



Islamabad POST

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China willing to resolve maritime disputes, says FM

Detailed News On Page-07

Turkish FM eyes cordial ties with Iran

Detailed News On Page-07



Djokovic fights back to win an epic match

Detailed News On Page-06



Gilgit-Baltistan denies unrest

Army deployed for Chehlum, clarifies Solangi

Gilgit Baltistan remains a heaven of peace and harmony

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

ISLAMABAD: Caretaker Federal Minister for Information Murtaza Solangi has denied the deployment of Pakistan Army in Gilgit-Baltistan "to maintain law and order". In a statement, the minister termed it "rumours" that the Pakistan Army has been called out in Gilgit-Baltistan, adding that the services have been sought on the occasion of Chehlum of Hazrat Imam Hussain. He took to social media website X, formerly Twitter, on Sunday and quoted the Home Department of Gilgit-Baltistan as saying that "the situation in Gilgit-Baltistan is completely peaceful and the news and speculations circulating in media regarding the deployment of Pakistan Army are completely baseless."

"All roads, trade centers, business activities and educational institutions in G-B are open as usual. The services of Pakistan Army and Civil Armed Forces have been requisitioned only to maintain law and order on the eve of Chehlum of Hazrat Imam Hussain (RA)," he continued. "Special measures have been taken for the security of procession routes and Imam bargahs as per past practice," Solangi wrote on X. "Section 144 of the Code of Criminal Procedure 1898 has been imposed

'Real reason behind Jaranwala incident'

BUREAU REPORT

FAISALABAD: Faisalabad Police spokesperson claimed to unearth real motive behind Jaranwala tragedy in which dozens of christian community houses and churches burnt that drew widespread condemnation. The police said accused Parvez Masih suspected his wife of having illicit relations with Umeir alias Raja and subsequently Parvez Masih tried to kill Umeir Raja as he hired killer and gave money and a motorcycle to the shooter for the murder. "A heinous conspiracy was made to desecrate the Quran after the failure to kill," the police claimed. Three people including Parvez Masih are involved in this heinous conspiracy and accused Parvez Masih wrote an insulting letter in the name of Umar and desecrated the holy book, the police claimed. He said people got angry after seeing insulting letters and papers and subsequently the incident occurred. The spokesperson said as a result of the incitement, houses and churches were set on fire in Christian settlements. Three persons including accused Parvez Masih and Umeir Raja are under custody.

across the region to maintain law and order, protect lives and property of the people and avoid any untoward incident," his message concluded. It may be recalled that the provincial government had decided to seek deployment of the army to quell unrest in the region on the Parliamentary Peace Committee's decision on Friday. Situation

turned tense on Sept 1, when demonstrations were held in the Gilgit city and surrounding areas on the call of Anjumani-Imamia, hours after a prominent religious leader, Maulana Qazi Nisar Ahmed, allegedly made derogatory remarks during a protest in Gilgit.

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Inflated electricity bills

PM's 48-hour deadline expires

FAISAL SHEIKH

ISLAMABAD: The 48-hour deadline given by caretaker Prime Minister Anwarul-Haq Kakar has expired without any announcement of relief in inflated electricity bills owing to stiff resistance by the International Monetary Fund (IMF), a Pakistani newspaper reported Sunday.

"The IMF has not yet granted its assent on Pakistan's request for deferment of electricity bills," top official sources claims report.

PM Kakar said Thursday that he would provide relief to power consumers within 48 hours, but this could not be done by Saturday night, the stipulated deadline.

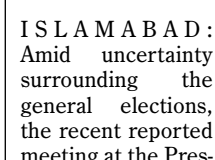
This scribe sent out questions to both the Ministry of Finance and Ministry of Power high-ups but got no reply. However, sources said the IMF was giving a very tough time to Pakistani negotiators, so both sides were unable to evolve a consensus on the formula for payment of inflated bills in a staggered manner. During this week, the Pakistani side shared its plan with the IMF to provide relief of up to 400 units of electricity in inflated bills. The IMF was given an assurance that none of its envisaged targets would be breached.

Continued on Page 06

Election date controversy President House 'meeting' triggers conspiracy theories

According to some speculations, the president could announce the general election date in the next 72 hours

DNA



ISLAMABAD: Amid uncertainty surrounding the general elections, the recent reported meeting at the President House has triggered speculations with some claiming President Alvi could announce polls date in a few days. The meeting is said to have been held on the fourth floor of Aiwan-e-Sadr (Presidency), where the president's office is situated. During the meeting, the fourth floor of the Aiwan-e-Sadr was off-limits to anyone — the staff also restricted from entering the area, a Pakistani newspaper reported on Sunday. What happened when 'three elders' are said to have met? In this regard, no statement has been issued by the President House. However, in the backdrop of the country's current situation, there have been a lot of speculations on social media. According to some speculations, the president could announce the general election date in the next 72 hours. The president had written a letter to the chief election commissioner for a meeting to set the date for upcoming elections. However, the CEC had refused a meeting, saying that under Article 57 of the Election Act 2017, the commission had the authority to set the election date.

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Sanallah slams Imran for hiring UK lawyer

KHAYAM ABBASI

ISLAMABAD: Amid reports that former prime minister Imran Khan hired a UK-based lawyer to represent him in international courts, Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) President and ex-interior minister Rana Sanallah said Sunday that a "puppet is being used to defame Pakistan globally". "Going to the International Court of Justice means making Pakistan stand in the global dock as a criminal," the senior PML-N leader said adding that only enemies of Pakistan could do this despicable act. On September 1, Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) announced on its official X — formerly known as Twitter — account: "PTI chairman and former PM Imran Khan has appointed the eminent human rights Barrister Geoffrey Robertson KC of Doughty Street Chambers to advise and represent him in international courts in relation to unlawful detention and

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Briefs

Sh. Rashid stresses dialogue to resolve crises

MEHTAB PIRZADA



RAWALPINDI: Awami Muslim League chief and former federal interior minister Sheikh Rashid Ahmed has said that arresting people would spread hatred while dialogue is the need of the hour. Taking to social networking site X, formerly Twitter, the ex-minister wrote on Sunday that the heads and leaders of 13 parties have fled the country by plunging the masses in economic torment and blaming the caretaker government for it. One [of the leaders] has flown to London, another was in Dubai, while the third was in Saudi Arabia; and the poor people are [protesting] on the streets. "Yesterday's shutter down strike is an evidence that the business community is also in [financial] trouble," he wrote.

PPP rejects any electoral alliance

DNA



THATTA: Pakistan People's Party (PPP) Sindh President Nisar Ahmed Khuhro declared that the PPP would not form any alliances with other parties, including the PML-N. Addressing a press conference in Thatta, Khuhro emphasized that the PPP would contest the general elections independently. Khuhro stated that the introduction of a presidential system in the country would require constitutional amendments. "If anyone is daring enough to challenge the constitution, he should demonstrate conviction by bringing forward the presidential system," he warned.

Is Pak situation impacting upon Taliban regime?

