



Islamabad POST

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Wagner seek to unsettle NATO's eastern flank

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Briefs

Govt to fully support PCB: Dar

MEHTAB PIRZADA

ISLAMABAD: Finance Minister Ishaq Dar said the government will extend its full cooperation to make the Asia Cricket Cup 2023 event successful. He was talking to a delegation of Pakistan Cricket Board headed by Chairman Muhammad Zaka Ashraf in Islamabad today. The PM reiterated govt's support and cooperation to encourage sports activities all over the country, especially Cricket which is becoming more popular among youth. Chairman PCB Muhammad Zaka Ashraf apprised the Finance Minister of matters related to PCB and hosting of Men's ODI Asia Cup-2023, jointly by Pak and Sri Lanka, this month.

Maryam inquires after teenage maid

DNA

LAHORE: Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) senior vice president Maryam Nawaz on Thursday visited the 14-year-old maid Rizwana, who was subjected to torture. During a visit to the General Hospital, LGH MS Dr Khalid bin Aslam apprised Maryam of the teenage maid's health condition. The medical superintendent said: "Rizwana's health is now out of danger". Last week, Jamaat-e-Islami (JI) Emir Sirajul Haq vowed to play his role in providing justice to teenage maid Rizwana.

LHC grants bail to Shehryar

DNA

RAWALPINDI: The Lahore High Court Rawalpindi bench on Thursday granted bail to Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) leader Shehryar Khan Afridi allegedly involved in the Military General Headquarters (GHQ) attack case. The LHC Justice Anwar-ul-Haq Pannu while hearing the case dismissed the 14 days' detention orders of Deputy Commissioner Rawalpindi and ordered Afridi's immediate release.

5-year plan chalked out Pakistan, Iran target \$5 bln trade volume

FM lauds Iranian leadership for its firm support to the Kashmiri people

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan and Iran on Thursday set a target of \$5 billion for bilateral trade as the two countries chalked out a five-year trade cooperation plan to enhance cooperation. Foreign Minister Bilawal Bhattu Zardari, addressing a joint press stakeout with his Iranian counterpart Hossein Amir Abdollahian, said the five-year trade cooperation plan was aimed at removing impediments in bilateral trade, finalizing the Free Trade Agreement and establishing of institutional linkages between the private sectors of both countries. "I am confident that the steps we are taking today, will chart the course for a long-term durable economic partnership between our two countries in the months and years ahead," the foreign minister told the media after the two leaders held a meeting as well as the delegation-level talks. He said during their meeting, they had agreed to prioritize the operationalization of the five remaining border markets by the end of current year. Foreign Minister Bilawal said Pakistan and Iran had decided to repatriate all the sentenced prisoners as per provisions of existing agreements between two sides. It was also decided to set free fishermen in custody in Pakistan and Iran and to waive off any fine imposed by the authorities of both countries for the release of their vessels. He said the two sides would exchange lists of prisoners to put into practice the understanding expeditiously. The meeting also discussed

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PM vows to strengthen Pak-Iran ties

STAFF REPORT

ISLAMABAD: The Foreign Minister of Iran, Mr. Hossein Amir Abdollahian, called on the Prime Minister, Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif in Islamabad on Thursday. Underscoring the close brotherly relations between the two countries, the Prime Minister reaffirmed Pakistan's commitment to further strengthen these ties, with particular focus on enhancing cooperation in the economic domain. Recalling the joint inauguration, with President Ebrahim Raisi, of the Mand-Pishin border marketplace on 18 May 2023, the Prime Minister stressed that initiatives aimed at economic uplift of the border areas, were a tangible manifestation of the shared priority to collectively work for the betterment of our two peoples. Noting that President Raisi's policy of 'Neighborhood First' was fully aligned with his vision of a secure, prosperous and interconnected

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CJP says no mily trials yet SC won't allow 'illegal actions' by Armed Forces

CJP commends the army for not opening fire at civilians



COURT REPORTER

ISLAMABAD: Chief Justice of Pakistan (CJP) Umar Ata Bandial has declared that the country's armed forces would not be allowed to take "illegal actions" as the Supreme Court adjourned indefinitely the hearing on a slew of petitions challenging the military trials of civilians. The six-judge bench, led by the CJP, comprised of Justice Ijazul Ahsan, Justice Munib Akhtar, Justice Yahya Afridi, Justice Sayyed Mazhar Ali Akbar Naqvi and Justice Ayesha A Malik. As the court put off the hearing for an indefinite period, the CJP, on the occasion, sought from the attorney general of Pakistan (AGP) the assurance that there would be no trial of civilians.

The AGP replied that he had already assured there would be no trial of the civilians. The chief justice made it clear that at the same time the apex court's order of provision of facilities to civilians presently in detention in connection with the incidents of violence on May 9 would stay. "I wish everybody comply with laws and the constitution," he said, and added, "The court holds in high esteem those who cooperate with it. We even respect those who don't cooperate with us." Advocate Latif Khosa said his only appeal to the court was to give decision in the case this week. CJP Bandial replied that as far as he was concerned, he was ready to work till 8:00 at night. "These days there are vacations. And there are some judges on the bench who have not taken a single day off," he said, and added, "The vacations are for three months. But we had decided to settle for just one month." He further said that the court was mindful of the fact that presently the country was passing through tough times. "And we have a great respect for those whose role is instrumental in keeping this court functional," he remarked.

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ISLAMABAD: The Foreign Minister of Iran, Hossein Amir Abdollahian, calls on the Prime Minister, Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif, Iranian Ambassador is also present on the occasion. - DNA

Toshakhana case IHC reserves verdict on Imran's plea

Haris says trial court has not entertained Khan's statement

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Islamabad High Court (IHC) has reserved verdict on former prime minister and Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) Chairman's plea to restore his right to defense in Toshakhana case. As per details, the PTI chief's counsel Khawaja Haris urged the court to hear the final arguments in this case and then announce the verdict. He said that the trial court has not entertained the PTI chairman's defense statement and the witness was termed irrelevant without hearing to the statement. The Chief Justice remarked that he will look into this matter and the verdict was reserved till tomorrow. Earlier, the PTI chairman challenged the cessation

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Pak faces devastating effects PM for strategy to mitigate climate change effects

Shehbaz says debt trap is a death trap for developing countries

SHUJAAT HAMZA

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif has called for devising strategy to save countries like Pakistan from the disastrous impacts of climate change when they have no contribution in inducing it. He was addressing a ceremony organized by Ministry of Climate Change in Islamabad Thursday, titled 'Review of Pakistan's climate journey'. The Prime Minister said climate change has adversely impacted the whole world with Pakistan facing the devastating floods that inundated vast fertile lands. He emphasized that the world needs to understand that there is no fault of countries having little to none contribution in greenhouse gas emissions but are facing the consequences of climate change and end up being trapped in a vicious cycle of loans to be paid back. Shehbaz Sharif

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'Never met army chiefs for personal reasons'

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif Thursday lamented being touted as the "establishment's man", saying that he only met the army's top leaders for the country's betterment, not personal gains. "I was called the establishment's man, but I did not care about those taunts [...] I never met army chiefs for personal reasons; the only motive behind those meetings was to ensure that the establishment and governments take the country forward together." The prime minister

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President for enhanced relations with UK, Korea

DNA

ISLAMABAD: President of Pakistan Dr. Arif Alvi has said Pakistan greatly values relations with UK and Republic of Korea. He expressed these views while talking to the newly-arrived envoys of both these countries. The United Kingdom's High Commissioner-designate to Pakistan Ms Jane Marriot, the Ambassador-designate of the Republic of Korea Mr Park Ki Jun,

and the High Commissioner-designate of Malawi Mr Younos Abdul Karim, presented their diplomatic credentials to President Dr Arif Alvi, at Aiwan-e-Sadr, Islamabad, on 03-08-2023. The President hoped that during tenure of these new envoys relations will improve further. He wished best of luck to the envoys. Talking to Jane Marriot, the UK's High Commissioner to Pakistan, the president said that Pakistan attached

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1 private, 7 govt bills smoothly sail through NA

ISLAMABAD: The National Assembly on Thursday wended up its legislative business by passing eight bills— one private and seven important government bills. The bills included the Institute of Gujrat Bill, 2023, the Pakistan Civil Aviation Bill, 2023, the National Logistics Corporation Bill, 2023, the National Anti-Money Laundering and Counter Financing of Terrorism Authority Bill, 2023, the Protection of Journalists and Media Professionals (Amendment) Bill, 2023, the Press, Newspapers, News Agencies and Books Registration (Amendment) Bill, 2023, the Gun and Country Club Bill, 2023 and Pakistan Air Safety Investigation Bill, 2023. The bills were piloted by Minister for Parliamentary Affairs Murtaza Javeed Abbasi, Minister of State for Foreign Affairs Hina Rabbani Khar and MNA Chaudhry Armaghan Subhani in the House. Moving the National Anti-Money Laundering and Counter Financing of Terrorism Authority Bill 2023, Hina Rabbani Khar said that this legislation was of immense importance and if enforced and properly implemented, it would make sure that Pakistan does not see the FATF's grey list again. The bill envisaged the establishment of a National Anti-Money Laundering and Counter Financing of Terrorism Authority, she said. —APP

Alvi gives assent to two bills

ISLAMABAD: President Dr Arif Alvi on Thursday gave his assent to two bills after they were passed by the parliament. The president signed the Board of Investment (Amendment) Bill 2023, providing for amending the Board of Investments Ordinance, 2001. President Alvi also assented to the Pakistan General Cosmetics Bill, 2023 aimed at regulating the sale, purchase, quality, packaging, manufacturing, storage and distribution of cosmetics. The president signed the said bills in the exercise of powers conferred on him under Article 75 of the Constitution.—DNA

PDMA warns of more rains, flooding

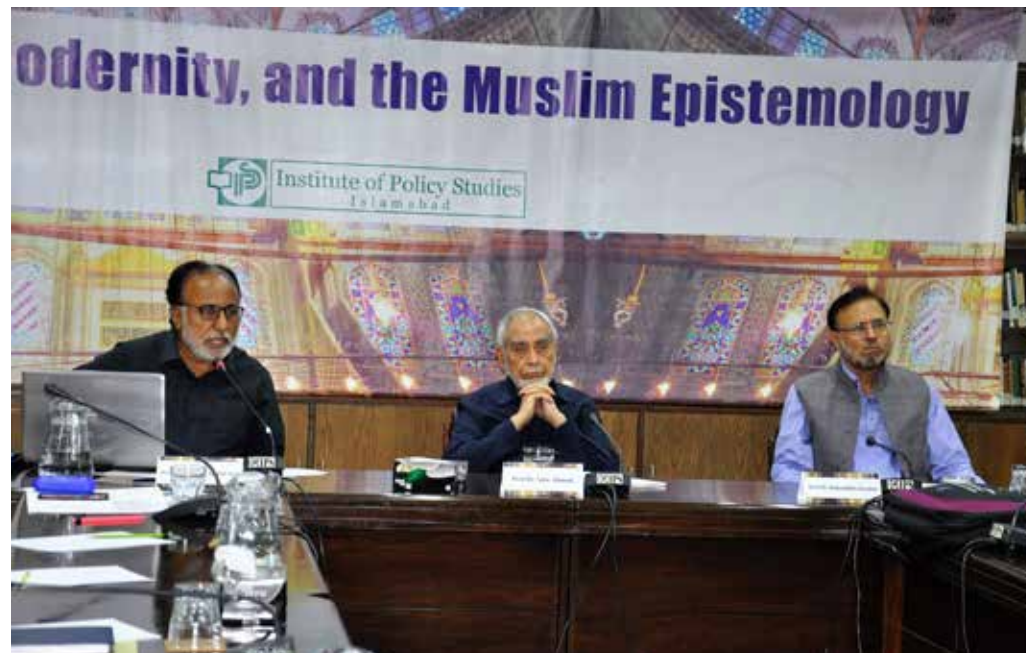
LAHORE: The Punjab Disaster Management Authority (PDMA) has issued a warning about the chances of more monsoon rains, already continuing in several districts of Punjab, until August 7. The current situation indicates potential flooding in Sialkot, Narowal and Rawalpindi districts. Furthermore, rivers in Punjab are experiencing low-level floods. According to a spokesman for the PDMA, residents should remain vigilant as Mangala in Jhelum river is at risk of high-level flooding during August 4 to August 6. However, water flow is reported to be normal at Tarbela, Chashma and Kalabagh. The flow of water in Jhelum and Chenab rivers remains normal. At Sulemanki, the water inflow is measured at 72,627 cusecs, while the outflow is at 63,412 cusecs. Head Islam is witnessing an inflow of 64,597 cusecs and an outflow of 53,974 cusecs. Taunsa at Indus River is also experiencing a low-level flood with a rail of 270,850 cusecs of water passing through Taunsa barrage.—APP

Modernity must be subjected to contemplation through Ijtihad

Mahnour Ansar

Islamabad, August 3: Epistemology reflects the fundamentals and foundations on which a particular worldview approaches knowledge, its sources, and objectives. Civilization, scientific tradition, literary work, and societal structures are developed through this worldview and play a key role in the concept of knowledge. The Western worldview has developed an epistemology that draws on the peculiar historical experiences of the Western nations and do not go well with divinely inspired Muslim societies. Given the gap between the Islamic worldview and the epistemology imposed through knowledge imperialism, Muslim societies have failed to exhibit their true potential. Muslims need to develop their epistemology through extensive academic engagements and blend the tradition with modernity through ijthad.

