Muslims wanted them to vacate. Tensions between India's majority Hindus and minority Muslims have risen over issues such as the eating of beef and inter-faith marriages with Muslims saying they have been increasingly targeted by Hindu activists since Prime Minister Narendra Modi's BJP government took power in 2014. BJP leaders say clashes between the two communities have broken

out in the past as well and have been less frequent since they came to power. The trouble in Gurugram, a city of over 1.5 million people formerly known as Gurgaon, has exposed multinationals such as Google, American Express, Dell, Samsung, Ernst & Young and Deloitte based there to risks of violence and disruption. Haryana police said they had arrested over 200 men from both communities in connection with the violence and some Muslims who had fled had begun to trickle back. Anil Vij, the interior minister of Haryana's BJP government, said he had received reports of some Muslims leaving but the situation is completely under control now. "No one is asking them to leave and we are providing full security in all communally sensitive areas," he told news agency. — Agencies

### Modi's govt defeats no-trust motion

DNA

NEW DELHI: The government of Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi defeated a no-confidence motion in parliament on Thursday after a fiery speech by the premier at the climax of a three-day debate. Opposition lawmakers — who had brought the motion over months of ethnic violence in Manipur state — walked out of the chamber, prompting a furious rebuke from the premier, with the government then winning the vote. The walkouts, according to broadcasters, included Congress party leader Rahul Gandhi, who on Wednesday said Modi's government was "set on burning the whole country". Modi denounced them, saying: "Those who don't trust democracy are always ready to make a comment but don't have the patience to hear [rebuttal]."



ISLAMABAD: Country Representative of UN Women Sharmeela Rasool along with chairperson NCSW Nilofar Bakhtiyar, founder of Nomad Gallery Nageen Hyat and others taking interest in photos during photo exhibition "Emerging Violence against Women Issues". — Online

# Caretaker KP CM seeks resignations from entire cabinet

DNA

PESHAWAR: Caretaker Chief Minister of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Azam Khan, has called for the resignation of the entire cabinet, as confirmed by official sources. This development comes after the Election Commission of Pakistan urged the Chief

Minister to eliminate ministers with political affiliations from the cabinet. In response to the call, a total of 19 cabinet members have already submitted their resignations to the Caretaker Chief Minister. This decision highlights a concerted effort to ensure a transparent and impartial electoral process. However, eight cabinet members are yet to tender their resignations,

## This development comes after the Election Commission of Pakistan urged the CM to eliminate ministers with political affiliations from cabinet

according to official sources. This process underscores a pivotal shift in the region's political landscape, aiming to curtail undue political influence within the government. The Election Commission's directive to remove ministers with political connections is a step towards fostering a level playing field for the upcoming elections.

# SC bench accepts lawyer's 'unconditional apology'

DNA

ISLAMABAD: A three-member bench of the Supreme Court on Thursday accepted Advocate Amanullah Kanrani's "unconditional apology" for hurling accusations against two of the bench's members during a hearing pertaining to the murder of lawyer Abdul Razzaq Shar in Quetta. On June 6, Shar was fatally shot by unidentified assailants near Alamo Chowk on Airport Road. According to the police, the attack occurred while he was en route to the Balochistan High Court (BHC), targeted by unknown individuals wielding automatic weapons. The government and the PTI had traded blame over the incident, with both sides accusing the other of having a role in the killing. Subsequently, an FIR was registered on the complaint of Shar's son, Advocate Siraj Ahmed, at Quetta's Shaheed Jamil police station against Imran. On Wednesday, the apex court bench — headed by Justice Yahya Afridi and comprising Justice Mazhar Ali Akbar Naqvi

and Justice Syed Hasan Azhar Rizvi — was hearing PTI Chairman Imran Khan's plea challenging a first information report (FIR) filed against him over Shar's murder when the exchange between the lawyer and the judges took place. A written order issued today states that the counsel, Advocate Kanrani, withdrew his allegations and "also rendered an unconditional apology". "After deliberations, the unconditional apology rendered by the learned counsel for the complainant was accepted," it adds. Adjourning the hearing till Aug 24, the verdict noted that the "interim order passed earlier shall continue". It further stated that the case "may be fixed for hearing before any bench available" then as the current bench may not be available on the next hearing due to summer vacations. The lawyer replied that not only had he read the FIR but also the order in which a judge, while hearing the case of former Lahore capital city police officer Ghulam Mehmood Dogar, had suggested initiating suo motu action over the delay in elections to the Punjab Assembly after its dissolution.