The strengthening of IS or assembling of around 20 other hardcore militant groups are considered a serious threats to future of all neighbouring countries of Afghanistan

SHAMIM SHAHID

AMIDST hectic efforts on the part of Taliban leaders for further strengthening its rule and influence in Afghanistan the ground reality is very different where common men are deprived of their just basic rights. Almost all people, irrespective of their political stance, religious faiths and communal races are making their best to flee the country and embark on new lives in Western-European world. No doubt to mention that through guns and sticks, Taliban are controlling economic markets, prices of daily use goods and made stable the currency but it is an undeniable fact that jobs or economic opportunities in all over Afghanistan are a few, bilateral trade with regional and neighbouring countries is on decline. Poverty and

unemployment issues are on rise. Majority of people's lives are depending in aid and assistance from UN agencies like WFP, UNICEF along with several other foreign donors and relief agencies. Despite frequent demands and reservations of UN, US, EU and other global organizations and forces, Taliban are stick to own made laws in according to what they called "Islamic Doctrine" and rejected the ideas of broad based coalition government. Similarly, Taliban are justifying their acts of banning women education, jobs in government, private and other commercial organizations. Even the women are not allowed to visit doctors and hospitals. Hundreds of women have been forced to home from airports while they were making efforts to go abroad for education or joining their close relatives,

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Sirajul Haq announces sit-ins

DNA

LAHORE: Resolving to continue his party's struggle against what he termed injustice and exploitation, Jamaat-e-Islami (JI) chief Sirajul Haq has announced his party's decision to stage sit-ins outside the four provincial governor's houses to protest the issue of exorbitant power billing. As stated in a press statement issued on Sunday, the Jamaat-e-Islami has also reached a decision about issuing a White Paper regarding the deteriorating economic conditions. "It has become difficult to live in the country in this suffocating environment," Haq said, fearing the government may levy tax even on 'our breathing'. He deplored that the 24 million

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COAS for propelling nation towards growth

Business leaders, General Asim Munir (COAS) discuss economic initiatives

ABID RAZA



LAHORE: Lahore Chamber of Commerce & Industry (LCCI) President Kashif Anwar alongside prominent business figures met with Chief of Army Staff (COAS) General Asim Munir, here on Sunday. Caretaker Punjab Chief Minister Mohsin Naqvi also attended the meeting in which country's economic trajectory was discussed in detail, LCCI spokesman confirmed this to the media. During the meeting, General Asim Munir highlighted the pivotal role of the Special Investment Facilitation Council (SIFC), emphasizing its potential to attract

Continued on Page 06

US ambassador meets Maryam

ABBAS HASHMI

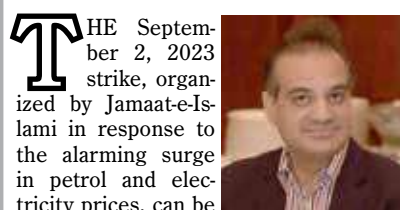
LAHORE: Pakistan Muslim League chief organizer and vice president Maryam Nawaz Sharif met with the US Ambassador to Pakistan Donald Bloom Sunday. During the meeting, both sides discussed importance of historical and bilateral relations between both countries. During the meeting, both sides stressed for promoting mutual cooperation including trade, economy, security, peace and regional stability was also emphasized. Maryam Nawaz Sharif also appreciated the efforts made by

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Of elections and simmering economic and political crises

COMMENT

ANSAR M BHATTI



THE September 2, 2023 strike, organized by Jamaat-e-Islami in response to the alarming surge in petrol and electricity prices, can be hailed as an unequivocal success. The overwhelming participation resulted in the closure of a majority of businesses, sending a powerful message. Although such widespread protests and strikes may not immediately sway the rulers, they undeniably lay the groundwork for more frequent and impactful demonstrations in the future. The nation has experienced a series of economic and political challenges in recent years. These challenges can be traced back to the moment when Nawaz Sharif was removed from office through a court order, a decision that many perceived as being based on tenuous legal grounds. It's important to clarify that this doesn't absolve the Sharif family of corruption allegations. Over the years, they have accumulated significant wealth during their tenures in both provincial and central government positions. However, what stood out was the sentencing of Nawaz Sharif in a case that had not previously been discussed or debated at any stage, raising questions about the fairness and transparency of

the legal process. The primary catalyst for his removal ostensibly stemmed from his deteriorating relationship with the Establishment of the time. He had probably become 'unmanageable' hence he has to be removed.

Then in 2018 the project Imran Khan was launched with this hope that he shall behave and remain within his limits. The relationship worked well for the initial two years nevertheless things started getting bad and then from bad to worse when Imran Khan tried to fly independently. His wings were consequently clipped and a hotchpotch type government was put in place to run the day to day affairs. It was a disorganized and chaotic government, struggling to manage the nation's day-to-day affairs. Regrettably, this government proved to be a resounding failure, causing significant harm to the country's economic and political landscape. The leader of this government Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif dissolved the National Assembly few days before the stipulated term in order to get maximum time for electioneering.

As per the Constitution, the election must take place within 90 days after the dissolution of the assemblies, however powers-that-be plus PML N want elections to take place somewhere in January or February 2024 — a timeframe which has already been rejected by other political parties including the PPP. The President of Pakistan too wants elections to take place within 90 days for which he had already written a letter to the Election Commission however his

plea was not entertained by the Election Commission of Pakistan, as a result of which the President was supposed to announce date for the elections.

According to recent reports, a momentous high-level meeting unfolded at the Presidency on Friday, September 1, 2023. This meeting saw the participation of the President and two other high-ranking officials from the Establishment. Notably, the President was reportedly advised against announcing his election date and was encouraged to entrust this decision to the Election Commission. Intriguingly, insiders with knowledge of the proceedings suggest that the meeting might have delved into discussions concerning the Official Secrets Act bills. It's worth noting that the President had previously publicly stated on social media that he had not granted his assent to these bills. Given that the President's term is set to conclude on September 08, it's plausible that this issue took center stage as well during the high-level deliberations.

With all factors considered, the paramount concern remains: will there be sustained economic and political stability, regardless of whether the elections are conducted within the next 90 days or later? Regrettably, the outlook for our nation's political and economic future appears far from promising. The treatment meted out to certain political parties, their leaders, and their supporters speaks loudly of a dismal political trajectory for our country.

The establishment of a government through gerrymandering and political

maneuvers is destined to exacerbate our existing challenges. In the recent past, we have witnessed similar scenarios with both the PTI and PDM governments, and these experiences have only compounded our difficulties. Efforts are underway to exclude the PTI from the electoral process, and this challenge extends to other major parties like the PPP and PML-N as well. The objective is to create conditions conducive to a hung parliament, wherein all parties find themselves compelled to seek the support of the powers-that-be for their political survival. In contemplating the future prospects of the three leading contenders vying for the coveted position of Prime Minister — Nawaz Sharif, Shehbaz Sharif, and Imran Khan — the ever-changing political landscape implies that all three might not necessarily be in contention for the highest office. Just as the caretaker prime minister can be surprising, the permanent prime minister might also catch people off guard.

Nawaz Sharif, in particular, faces a challenging journey if he wishes to reenter the race. His foremost obstacle appears to be his legal sentence and his relationship with the Establishment. For many observers, it seems that he has yet to gain the confidence of the establishment, primarily due to his previous stances towards the institution and its officials. Shehbaz Sharif, often referred to as Shehbaz Speed, faced significant challenges during his one and a half-year tenure as the country's leader, which unfortunately did not result in effective governance. His leadership period appeared to multi-

ply Pakistan's existing problems rather than resolving them. The once-promising image of a 'reformer' and 'do-gooder,' carefully cultivated during his time as Punjab's chief minister, quickly faded when he took on the role of prime minister. This experience, marked by a lack of success and impact, raises doubts about whether the powers-that-be would be inclined to repeat such a leadership choice in the future.

Pakistan happens to be a land of miracles, however no miracle is expected to occur in case of Imran Khan. Even if he decides to follow 'his master voice' even then his chances to become the prime minister any time soon are dim. Those who are close to him staunchly believe, what sets him apart from other politicians is his 'unwavering' commitment to his 'principles', whereas many of his peers tend to pivot their stance opportunistically for personal gain. When addressing the ongoing protests and strikes, it is imperative for the interim government to proactively devise a comprehensive relief package to avert potential turmoil in the near future. To effectively address this challenge, the government must demonstrate courage by expanding the tax base and revenue sources, ensuring that even those who perceive themselves as exempt from taxation are brought within the tax net. Additionally, tackling rampant corruption must be a top priority, as it remains the most significant impediment to progress and must be eradicated swiftly and decisively.