This was observed by academics during a seminar on "Tradition, Modernity, and the Muslim Epistemology" held at the Institute of Policy Studies (IPS), Islamabad. The speakers included Professor Dr Ali Abbasi, President, Al-Mustafa International University, Qom, Iran, as the keynote speaker, the chair Professor Dr Anis Ahmad, vice chancellor, Riphah International University (RIU), Professor Dr Mustafeez Ahmad Alvi, HoD, Islamic Thought and Culture, NUML, and Professor Dr Mohyuddin Hashmi, Dean, Faculty of Arabic and Islamic Learning, Allama Iqbal Open University (AIU). Prof Ali Abbasi said that the particular understanding of ration-



ality and reason in the West has undermined the traditional norms and beliefs. Despite the persistent, extensive, and expansive development of the Eurocentric epistemology and its aggressive implementation through colonial and neo-colonial means, the Muslim worldviews, doctrinal beliefs, and epistemological sources are still intact, vibrant, and dynamic. Muslims do not alternate between tradition and modernity to insist putting aside all outcomes of modernity; rather benefits from modernity and other human experiences to adopt it on the touchstone of its values, sacred ideology, and rational traditions. He emphasized that a single epistemology cannot claim its preva-

lence over all societies and civilizations, particularly those that have their rich legacy of knowledge, including Muslims. The negative consequences of the attempt of the Western civilization to dominate the diverse worldviews and indigenous values of other civilizations must be taken care of. Connecting mankind with spirituality and theories based on divine sources of knowledge is one of the primary things to undertake. He underlined that it is the duty of scientific and academic centers to resolve the ideological confusion. Prof Mohyuddin Hashmi said that only the right understanding of epistemology can solve ideological confusion. In faith-based thought, revelation sets the tradition that

itself has the room for embracing modernity through discovery of the knowledge in the universe. In the secular epistemology, the sole source of knowledge is the universe, and despite the significance of tradition, the Western concept of modernity is not ready for a reconciliation. This difference shows that Western ideology has different views of tradition and values, and that it is inapplicable to Muslims and unable to solve their issues. Ijtihad has been a part of Muslim tradition and needs to be made vibrant and functional to reconcile modernity with tradition. Prof Anis Ahmad said that civilization, culture, and values have been studied in the framework of former colonizers based on their own

worldviews and social constructs. Under the faith-based worldview, the real source of knowledge has to be transcendent, comprehensive, and applicable. On this criterion, no concept or doctrine can claim to be a real knowledge source. Islamic epistemology is not dualist and does not draw a line between deen and dunya; rather it derives from a Tawhidi paradigm. He stressed that Muslim scholars must internalize the transcendent Qur'an and Sunnah in thinking and vision. Similarly, a new genre of knowledge has to emerge from the Qur'an and Sunnah with complete understanding of modern reality. And a new approach which is not hypothetical but comprehensive, transcendent, and applicable is needed for the development and progress of Muslim society. Earlier, Dr Mustafeez Alvi mentioned that tradition transmits culture and values while modernity transforms ideology and knowledge. This transmission and transformation have created new sources of knowledge and epistemological foundations. While faith-based epistemology is derived from knowledge, learning, logic, and philosophy enlightened by the Qur'an, all other sources of human knowledge— whether embedded in tradition or modernity— must align with the Qur'an, he said. For this, ijthad within the Islamic framework of thinking is a tool to apply updated knowledge to different aspects of human life. Prof Dr Fakhru-Islam, director research and academic outreach, IPS, thanked the scholars for their illuminating talks and shared that IPS shall keep on collaborating with other academic institutions to promote dialogue and discourse on the subject.

10 BTAP first phase extended till July 2024

PESHAWAR: The first phase of the 10 billion trees afforestation project (10BTAP 2019-23) has been extended up to July 2024 by the government in order to achieve the set plantation target of 10 billion saplings in the country. Muhammad Ibrahim Khan, Deputy Project Director, 10 BTAP KP Forest Department while confirmed the extension of the mega project started in all provinces, Azad Kashmir and Gilgit Baltistan in September 2018 after the successful completion of its first phase (2013-19) with the aim to counterbalance the effects of climate change and global warming. He said that approximately 700 million saplings against the set plantation target of 10 billion were planted during the last four years under the 10 billion trees afforestation project in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. He said that the remaining 300 million saplings would be planted in the extended year with the help of forest enclosures, farms forestry and the general public. Ibrahim Khan said the total financial share of KP in 10 BTAP was Rs27 billion out of which Rs12 billion was released including six billion each under the Public Sector Development Program of the Federal Government and the Annual Development Program of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa government.—DNA

Pak-Africa Business forum discusses trade with Rwanda

DNA

ISLAMABAD: President of Pak Africa business forum Omar Shahid Butt said that Rwanda is a gateway to Africa for Pakistan. Increasing trade with Africa can open up the entire continent for Pakistani Exports. Omar Shahid Butt, President of Pak-Africa Business Forum, organized a High Tea in honor of the Pakistani High Commissioner nominated for Rwanda Mr. Naeem Khan. All the major exporters of Pakistan participated in the event. Among the exporters who participated in the event were representatives of the pharma sector, textile sector, IT sector, and the representatives of Electrical Cables sector also graced the occasion.

A comprehensive strategy was formulated to increase Pakistani exports to African countries including Rwanda, Congo. Speaking on this occasion, Omar Shahid Butt said that Look Africa is an excellent initiative to increase Pak-Africa trade relations, but this initiative of the government needs the support of the private sector, and he expressed his determination to support the government in this matter in the country's interest. He said that Africa is a region rich in resources and Africa has mineral resources and raw materials that Pakistan can import and it can be beneficial for the industry of Pakistan and by using this raw material, Pakistan can manufacture its export products and export them to Africa. The president of the Pak-Africa

Business Forum said that Pakistan already imports a large amount of tea from Rwanda, while Rwanda's IT industry is also very active, and both countries can work together in this sector to achieve common goals. Mr. Naeem Khan while speaking to the attendees said that there are many opportunities in Rwanda in the textile and pharma industry sectors which can be taken advantage of. He said that Rwanda has the potential to become a hub for Pakistani export products and Pakistan can export its products to other countries from Rwanda. The Ambassador highlighted the importance of Rwanda in African union, and he described that Rwanda is very safe & peaceful country for Pakistani investors. He further highlighted the importance

of Pak-Africa business forum and said that it plays a pivotal role in enhancing bilateral trade and economic relations between Pakistan & Africa. He congratulated Omar Shahid Butt for the initiative of Establishing this business forum and he also invited Omar Butt and other member of this forum to visit Rwanda. Rwanda is an important country in Africa, its economy is progressing. Pakistan gives vital importance to its relations with Rwanda. Mr. Naeem Khan said that African countries can also invest in the CPEC Project. On this occasion, Omar Butt and the Pakistan High Commissioner to Rwanda came to the agreement to coordinate efforts to open up Rwanda and the surrounding nations to Pakistani exporters.

Women's participation in politics signifies gender equality: Minister

ISLAMABAD: Minister for Law and Justice Senator Azam Nazeer Tarar on Thursday said that women's full and equal participation in political and electoral processes signifies gender equality in the country. He was addressing the 'National Dialogue on Women Inclusive Electoral Processes', said a press release issued here. The minister said that when women participate in elections— as voters, candidates, electoral administrators, or party supporters, political processes are more inclusive and democracy is strengthened. He further added that women's full participation in political and electoral processes has been enumerated in international instruments such as the

International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR) and the Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), both of which have been ratified by Pakistan. The minister said that under the Elections Act 2017, the ECP may declare the election void if the turnout of women voters is less than ten per cent of the total votes polled in a constituency. The commission may conduct public awareness programs and media campaigns regarding the importance of maximum voter enrollment and participation in elections especially by women, he said. Azam Nazeer Tarar said that there shall be seats in the National Assembly allocated to each Province, Islamabad

Capital Territory, and the Federally Administered Tribal Areas and seats reserved for women and non-Muslims, as specified in Article 51 of the Constitution. The ECP will annually publish disaggregated data of registered men and women voters in each National Assembly and Provincial Assembly constituency highlighting the difference in number of registered men and women voters, he said. The law minister said that the Presiding Officer may at any stage on the polling day during or after the polling, prepare and send a special report to the Returning Officer and to the commission if he has reason to believe that women voters have been restrained from exercising their right to vote based.—APP



ISLAMABAD: Foreign Minister Bilawal Bhutto Zardari calls on Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif. —DNA

Govt to take Pakistan to forefront of digital world: Amin

The National Incubation Centre Karachi (NICK) played a significant role in promoting entrepreneurship and the successful startups created a valuable number of employment opportunities, he stated

KARACHI: Federal Minister for Information Technology Syed Amin-ul-Haq on Thursday expressed his resolve and determination to take Pakistan to the forefront of the digital world with a futuristic vision. The minister, while addressing the graduation ceremony of 8th and 9th Cohorts of National Incubation Centre Karachi (NICK) at NED University of Engineering and Technology, said that multifaceted efforts were required by all the stakeholders for materializing

the Vision 2025. The federal minister said that dedicated efforts by the Ministry resulted in the surge of Pakistan's IT exports to \$ 2.6 billion while we were fully determined to enhance the figure to \$15 billion in the coming years. Following the vision of Digital Pakistan, the IT Ministry has taken multiple steps for the promotion of the sector which resulted in the expansion of internet connectivity, broadband and cellular coverage in the country, he said adding that, now-

adays, the number of mobile phone subscribers in the country had reached at 195 million against the earlier figure of 160 million in FY 2018-19. Referring to smart phone manufacturing in Pakistan, Amin ul Haq said that 22 million smart phones had been manufactured in the country that had ensured the availability of smart phone at a lower price. "For the first time, smart phone was exported from the country as well", he revealed. The IT sector has attracted foreign di-

rect investment of \$ 7.1 billion while the sector has contributed as taxes of Rs.11.20 billion to national kitty, he added. The minister said that the Ministry's Universal Service Fund was working to improve broadband services for providing digital services to the population living in remote under serve areas of all the four provinces. The National Incubation Centre Karachi (NICK) played a significant role in promoting entrepreneurship and the successful startups created

a valuable number of employment opportunities, he stated. Gaming and animation is a vast field of IT sector at global level but the field has been neglected in the past, he observed adding that Pakistan's share in multi billion dollar market was negligible. Two centres of excellence in Gaming and Animation will be established at Karachi and Lahore with an estimated cost of Rs.2.2 billion, the minister informed adding that one of them would be in the NED University.—DNA

Iranian CG shows interest as CPEC partner

PESHAWAR: Iranian Consul General in Peshawar, Ali Banafsha Khawa, while reaffirming Iran's unwavering commitment to regional peace and stability, has emphasized Iran's keen interest in becoming an active participant in the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) project, underscoring the importance of cooperation among regional nations for mutual progress and prosperity. The Iranian Consul General expressed these views during a conversation with media persons during his visit to Peshawar Press Club on Thursday. During the visit, the Iranian diplomat participated in a Meet the Press event alongside esteemed members of the PPC. The gathering facilitated open discussions on various subjects, including the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC), Iran-Pakistan trade relations, and fostering people-to-people contact between the two neighboring nations.—APP

Beautiful example of religious, mutual harmony, brotherhood in Chitral valley

CHITRAL: The Muslim and Kalash communities were living in three different valleys named Bumborat, Birir, and Rumbor without any sectarian upheaval or prejudice towards each other. Most of the persons from the Kalash clan had converted to Islam and still been living with their families and were allowed the right to have property and possessions there. Recently two Muslims named Haji Zafar Ahmed and Haji Qari Nazir Ahmed who had gone to perform Haj when they came back to their valley, received a warm welcome from the Kalash tribes on their arrival at the Kalash Rombor. This was the third family who became Muslims from the Kalash community and performed the pilgrimage. On this occasion, former Special Assistant to Chief Minister Khyber Pakhtunkhwa on minority affairs Wazir Zada Kalash congratulated Haji Qari and Haji Nazir Ahmed's family on behalf of the Kalash tribe. According to details, these people were living in these valleys with great religious mutual harmony and attended each other's religious, and cultural, festivals.—APP

INVITATION FOR BIDS				
TEHSIL HEADQUARTER HOSPITAL PINDI GIEB, DISTRICT ATTOCK				
Reference No: THQ/PG/LAB Items: 03/2023 Dated: 31-07-2023				
PROCUREMENT OF PATHOLOGY LAB ITEMS UNDER FRAME WORK CONTRACT TEHSIL HEAD QUARTER HOSPITAL PINDI GIEB, DISTRICT ATTOCK INVITES SEALED BIDDERS FROM REGISTERED SUPPLIERS/TRANSFORMERS FOR THE SUPPLY LAB ITEMS FOR THE YEAR 2023-24				
Total estimated Budget: RS. 45,00,000/-				
Estimated cost for Lab Items: RS. 45,00,000/-				
Sr. NO	Detail	Bid Security	Closing date and time for the submission of Bid	Opening Date and Time
01	Frame Work Contract for the Procurement of Pathology Lab reagents Kits and other lab related for the year 2023-24	02% of Estimated Budget	10:00 AM 21-08-2023	11:00 AM 21-08-2023
Interested bidders may get the bidding documents from the office of Medical Superintendent of this hospital on submission of written application on their letter head along with payment of non-refundable fee of Rs.1,000/- (one thousand only) during working hours as per following notified schedule.				
Copy of Bidding Documents can also be available for information as WWW.PPRA.PUNJAB.GOV.PK Single Stage - Two Envelope procedure, as per Rule 38 (a) of PPRA Rules, 2014 shall be applied. The detail Terms and Conditions may be seen in the bidding documents or on the website WWW.PPRA.PUNJAB.GOV.PK				
NOTE: All the assessments and procuring procedures (ie receiving, opening and awarding etc) shall be governed by the PPRA PROCUREMENT RULES, 2014 (Amended up to date) and Decision of committee member will be consider final. For obtaining any further information or clarifications, please contact at the following.				
Name: Dr. Idris Masood Designation: Medical Superintendent Contact No: 037-2350355-56 Email: idrisc@idrisidris@gmail.com				
IPL NO 6115				

National Days and Armed Forces Days

August

Aug 01/China
Armed Forces Day

Aug 01/Switzerland
National Day

Aug 01/Lebanon
Armed Forces Day

Aug 01 /Syria
Armed Forces Day

Aug 4/Bukino Faso
National Day

Aug 09 /Singapore

Aug 15/DPR Korea
Independence Day

Aug 15/India
Independence Day

Aug 15/Poland
Armed Forces Day

Aug 17 /Indonesia
Independence Day

Aug 24/Ukraine
Independence Day

Aug 25/Uruguay
Independence Day

Aug 30 /Turkey
Armed Forces Day

Aug 31/Kyrgyz
Republic
Independence Day

Aug 31/Malaysia
National Day

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



Enquiry

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PIA Flight Info.....114
PIA Cargo.....9280979
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

Serena Hotels, Pak Squash Federation celebrate Hamza win

Serena Hotels under its sports diplomacy initiative partnering with the Pakistan Squash Federation, Senior Vice President, Air Vice Marshal, Mr. Kazim Hammad, was the chief guest on the auspicious occasion

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Despite all odds, our youth has always made us proud by showing their resilience and determination to succeed. Pakistan's Hamza Khan won the World Junior Squash Championship in Melbourne on Sunday, a feat which was last accomplished by Jansher Khan in 1986. In an epic finale against his Egyptian opponent Mohamed Zakaria, Hamza scored 10-12, 14-12, 11-3, and 11-6 by bringing the title of World Champion back to Pakistan after 37 years, creating history and motivating thousands of young players across



the country. In a ceremony hosted by Serena Hotels under its sports diplomacy initiative partnering with the Pakistan Squash Federation, Senior Vice President, Air

Vice Marshal, Mr. Kazim Hammad, was the chief guest on the auspicious occasion, and he presented Hamza Khan with the Trophy along with his family making it even

more special for the young athlete.