# Hawaii fires: At least 36 killed as flames sweep through Maui

NEWS DESK

FLORIDA: At least 36 people have died as fast-moving wildfires tear through the Hawaiian island of Maui, officials say. The deaths in the city of Lahaina, the island's main tourist destination, came as strong winds from a distant hurricane fanned the flames. The fire is one of several ongoing blazes that have burnt entire neighbourhoods to the ground. Thousands of people have been forced to evacuate their homes and a state of emergency has been declared. A huge search and rescue operation is under way, with some people still unaccounted for. "We barely made it out in time," Kamuela Kawaako, who fled to an evacuation shelter on Tuesday with his partner and six-year-old son, told the Associated Press. "It was so hard to sit there and just watch

my town burn to ashes and not be able to do anything," he said. "I was helpless." Five evacuation shelters have been opened on Maui and officials earlier said they were "overrun" with people. The island is a popular tourist destination and visitors have been urged to stay away. "This is not a safe place to be," Hawaii Lt Governor Sylvia Luke told reporters. "We have resources that are being taxed." Firefighters are still battling active fires, with helicopters dropping water on the blazes from above. The western side of the island, which is the second largest of the Hawaiian archipelago, was almost cut off entirely with only one main road open. "As the firefighting efforts continue, 36 total fatalities have been discovered today amid the active Lahaina fire," the Maui county government said in a statement late on Wednesday.

# Lebanon army seizes Hezbollah munitions after clashes

NEWS DESK

BEIRUT: The Lebanese army said Thursday it had seized munitions from a Hezbollah truck that overturned near Beirut, leading to deadly clashes between Christian residents and members of the powerful Shiite Muslim group. The violence erupted on Wednesday evening after the accident in Kahale, a town in the mountains east of the Lebanese capital, on the road linking it to the Bekaa Valley bordering Syria. Kahale mayor Abboud Abi Khalil said that residents had surrounded the truck demanding to know what was inside, before Hezbollah members escorting it opened fire and killed one of them. Iran-backed Hezbollah said one of its members was

shot and later died of his wounds. The army confirmed in a statement on Thursday that two people had been killed and said ammunition had been seized from the truck. "The cargo of the truck has been transported to a military center, and an investigation has been opened by the competent judicial authorities," it added. The army said its troops had removed the truck at dawn and reopened the Beirut-Damascus road which Kahale residents had blocked in protest. Hezbollah is the only Lebanese faction that kept its weapons after the end of the 1975-1990 civil war. It is considered a "terrorist" organization by many Western governments. A funeral is due to be held on Thursday for Ahmad Ali Kassas, the Hezbollah member who was killed in the Kahale clashes.

# At least 17 dead as boat carrying Rohingya refugees sinks

WEB DESK

BURMA: At least 17 Rohingya refugees have been killed, and 30 remain missing after a boat capsized in bad weather in the Bay of Bengal earlier this week, aid workers in Myanmar said. Volunteers said on Thursday that eight people were rescued from the boat, which was headed for Malaysia, a coveted destination for thousands of Muslim-majority Rohingya people fleeing persecution and poverty in Myanmar and Bangladesh. It was

unclear from where the boat had set off. "We found dead bodies starting from August 7," said Min Htal Wah, chairperson of Shwe Yaung Metta Foundation, a rescue organisation based in the coastal Rakhine state of Myanmar. "Within three days, we found 17 dead bodies ... We found some people alive," he said, adding that 10 women were among the dead. A Rohingya aid worker in Maungdaw township on the border with Bangladesh said the boat had departed in bad weather, and about 500 others were still hoping to cross to Malaysia.

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