DC reviews preparations for anti-polio drive

LAHORE : Lahore Deputy Commissioner Rafia Haider on Sunday chaired a meeting at her office to review arrangements made for a 7-day special anti-polio campaign commencing from September 4 to 11 in the provincial capital. The meeting discussed the progress of the previous anti-polio campaign. Addressing the meeting, the DC stressed a coordinated strategy for preparation of a micro-plan and special attention on training of polio teams so that vaccination targets could be achieved. The deputy commissioner instructed Health Department officials to adopt measures for coverage of left-over children during the previous anti-polio campaign. She directed the assistant commissioners to deal with refusal cases and to communicate with the parents to get their children vaccinated. Rafia Haider appealed to parents to cooperate with the administration to ensure that all children under the age of five receive anti-polio drops. The meeting was briefed that more than 0.2 million children would be administered polio drops during the 7-day anti-polio drive in the provincial capital. More than 6,360 polio teams would participate in the drive. The meeting was attended by Additional Deputy Commissioners, Assistant Commissioners, CEO Health and Education, Deputy District Health Officers, Union Council Municipal Officers and areas in-charge. —APP

E-driving license facility introduced

LAHORE : Punjab police have rolled out electronic driving licences for citizens across Punjab. Inspector General of Punjab Police Usman Anwar said that citizens can apply on the Driving Licence Information Management System website for their driving licence. He said that the driving licence can also be downloaded in PDF form and used while driving. IG Police said that more than 3 million driving licences have been issued during this year and the number of driving licence centers increased from 45 to 200 across Punjab. The Federal Investigation Authority unearthed over 27,000 fake driving licences by a gang in three years. —DNA

Four held in search operation

DNA

PESHAWAR : Kohat Police arrested 4 accused in a search and strike operation on Sunday. The Police recovered weapons from their possession, including 1 Kalashnikov, 2 pistols, 1 Kalashnikov, 8 chargers and hundreds of cartridges. The arrested accused were identified as Ahsan Khan, Nasrullah Khan, Asim and Mehmood, all residents of Jangal Khel. The operation was led by DSP Headquarters Muhammad Nawab Khan and SHO Jangal Khel Ruman Khan along with a police force. Cases have been registered against the arrested armed criminals in Jangal Khel Police Station.

OIP: Rahmatan Lil 'Alamiin's universal values emphasized

DNA

ISLAMABAD: A lively session of the Online Internship Program "Contemporary Dynamics of Indonesia" had an interesting enlightening discussion on "Commitment to Islam Rahmatan Lil 'Alamiin". Renowned Indonesian scholar Dr. Dicky Sofjan from the Indonesian Consortium for Religious Studies (ICRS) Yogyakarta, was the speaker at this session of the OIP which is a collaboration between the Indonesian Embassy and the Bahria University Islamabad. The session discussed the contemporary challenges Muslims were facing in the ever growing multicultural world. It also shed light on the issue of tolerance, pluralism, inclusion, Islamophobia and tendencies of extremism and how Muslims embrace the change and engage with people from various cultures and with different world view under the guiding principles of Wasatiyah and Islamic universal values of Rahmatanlilalamin. "As a religion of peace, the beauty of Islam is in its universal appeal for the entire mankind with its guiding principles of moderation

in life and rejection of prejudices based on race, caste and creed" the speaker said while sharing his thoughts. Dr. Dicky Sofjan highlighted Indonesia's mega biodiversity, rich culture, and diverse traditions, including 700 psycholinguistic groups and over 400 local indigenous belief systems. Islam is the predominant religion, alongside Christianity, Hinduism, Buddhism, and Confucianism. Indonesia is not an Islamic state but has "Pancasila" as its state ideology and philosophical basis, making it a diverse and multicultural country, he added. The speaker emphasized the importance of respecting and appreciating various worldviews, stating that Muslims believe Prophet Muhammad is sent as a mercy and blessing to the Multiverse and that these teachings are relevant to contemporary contexts. "The Islamic universal doctrine of Rahmatan Lil 'Alamiin's needs to be contextualized in the broader understanding that the world is moving towards a multicultural society with increasing diversity of world views becoming a reality" the speaker shared his insight. Dr. Dicky Sofjan discussed how homogenous country like Japan



was becoming multicultural due to increasing acceptance of Islam, similar to the other changes occurring in the UK and USA in line with the growing multiculturalism. The speaker while discussing the concepts of tolerance, pluralism and inclusion dismissing that they were creating misconception that all religions were the same. He explained that tolerance embraces differences and pluralism acknowledges that people's experiences are influenced by their environment, upbringing, and ethnic identity. He also underlined the importance of inclusion in social interactions, politics, and econo-

my, arguing that extreme views cause conflict. While discussing pluralism, he also cited examples of differences within Islam and other religions like Christianity, Hinduism, and Buddhism. He said that the main challenge was engaging people who may be different in fundamental values, rituals, and practices arguing that studying religion and multiculturalism can help develop better understanding among people of different world views. Dr. Dicky Sofjan attributed the rise in anti-Islamic sentiments to religious illiteracy and mistrust towards Muslims' ability to embrace modernity and engage with others. He stressed the importance of good character in displaying Islam, stating that discrimination and stereotyping hinder the development of understanding and integration of Muslims globally. "One of the toughest question we face is that why Muslims were economically backward, undemocratic, without technology innovation and at the lowest rankings in all indexes be it GDP, investment, education, health or financial systems" the speaker lamented. Sharing his thoughts on the

rise of the internet and digital world, he said that social media is transforming our lives in both positive and negative ways. Social media has led to negative fragmentation of religious communities with people learning Islam from the internet rather than authentic sources, he added. "Big data analytics, machine learning with robotics, and artificial intelligence have also been used to propagate certain world views and as we move towards a multicultural world, the world becomes even more polarized causing frictions and competitions both online and offline" Dr. Dicky Sofjan said while mentioning another emerging unique and complex challenge. As the people are coming across new cultures and ideologies, the speaker emphasized the importance of being Muslims and the significance of Islam in preventing nihilism and the notion of no meaning of life. He urged on the need for Muslims to appreciate diversity and be kind and empathic towards others who may be different from them. He stressed the need for strategic actions and propagation and avoid being unmindful of emerging realities and challenges.

Karachi police arrest woman who threw toddler from 6th floor

KARACHI : A mother, who threw her newborn baby from the sixth floor of a building in Karachi, has been arrested by police. According to details, a woman threw her toddler from the sixth floor of a building in Karachi's Liaquatabad No.4. The police have arrested the woman, who is said to be a drug addict and mentally challenged. The lady is divorced and living in her brother's house. According to police, the woman will be checked by a psychiatric doctor? In one such incident in 2021, a woman jumped off from a six-storey building along with a minor girl in Karachi after it emerged that she was locked in a room by her family over drug-addiction. —APP

Sugar price shoots to Rs220 per kg

QUETTA : Sugar price spiked to a record high of Rs220 per kg in retail markets of Balochistan. The sugar that was earlier being sold at Rs200 suddenly recorded a Rs20 per kg rise in Balochistan to reach an all-time record high of Rs220. The commodity's wholesale price is Rs210 per kg in the province, while a 50-kg sack has reached Rs10,500, the market sources said. According to dealers, the price of the commodity increased after the supply of sugar got suspended as vehicles got stuck on the national highways after the suspension of permits. The sudden rise in sugar prices has added to the misery of the people who are already bearing the brunt of inflation. —APP

Court Notice

In the Court of Waqas Ahmed Warraich, Civil Judge 1st Class Jhelum, Suit for Declaration with Interim & Mandatory Injunction etc. Case title Mrs. Iqbal Shaheen VS Tehsilidar Tehsil Jhelum etc., against No.3 Sonia Shaheen No.4 Maryam Jahandad daughters No.5 Faisal Arif son of Jahandad (deceased) R/O Machine Mohallah No.3, Jhelum presently residing abroad. As there is not possible to call the defendants through Summons in the instant suit so through proclamation in Newspaper, you are directed to appear in the court on 07.09.2023 at 8:00AM, otherwise ex-parte proceeding will be initiated.