Hamza Khan has accomplished so much while facing a lot of difficulties in his career at an extremely young



age and has made the whole nation proud, commented Group Captain Mr. Zafaryab Khan, the Honourary Secretary of Pakistan Squash Federation,

congratulated Hamza, and his family for his momentous win. The evening was graced by media colleagues, senior government officials, the corporate

community, and other notable members of society. The evening was an ode to Hamza, his resilience, and his accomplishments against all odds.

China-Pakistan Economy & Trade B2B Forum held

DNA

ISLAMABAD: The 10th Anniversary Ceremony for CPEC and China-Pakistan Economy & Trade B2B Forum was held in Shenzhen, China. At the forum, the Pakistani representative introduced in detail the more than 50 agreements signed by two governments since the construction of the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor was launched in 2013, which determined the "1+4" cooperation layout centered on the CPEC, with Gwadar Port, energy, infrastructure and industrial cooperation as the four priorities. In response to

these statements, all guests and Pakistani representatives conducted in-depth exchanges on the composition of Pakistan's national resources, economic situation, investment policy, financial system, security situation and other issues of common concern to both sides. Subsequently, special guests from local enterprises conducted targeted project exchanges with the Pakistani delegation, whom conducted policy interpretation, market analysis, project evaluation and resource docking with Chinese enterprises. As for conference outcome, Chinese representatives expressed hope to normal-

ize this forum, and combine the industrial characteristics of the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area to cooperate with Special Economic Zone (SEZs) in Pakistan in an all-round way to go overseas as a whole in the form of industrial belts and clusters. At the same time, invite outstanding Pakistani enterprises to visit China to establish a two-way cooperation mechanism, promoting the export of Pakistani specialty products and undertake the transfer of China's industrial capacity. Accordingly, the Pakistani delegation expressed willingness to actively cooperate with

Shenzhen, hoping to encourage outstanding enterprises from Pakistan, the Middle East and the Gulf region to develop in China through the establishment of Bay Area headquarters base in Shenzhen. This forum is hosted by the China-Pakistan Trade, Investment and Technology Cooperation Center, as well as undertaken by China-Pakistan United (Shenzhen) Economy & Trade Management Co., Ltd, which on site signed a strategic cooperation agreement with Pakistan Effendi Group to further promote the close cooperation between bilateral enterprises in the future.

UK Visas and Immigration encourages Pakistani students

DNA

ISLAMABAD: UK Visas and Immigration is expecting a high demand for UK student visas this summer with August being the peak month for UK student visa applications. To beat the rush and allow time to travel to the UK before courses start in September, the British High Commission is urging students to apply for their visas online (www.gov.uk/student-visa/apply) as soon as they receive their Certificate of Acceptance for Study (CAS) from their chosen education provider.

Students are also being advised to take care on filling out their visa applications correctly - and to double check that they have included all the necessary information and documents. Visa applications can take longer to be assessed if an application is incorrect or incomplete.

The UK Visas and Immigration (UKVI) representative at the British High Commission said the following: We are delighted that many students are choosing the UK to pursue higher studies. We always advise that applicants should apply early and provide all of the documents requested. This is particularly important during the busy summer period where both tourists and students are applying in large numbers.

Chinese sesame testing farm ready for harvest in Pakistan

DNA

ISLAMABAD: China Machinery Engineering Corporation (CMEC) established a sesame testing farm near Lahore and is expecting their first sesame harvest next week. The trial yield will be 850-1000 kg per acre. The company has started cultivation of 20 acres of sesame for testing purposes and performance. The testing farm started early this year will boost innovative farming and agricultural cooperation between the two countries. Talking to Gwadar Pro, Dai Bao, Vice General Manager of CMEC Pakistan said we are testing seeds and field management. Hope to start sesame trading and contract farming in future to improve Pakistan sesame yield and trading volume. Sesame is adaptable to many types of soils. However, it performs better in well-drained soils and is usually produced in upland plains. Production costs per acre are modest and almost comparable to the cost of producing soybeans. Fertilizer costs are primarily for nitrogen, which can be met through organic sources. Harvest costs are similar to other grains. Global demand for sesame seeds has been rising over the years. The crop is gaining momentum as a health-enhancing food, which is used in many dishes. If testing goes well, in the future we will introduce modern technology to improve the yield and will export more sesame to China, said Dai.

Turkish delegation to visit Pakistan

ISLAMABAD: Chief Executive Officer Pakistan Furniture Council Mian Kashif Ashfaq on Thursday said a high level Turkish furniture delegation will soon visit Pakistan to further explore the possibilities of collaboration for joint ventures and investment. After his return from a week-long tour of Turkey he held a series of fruitful meetings with Turkish furniture manufacturers and invited them to Pakistan, said a news release issued here. He said both the Turkish and Pakistani furniture industries were significant players in the global market. Collaboration between the Turkish and Pakistani furniture industries could lead to exciting opportunities for both countries. It could involve sharing expertise, technology, and design ideas, resulting in the production of unique and high-quality furniture products, he remarked. This partnership may also facilitate access to each other's markets, potentially increasing trade and economic benefits for both nations. He said their visit will be an exciting opportunity for both countries businesses to strengthen their ties.--DNA

Pakistan Stands with Kashmiris, says Secretary NSD

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan will continue to extend its moral, political and diplomatic support for its Kashmiri brethren in their struggle for self-determination, said Engr. Aamir Hassan, Secretary National Security Division (NSD) He was addressing a Roundtable discussion titled "Ramifications of 5th August 2019: Way Forward on Kashmir" organized by the Institute of Regional Studies (IRS) here on Thursday. The Secretary NSD said that it had been four years since India's revocation of the special status of Jammu and Kashmir by India. The Indian actions were not only in a clear violation of the UNSC resolutions but were also reflective of the systematic aggression being inflicted on Kashmiris in the form of collective punishments, he added. He further said that while the atrocities in the IIOJ&K had only intensified in magnitude over the years, the resolve of the Kashmiris was commendable and despite our internal challenges, Kashmir was and will continue to remain a primary national security concern for Pakistan. Ambassador Jalil Abbas Jilani while discussing the history of diplomatic efforts said that effective diplomacy was the only way forward, however, in order for such an endeavor to proceed and bear fruitful results, willingness of both parties and internal political consensus in the respective countries was imperative. He commented that the Indian actions in 2019 were not only a violation of the Indian constitution and the UNSC resolutions but were also against the commitments of the Indian leadership made with the Kashmiris. He said that political consensus.

Responsive and inclusive local govts essential

ISLAMABAD: Convener Parliamentary Task Force on Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) Ms. Romina Khurshid Alam on Thursday said that sustainable progress cannot be achieved without a proactive third tier of government. She stated this during the inaugural session of the National meet on Sustainable Development Goals 2023 with the theme "From Global Goals to Local Impact: empowering Local Government for SDGs Success" -Ensuring responsive, inclusive, participatory, and representative decision-making at all levels. She said that this tier of the government (local government) should not only be empowered but should also be included in all policy formulation and strategy development. She further said that the local government system plays a pivotal role in the adoption and implementation of the SDGs. Furthermore, Convener Parliamentary Task Force on SDGs stated that Local Government representatives are much closer to citizens unlike provincial and federal governments on account of constraints such as limited resources and limited personnel. Moreover, she said that United Nations has also recognized the significance of Local Governments in achieving the SDGs and urged governments to empower their local administrations and departments. It is high time that Federal and Provincial Governments collaborate with the third tier of Government to localize the SDGs and ensure socio-economic progress in the country, she added. In addition, she stated that Parliamentarians and Government Represent-

atives should ensure the implementation of the Local Government System in Pakistan in order to manage critical aspects of our communities such as education, healthcare, water and sanitation systems, transportation, housing markets, and local businesses. Local Governments have the potential to directly impact health, education, economic, and social sectors, to contribute to poverty alleviation, gender inclusivity, and industrial innovation. While highlighting the importance of Local Governments, she said that it is indeed the backbone of our democracy and the key to implementing policies that truly impact the lives of our citizens, inspiring lasting and positive change at the grassroots level. The National Meet 2023 aims to provide a platform for stakehold-

ers and decision-makers to engage in extensive deliberations to strengthen Article 140(A) and the local governance system of Pakistan through legislative reform. We aim to propose a constitutional amendment to ensure increased autonomy and continuity of local governments, she maintained. During her address, she also highlighted the last year's National Meet which was a resounding success of the Parliamentary Task Force on SDGs amidst post-Covid19 challenges, advocated for climate justice, strategized for SDG's achievement through budgeting and SDGs localisation and identified the gaps in data collection for SDGs achievement. Throughout the year, the SDGs Secretariat and the Parliamentary Taskforce have made notable progress across agreed-upon policy actions.--DNA

PM launches Digital Youth Hub as one-stop guide

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Thursday launched a Digital Youth Hub portal to provide integrated and one-stop guidance on the youth-related initiatives launched by the government. In his address, the prime minister congratulated the youth on the launch of facility and assured that the government was expanding Youth Program across the country as laptops and business loans were being disbursed across the country. He told that already that Rs 30 billion had already been disbursed by the banks to youth in form of business loans. He said Rs 80 billion had been specified for youth-related initiatives including IT programs, freelancing, IT incubators and others, besides another Rs 5 billion allocated for sports projects. The prime minister said he had replicated his idea of an Endowment Fund at the federal

level as an Education Endowment Fund had been set up with Rs 5 billion funding. He said that the facilities like laptops and other funding initiatives were only meant for the high achievers of the public sector universities. The prime minister asked the youngsters to reg-

ister themselves at the portal to avail the available facilities. The prime minister thanked SAPM Shaza Fatima Khawaja, Lt General Senator Abdul Qayyum, vice-chancellors and members of the Youth Parliament for their efforts to uplift youth. He assured the participants of con-

tinuing his efforts to empower youth to make Pakistan a great country. The prime minister told the Azerbaijan Ambassador, also attending the ceremony, that a horticultural delegation from his country had visited Islamabad and shared experiences with the CDA which would be

replicated in Islamabad. Special Assistant to PM Shaza Fatima Khawaja told the gathering that the government had allocated Rs 5 billion for skill development and as much amount for sports-related programs. She said the Digital Youth Hub was the culmination of all of the prime minister's initiatives for the youth he had taken during last few months which were actually the manifestation of Shehbaz Speed. She said the Portal was the one-stop shop and mobile application providing guidance on all initiatives like laptops, scholarships and loans. In his address, Senator Farrukh Qayyum said the youth of Pakistan were enlightened and read out Quaid-e-Azam's sayings apprising youth of their responsibilities for national development. He said the country could never achieve progress without skill-training of its youth. He said in its respective tenures, the PML-N government built efficient infrastructure and also forged friendly ties with the international world.



Briefs

Services' trade deficit narrows by 87% in FY2023

ISLAMABAD: The services' trade deficit shrank by 87.68 percent during the fiscal year 2022-23 as compared to the corresponding period of the previous year, the Pakistan Bureau of Statistics reported.

The services trade deficit was recorded at \$719.45 million during July-June (2022-23) against the deficit of \$5,840.11 million during July-June (2021-22). The exports of services during the period increased by 2.78 percent going up from \$7,102.35 million in 2021-22 to \$7,300.13 million during fiscal year 2022-23, according to PBS data.

On the other hand, the imports declined from \$8,019.58 million in FY2023, showing negative growth of 38.04 percent. Meanwhile, on a year-on-year basis, the export of services decreased by 13.99 percent by declining from 664.02 million in June 2022 to \$571.10 million in June 2023. The services imports also increased by 50.71 percent, from \$1,328.89 million to \$655.06 million.

On a month-on-month basis, the export of services dip by 5.91 percent in June 2023 when compared to the exports of 606.99 million in May 2023. The imports of services also went down by 27.47 percent in June 2023 compared to imports of \$903.09 million in May 2023, PBS reported. It is pertinent to mention here that the merchandise trade deficit witnessed a decline of 41.16 percent during the first month of the current fiscal year (2023-24) as compared to the corresponding month of last year. The trade deficit during the month under review was recorded at \$1,607 billion against the deficit of \$2,731 billion in July 2022, a decline of 41.16 percent. The exports during the month were recorded at \$2,057 billion against \$2,250 billion last year, showing a decline of 8.57 percent.—APP

US, China, UK remained top 3 destinations of exports in FY23

ISLAMABAD: The United States (US) remained the top export destination of Pakistani products during the fiscal year (2022-23), followed by China and the United Kingdom (UK).

Total exports to the US during July-June (2022-23) were recorded at US\$ 5929.176 million as opposed to the exports of US\$ 6808.278 million during July-June (2021-22), showing a decline of 12.91 percent, according to the State Bank of Pakistan (SBP). This was followed by China, wherein Pakistan exported goods worth US\$ 2029.104 million compared to the exports of US\$ 2783.059 million last year, showing a decrease of 27.09 percent. UK was the third top export destination, where Pakistan exported goods worth US\$ 1966.357 million during the year under review against the exports of US\$ 2201.080 million during last year, showing a decline of 10.66 percent, SBP data revealed. Among other countries, Pakistani exports to Germany stood at US\$ 1600.172 million against US\$ 1751.423 million last year.—APP

UAE, Pakistan to sign economic Partnership agreement

Ahsan Zafar Bakhtawari, President, Islamabad Chamber of Commerce & Industry says that Pakistan and UAE enjoyed cordial relations

FAISAL SHEIKH

ISLAMABAD: The United Arab Emirates (UAE) was working to sign a Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement (CEPA) with Pakistan that would create many new opportunities for the entrepreneurs of both countries to promote bilateral trade and exports. This was said by Rashid Abdul Rehman Al Ali, Deputy Head of Mission of UAE Embassy while addressing the business community during his visit to Islamabad Chamber of Commerce & Industry (ICCI).

He said that he was quite optimistic about the economic future of Pakistan as FDI from UAE, Saudi Arabia, Qatar and China was coming to Pakistan. He termed the holding of first-ever Pakistan Minerals Summit a positive development for the country. He said that UAE wanted to further promote investment with Paki-



stan with focus on agriculture, textiles, marble & tiles, gemstone, mining and petroleum. He stressed for further strengthening government-to-government and business-to-business rela-

tions between the two countries to explore new avenues of business matchmaking. He said that Pakistan was the most favorable country for tourism and an improved tourism infrastructure

would attract more tourists. Speaking on the occasion, Ahsan Zafar Bakhtawari, President, Islamabad Chamber of Commerce & Industry said that Pakistan and UAE enjoyed cordial re-

lations, which were based on common foundations of history, religion and culture. He said that UAE has always helped Pakistan in difficult times, which showed its sincerity with our country.