KARACHI: The Russian center for science and culture in Karachi celebrates Uzbekistan culture day under the separation of Vice Consul Ruslan Prokhorov of Russian, organised by Fariha Aqib, Ranogul Khan, and Rida Alam. There was Uzbek cuisine and the delicacies of Uzbekistan. Uzbek play, Kazan kabab, Hanum, Damlama, Naan, and Halwataar are served in beautiful national Uzbek crockery All the ladies and kids wear national dress called Atras. Russia is a generous country it always celebrates other cultures with love peace and respect. —DNA

RCCI to organize business opportunities conference in Egypt

FAISAL SHEIKH

RAWALPINDI : The Rawalpindi Chamber of Commerce and Industry (RCCI) is taking a delegation of the Pakistani business community to Cairo, Egypt, for Pakistan-Egypt Business Opportunities Conference on September 7. RCCI president Saqib Rafiq in a statement informed that the trade volume between Pakistan and Egypt is close to \$400 million which can be increased to one billion dollars in couple of years and added that by enhancing trade cooperation with Egypt, Pakistan can get easy access to many African markets including Libya, Morocco, Sudan and Algeria. Saqib Rafiq, said that with participation from esteemed Egyptian businessmen, the event is primed to set a new precedent in fostering bilateral economic growth and partnerships. He urged that both sides should focus on developing strong linkages between their private sectors in or-

der to explore all untapped areas of trade promotion. The conference, organized by RCCI, will witness the convergence of visionary entrepreneurs from both Pakistan and Egypt, he added. He further added that on the sidelines of the Business Opportunity Conference, Business-to-business (B2B) meetings will also be held. This will provide an exclusive platform for delegates to establish meaningful connections and nurture

potential partnerships, he remarked. Prior to the conference, the RCCI leadership had a pivotal meeting with Tariq Muhammad Dehroug, the Egyptian Ambassador to Pakistan, Sameh Ahmed El Ghamrawi, Deputy Chief of Mission, Mr. Mohamed Saad, Egyptian Defense Attaché. These meetings served as an opportunity to discuss the substantial strides made in preparation for the event and highlight

the monumental business prospects that await both nations, he added. With a delegation numbering in the hundreds, RCCI's efforts stand as a testament to its commitment to fostering economic growth and international collaborations. The Business Opportunities Conference in Cairo signifies a significant milestone in creating lasting partnerships that transcend geographical boundaries.



Indonesian Consulate holds reception to mark Independence Day

NAZIR SAYAL

KARACHI: The Consulate General of the Republic of Indonesia in Karachi, under the leadership of His Excellency Dr. June Kuncoro Hadiningrat, hosted Diplomatic Reception to celebrate 78th Anniversary of the Independence of the Republic of Indonesia. The event was held in Pearl Continental Hotel and attended by diplomatic corps in Karachi, representatives of the Sindh Government, business community, education community, media community and Pakistani colleagues. The caretaker Minister of Home and Prison, Bring (rt) Haris Nawaz, who acted as Chief of Guest joined the event along with officials from Sindh Government and Diplomatic Community in Karachi. The event showed

a celebration of cultural diversity, strengthening diplomatic ties, and fostering goodwill between Indonesia and Pakistan. The Indonesian Consul General, Dr. June Kuncoro Hadiningrat delivered a heartfelt speech, which deliberates the cooperation between Indonesia-Pakistan through joint research, scholarships from Indonesia to Pakistan in, gastronomy, and Indo-

nesia's commitment to allocate bigger import quota of rice from Pakistan. Mr. Haris Nawaz also expressed his appreciation and gratitude to Indonesia for the support and camaraderie

shared with Pakistan. Joint collaboration by Indonesian and Pakistani students under the Indonesia-Pakistan Children Friendship enthralled the audience with a captivating dance.



Dengue information uploaded on hospital website

DNA

LAHORE : The administration of General Hospital Lahore has uploaded all precautionary measures and necessary information in both English and Urdu languages on its website for the timely prevention of dengue and for the guidance of the public. Ameeruddin Medical College/PGMI Principal Prof Dr. Al-Fareed Zafar has said that every diseases including dengue can be effectively treated by using internet and modern information technologies. Inspecting the dengue ward here at the hospital on Sunday, Dr. Al-Fareed Zafar said that today is the era of the fastest dissemination of information and the website of Lahore General Hospital, lgh.punjab.gov.pk, would provide all preventive measures and methods to the public to deal with the threat to human health. For the convenience of the public, all information has been uploaded simultaneously in both Urdu and English languages, he said. NGOs, civil society representatives, public health associates and even media can perform the duty of guiding the general public by virtue of this website, the principal added. He said that it was the responsibility of citizens to take all possible precautions to prevent dengue and to be part of efforts to keep their families, relatives and friends safe from this disease. "This is possible only when every person keeps their home and surrounding environment clean and neat by actions. We should also inform others about the importance of cleanliness," he maintained. The principal said that the prevention of diseases is not possible without the cooperation of the people. "The full responsibility of the prevention of diseases cannot be placed on government departments alone." He expressed hope that Pakistani doctors living in the country and abroad will also play their role in spreading the awareness campaign about dengue prevention measures among the masses through the website of the General Hospital and play their role in eradicating the disease.



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cordially invite diplomatic missions to visit us on Monday from 10 am to 1:30 pm to enjoy our hospitality and products tasting. However, since we are located in a Prohibited area and it will be mandatory to obtain a No Objection Certificate (NOC) from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs well in advance of the intended visit. We look forward to welcoming you all soon.

For further information please contact the following:

Maj (r) Sabih Ur Rehman
Mobile: 0300 8553342

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

Edhi Ambulance.....115
PIA Flight Info.....114
PIA Cargo.....9280979
Railway Inquiry.....117
Railway Exchange9270831-5
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

PIDE releases report on state of industry in Pakistan

A staggering 83% of surveyed firms expressed that the unavailability of electricity creates hurdles in achieving their production goals

MAHNOOR ANSAR

ISLAMABAD: The Pakistan Institute of Development Economics (PIDE) has unveiled a groundbreaking report shedding light on the challenges faced by the engineering industry in Pakistan. The comprehensive study, conducted by a team of esteemed researchers led by Dr Nadeem ul Haque, and including Dr Usman Qadir, Dr Abid Rehman, and Mr Mohammad Armughan, delves into the realities faced by engineering firms and provides valuable insights into the state of the industry. The report is based on an extensive survey of 328 engineering firms from across the Golden Triangle of Lahore, Gujrat, and Gujranwala. It reveals compelling statistics that underscore the critical concerns affecting the industry's growth and productivity. According to the press release

issued from the PIDE, one of the foremost issues outlined in the report is the severe impact of electricity unavailability on daily production targets. A staggering 83% of surveyed firms expressed that the unavailability of electricity creates hurdles in achieving their production goals, resulting in a detrimental gap between demand and supply for the industry. Moreover, 78% of these firms reported that electricity scarcity hinders their operational efficiency, a crucial factor where economies of scale need to be achieved. Load-shedding and voltage fluctuations further exacerbate the challenges by increasing the risk of machinery malfunctions and damage, affecting 68% of the firms. The financial strain of arranging alternate supply, amounting to PKR 71,000 per unit annually, adds to the burden on firms' operations, impacting 72% of the surveyed companies. The report

underscores the significance of addressing these challenges. It recommends that engineering firms adopt international and national quality standard certifications to maintain quality standards, a move endorsed by 89% of the surveyed firms. Moreover, the government is urged to focus on enhancing the electricity supply in industrial areas, with smaller firms exploring backup power options to ensure uninterrupted operations, a sentiment echoed by 76% of the respondents. An interesting finding of the report is the lack of an online presence among Pakistani engineering enterprises. With a surprising 63% of surveyed firms lacking an online presence, there is an urgent need for businesses to establish themselves online to reach a wider customer base and enhance engagement. The study also reveals that while a significant portion of firms (63%) show no intent to

expand in the coming years, a proactive minority plans to invest in advanced technology, machinery, land, and skilled labor to boost their business prospects. Another critical issue highlighted in the report is the lack of access to credit for the majority of firms. The majority of firms lack adequate collateral to secure loans due to their small size. This reduces their marketability to commercial lenders and has resulted in only 5% of surveyed companies having loans or lines of credit. Limited access to finance this hampers the industry's growth potential. To address this, the report suggests that financial institutions introduce special credit schemes for small and medium-sized enterprises to encourage business expansion and development. The research also explores the complex landscape of international trade for Pakistani engineering firms, revealing obstacles related to tax implications, product

quality, branding, and pricing. Most notably, a substantial 84% of firms source their raw materials domestically, emphasizing a need to diversify suppliers and engage with international markets. The report emphasizes the importance of a thriving relationship between businesses and the government for economic prosperity. However, political instability and unfavorable economic policies have led to a lack of trust and dissatisfaction among business owners, impacting productivity and profit margins. The release of this comprehensive report marks a significant contribution to the understanding of Pakistan's engineering industry. The recommendations provided serve as a roadmap for policymakers, industry stakeholders, and businesses to collaborate and drive positive change in the sector. By addressing the identified challenges, Pakistan can position itself for a brighter industrial future.

Teachers training workshop

ISLAMABAD: A three-day training workshop on space education for primary and secondary science school teachers will commence at the Institute of Space Technology (IST) on September 7. The workshop organized by the Space Education Research Lab, National Center of GIS and Space Applications (NCGSA), IST will focus on enhancing the teaching skills and resources linked with Pakistan's primary and secondary school science curriculum. According to an official of IST, school teachers, with at least two years of experience, from different educational institutions will attend the workshop. The workshop has been planned in collaboration with the Office of Astronomy for Education (OAE), and the International Astronomical Union (IAU) as part of their Teachers Training Program for Astronomy Education.—APP

Govt taking steps to boost tourism industry

ISLAMABAD: Minister of State for Tourism Wasi Shah Sunday said that his government was taking significant steps to enhance foreign investment for the tourism industry and boost investors' confidence to explore the tourism potential of Pakistan which will promote the soft image of the country at the international level. Talking to a private news channel, he said that efforts are being made to promote and showcase Pakistan's rich tourism heritage at all international forums with the active participation of public-private stakeholders. He said that the foundation stone of the first theme park in Skardu will be laid soon. The Minister Tourism said that all possible measures will be taken to provide the best ever facilities to tourists, adding that the tourism sector will actively promote to strengthen the national economy and lead the country to progress and prosperity. Minister said the growth of the travel industry must also benefit local communities and create an environment while enhancing the tourist ecosystem. Replying to a question, he said Pakistan has great potential to attract a huge number of foreign tourists and expatriate Pakistanis to explore and witness the country's culture, ecotourism and religious tourism.—APP

Freelancing revolution: A beacon of hope

ISLAMABAD: In an era of rapid technological advancement, Pakistan is witnessing a transformative shift in its economic landscape. While the country has long relied on traditional labour and industrial markets, a remarkable change is underway as it emerges as one of the top five nations embracing the freelance revolution. Pakistan has firmly secured its position as the fourth fastest-growing freelance market globally, a recognition bestowed by the prestigious Oxford International Institute through its Online Global Index. Esteemed international organizations have consistently advocated for harnessing the immense potential that Pakistan possesses, thanks to its youthful population, with a remarkable 64 percent being under the age of 30. In Fiscal year 2022, Pakistan's fragile economy received a much-needed boost as it generated a staggering almost \$ 400 million in export-related income through freelancing. This financial injection underscores the immense potential of this sector to revitalize the nation's economic prospects for benefits of its people. National Skills University (NSU) is at the forefront of equipping Pakistan's workforce with the skills required for the freelance industry. Offering courses in graphic design, video editing, cyber security, and more, these programs are tailored to meet the demands of the digital economy.

Disaster monitoring course' from Sept 5

ISLAMABAD: Inter-Islamic Network on Space Sciences and Technology (ISNET) Secretariat in collaboration with the Space and Upper Atmosphere Research Commission (SUPARCO) has planned to organize a distance training course on "Space-based disaster monitoring and management" from September 05-07. According to the ISNET, the course will provide a basic understanding of space-based disaster monitoring and management. The course will start with image interpretation techniques, remote sensing for disaster monitoring as well as rapid and detailed damage assessment. The course will provide hands-on exercises emphasizing flood, earthquake, landslide and drought rapid mapping and damage assessment techniques and also give a brief about hazard modeling and a case study for flood hazard assessment. About the course content, the ISNET revealed that the course included an introduction to GIS, Satellite Remote Sensing, Image Interpretation, Monitoring and Mapping of Disasters, Damage Assessment and a Flood Hazard Assessment case study. The participants are required to have basic knowledge of GIS and Remote Sensing. This course will provide them basic understanding of the use of Remote Sensing and GIS for disaster monitoring and management along with the understanding of hazard assessment.—APP

Junaid Jamshed remembered on his 59 birthday

ISLAMABAD: Today marks the 59th birthday of the iconic and most cherished personality in Pakistan, singer-turned-tele-evangelist Junaid Jamshed on Sunday where his fans from all walks of life shared posts on media platforms and paid tributes. Jamshed who brought to the world "Dil Dil Pakistan" a timeless classic that will rule our auditory palette for generations. Jamshed had quite a journey, leaving behind an engineering profession to seek his dream of being a popular singer, touring with his band Vital Signs worldwide and earning uncountable fans and appreciation from all around, to leaving all the glory behind in the way of seeking spirituality and the God, electronic channels reported. A Karachiite by birth, Jamshed was born on 3rd Sept 1964. In 2004, Jamshed focused on his religious calling, discarded his romantic and melodious pop singer image and started reciting naats on TV and releasing them on CDs. His debut religious album 'Jalwa-e-Janan' was released in 2005 and was followed by 'Mehboob-e-Yazdaan' in 2006, 'Badr-Ud-Duja' in 2008 and 'Badeez Zaman' in 2009. Jamshed also using his creativity launched his own clothing line with the name 'J.' While traveling from Chitral to Islamabad on December 07, 2016, Jamshed, along with his wife, Ayesha and daughter Nahya, died when PIA Flight 661 crashed in the mountainous region near Chitral.—APP

Swiss govt announces excellence scholarship for Pak Students

DNA

ISLAMABAD: The Swiss Government has announced the "Excellence Scholarship for Pakistani students" for the academic year 2024-25, according to the Higher Education Commission. Each year, the Swiss Confederation awards Excellence Scholarships to promote international exchange and research cooperation between Switzerland and over 180 other countries. The research scholarship (research fellowship, PhD, Postdoc) is available to post-graduate researchers in any discipline (who hold a master's degree is the

minimum qualification required) who are planning to come to Switzerland to pursue research or further studies at doctoral or post-doctoral level. The Swiss Government Excellence Scholarships are aimed at providing education opportunities to the young researchers from abroad who have completed a master's degree or PhD and foreign artists holding a bachelor's degree. The recipients are selected by the awarding body, the Federal Commission for Scholarships for Foreign Students (FCS). The prospective applicants can study in the categories including one-year Research after Masters, 03-year PhD after Masters,

one-year Post Doctorate. The interested candidates may also request for all necessary information and requirement regarding the scholarship by sending an email to Islamabad.scholarship@eda.admin.ch. The deadline for submitting the application to the embassy is September 30 while more information is available through the weblink: <https://www.sbf.admin.ch/sbf/en/home/education/scholarships-and-grants/swiss-government-excellence-scholarships.html>. The applications are subject to preliminary selection by the relevant national authorities and/or the Swiss diplomatic representation. The short-listed applications are then assessed by the Federal Commission for Scholarships for Foreign Students (FCS), which makes the final decision. The FCS assesses scholarship applications according to three criteria including candidate profile, quality of the research project or artistic work and synergies and potential for future research cooperation. The FCS is composed of professors from Swiss public universities. Scholarship awards are decided on the basis of academic and scientific excellence. The FCS will announce its decisions regarding the new scholarship awards by the end of May at the latest.