He said that UAE was one of the major trading partners of Pakistan with a bilateral trade of over USD 10 billion and added that there was great potential to further increase this figure by regular exchange of trade delegations. He said that UAE's investors should invest in Pakistan's tourism sector to further upgrade its infrastructure. Zafar Bakhtawari, former President ICCI and Secretary General UBG said that ICCI would like to organize a Pak-UAE business forum in ICCI auditorium in collaboration with UAE Embassy. The UAE DHM assured his cooperation to hold the said event in a successful manner. Khalid Iqbal Malik Group Leader, Ch. Javed Iqbal, Maqsood Tabish, Babar Chaudhry and others also spoke on the occasion and shared useful ideas to further strengthen Pak-UAE bilateral trade and economic relations.

PTS to celebrate Foundation Day on August 6th

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan Tehrik-e-Shadbad (PTS) will hold its first Foundation Day on August 6, 2023. Lt. Gen (ret) Asad Durraani will be the Chief Guest on the occasion. The party was established by Dr. Hanif Mughal on August 6, 2022, in Rawalpindi, with a manifesto to promote education, justice, health, and employment for the masses. Since then, people belonging to different classes and groups have joined PTS, but it is becoming popular among the exploited poor, labourers, farm-

ers, and students. Chairman PTS Dr. Hanif Mughal said in a statement issued here today that PTS wants to bring positive change to society, which is much needed as the economic situation has resulted in unmatched misery for the masses. Leading political parties have done nothing for the masses, which has resulted in widespread frustration as top leaders are focused on their personal welfare. The downtrodden class, which is suffering from crushing deprivations, wants a break for which consciousness is necessary, and they must be able to

speak for themselves, he said. The PTS chief said that those with nothing should get the courage and strength to get their rights in a system that has been hijacked by the irresponsible and greedy elite. Every person in Pakistan should have equal opportunities irrespective of the area, sect, religion, and gender they represent, and the PTS will continue to strive for a society based on social justice, the rule of law, and human dignity, he said. PTS also wants a better social protection programme for the masses, as almost fifty percent of the population is food inse-

cur; freedom of the media; and legislation on women's rights, as women are in the majority in the country and without their active participation, the economy could never progress. The function will be Presided over by Haji Abdul Rauf, President All Pakistan Tanzeem-e-Mughlia, while Brig. (ret) Aslam Khan, Dr. Ghulam Hussain, President of Mughal Society of Pakistan Baig Raj, Group Country Manager of United International Group Dr. Murtaza Mughal, will be Guests of Honour. Renowned broadcaster Naeem Qureshi will be Stage Secretary at the occasion.

Ahsan unveils ERC to transform education sector

ISLAMABAD: Minister for Planning, Development and Special Initiatives Professor Ahsan Iqbal on Thursday unveiled a momentous Education Research Commission (ERC) to revolutionize the country's education system, ensure inclusive and sustainable national development. Chairing a maiden meeting of the commission, the minister shed light on the nation's paradoxical history, and said "Pakistan has achieved remarkable milestones, defying global opposition, and asserting itself as a nuclear power. However, we face challenges in our education sector, which is vital for our future growth and prosperity." Emphasizing the significance of education as a fundamental right and a catalyst for socioeconomic progress, he reiterated that education impacted every citizen and transcended all societal barriers. He acknowledged the widespread desire for high-quality education and highlighted the need for urgent action to address the persistent shortcomings. In his address, Ahsan Iqbal delved into crucial issues plaguing the education sector, expressing concern over the widening salary gap between public and private school teachers and recognizing the governance issue that hampered effective education delivery. The minister called for comprehensive reforms to attract and retain highly qualified teachers, stressing the importance of stability of tenure in improving the quality of education. Furthermore, Ahsan Iqbal emphasized the significance of data-driven decision-making and proposed the establishment of key performance indicators (KPIs) to assess the education system's efficiency and effectiveness. "By adopting evidence-based policy frameworks, Pakistan can ensure that every rupee invested in education yields optimal results and positively impacts the nation's future," the minister observed. Addressing the critical role of teacher training in elevating the education system, he announced the establishing a modern teacher training institute. He shared his vision for a state-of-the-art facility that would become a model center of excellence for teachers' training, with the potential to elevate the standard of education across the country. The minister also spoke about the urgent need for Madrassah (religious seminary) reforms, emphasizing the importance of matriculation equivalence in Madrassah education to provide students with diversified career opportunities and integrate them into mainstream society. Ahsan Iqbal unveiled plans to address the challenge of out-of-school children by allocating funds amounting to Rs25 billion, and underscored the importance of early childhood education.—DNA

Monsoon tree plantation drive kicks off at AIU

ISLAMABAD: Allama Iqbal Open University (AIU) has launched a monsoon tree plantation drive of 2023. Vice-Chancellor Prof. Dr. Nasir Mahmood inaugurated the campaign by planting a maple leaf tree. Deans, Principal Officers, and faculty members were present at the planting ceremony. On this occasion, Prof. Dr. Nasir Mahmood said that in view of climate change, plantation has become the most important need of the country and AIU is playing an important role in meeting the need by planting hundreds of saplings not only in the main campus of the university but also in the 54 regional offices of the university throughout the country in both spring and autumn seasons. The monsoon planting campaign will be carried out at the national level, and students will also be mobilized in the campaign through the regional offices. He said that gardeners of the university have provided a conducive learning environment to the students by decorating the university with flowers and plants, for which they deserve appreciation. Dean Faculty of Education Prof. Dr. Tanzeela Nabeel, Dean Faculty of Sciences, Prof. Dr. Irshad Ahmed Arshad, Director Regional Services, Dr. Malik Tauqir Ahmad Khan, Registrar, Raja Umer Younis, Director Admin, Prof. Dr. Syed Muhammad Amir Shah, Director Admissions, Syed Zia-Ul Husnain Naqvi, Controller of Examination, Mian Muhammad Riaz.—APP

National Logistics Corporation, others bills introduced

ISLAMABAD: As many as two bills including the National Logistics Corporation Bill, 2023 and the National Anti-Money Laundering and Counter Financing of Terrorism Authority Bill, 2023 were introduced in the National Assembly on Thursday. The bills were introduced by Minister for Parliamentary Affairs Murtaza Javed Abbasi and Minister of State for Foreign Affairs Hina Rabbani Khar in the House respectively. Meanwhile, three reports of various standing commit-

tees including Information and Broadcasting and Inter-Provincial Coordination were present in the House. Maulana Abdul Akbar Chitrali on behalf of Chairperson Standing Committee on Information and Broadcasting Javaria Zafar Aheer presented the reports on the Bill to amend the Protection of Journalists and Media Professionals Act, 2021 [The Protection of Journalists and Media Professionals (Amendment) Bill, 2023] and on the Bill to amend Press, Newspa-

pers, News Agencies and Books Registration Ordinance, 2002] [The Press, Newspapers, News Agencies and Books Registration (Amendment) Bill, 2023] in the house. Similarly, Chairman Standing Committee on Inter-Provincial Coordination Nawab Sher presented the report on the Bill to provide for the establishment, administration and management of the affairs of the Gun and Country Club in Islamabad [The Gun and Country Club Bill, 2023.—APP

IRSA releases 288,400 cusecs water

ISLAMABAD: Indus River System Authority (IRSA) on Thursday released 288,400 cusecs water from various rim stations with inflow of 395,000 cusecs. According to the data released by IRSA, water level in River Indus at Tarbela Dam was 1541.29 feet and was 143.29 feet higher than its dead level of 1,398 feet. Water inflow and outflow in the dam was recorded as 199,300 cusecs and 155,300 cusecs respectively. The water level in River Jhelum at Mangla Dam was 1231.90 feet, which was 181.90 feet higher than its dead level of 1,050 feet.—APP

Corporate farming to attract Rs100b investment

ISLAMABAD: President Kissan Ittehad Khalid Mehmood Khokhar Wednesday said that corporate farming will attract about Rs100 billion investment in the agriculture sector within three years and help to achieve self-sufficiency in staple food crop production, besides attaining food safety and security in the country. Addressing a press conference, he dismissed all the misconceptions being created by some elements regarding corporate farming in the country in which they claimed that initiation of corporate farming would deprive the small farmers of their cultivable lands. He said that under corporate farming the farmer's clusters would be established to start collaborative farming to enhance the output of all major and minor crops by adopting modern and innovative cultivation technologies and they would be enabled for purchasing of latest tools including tractors, combine harvesters and land levellers. The farmers would be given their due right through future market practice as it was protecting farmers' rights around the world, he said adding that they would also provide proper seeds and other agriculture inputs to enhance their farm income to alleviate poverty in the country. The agriculture sector development was vital for economic development in the country, he said adding that coordinated efforts by all the national institutions were required to uplift local agriculture sector in order to achieve food safety and security.—APP



ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Information and Broadcasting Ms. Marriyum Aurangzeb and Her Excellency Pang Chunxue, the Charge d'affairs of the Chinese Embassy in Pakistan cutting ribbon to inaugurate Chinese News Service at APP Headquarters.—APP



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Donald Trump's new indictment

The indictment served on Donald Trump on Monday marks the beginning of a legal reckoning that is desperately required, if American democracy is to properly free itself from his malign, insidious influence. Mr Trump already faces multiple criminal charges relating to the retention of classified national security documents and the payment of hush money to a porn star. But the gravity of the four counts outlined by the special counsel, Jack Smith, is of a different order of magnitude. Mr Trump stands accused of conspiring, in office, to overturn the result of the 2020 presidential election. Following Joe Biden's victory, the indictment states, Mr Trump "knowingly" used false claims of electoral fraud in an attempt "to subvert the legitimate election results". A bipartisan congressional committee report last year came to similar conclusions and provides much of the basis for the charges. But this represents the first major legal attempt to hold Mr Trump accountable for events leading up to and including the storming of the Capitol by a violent mob on 6 January 2021. It is inconceivable that Mr Trump should not be made to answer for actions that imperilled the constitutional and democratic functioning of the United States. The prosecutors' case will hinge on their ability to prove that he knew his claims of a stolen election were bogus. But beyond the trial itself, it would be foolish to underestimate Mr Trump's ability to turn even this situation to his own political advantage. The legal fronts on which Mr Trump is now engaged will drain his financial resources. But a narrative of victimhood and persecution has become, and will remain, the galvanising theme of his campaign. Two previous criminal indictments saw his poll ratings lift, helping him to establish a huge lead in the race for the Republican presidential nomination for 2024. Whatever the evidence to the contrary, a sizable proportion of American voters will continue to back Mr Trump's self-serving version of reality. One of the most dangerously polarising elections in US history thus looms as, over the next 15 months, Mr Trump uses political cunning to evade the legal net that is closing around him. Through his lawyers, he will do all he can to delay matters, hoping eventually to dictate the course of events from the White House. For his part, Mr Smith said on Monday that the justice department will seek "a speedy trial". It is in the interests of American democracy, to which Mr Trump represents a clear and present danger, that the justice department gets its wish. A healthy body politic cannot allow its founding values and core principles to be trashed with apparent impunity. Prosecutors will need to proceed with care and be alert to the complex political dynamics. But this climactic reckoning in court needs to take place before Mr Trump gets the chance to besmirch the country's highest office all over again.



Italy should not shy away from BRI

The souring attitude of Italy toward the Belt and Road Initiative over the past three months shows how much the Giorgia Meloni government is willing to allow its China policy to be subject to the influence of Washington. Shortly after attending the G7 Summit in Hiroshima in May – in which the United States urged all the other members to "de-risk" their trade and economy by easing, if not ending, their reliance on China, Italian Prime Minister Meloni told the media: "Italy is the only G7 member that signed up to the accession memorandum to the Silk Road, but it is not the European or Western country with the strongest economic relations and trade flows with China." That is a Washington-style distortion of the initiative. It is by no means a platform for harvesting China's development dividends, but one through which countries participate on an equal footing to tap into their complementarity for common development. In her meeting with US President Joe Biden on Thursday last week, Meloni reportedly told Biden that her government intends to pull Italy out of the initiative. To avoid that move being seen as something enforced on Italy by the US, the Italian leader stressed in the news conference at the White House after her meeting with Biden: "If you think that the US demands or imposes the policy on this, you are wrong. The conversation is broad and involves all G7 countries and it is about de-risking from supply chain dependence on China, which is a priority." Italy's participation in the initiative drew immediate, harsh criticism from the US back in 2019. The latter has never stopped smearing the initiative put forward by China in 2013 as an "opaque geopolitical scheme", even though it has proved to be an effective public good promoting the common development of the more than 100 participating countries and international organizations. As Italy will assume the presidency of G7 next year and is due to make a decision on whether to renew the five-year agreement on the initiative in March, it is clear that Washington has been busy in its efforts to ensure that Italy sets "the right" example for the other G7 members. Meloni should be reminded of what she told the Chinese leader at their meeting in Bali, Indonesia, in November. She said that Italy stands ready to continue advancing bilateral cooperation in such areas as trade and culture. Italy does not approve of bloc confrontation, and believes that countries should respect their differences and disagreements, strengthen solidarity, keep to dialogue and exchanges, and enhance mutual understanding. And it hopes to closely collaborate with China within the UN, the G20 and other frameworks to tackle the various pressing challenges facing the world in a more effective manner. Meloni should hold true to those words, rather than being swayed by Washington's scaremongering.

Sovereign wealth fund- hope or a dream

Qamar Bashir



The Abu Dhabi Investment Authority (ADIA), worth \$ 850 million, has provided technical assistance to Pakistan in the drafting of the law, which may end up buying or benefiting from this fund as the United Arab Emirates (UAE)

The Pakistan Sovereign Wealth Fund (PSWF) Bill was passed by the Senate on Wednesday, August 2, just eight days prior to the dissolution of the National Assembly and the end of the current government's mandate. The bill, once signed by the President, will enable the government to establish a PSWF where the country's solvent assets worth Rs. 2.3 Trillion will be parked. PSWF is being established to provide a long-term investment vehicle for the nation's excess oil and gas revenues, invest in strategic assets such as infrastructure and energy initiatives, and provide financial assistance to the government. The government has identified at least seven solvent and profit making companies with net worth of Rs. 2.3 trillion including Oil and Gas Development Company Limited (OGDCL), Pakistan Petroleum Limited, National Bank of Pakistan, Pakistan Development Fund, Government Holdings Private Limited, Mari Petroleum Company

Limited, and Neelum Jhelum Hydro Power Company Limited for their transfer to SWF. The new sovereign fund is exempted from three core laws: the Privatisation Commission Ordinance, Public Procurement Regulatory Authority Ordinance, and the State-Owned Enterprises (SOE) Act, 2023. This, according to one opinion, clearly reflects the urgency on the part of the current government to allow the caretaker government to quickly sell some of the identified assets or use them to raise loans.