AC conducts crackdown against Dengue violators

ISLAMABAD: In a bid to curb the spread of dengue, the Assistant Commissioner Secretariat conducted a surprise inspection of various locations in the Secretariat Sub-Division here Sunday. The inspection team sealed four factories, stores, and dustbins for violating dengue SOPs, while the managers were taken into custody, while other infringers were fined and warned, ICT Spokesman said. The AC Secretariat, Syed Faizan Ali, led the inspection team, which comprised of officials from the health department, the municipal corporation, and the police. The team inspected workshops, tyre stores, nurseries, dustbins, and other facilities. The inspection team found that four factories were not following the dengue SOPs. The factories were storing water in open containers, which is a breeding ground for mosquitoes. The team also found that the tyre stores were not disposing of used tyres properly. The used tyres can also collect water and become breeding grounds for mosquitoes. AC also ordered the factories and tyre stores to be sealed immediately. The managers of the factories and stores were also taken into custody. The inspection team fined several other violators of the dengue SOPs. The team also warned them to comply with the SOPs in the future. The inspection was part of the government's efforts to curb the spread of dengue. He said that the government would not tolerate any violations of the dengue SOPs, he added. He urged the people to cooperate with the government's efforts to control dengue. He said that the people should keep their surroundings clean and should not allow water to collect in any containers. The Assistant Commissioner Secretariat's crackdown on dengue violations is a welcome move. It is important to take all necessary measures to prevent the spread of dengue, especially during the monsoon season. The government's efforts to control dengue will be successful only if the people cooperate he added.—DNA

Nobel Fest VI to be held in Islamabad in November

Nobel Fest is becoming a platform for concluding scientific and educational agreements and contracts as well as a platform for cooperation between business, science and education

DNA

ISLAMABAD: The Nobel Fest VI 2023, to be held in Islamabad in the month of November, will help the future generations explore mysteries of our world through diving into knowledge of scientific discoveries and technological innovations essential to combat modern day challenges. According to the COMSTech, the high level event will be held during November 29-30 at COMSTech with the support of OIC-COMSTech and Inclusive Development Foundation under the theme "Bridging Science and OIC Countries in the Digital Future". It will center around scientific discoveries and technological innovations, with a particular focus on key topics such as the future of medicine, digitalization in education, world-changing technologies, efforts to combat climate change, and strate-

gies for economic development. The objective of the Nobel Fest is to make education and science accessible for everyone in the world, especially the least developed and developing countries of OIC. Nobel Fest is considered as one of the key tools in the popularization and development of education, science and technology and motivates thousands of students and young scientists to search for answers to the unexplored mysteries of our world. Nobel Fest is a unique and one of the most impactful educational and technological gatherings with an annual audience of 5K offline, 800K online participants from more than 500 universities, and 100 countries. Since 2020, 15 Nobel Laureates, 15 breakthrough winners, eminent experts, innovators, leaders of international organizations and global businesses have participated in the yearly event of the Nobel Fest.

The Technology and Start-up Expo during the event will include a demonstration of scientific and technical developments of universities and competition for the best Tech projects. The "Innovator of the Year" award, which is a prominent feature of the Nobel Fest will stimulate the development of science and innovations as well as motivate scientists and researchers to make new discoveries. The Nobel Fest will have participation from several Nobel Laureates, reputable scientists, experts and heads of international companies and global tech giants will join as speakers to interact with young students from Pakistan and other OIC member states through physical and virtual studios. Nobel Fest is becoming a platform for concluding scientific and educational agreements and contracts as well as a platform for cooperation between business, science and education.

Briefs

Federal Police may expand its operations across Pakistan

DNA

ISLAMABAD: The federal police department is considering expanding its jurisdiction in all provinces across Pakistan. Details reveal that the federal police are deliberating on expanding their operations nationwide by establishing offices in all provinces, following a model similar to the Federal Investigation Agency (FIA). In this regard, the federal police are also considering writing a letter to the Ministry of Interior to get a final opinion. Sources have said that legal consultation is also being held in this regard. Meanwhile, the Ministry of Interior and the Ministry of Law will provide their definitive opinions on this matter.

It was reported that the Ministry of Interior and the Ministry of Law will present their final recommendations on this issue. Once a decision is reached, the federal police will be able to collaborate on their cases with other provinces as well.

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Pakistan trade deficit worsens by 30% in August

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Compared to July, Pakistan's import bill has reached \$4.5 billion in August registering an increase of 21 percent. As the volume of imports has increased, the trade deficit has also worsened to \$2.13 billion registering an increase of 30%. According to data released by the Pakistan Bureau of Statistics, compared to July 2023, the exports registered an increase of 14.30% on Month-on-Month in August. Meanwhile, compared to August 2022, exports decreased by 4.83% Year-on-Year and stood at \$2.36 billion. On MoM, exports in August 2023 increased to \$2.36 billion compared to \$2.07 billion in July 2023.

Meanwhile, the imports increased by 21.2% MoM in August 2023 and stood at \$4.49 billion compared to imports which stood at \$3.71 billion in July 2023. On YoY, the imports registered a decrease of 26% and stood at \$4.49 billion as compared to August 2022 in which imports stood at \$6.1 billion. According to the data, exports decreased by 6.4% to \$4.43 billion in 2MFY24, imports decreased by 25.7% to \$8.19 billion in 2MFY24, and the trade deficit increased by 30% to \$2.13 billion compared to July 2023. On a cumulative basis, in 2MFY24, the trade deficit improved by 40.29% YoY to \$3.76 billion as compared to \$6.3bn in 2MFY23.

Business community holds rallies to protest power cost

The protest rallies against the inflated power bills were led by PIAF patron-in-chief Mian Anjum Nisar, chairman Faheemur Rehman Saigol and other leadership of the PIAF, BMP and FPCCI

FAISAL SHEIKH

ISLAMABAD: The business community, under the banner of the Pakistan Industrial and Traders Associations Front (PIAF), held peaceful protest rallies against the soaring cost of living, including higher fuel and utility bills and record depreciation of the rupee against the dollar, which has led to widespread discontent among the trade and industry. The protest rallies against the inflated power bills were led by PIAF patron-in-chief Mian Anjum Nisar, chairman Faheemur Rehman Saigol and other leadership of the PIAF, BMP and FPCCI. The protesters chanted slogans against the successive govern-

ments for escalating energy cost and made the commitment that their protest will continue until the withdrawal of power tariff hike in the country.

The protesters said that thousands of traders have shuttered their shops, striking over soaring energy and fuel bills stirring widespread discontent. There were widespread market closures on Saturday in Lahore, Karachi and Peshawar, where abandoned bazaars were posted with placards decrying the unreasonable increase in electricity bills and taxes. Everyone is participating because the situation has become unbearable now. Some relief must be given so people can put food on the table. Addressing the protesters, PIAF patron-in-chief Mian

Anjum Nisar and chairman Faheemur Rehman Saigol observed that the successive governments had compelled the business community to unanimously show their shutdown power. They made it clear that the strike call was apolitical and refused to pay unjustified taxes and increased petroleum and electricity prices. They said the government had forced the traders and public on the roads by hiking the power bills, which were higher than their monthly salaries. They demanded the rulers suspend free supply of power to influential people. Mian Anjum Nisar termed shameful the statement of caretaker Prime Minister about the public outcry against the electricity bills. He said traders organisa-

tions across the province had announced their support for strike call. He said protest and strike were the constitutional right of the people and they would not succumb to any browbeating of the government. PIAF Faheemur Rehman Saigol, addressing the protesters, accused the government of implementing the IMF agenda and said there would be no compromise on their countrywide protest against the inflated electricity bills and increase in petroleum prices. He said that decades of mismanagement and instability have hobbled Pakistan's economy, and the govt was forced into a deal with the International Monetary Fund (IMF) to avert so-called default. He said that the markets across

Lahore remained closed on Saturday in protest against inflated electricity bills and rising inflation in the country. Traders cannot pay such heavy bills, as it is destroying our businesses, he said and urged the Caretaker PM Anwaarul Haq Kakar to take back the recent hike in the electricity bills. The inflated power bills triggered country-wide protests from Karachi to Khyber and protests in some parts of the country are turning violent. The protesting masses have been demanding that the government should end the provision of free electricity to the notables and provide them relief as the bills they have been receiving are more than their salaries.