The Abu Dhabi Investment Authority (ADIA), worth \$ 850 million, has provided technical assistance to Pakistan in the drafting of the law, which may end up buying or benefiting from this fund as the United Arab Emirates (UAE) has repeatedly expressed interest in acquiring stakes in Pakistan's oil and gas sector, indicating the possibility of divesting shares of these assets. The crafting of such an important piece of legislation with the assistance of the law's beneficiaries could be considered a conflict of interest. This is the same formula that was used while developing the mineral exploration policy, which acquired the input and agreement of prospective investors before it was finalised. Interestingly, thanks to SIFC, Pakistan's relations with the UAE have suddenly improved. The government has already sold four terminals 6 to 9 of the east wharf of the Karachi port to the UAE on the platform of SIFC, and SIFC is also pressuring the Ministry of Commerce to sign a Comprehensive Economic Partnership Act (CEPA) with the UAE before the end of the term, despite the opposition of the Pakistan Business Council, which claims that it will reduce 80% of tariff lines to zero duty in ten years, harming local manufacturing. The IMF's latest staff level report had recommended the governments to carefully consider the potential benefits and risks of the sale of state-owned assets before making a decision to sell and has advised it to adopt a transparent and fair process for making such deals and to ensure that the proceeds of the sale are used for productive purposes. However, the report also noted that the sale of state-owned assets has become increasingly common in recent years, as governments have sought to raise revenue and reduce debt, besides improving efficiency and transparency in the economy, and attracting foreign investment. The finance ministry has already finalised the broad features of the Pakistan Sovereign Wealth Fund (PSWF), including its governance structure and transaction flow. The fund will, according to plans, optimally leverage and better manage the government's assets in accordance with international standards, policies, and practices. The Fund will be able to make direct investments in existing and new projects, leverage existing assets, and invest in joint ventures with private parties, foreign sovereign wealth funds, and governments. The fund would have the legal status of a corporation, with the authority to raise funds

through the sale of assets and to use Pakistan's share in joint ventures in the agriculture, mining, and information technology industries. The government is also forming a Supervisory Council, which will be led by the prime minister. Members will include the ministers of finance and planning, the finance secretary, the governor of the SBP, and the fund's CEO. The transfer of state-owned firms to the sovereign fund will be decided by the supervisory council. A seven-member advisory committee comprised of seven experts, who may also be foreigners, and a seven-member board are being formed to oversee the new fund's operations, with the mandate to approve the annual budget and profit distribution, attract investment and market the Fund, and develop financial, administrative, and investment policies. Pakistan is not the only country that has established an SWF; in fact, it is too late. There are more than 60 sovereign wealth funds around the world, with a combined asset worth of more than \$7 trillion. Norway, Saudi Arabia, and China have the largest SWFs. SWFs exist in developed countries such as the United States, Japan, and Germany. However, the destiny of the bill hangs in the balance because it was enacted only 7 days before the dissolution of the legislatures and the end of the incumbent government's term.

As per procedure, once the bill is passed by the Parliament, the Speaker National Assembly or the Senate Chairman as the case may be sent the passed bill to the Prime Minister, who in his turn a bill vide his converting note or a summary advising the President to sign the bill. The president on its turn has 16 days to either sign the bill or send it back to the Prime Minister advising to reconsider the bill in the light of his observations. The bill is then submitted to the joint session of the parliament, if the parliament amend the bill or otherwise is sent back to the president who after receiving the bill has another 9 days to sign the bill or otherwise. It means that all nine legislation passed after July 20th are at risk of lapse since, once the assemblies are dissolved and the bills are not yet signed by the president, the bill will either expire or be revived when the next parliament is elected. In many nations, the bill will simply expire if it is not signed by the president before the end of the parliament's term. If the bill dies, it must be reintroduced in the following parliament to become law. If the bill is resurrected, however, it will not have to go through the entire legislative process again. Instead, it will be forwarded to the president for signature. If a bill is not signed by the president within 10 days (excluding Sundays) in the United States, it becomes law without his signature. This is referred to as a "pocket veto." A bill dies in Canada if it is not signed by the governor general within 30 days, and in Singapore if it is not signed by the president within 21 days. I hope the President recognises the

importance and urgency of the bill and considers signing it into law, as approval of the PSWF bill is a big step forward for the country. It would provide a much-needed source of long-term financing for investment in vital sectors such as infrastructure, energy, and manufacturing, hence stimulating economic growth and job creation. The President may have all the more reasons to sign the bill as the entire international media has largely reacted positively to the passage of this bill. Reuters said "The passage of the bill is a significant step forward for the government, as it will help to attract foreign investment and boost economic growth" and added that the government has set a target of raising \$10 billion from the sovereign wealth fund over the next five years. Financial Times said: "The bill is seen as a key part of the government's efforts to attract foreign investment and boost economic growth." and added the bill was passed with the support of the opposition parties, which is seen as a sign of consensus on the need to reform the economy. Bloomberg commented, "The bill is seen as a key part of the government's efforts to reform the economy and address the country's chronic balance of payments problems." and added that the bill is seen as a key part of the government's efforts to comply with the conditions of the International Monetary Fund (IMF).

The Wall Street Journal observed, "The bill is a welcome development, as it will help to improve the country's investment climate and attract foreign capital" and added that the bill is a "test case" for the government's ability to implement economic reforms. The Economist commented, "The passage of the bill is a positive step, but it remains to be seen whether the government will be able to implement it effectively." and added that the bill is "a step in the right direction," but it warned that the government will need to "avoid the pitfalls of corruption and mismanagement. The success of PSWF will however depend on how the incoming caretaker government treats this bill and on the political will of the next elected government which will come into power after securing a mandate by the people in the next general election, assuming that they will be held as per provisions of the constitution. The success of PSWF will also depend on a number of factors, including the quality of its management, the performance of its investments, and the stability of the global economy. It will also depend on providing it with adequate resources and by appointing experienced and qualified managers capable of developing a clear investment strategy, publish regular reports on the fund's activities and ensuring that the fund is transparent and accountable.

—The Writer is the Former Press Secretary to the President Former Press Minister to the Embassy of Pakistan to France Former MD, SRBC

China and Pak are strengthening mutual economic coop

Laraib Arshad



China's economic success is attributed, in part, to its focus on exports and its ability to attract foreign investment. Furthermore, China's large domestic market has fueled its economic growth. Pakistan has the potential to benefit by increasing its focus on exports, attracting foreign investment, and developing its domestic market. China's economic model prioritizes investment in infrastructure, human capital, and technology, which has facilitated rapid growth and established it as a global economic leader. Pakistan could potentially benefit from making similar investments in these areas. The Chinese government has played a significant role in China's economic development by implementing policies that encourage growth, such as investing in education, infrastructure, and research and development. Pakistan could potentially benefit from adopting comparable government policies that promote economic growth and development. It is worth noting that China's economic development has also brought about environmental challenges, including pollution and resource depletion. Pakistan could learn from China's experience and prioritize sustainable development to avoid similar environmental issues. China's heavy investment in its manufacturing sector has contributed to its economic growth, and Pakistan could potentially benefit from investing in its own manufacturing sector to create jobs and stimulate economic growth. China has also established special economic zones to attract foreign investment and promote economic development, and Pakistan could potentially benefit from

developing similar zones. China's success can be attributed to factors such as its large and skilled workforce, investment in education and training programs, a strong entrepreneurial culture, robust infrastructure, a thriving digital economy, attracting foreign investment, and an export-oriented approach. By prioritizing these areas, China has created jobs, stimulated economic growth, and improved the standard of living for its citizens. Pakistan could potentially follow a similar approach to promote economic growth and development. For instance, Pakistan could invest in education and training programs, develop policies and incentives to attract foreign investment, and invest in infrastructure to support economic growth. China's success in developing a skilled workforce can be attributed to its investment in education and training programs. China has invested in vocational schools and apprenticeship programs to develop skilled workers in fields such as manufacturing and technology. Pakistan could potentially benefit from implementing similar education and training programs to develop its own skilled workforce. China's success in developing a strong infrastructure is due to its investments in transportation, energy, and telecommunications. China has constructed high-speed rail systems, airports, and ports to support its growing economy. Additionally, China has invested in renewable energy sources such as solar and wind power. Pakistan could potentially benefit from investing in its own infrastructure to support economic growth and development. China's success in developing a strong digital economy is a result of its investment in technology and innovation. China has developed a robust e-commerce industry, with companies like Alibaba and JD.com leading the way. Furthermore, China has invested in artificial intelligence and robotics to drive innovation and economic growth. Pakistan could potentially benefit from investing in its own digital economy to promote innovation and economic growth. China's success in attracting foreign investment can be attributed to its policies and incentives for foreign investors. China has implemented measures to reduce bureaucracy and streamline the investment process for foreign investors. Additionally, China has offered tax incentives and subsidies to attract foreign investment. Pakistan could potentially benefit from developing similar

policies and incentives to attract foreign investment and promote economic growth.

China's success in developing an export-oriented economy is a result of its focus on manufacturing and trade. China has a strong manufacturing industry, with companies like Foxconn and Huawei leading the way. Additionally, China has developed trade relationships with countries worldwide, including the United States and Europe. Pakistan could potentially benefit from developing a similar export-oriented economy to promote economic growth and development. China's success in developing its agricultural sector can be attributed to its investment in research and development, infrastructure, and policies to support farmers. China has invested in research to develop new crop varieties and improve agricultural practices. Moreover, China has developed infrastructure such as irrigation systems and transportation networks to support agricultural production and distribution. China has also implemented policies like subsidies and price supports to promote agricultural development. Pakistan could potentially benefit from implementing similar policies and investing in research and development to promote agricultural growth. China's success in developing its financial sector can be attributed to its policies and institutions that promote investment and financial stability. China has implemented policies to encourage financial innovation, such as allowing online lending platforms to operate. Additionally, China has established institutions like the China Securities Regulatory Commission to regulate financial markets and promote stability. Pakistan could potentially benefit from developing similar policies and institutions to promote financial stability and attract investment.

China's success in promoting entrepreneurship and innovation is due to its policies and incentives for entrepreneurs. China has implemented policies to support startups, including tax incentives and subsidies. Pakistan could potentially benefit from implementing similar policies to foster an entrepreneurial culture and drive innovation. China's success in developing its tourism industry is a result of its investment in infrastructure, cultural preservation, and policies to promote tourism. China has invested in infrastructure such as airports, highways, and high-speed rail systems to facilitate travel for tourists. Additionally, China has implemented policies to promote tourism, such as easing visa restrictions for tourists from certain countries. China has also preserved cultural sites and traditions to

attract tourists interested in Chinese culture. Pakistan could potentially benefit from investing in its own tourism industry and developing policies to promote tourism. China's success in developing its healthcare system is attributed to its investment in healthcare infrastructure, research and development, and policies to promote healthcare access. China has invested in healthcare infrastructure, including hospitals and clinics, to improve access to healthcare. Moreover, China has invested in research and development to advance treatments and technologies. China has also implemented policies to promote healthcare access, such as providing universal healthcare coverage to its citizens. Pakistan could potentially benefit from investing in its healthcare system and developing policies to promote healthcare access. China's success in developing its environmental policies can be attributed to its investment in renewable energy, pollution control, and conservation. China has invested in renewable energy sources such as solar and wind power to reduce reliance on fossil fuels. Additionally, China has implemented policies to control pollution, including emissions reduction from factories and vehicles. Furthermore, China has implemented conservation policies to protect natural resources and wildlife. Pakistan could potentially benefit from developing similar environmental policies to promote sustainability and protect its natural resources. Pakistan has forged a strong collaboration with China, both in military and economic projects, perceiving them as counterweights to an Indian-Western alliance. Pakistan has also acted as a conduit for China's influence in the Muslim world, while China consistently supports Pakistan in regional issues. China's economic success can be attributed to various factors, including its emphasis on exports, attraction of foreign investment, development of a large domestic market, and government policies that prioritize education, infrastructure, and research and development. Pakistan has the potential to benefit from adopting similar strategies to stimulate its own economic growth and development. At the end, I express my gratitude to the esteemed Sir Dr. Muhammad Akram Zaheer for his invaluable guidance in composing this piece. He graciously bestowed upon me his time and wisdom, offering me valuable feedback and constructive critique that have greatly enhanced the caliber of my work. His patience, encouragement, and eagerness to partake in profound discussions have served as a true source of inspiration.

Briefs

Pakistan, Iran target \$5 bln trade volume

FROM PAGE 01
the grave human rights situation in the Indian Illegally Occupied Jammu and Kashmir. Foreign Minister Bilawal thanked the Iranian leadership for its firm and consistent support to the legitimate cause of Kashmiri people. About the situation in Afghanistan, both sides agreed to continue their active engagement with a view of advancing peace and stability in the neighbouring country to promote well-being and prosperity of Afghan brothers and sisters. They also agreed to continue their cooperation to counter Islamophobia and anti-Muslim hatred. "There has been an unfortunate series of Islamophobic acts and events across Europe, and not just isolated events but repeated and premeditated provocations. In my view, these are not only hate speech but would endanger provoking violence." In his remarks, Iranian Foreign Minister Hossein Amir-Abdollahian said the two countries would take immediate steps for the release of fishermen and their vessels. Emphasising the completion of the Pakistan-Iran gas pipeline, the Iranian foreign minister said the project would definitely serve the national interests of the two countries.

PM vows to strengthen Pak-Iran ties

FROM PAGE 01
region, the Prime Minister stressed the importance for Pakistan and Iran leveraging their unique geographical location to promote mutually reinforcing goals of regional peace and prosperity, through greater trade and enhanced regional connectivity. The Prime Minister added that the Economic Cooperation Organization (ECO) was uniquely placed to play this role. Expressing deep concern at the rising incidents of Islamophobia and anti-Muslim hatred, the Prime Minister underlined Pakistan's firm resolve to work with other Islamic countries, including Iran, in articulating a unified view against such despicable acts, aimed at sowing disharmony and divisions within communities and between societies. Pakistan-Iran relations are characterized by frequent exchanges at the leadership level, commonality of views on important regional and global issues and strengthened cooperation in all areas of mutual interest.

President for enhanced relations...

FROM PAGE 02
utmost significance to its longstanding ties with the UK, which were grounded in historic connections and enduring people-to-people linkages. He remarked that both countries needed to further expand and promote economic and trade relations for the mutual benefit of the two sides. He also lauded the contributions of the Pakistani diaspora in the UK towards its socio-economic development. President Alvi underscored the need for strengthening cultural ties and people-to-people contacts. He also urged that the world needed to prevent and discourage the incidents of the Islamophobia in the world. Speaking to Park Ki Jun, the ambassador of the Republic of Korea, the president said that Pakistan highly valued its multidimensional relationship with Korea, encompassing political, economic, scientific, cultural, and people-to-people linkages. He mentioned that Pakistan and Korea had tremendous potential to increase bilateral trade to further strengthen economic relations. He said that Pakistan was open for business and investment, and would welcome Korean investment in all sectors of its economy.

Asian Hockey Championship

Poor performance by Pak hockey team: Malaysia rough up Green Shirts

The green shirts displayed solid temperament in the first two quarters but Malaysia took a 2-0 lead till half-time to put the inexperienced Pakistan side under pressure

DNA

CHENNAI: Pakistan lost to Malaysia in their first match of the Asian Hockey Champions Trophy in Chennai on Thursday. The green shirts displayed solid temperament in the first two quarters but Malaysia took a 2-0 lead till half-time to put the inexperienced Pakistan side under pressure. Faisal Saari and Farhan Sarri partnered twice to provide a 2-0 lead to Malaysia. Faisal scored the first goal with a superb assist from his partner Farhan in second quarter. Soon after the first goal, the duo went on to score another goal. Faisal constructed another goal for Malaysia as Silverius Shello made the most of the pass and



netted the ball successfully. 3-0 up Malaysia ruled the game thereafter and started their Asian event's campaign on a winning note.

Pakistan squad:
Muhammad Umar Bhatta (c), Akmal Hussain, Abdullah Ishtiaq Khan, Muhammad Abdullah, Muhammad Sufyan Khan, Ehtsham Aslam, Osama Bashir, Aqeel Ahmed, Arshad Liaquat, Muhammad Imad, Abdul Hanan Shahid, Zakaria Hayat, Rana Abdul Waheed Ashraf (Vice Captain), Roman, Muhammad Murtaza Yaqoob, Muhammad Shahzaib Khan, Afraz, Abdul Rahman, while the standby includes Ali Raza, Muhammad Baqir, Muhammad Nadeem Khan, Abdul Wahab, Waqar Ali, Muhammad Arsalan and Abdul Qayyum.

Asian Champions Trophy 2023 hockey full schedule

As per Indian Standard Time (IST)

Asian Champions Trophy 2023 hockey fixtures

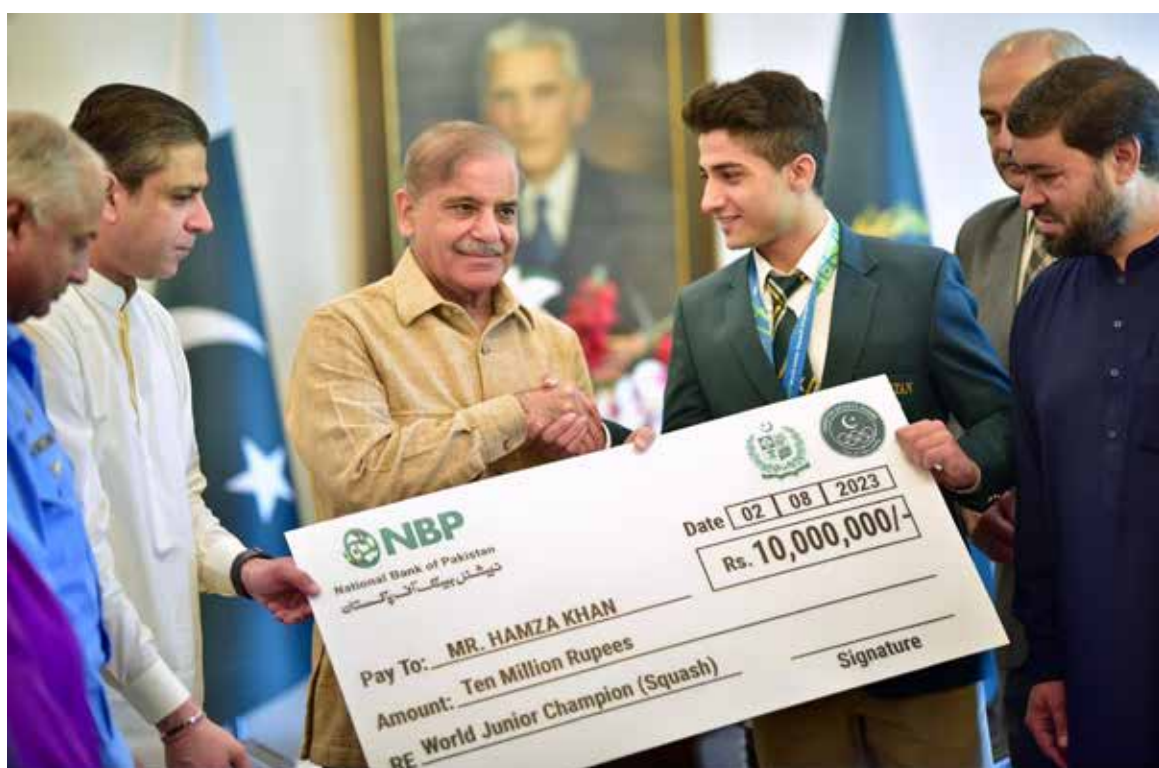
Date	Match	Time
August 3, Thursday	Korea vs Japan	4:00 PM
August 3, Thursday	Malaysia vs Pakistan	6:15 PM
August 3, Thursday	India vs China	8:30 PM
August 4, Friday	Korea vs Pakistan	4:00 PM
August 4, Friday	China vs Malaysia	6:15 PM
August 4, Friday	Pakistan vs Japan	8:30 PM
August 6, Sunday	China vs Korea	4:00 PM
August 6, Sunday	Pakistan vs Japan	6:15 PM
August 6, Sunday	Malaysia vs India	8:30 PM
August 7, Monday	Japan vs Malaysia	4:00 PM
August 7, Monday	Pakistan vs China	6:15 PM
August 7, Monday	Korea vs India	8:30 PM
August 9, Wednesday	Japan vs China	4:00 PM
August 9, Wednesday	Malaysia vs Korea	6:15 PM
August 9, Wednesday	India vs Pakistan	8:30 PM
August 11, Friday	Fifth place game	3:30 PM
August 11, Friday	Semi-final 1	6:00 PM
August 11, Friday	Semi-final 2	8:30 PM
August 12, Saturday	Third place game	6:00 PM
August 12, Saturday	Final	8:30 PM

Messi scores two more as Miami march past Orlando

FORT LAUDERDALE: Lionel Messi made it five goals in three appearances for Inter Miami as he scored twice in a 3-1 win over Orlando City in the Leagues Cup round-of-32 on Wednesday. Messi scored twice from close range to maintain his 100 percent winning record with Miami, who were winless in 11 league games before his arrival. Messi will now head on the road with Miami for the first time with Sunday's match with FC Dallas in Texas offering a place in the quarter-finals of the tournament for top flight teams from Major League Soccer and Mexico's Liga MX. Wednesday's Florida derby was not a game which will be featured in the Messi highlight videos but despite being frustrated by tight-marking for most of the game, the seven-time Ballon D'Or winner emerged the decisive figure once again. A thunderstorm led to a 95-minute delay to the kick-off but when the game began, Miami picked up where they left off in their 4-0 win over Atlanta United last week - attacking with intent. Robert Taylor, the Finnish winger, cut in from the left and chipped a perfect ball into the path of the on-running Messi who brought the ball down with his chest and volleyed home from six yards out. But Orlando responded strongly and they drew level ten minutes later when a low shot from Ivan Angulo was pushed out by Miami keeper Drake Callender and Uruguayan Cesar Araujo pounced on the edge of the box to drive a low shot into the corner. Orlando were increasingly effective in closing down Messi and the



Argentine showed the first signs of frustration when he picked up a foul on Wilder Cartagena. Orlando coach Oscar Pareja had clearly given his team instructions to sacrifice possession to Miami to ensure they had enough players to crowd out and neutralise Messi and Busquets, and the approach was working. - Agencies



ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif presenting cash prize of Rs. 10 million to Hamza Khan who recently won the World Junior Squash Championship. - APP

Former PCB Chairman Ijaz Butt dies aged 85

LAHORE: Ijaz Butt, the former chairman of the Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB), passed away in Lahore on Thursday at the age of 85. According to his son-in-law, Arif Saeed, he had been battling illness for a considerable period. The PCB expressed its deep sorrow over the news of the demise of Ijaz Butt in a concise statement on their official Twitter account. "The PCB is saddened by the news of the passing of former Test cricketer and ex-PCB chairman Ijaz Butt. Our heartfelt condolences to his family and friends," PCB tweeted. Butt took on the position of PCB chairman in October 2008, and his tenure proved to be a mixed bag of successes and challenges. Shortly after assuming

office, Pakistan faced a major setback when a terrorist attack targeted the Sri Lankan team tour bus, leading to the suspension of several international fixtures. However, amidst the difficulties, there were moments of glory for Pakistan cricket. In the same year, the team achieved a momentous victory in the T20 World Cup under the captaincy of Yousuf Khan. Unfortunately, 2010 brought with it a dark chapter for Pakistan cricket as it was hit by a spot-fixing scandal. Mohammad Amir, Salman Butt, and Mohammad Asif were found guilty of spot-fixing during a Test match against England, tarnishing the reputation of the national team. In the aftermath of the infamous spot-fixing debacle at Lord's in 2010, Butt made a significant decision by appointing Misbah ul Haq as the Test captain. This move turned out to be a stroke of genius, as Misbah went on to become the most successful Test captain of Pakistan, leading the team to victory in 26 out of 56 matches. - APP

Pakistan continue to impress in Norway Cup
They beat Molde FK 4-0 on Thursday

OSLO: Pakistan's street child team won their first knockout game of the Norway Cup on Thursday in Oslo. The Green Shirts, who have won four matches in a row, beat Molde FK 4-0 to qualify for the next round. Pakistan beat Skjold IL 2-0 to register their third consecutive victory on Tuesday. Ahmad Raza and captain Tufail Shinwari scored the goals for the winning side. Earlier, Pakistan beat rvoll IL 2-1 and Frigg Oslo FK 11-1 to start the tournament with two consecutive wins. The Ambassador of Pakistan to Norway, Saadia Altaf Qazi, also met the Pakistan team on Tuesday. She lauded the team's performance in the tournament, so far, on this occasion. Pakistan is participating in the Norway Cup under the banner of Muslim Hands, a charity organi-



zation, and thus is playing under the name of Muslim Hands FC. A total of 2,350 teams and about 30,000 players are participating in the tournament across different competitions. It must be noted here that Pakistan team finished runners-up in the Street Child World Cup in Doha last year. They remained unbeaten throughout the tournament but lost the final against Egypt on penalties (4-3). They were also the runners-up in the previous edition in Russia (2018), meanwhile in Brazil (2014) they finished third. **Pakistan's squad:** Tufail Shinwari (c), Saud Ahmed, Asad Nasir, Abid Ali, Faisal Ahmad, Mohammad Ali, Ahmad Raza, Abdul Wahab, Shahmir, Sahil Gull, Mohammad Adeel, Abdullah, Ubaid Ullah, Ali Asi. - Agencies

SC won't allow 'illegal actions'...

FROM PAGE 01

The chief justice went on to say that what happened on May 9 was extremely unfortunate. "At the same time, however, I won't like Pakistan Army personnel to shoot at civilians," he said, adding, "And one must commend the army for not opening fire at civilians." He said it was also shocking that some people in Mianwali attacked military installations by bulldozing the wall. "But at the same time, let me make clear that the bench will not allow the country's armed forces to do something illegal," the CJP said categorically. He further said that he thought the bench should hear more from the AGP. "I think we should adjourn the case's hearing at least for two weeks," he said. Advocate Latif Khosa sought from the court two hours to complete his arguments in the case. The AGP said he would like to say something about the parallel judicial system. "In the case of Liaquat Hussain, the nature of crimes was purely civil," he said, adding, "Suspects in the case were charged under section 2D(I) of the Official Secrets Act."

IHC reserves verdict on...

FROM PAGE 01

of his right to defense by the trial court in Toshakhana case in the Islamabad High Court. The petitioner pleaded to the high court to declare the trial court's yesterday's order as void and restore his right to defence in the case. PTI chairman also requested the court for hearing his petition today. Chief Justice Islamabad High Court Aamir Farooq heard appeal of the chairman PTI against declaring Toshakhana criminal case as maintainable. Toshakhana reference The Toshakhana issue became a major sticking point in national politics after the Election Commission of Pakistan disqualified the PTI chief for making "false statements and incorrect declaration". The reference, which alleges that Imran failed to share details of the gifts he retained from the Toshakhana (during his time as the prime minister) was filed by lawmakers from the ruling coalition last year.

PM for strategy...

FROM PAGE 01

said debt trap is a death trap for these developing countries which are hardly meeting both ends. He expressed gratitude to all donors, brotherly countries who came to Pakistan's rescue during the devastating floods last year. In a tweet, the Prime Minister said it has been a year since the most devastating floods in history put one-third of Pakistan under water, caused large-scale destruction of infrastructure including millions of acres of standing crops and inflicted overall loss of 30 billion dollars on Pakistan's economy. He said Pakistan used the unprecedented floods to warn the world of impending disaster induced by climate change. Shehbaz Sharif further said that under the 4RF framework, Pakistan has been working on recovery, rehabilitation and rebuilding of the flood-affected regions.

'Never met army chiefs..'

FROM PAGE 01

made the remarks after inaugurating the newly-constructed Bhara Kahu bypass project in Islamabad. PM Shehbaz said during his 38 years in politics, he has met several army chiefs to ensure that "Islamabad's government and Rawalpindi's establishment remain on the same page." "I have met many prominent army chiefs in my time in politics [...] but the only idea behind it has been to take Pakistan to such a level for which scores of Muslims sacrificed their lives." PM Shehbaz mentioned that there were reports that he was "very close" to former president General (ret'd) Parvez Musharraf. "...but what did I get? Nawaz Sharif was thrown into jail and so was I. He went to Attock, so did I. He went to Landhi jail, so did I. Nawaz Sharif was exiled, so was I. Even my family was exiled."