ISLAMABAD: A vendor is selling grapes at Pirwadhai area to earn daily wages for the livelihood of his family.—Online

IPS to represent Pakistan in moot of energy in Johannesburg

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Institute of Policy Studies (IPS) will be representing Pakistan in the annual meeting of the International Network of Energy Transition Think Tanks (INETTT) in Johannesburg, South Africa from September 3-9, 2023, hosted by Agora Energiewende - a project of Smart Energy for Europe Platform gGmbH from Berlin, Germany, in collaboration with Public

Affairs Research Institute (PARI), South Africa. IPS will be represented by its General Manager (Operations) Naufil Shahrukh, in the moot that will allow the network's members to reconnect and engage in thematic and institutional discussions and activities within the network and with other actors of South African energy transition scene. The meeting will be followed by a workshop, mapping and cross-checking INETTT members

work areas, defining and increasing impact of their work on decision-making, building institutional capacities to handle the workload and support impact-making, field trips to projects sites, and understanding South African energy transition context as well as the new INETTT governance paradigm. It may be noted that this will be the first international meeting and workshop of the international network, featuring think tanks from across the world which are

working on renewable energy transition in form of policy research, dialogue and interventions. Having collaborated with Agora in three research studies on renewable and clean energy transition in the past and also given its established profile in the said domain, IPS is the only think tank from Pakistan invited to be part of this important initiative that will lay foundations for the plans, strategies and future courses of action for the international network.

Pakistan Pavilion inaugurated at CIFTIS

DNA

BEIJING: The Pakistan Pavilion was officially inaugurated on Saturday by the Ambassador of Pakistan to China Moin ul Haque at the China International Fair for Trade in Services (CIFTIS). According to China Economic Net (CEN), the pavilion showcases the diverse range of service-oriented enterprises from Pakistan, highlighting the country's commitment to fostering international trade partnerships. Representatives from top Pakistani service-oriented enterprises participated in the event, including companies spe-

cializing in IT, telecommunications, logistics & traveling, and financial services. Pakistan's Ambassador to China, Moin ul Haque said that the Pakistan Pavilion at CIFTIS provides a platform for Pakistani businesses to showcase their capabilities and explore new avenues for trade and investment. This initiative reflects Pakistan's dedication to strengthening economic ties with China and other countries, and further positioning the country as a hub for service-oriented enterprises in the region. "This exhibition will support Pakistan in increasing services exports, especially in IT, e-commerce, finance and

logistics. It will also help promote regional connectivity with the presence of NLC and PIA in the exhibition. "This year, 75 countries and international organisations are participating in the CIFTIS with almost 1,868 exhibiting companies", he added. The top Pakistani Firms participating in CIFTIS, Special Technology Zone Authority (STZA), Pakistan International Airlines (PIA), NETSOL, ISBEL, National Bank of Pakistan, National Logistic Corporation (NLC), P Enterprise and others opened their booths to attract Chinese investors at CIFTIS, which takes place in Beijing from September 2 to 6.

Scholarship Program for students of Gilgit-Baltistan


ISLAMABAD: Higher Education Commission (HEC) has announced a Scholarship Program for students of Gilgit-Baltistan to study in top Pakistani universities or institutions. According to an official of HEC, the applications have been invited from outstanding students of Gilgit-Baltistan who intend to pursue undergraduate studies (four/five years BS programs) from HEC-recognized public sector universities/degree awarding institutions (DAIs). The scholarships are being offered for the academic year 2023-24 in all areas of study or disciplines under the project titled, "Undergraduate Scholarship Program for the Students of Gilgit-Baltistan in Top Pakistani Universities/Institutions (Batch-III)". About the eligibility criteria, the official informed that the applicants must domicile or local certificate of Gilgit-Baltistan and have completed a Higher Secondary School Certificate (HSSC)/ Equivalent. The applicants who are already availing any other scholarship are not eligible to apply while the maximum age limit is 22 years as of closing date of application submission. The candidates will have to meet HEC and university criteria for admission to BS programs. About the scholarship program, the official revealed that the scholarship will cover tuition fees, hostel fees and other charges-maximum Rs. 240,000 per year, a stipend of Rs. 15,000 per month and books and traveling allowances of Rs. 30,000 per annum. The candidates will be shortlisted based on their scores in Aptitude Test (to be conducted by the Education Testing Council, HEC) and academic credentials in which the candidates must secure at least 50 percent marks. The students already enrolled in any BS Program in public sector universities/institutions prior to the advertisement or announcement (maximum one academic year/session) may also apply. The award of the scholarship will be purely merit-based and irrespective of gender, caste, race and religion. The applicant can apply to any Public Sector University/Institution of Pakistan however, any expenditure over and above the cost given in Project PCI will be borne by the student. The test result will be valid for one year after the announcement of the test result and HEC reserves the right to postpone or cancel the scholarship process at any stage without assigning any reason.—APP

Xinjiang to deepen medical cooperation with Pakistan

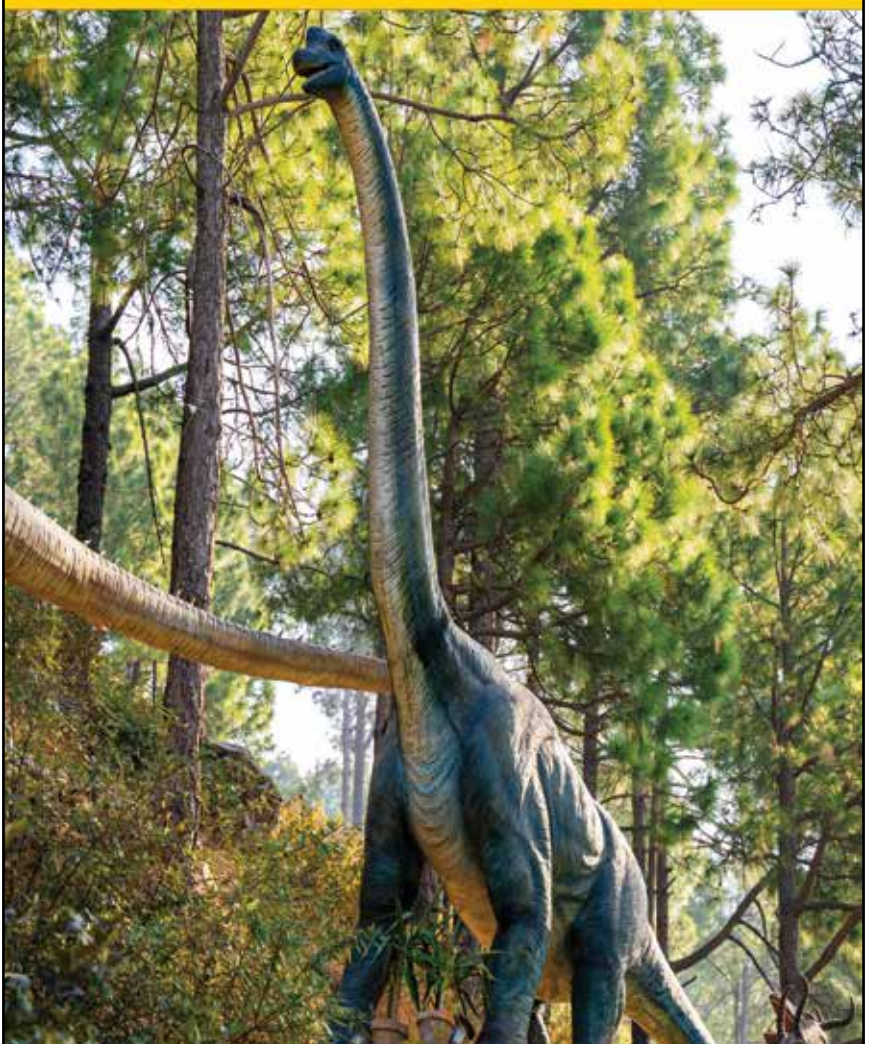
ISLAMABAD: China Xinjiang's region will deepen cooperation with Pakistan in medical field, Gwadar Pro reported on Saturday. Recently, Senator Rana Mahmood-ul-Hasan and his delegation visited Xinjiang Medical University and had a symposium with school president Haji Akber Aisa to further strengthen exchanges and cooperation between Pakistan and Xinjiang Medical University in the fields of education and scientific research. In our previous exchange with BRI countries, we learned that they are very interested in traditional Chinese medicine (TCM), including Uyghur, Kazak and Mongolian medicine," said Haji Akber Aisa. Xinjiang Medical University's medical exchanges with BRI countries started long ago, but there is a lack of a platform for all-round medical cooperation. Earlier this year, at the first session of the 14th National People's Congress (NPC), Haji Akber Aisa put forward the proposal of carrying out an action plan for BRI medical science and technology innovation. Strengthening exchanges of international medical talent and building a bridge for mutual learning are important parts of the plan. At the symposium, the two sides had in-depth discussions on education policies, student exchanges and other aspects. They also planned to build a platform for international education cooperation, further strengthening cooperation in scientific research, exchange of teachers and joint training of students. "Our university has 30 years of experience in international education, with a mature system covering undergraduate and postgraduate stages. We have cultivated about 1,200 Pakistani students. In the future, we will strengthen interschool cooperation with Pakistan and collaborate in medical qualification examinations. We want to play a more active role in promoting medical research and talent training in BRI countries." He added, Haji Akber Aisa also suggested establishing high-quality overseas research and education centers in BRI countries and launching some mutually recognized technical norms and standards of TCM to facilitate resource sharing and improve the technological innovation capacity of the BRI countries. "With the internationalization of medical industry and advancement of medical science and technology, TCM will be integrated into the mainstream medical system of Belt and Road countries, and play a more important role in other aspects including economy, culture and ecology," he said.—DNA