Briefs

Fitch downgrade 'puzzling': US Treasury chief

WASHINGTON: US Treasury Secretary Janet Yellen said Wednesday that Fitch Ratings' downgrade of the US's credit rating was "puzzling" and "unwarranted." "Fitch's decision is puzzling in light of the economic strength we see in the United States," she said in remarks on the Inflation Reduction Act and progress in modernizing the Internal Revenue Service (IRS). "I strongly disagree with Fitch's decision, and I believe it is entirely unwarranted," she added. Yellen called the rating agency's decision a "flawed assessment" and argued that it is based on outdated data and fails to reflect improvements across a range of indicators, including those related to governance during the past two and a half years. Fitch on Tuesday downgraded the US's long-term foreign-currency credit rating to "AA+" from "AAA" with a stable outlook, stating that the change reflects expected fiscal deterioration over the next three years and a high and growing general government debt burden as well as debt limit standoffs and last-minute resolutions. Yellen, on the other hand, responded that both Democrats and Republicans came together to pass legislation to resolve the debt limit despite the gridlock. —APP

Russia puts Norway on list of 'unfriendly' countries

MOSCOW: Moscow on Thursday put Norway on the list of "unfriendly" countries, saying it is because of actions against Russian diplomatic and consular missions abroad. "The decree provides for a restriction, up to a complete ban for unfriendly countries, to hire employees from among persons located on the territory of Russia in embassies, consulates, representative offices of state bodies and state institutions," the government said in a statement. The approved list, in addition to the names of "unfriendly" countries, specifies how many employees from Russia could be hired by such states. For Norway, Moscow has reserved a quota of 27 people. Last March, Russia issued a decree with a list of countries "unfriendly toward Russia, Russian companies, and citizens." The list includes countries that have been imposing sanctions against Russia for more than 10 years. The decree gives the government the right to introduce special measures in response to "unfriendly actions." —APP

Hong Kong reports case of monkeypox

HONG KONG: Hong Kong Wednesday reported a case of monkeypox involving a 31-year-old male patient with "underlying illness," health officials said. The patient "had developed lymphadenopathy, localized skin ulcer and swelling, and rash since July 27," the Centre for Health Protection (CHP) said in a statement. He is admitted to Princess Margaret Hospital where his condition remains stable, it added. Urging people to avoid close physical contact with persons suspected of contracting monkeypox, it asked the high-risk target groups to receive vaccination against the disease.

Mpox is transmitted to humans through close contact with an infected person or animal, or with material contaminated with the virus. Patients often start exhibiting symptoms with a fever, enlarged lymph nodes, back pain, and muscle aches before a rash appears on the skin, according to World Health Organization (WHO). According to the global health body, 87,377 viral disease cases and 140 deaths have been reported since January 2022 worldwide. Last year, the WHO renamed monkeypox to mpox, saying the name of the disease had acted as "racist and stigmatizing language." —DNA

All frowns in the land of smiles: What's happening in Thai politics?

An eight-party coalition headed by MFP failed to secure the young reformist candidate Pita Limjareonrat the prime minister's job last month

BANGKOK: Thailand's political deadlock shows no signs of ending any time soon, as the kingdom's lawmakers broker, bicker, and break alliances months after national elections with a new prime minister still nowhere to be seen. The renewed political instability has revived long-held fears in a country that has seen more than a dozen military coups in the past century. So what is happening, why, and what might come next? - How did we get here? - Thailand held elections in May, returning a shock win for the progressive Move Forward Party (MFP), buoyed by many Thais' desire for change and an end

to almost a decade of army-backed rule. But their plans, which included amending strict royal defamation laws, spooked the powerful conservative establishment. An eight-party coalition headed by MFP failed to secure the young reformist candidate Pita Limjareonrat the prime minister's job last month. But didn't he win the election? - MFP won the most seats in the lower house with 151, reaching 312 with their coalition partners. But to become PM candidates need 374 ballots for a majority in a vote of both houses of parliament - including 250 junta-appointed senators - a system de-

signed by the generals. Thanks to the MFP's reformist stance - especially around the royal defamation laws, but also pledges to tackle powerful business monopolies - they swayed just 13 senators, effectively ending Pita's bid for power. Pita was also suspended as an MP by the Constitutional Court over his ownership of media shares, prohibited for Thai lawmakers, and could yet be barred from politics. - So Pita's out. Who's next? - All eyes are now on MFP's coalition partner Pheu Thai, which came second in May's election. Pheu Thai is seen as a vehicle for the Shinawatra political clan, whose members include two former

prime ministers ousted by military coups in 2006 and 2014. They formally broke with MFP on Wednesday after weeks of speculation, announcing businessman Srettha Thavisin as their PM candidate. Pita has said previously his party would support any Pheu Thai nominee but his supporters are furious and small protests against PT have appeared. - Aren't they on the same side? - They both oppose military rule, but MFP and Pheu Thai represent two very different sides of Thai society, MFP supporters have agitated for more radical change while Pheu Thai followers, who tend to be older and mostly rural-based, have

been turned off by the calls for rapid reform. It all bubbled over last week when a Pheu Thai leader was photographed sharing an iced drink with leaders of army-backed parties despite election promises to never work with military-aligned groups. Overshadowing everything is MFP's refusal to back down over amending the royal defamation laws that protect King Maha Vajiralongkorn, and which carry jail terms of up to 15 years. - What happens now? - A third vote to choose a PM, scheduled for Friday, has been postponed while the Constitutional Court considers another case related to Pita's nomination.

Before putting Srettha to a vote, Pheu Thai must ensure it has enough backing to get him through. It has been in talks with senators as well as other lower house parties to form a new coalition, though details have not been announced. - OK, so anything else? - As ever, two spectres loom over the whole process - the army and former premier Thaksin Shinawatra. Still regarded by many as Pheu Thai's true string-puller, Thaksin is expected to return to the kingdom on August 10 after 15 years in self-exile. And in a country with such a rich history of coups, further military intervention can never be ruled out.



ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Law and Justice Senator Azam Nazir Tarar along with SAPM on Interior and Legal Affairs Attaullah Tarar inaugurated the Extended Blocks of Islamabad Bar Council complex on 3rd August 2023 at Federal Judicial complex—DNA

Pro-coup protests continue in Niger as Biden urges Bazoum release

NEWS DESK

WASHINGTON: Hundreds of people backing last week's removal of Niger's democratically elected President Mohamed Bazoum by his presidential guard have gathered for a mass rally in the capital, Niamey, with some brandishing giant Russian flags. The demonstrators converged at Independence Square in the heart of the city on Thursday, following a call by a coalition of civil society associations on a day marking the 63rd anniversary of the country's independence from France.



Issiaka Hamadou, one of the demonstrators, said that it was "only security that interests us," irrespective of whether it came from "Russia, China, Turkey, if they want to help us." "We just don't want the French, who have been looting us since 1960 - they've been there ever since and nothing has

changed," he said. France has some 1,500 troops in Niger fighting armed groups in the Sahel. The coup has triggered sanctions by the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) and condemnation from the African Union, United Nations and Western countries. But coup leader

General Abdourahmane Tchiani remained defiant on Wednesday, saying he "refuses to give in to any threats, wherever they come from."

Earlier on Thursday, United States President Joe Biden called for the immediate release of Bazoum and his family, and for the country's democracy to be preserved. "In this critical moment, the United States stands with the people of Niger to honour our decades-long partnership rooted in shared democratic values and support for civilian-led governance," he said. "The Nigerian people have the right to choose their leaders," Biden said.

UK cuts number of embassy staff in Niger

LONDON: The UK on Thursday said it is reducing the number of staff at its embassy in coup-hit Niger. "There has been a military takeover in Niger, which has led to protests and unrest," said the UK Foreign Office in a statement. "Protests can be violent and the situation could change quickly without warning," it added. The move follows a similar decision by the US, which has initiated a partial evacuation of its embassy in the capital of Niamey. Niger's President Mohamed Bazoum was detained by members of the Presidential Guard on July 26, and that evening, the military announced that it had seized power. Gen. Abdourahmane Tchiani, the leader of the mutinous soldiers, assumed the leadership of the group called the National Council for the Safeguarding of the Country on July 28. In a televised address Wednesday night, Tchiani said he will not bow down to pressure to reinstate Bazoum, and criticized sanctions imposed by West African leaders.—DNA

Cambodia's Hun Sen defends dynastic succession

PHNOM PENH: Cambodia's outgoing Prime Minister Hun Sen lashed out Thursday at international criticism of elections his party won against no meaningful opposition, and defended his decision to hand power to his son as necessary to avoid bloodshed. The 70-year-old has ruled Cambodia with an iron fist for nearly four decades but announced last week he was stepping down for his son Hun Manet to take over as PM this month. The move came after his Cambodian People's Party (CPP) won a landslide victory in an election last month condemned by the United States, United Nations and the European Union as not free or fair. Election authorities disqualified the only serious opposition party on a technicality, paving the way for the CPP to win 82 percent of the vote and claim all but five seats in the 125-member lower house. "I can declare that democracy in Cambodia has won," Hun Sen said on Thursday in his first speech since the polls, insisting that the critics did not represent the whole international community. He also defended his handover to Hun Manet - a dynastic succession compared by some critics to North Korea - maintaining it was needed to ensure peace in the country should he die in office.

Spain's Catalonia region declares drought emergency

MADRID: The government of northeastern Spain's Catalonia region declared a "drought emergency" on Wednesday in 24 municipalities and will begin to impose significant water restrictions next week. "We're coming off 30 months of drought," said Samuel Reyes, director of the Catalan Water Agency (ACA), at a press conference. It marks the first time that the region has raised a high alert level in an area possibly due to drought. The emergency protocol comes from Spain's recently passed plan to cope with a lack of rain. The municipalities in the northeastern province of Girona get their water from an aquifer with historically low levels and are also the most affected regions. The other two towns under a drought emergency are south of Barcelona and get their water from a reservoir that is 6% full. In total, around 25,000 people will be affected. Under the state of emergency, the towns must limit water consumption to 200 liters (52.8 gallons) per capita per day. Although there were mild water restrictions in the same area, the Catalan Water Agency said consumption increased in July to 243 liters (64 gallons). However, the new regime will fine towns surpassing the maximum water usage. Around 6 million people in Catalonia have been under mild water restrictions for months. One of the most apparent consequences of those laws are dried out parks and gardens in cities like Barcelona, as it is not permitted to water green areas like parks. But not everyone has been following the rules, and Reyes said that in some towns, you can still see lush gardens and greenery. Towns and residents in the affected area will not only have to stop watering plants but reduce per capita consumption, reduce industrial water consumption by 25% and completely stop watering crops. Reyes urges citizens to reduce their water usage but said they should not worry about having their water cut off. Water cuts, he said, were often "counterproductive," as residents begin to fill up bathtubs or hoard water when it is turned on. Instead, he encouraged them to install equipment that lowers water pressure.—DNA



BRUSSELS: Pakistan ambassador to Belgium Amna Baloch meets Japanese ambassador to Belgium and NATO, Masahiro Mikami.—DNA

China-Pak Economy, Trade B2B Forum held

BEIJING: The 10th Anniversary Ceremony for China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) and China-Pakistan Economy and Trade B2B Forum was held in Shenzhen, China. At the invitation of the Shenzhen Municipal Government and the China-Pakistan Trade, Investment and Technology Cooperation Center, guest including Rama Ihsan Afzal Khan, Coordinator to Prime Minister of Pakistan on Commerce and Industry, Muhammad Asif Noor, Chief Executive Officer at Belt and Road Consultants Pvt Limited, Mr. Fu Chaoyang, Chairman of the Board of Directors of China Ocean Group Industry Co., Ltd, Ms. Zhu Yanyan, President of China-Pakistan United (Shenzhen) Economy and Trade Management Co., Ltd., Zang Mengsheng, General Manager of the Trade and Finance Department of Pakistan's Habib Bank Limited (HBL) in China, attended the forum, China Economic Net (CEN) reported on Thursday. At the forum, the Pakistani repre-

sentative introduced in detail the more than 50 agreements signed by two governments since the construction of the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor was launched in 2013, which determined the "1+4" cooperation layout centered on the CPEC, with Gwadar Port, energy, infrastructure and industrial co-



operation as the four priorities. In response to these statements, all guests and Pakistani representatives conducted in-depth exchanges on the composition of Pakistan's national resources, economic situation, investment policy, financial system, security situation and other issues of common concern to both

sides. Subsequently, special guests from local enterprises conducted targeted project exchanges with the Pakistani delegation, whom conducted policy interpretation, market analysis, project evaluation and resource docking for Chinese enterprises. As for conference outcome, Chinese representatives expressed hope to normalize this forum, and combine the industrial characteristics of the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area to cooperate with Special Economic Zone (SEZs) in Pakistan in an all-round way to go overseas as a whole in the form of industrial belts and clusters. At the same time, invite outstanding Pakistani enterprises to visit China to establish a two-way cooperation mechanism, promoting the export of Pakistani specialty products and undertake the transfer of China's industrial capacity. Accordingly, the Pakistani delegation expressed willingness to actively cooperate with Shenzhen, hoping to encourage outstanding enterprises from Pakistan.—DNA

Greenpeace activists climb on roof of British premier's house

LONDON: A group of Greenpeace activists on Thursday took a stand against British Prime Minister Rishi Sunak's support for a significant increase in North Sea oil and gas drilling by staging a protest at his residence. The demonstrators scaled the roof of the Prime Minister's £2 million (\$2.5 million) mansion in Yorkshire and covered it with a large "oily-black fabric", spanning approximately 200 square meters (2,150 square feet). Two more activists on the ground unveiled a banner that bore the message 'Rishi Sunak - oil profits or our future?', according to a picture shared by Greenpeace on X, formerly known as Twitter. Sunak is not present at the residence as he departed for a family vacation in the US on Thursday and he is anticipated to be overseas for approximately 10 days. Number 10 has declared that Sunak aims to maximize oil and gas extraction from the North Sea, revealing a policy of granting over 100 new drilling licenses. This approach, described as "maxing out," has drawn criticism from environmental organizations, who argue that it will undermine the UK's climate obligations.—Agencies

Parts of southern France on alert for wildfires

ANKARA: Many regions in southern France were placed on high wildfire alert on Thursday due to the risk of wildfires. According to the Meteorological Administration, scorching temperatures are expected in the areas of Bouches-du-Rhone, Sud-Est, Var, and Vaucluse. A "very high risk of wildfire" has led to a red alert in Bouches-du-Rhone, while in three areas of the Sud-Est region, an orange alert - a level below - has been issued for the risk of forest fires. In the nearby Var and Vaucluse regions, the public has been told to be vigilant for potential fires. This is the second time since June that a red alert has been declared in Bouches-du-Rhone, and five wooded areas in the Var and Vaucluse regions have been closed to tourists. French authorities say that nine out of 10 wildfires in the country are caused by human activities.—APP

Heat wave hits scouts camping in South Korea

DNA

SEOUL: Sweltering temperatures in South Korea led to hospitalization of at least 88 people during the opening ceremony of the 25th World Scout Jamboree on Wednesday night, officials said on Thursday. The global event, known as the "cultural Olympics for youth," opened at a massive campsite in Saemangeum Reclaimed Area with about 43,000 young scouts from 158 countries. Jeonbuk police said participants with heat-related illness symptoms were treated within the hospital inside the campsite, while five others were referred to nearby hospitals with ankle fractures or signs of anxiety disorders. Many people had collapsed during the event which forced fire authorities to ask the organizers to halt the event. "Most of the patients showed signs of exhaustion, but no one was seriously hurt," an official said. This year's unusually hot summer weather, which has so far killed at least 23 people nationwide, is expected to continue throughout the 12-day event, with temperatures likely to hover around 35C (95F) in most parts of the country. Authorities have raised the heat wave alert to "serious," the highest level in the four-stage warning system, for the first time since 2019.

Briefs

Zardari, Bilawal to begin consultation on Sindh caretaker setup

DNA

KARACHI: Asif Ali Zardari and Bilawal Bhutto will begin their consultations for interim setup in Sindh from tomorrow. According to sources, Chief Minister Murad Ali Shah and senior provincial ministers will share their points of view over Sindh caretaker setup with the People's Party's top leadership.

Sindh government sources said that the government has considered over three names for the caretaker chief minister's office and these names will be presented to the party leadership. Moreover, 18 prominent persons from various sectors have been interviewed for the caretaker cabinet of the province, according to sources.

The government will initiate talks over the caretaker setup with the MQM after concluding consultation within the ruling party. The leader of opposition in Sindh Assembly Rana Ansar and Chief Minister Murad Ali Shah are expected to hold a meeting for talks over the interim setup next week.

Govt to charge additional Rs24.50b on electricity bills

DNA

KARACHI: There is a bad news for the people of Karachi as the government has decided to impose an additional burden of Rs24.50 billion on the electricity consumers of the city. The government has decided to impose a surcharge of Rs1.52 on the electricity bills for the consumers of Karachi, with this additional surcharge, an additional burden of 24 billion 50 crore rupees will be imposed on the citizens of Karachi. This surcharge of Rs1.52 in bills will be applicable for one year while the surcharge on electricity bills is being adjusted quarterly. In this regard, the federal government has submitted an application to Nepra, which will be heard by the authority on August 15.

Sh. Rashid berates govt for bulldozing bills

DNA

RAWALPINDI: Awami Muslim League chief and former interior minister Sheikh Rashid Ahmed says the National Assembly with only nine lawmakers in attendance passed 53 bills in just two days, setting a world record of speedy working of democracy. In his statement on the social networking site X (Twitter), Rashid said no industry was running in the country except the bill-manufacturing factory. The former interior minister said the lawmakers who did not even know what law was, were passing bills without realising that they would fall prey to their own legislation one day. Instead of making lame excuses and cornering a party to the wall, they should openly admit that they were not in a position to go to the polls and show their faces to the public.

He said people were well aware that elections on new census could not be held without amendment to the constitution by a two-thirds majority. But the day they (rulers) revealed the truth to the people, would prove to be their last day in power, he said. "Their days in power are numbered so they should make preparations for their departure. They (rulers) have a previous record of fleeing the country on a Rs 50 stamp paper," stated the AML chief.



ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif receiving a briefing regarding Barakahu Bypass which was inaugurated. – DNA

India's Gurugram

Muslims face attacks on mosque, businesses

Streets are deserted and tensions high after mobs torch Muslim-owned shops, a mosque and kill its imam in northern Haryana state

NEWS DESK

GURUGRAM: The Anjuman Jama mosque in Gurugram's Sector 57 is deserted. About 10 police officers stand in front of the concrete structure, which used to host up to 450 worshippers but is now a mound of debris and ashes. The mosque – one of the few places for Muslim worship in Gurugram, a predominantly Hindu city next to India's capital, New Delhi – came under attack on the night of July 31, allegedly by a Hindu far-right mob. The assailants set the mosque ablaze and killed Mohammad Saad, a 22-year-old naib (deputy) imam who was inside at the time. The attack took place hours after deadly communal violence erupted in the neighbouring Nuh district in Haryana state.

Mohammad Faheem Kazmi, an interior designer who regularly prays at the torched mosque, said he was horrified. "This attack was revenge for Nuh," the 32-year-old, who has lived in the area since 2011, told media. At least four people were killed, including two policemen, when a Hindu religious procession in Nuh that was organised by the Vishwa Hindu Parishad (VHP) and Bajrang Dal, two Hindu far-right organisations aligned with the ruling Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), turned violent. According to media reports and Nuh residents, clashes ensued after some Muslim men stopped the religious procession and stones were thrown at the march. Authorities in Haryana have deployed additional troops, imposed a curfew and suspended the internet in the wake of the un-

rest. But the measures did not stop Hindu mobs from attacking Muslim-owned shops, roadside eateries, properties and places of worship in Gurugram as well as in nearby towns such as Sohna, residents said. Shops in Gurugram's Sector 70A and Sector 66 were torched on Tuesday evening, while Bajrang Dal members held a rally in Haryana's Bahadurgarh city, shouting hateful slogans such as "Desh ke gaddaron ko, Goli maaro saalon ko" ("Shoot the traitors of our country") – a chant that was widely used by BJP politicians against Muslims during the anti-Citizenship Amendment Act protests in 2019 and 2020. Speaking about the violence on Tuesday, Gurugram Police Commissioner Kala Ramachandran told foreign media that "some kiosks were damaged in arson".

"Prima facie [On the first impression] the men we rounded up were not linked to any particular group. However, an investigation is still under way," she said. The offices of companies such as Google and Deloitte are located just a few kilometres from the sites of violence in Gurugram, which has been given the moniker "millennium city" for attracting multinational corporations and hosting upmarket shopping centres. The unrest in Haryana comes a month before global leaders are due to arrive in New Delhi for a Group of 20 (G20) summit. Prime Minister Narendra Modi has not commented on the violence that came a day after a railway security officer killed one of his colleagues and three Muslim passengers, in what is seen by many as a hate crime.

US backs direct talks between Pak and India

ISLAMABAD: A day after Pakistan's leader proposed "conditional" talks with arch-enemy India, the United States said it supports direct talks between the nuclear-armed South Asian neighbours. Pakistani Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Tuesday said he was ready to resume bilateral dialogue with India. Pakistan downgraded diplomatic ties with India in 2019 when New Delhi scrapped the special status of Indian-administered Kashmir. The status gave semi-autonomy to the disputed Himalayan region, which is also claimed by Pakistan. Since their independence from British rule in 1947, the two countries have fought two of their three wars over Kashmir. "We are prepared to talk with everyone, even with our neighbour, provided that the neighbour is serious to talk about serious matters on the table because war is no more an option," Sharif said in Islamabad. When asked to respond to Sharif's statement, US Department of State spokesperson Matthew Miller on Wednesday said the US has always maintained the two countries should engage in dialogue. "As we have long said, we support direct dialogue between India and Pakistan on the issues of concern. That has long been our position," Miller said. – DNA

Wagner fighters seek to unsettle NATO's eastern flank, Polish PM says

WEB DESK

WARSAW: Fighters from Russia's private Wagner mercenary force are being moved close to NATO's eastern flank to destabilise the military alliance, according to Poland's prime minister. Wagner soldiers have begun training with the Belarus national army, prompting Poland to start moving more than 1,000 troops closer to the border. On Tuesday, it accused Belarus of violating its air space with military helicopters. "We need to be aware that the number of provocations will rise," Mateusz Morawiecki said on Thursday after meet-

ing Lithuanian President Gitanas Nausėda in eastern Poland. "The Wagner group is extremely dangerous and they are being moved to the eastern flank to destabilise it." The politicians met in the Suwalki Gap, a sparsely populated but strategically important area of Polish territory between Belarus and the Russian exclave of Kaliningrad that joins the Baltic states to other NATO members. Nausėda said the number of Wagner fighters in Belarus could be higher than 4,000. "We must not only talk about measures at the national level but also ... what should be done if this situation becomes even more complicated, including the closure of the

border with Belarus," Nausėda said. "This should be done in a coordinated manner between Poland, Lithuania and Latvia." Laurynas Kaciunas, chairman of the Seimas National Security and Defence Committee, told reporters that Wagner mercenaries in Belarus with their current combat power do not pose a conventional military threat. Whether they pose a great threat in the future, he said, "will depend on further scenarios, how they are armed and their orders". In Poland, some critics of the government believe that it is overstating the threat in order to present itself as tough on security before parliamentary elections later this year.

ECP allots symbols to 23 parties for next elections

ISLAMABAD: The Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) has allotted election symbols to 23 political parties for the upcoming general elections. A hearing was held in the ECP on the requests for allotment of electoral symbols to the political parties for the upcoming general elections. During the hearing, ECP gave the symbol of sword to Pakistan People's Party while rejected the request of Isteqam-e-Pakistan Party (IPP) to allot the Shaheen (Eagle). The ECP allotted the electoral symbol of Chirya (Sparrow) to (IPP).

The ECP stayed the decision on the request of IPP and All Pakistan Muslim League. The ECP said IPP asked for Shaheen symbol which was already with APML. The ECP rejected the request to allot Shaheen election symbol to IPP. The ECP said that the registration of the IPP was still pending and the party should provide the relevant documents. On the other hand, the ECP awarded the symbol of book to Jamiat Ulema Islam (F), cup to Peoples Muslim League, ring to Jamiat-e-Islam, bucket to Kisan Etihad and moon to Hazara Democratic Party while Pakistan Awami League was allotted hockey as election symbol. Knife was allotted to Pakistan Humanity Movement, missile to Pakistan Peace Movement, Pistol to Pakistan Protection Movement, victory to Pakistan People's Party Bhutto Shaheed, waistcoat to Pakistan Welfare Movement, plaque to JUI ideological, helmet to Modern Awami Party and telephone to Tehreek Awam Pakistan. The ECP made sign of All Pakistan Muslim League subject to the holding of intra-party elections and the party assured to hold the elections within 40 days. – DNA

'Pak-China friendship to safeguard mutual interests'

The CPEC has brought more billions of Chinese investment to Pakistan, establishing power plants, developing the strategically located deep-water Pakistani port of Gwadar on the Arabian Sea and building transport infrastructure, he mentioned

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Chinese Vice Foreign Minister Sun Weidong Thursday termed Pakistan-China friendship 'unbreakable' and said that the two sides had always stood by each other in hard times and will continue act "collectively" to protect their mutual interest for tackle global challenges. "The leaderships of both sides are agree to continue the mutual understanding through supporting traditional friendship to promote peace in the region", he said in an exclusive interview with PTV news channel. He said China and Pakistan are unique and time-tested all-weather strategic cooperative partners, adding, the friendship between the two sides will be passed on from generation to generation and will not be shaken or changed. He said Pakistan-China friendship is higher than mountains and strong than rocks. Replying to a question, he said both the governments



have decided to cooperate with each other and develop the agriculture, industry and transport sector. Although, investment and cooperation will be expanded at the national level, marginalized and less-developed areas will get priority, he added. He said that China and Pakistan were the most trustworthy good neighbors, good friends and good brothers to each other. To another query, he replied that the recent visit of He Lifeng, the Chinese vice premier and special presidential envoy "reflects the importance" the two countries attached to deepen their bilateral ties further. The CPEC has brought more billions of Chinese investment to Pakistan, establishing power plants, developing the strategically located deep-water Pakistani port of Gwadar on the Arabian Sea and building transport infrastructure, he mentioned. "Over the past decade, as an important pioneering project of the BRI, CPEC has achieved fruitful results and become a new benchmark for the friendship between China and Pakistan," he added. The CPEC projects "are flourishing all across Pakistan," making a "tangible contribution" to the national development of the country and to regional connectivity as well, he mentioned

Trudeau, wife announce separation

DNA

OTTAWA: Justin Trudeau's surprise announcement that he and his wife were separating, just a week after a broad cabinet reshuffle, underscores the Canadian prime minister's focus and intent to lead the Liberal Party into a fourth election victory, despite sagging opinion polls, pollsters and insiders said.

On Wednesday, Trudeau and his wife Sophie Gregoire Trudeau unexpectedly announced their separation, likely marking the end of their 18-year-long high profile marriage. The separation is one of Trudeau's biggest personal crises, although insiders and political commentators said he wants to ride out the aftershocks.

"He's running again," said a source close to Trudeau, when asked whether the news of the separation might be prompting second thoughts. The source was not authorized to speak about the matter publicly. Trudeau said on Instagram that the couple took the decision after "many meaningful and difficult conversations." His office said the two had signed a legal agreement and the couple would focus on raising their children. The family will go on vacation together next week.

Speediest legislation becomes talk of the town

DNA

ISLAMABAD: The present government has broken all records of speedy legislation as it has managed to get 54 bills passed from the National Assembly in just four days. Out of these 54 bills, 35 are related to the establishment of universities, which have made Minister for Education Rana Tanveer Hussain feel helpless. Speaking on the floor of the National Assembly, Federal Minister for Education Rana Tanveer Hussain expressed his reservations over the hasty passage of bills related to universities. He said that first of all approval should be sought from the concerned university before okaying the charter.

"Because when the charter is approved, these universities get a legal cover. Besides that they can also award degrees," he said, and added, "But when the bill gets passed, there is a tendency to build universities without HEC nod." The result was, he added, when degrees awarded by these universities were sent to the HEC for attestation, the latter refused to ratify them. "Consequently, both students and their parents get disturbed. Because parents have to toil really hard to bear the expenses of their kids. I have been told that there are 10,000 such students whose degrees have not been verified so far," the minister added.

Pak, US agree to enhance co-op in diverse fields

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan's Ambassador to the United States Masood Khan called on US Under Secretary for Economic Growth, Energy, and Environment Jose W. Fernandez at US Department of State in Washington. They discussed Pak-US cooperation in diverse fields and agreed to further enhance ties especially in trade, technology, agriculture, energy and climate change. In a tweet US Under Secretary Fernandez said that they discussed strengthening US-Pak economic partnership and climate resilience via US-Pakistan Green Alliance and investment in technology sector. He said that he looks forward to working together on mutually beneficial priorities. "Today I discussed with Pakistani Ambassador Masood Khan strengthening US-Pak economic partnership and climate resilience via the U.S.-Pakistan Green Alliance and investment in the technology sector," tweeted Under Secretary Fernandez.