E-driving license facility introduced in Pakistan

LAHORE: Punjab police have rolled out electronic driving licenses for citizens across Punjab. As per details, Inspector General (IG) of Punjab Police Usman Anwar said that citizens can apply on the Driving License Information Management System (DLIMS) website for their driving license. He said that the driving license can also be downloaded in PDF form and used while driving.—DNA



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Court Notice

In the Court of Mohsin Ali Civil Judge Gujrat

Title: Muhammad Alam. Versus Province of Punjab etc. Notice to:

1- Province of Punjab through District Collector Gujrat. 8- Saria Begum D/o. Noor Begum (Sister of Nazar Hussain), 9A-Farkhana D/o. Ghulam Haider (W/o. Ghazanfar) 10- Noor Ahmad, 11- Muhammad Ayoub S/o. Raja Khan, 15- Talab Hussain Late, 16A-Ghulam Rasool, 16B-Ehtsham S/o. Ghulam Qadir, 18B- Asia W/o. Munir Hussain (D/o. Mush-taq) cast Gujjar R/o. Bora Tehsil & District Gujrat.

Suit for Declaration with Consequential Relief

Whereas in the above mentioned case it has been proved to the satisfaction of the court that the above mentioned defendants are not served in ordinary way. It is therefore proclaimed under order 5 rule 20 CPC that if the said defendants will not appear personally or through a duly authorized agent or pleader in court at 8 AM on 05-09-2023, otherwise case will be decided ex party.

Court Notice

In the Court of Muhammad Amir Sultan Kalachi Civil Judge Gujrat

Title: Muhammad Arshad. Versus Ghazanfar Ali. Notice to:

Ghazanfar Ali S/o. Khan Muhammad cast Jutt R/o. Zafar Colony Near Shaheen Chowk City Gujrat.

Suit for Construction Material etc.

Whereas in the above mentioned case it has been proved to the satisfaction of the court that the above mentioned defendants are not served in ordinary way. It is therefore proclaimed under order 5 rule 20 CPC that if the said defendants will not appear personally or through a duly authorized agent or pleader in court at 8 AM on 16-09-2023, otherwise case will be decided ex party.

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CIFTIS sign of economic growth momentum

REBECA Grynspan, secretary-general of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD), addresses the Global Trade in Services Summit of the 2023 China International Fair for Trade in Services (CIFTIS) via video in Beijing. Will China's economy experience a deep recession? Is China facing an unprecedented economic crisis? Will China's economic woes worsen? Such questions are catching the attention of the world. Some in the West who fear China's rise and keep talking about a "China threat" have indulged in schadenfreude making such forecasts of gloom and doom for the Chinese economy. Some who know how important China's growth is to the development of the global economy worry the answer to such questions is "yes". China's economy has continued to go from strength to strength despite such forecasts about its collapse having been heard numerous times in the past. The resilience of China's economy which enables it to overcome difficulties makes a mockery of the doomsayers. The current China International Fair for Trade in Services, being held in Beijing, sends a strong message that China's economy will continue to maintain its momentum for growth, and China's market still has great appeal for international investment. A total of 82 countries and international organizations have participated in the offline exhibitions and meetings of the CIFTIS, and 2,400 companies, including 424 of Fortune 500 and top industrial players will exhibit online and offline. More than 70 renowned enterprises and institutions are unveiling innovations at the fair. CIFTIS will host 202 activities including 10 summits, 107 themed forums, 17 side events, two highlight events and 66 promotional business talks. What is particularly noteworthy is the conference on the wider opening-up of the service sector, which highlights the continuation of the country's efforts to open its market wider to the world. The output of the service sector makes up two-thirds of the global gross domestic product and two-thirds of global foreign direct investment is in this sector as well. This fair, the largest of its kind in the world, is of great significance to both China's economic growth and the development of the global economy. The trade in services has become an important engine for the growth of China's economy. Its foreign trade in services totaled nearly 6 trillion yuan (\$826.3 billion) in 2022, an increase of 12.9 percent year-on-year, and the second largest in the world for the ninth consecutive year. The hosting of such a large-scale international event for the trade in services will provide a boost to the development of the global economy. The opportunities CIFTIS will create for foreign investors to invest in the increasingly open service sector in China will be a boon for the recovery of the global economy.

Tokyo should heed concerns of world

ACCORDING to Tokyo Electric Power Company, which has been discharging the nuclear-contaminated water into the ocean at the damaged Fukushima Daiichi Nuclear Power Plant since Aug 24, tritium was detected in the sea near the plant. Since the density was far below its own preset safety standard, it says there is no need for it to stop releasing the toxic wastewater into the ocean. Meanwhile, a Japanese civic group that opposes the discharge filed a complaint on Thursday against the Japanese prime minister and the president of TEPCO, saying the consequences of dumping the toxic water into the ocean may be extremely serious. The dispute between Japan and China over the issue continues, with Beijing strongly condemning the release and Tokyo staunchly defending it. It is absurd that the Japanese government has accused its Chinese counterpart of sensationalizing the matter, asking the latter to recall its decision on a blanket ban on Japanese seafood, as if China should choose to ignore the environmental impacts of Japan's selfish move that will last 30 years. There is even talk of it making a complaint at the World Trade Organization against the Chinese decision. The Chinese government, as it said in its notice to the WTO, has every right to defend its move as an "emergency measure" to effectively protect its people's lives and health, and completely suppress corresponding risks, arguing the discharge will bring uncontrollable risks to public health and food safety. It is ridiculous that Tokyo has kept a studied silence over the fact that it is the US that has seen the largest decline of imports of Japanese food over the past eight months among all countries. Beijing certainly isn't the only one opposing Tokyo's move. And, as a Foreign Ministry spokesperson said, it should be made clear that the disposal of the nuclear-contaminated water is not Japan's domestic affair and not only an issue between certain countries. By polluting the ocean in this way, Japan is harming the environment and posing a risk to the health of humanity. "On this major issue, what Japan needs to face is not a single country, but the whole international community." Beijing has consistently demanded the Japanese side demonstrate full transparency and address neighboring countries' concerns. This is important not only because of the huge volume of the discharge and the hard-to-predict consequences, but also because of the subsequent damage it may do to related industries. Tokyo insists on using the term "treated water" to downplay the risks. But as Japanese Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries Minister Nomura Tetsuro let slip, the water being released from Fukushima is "contaminated water". That Japanese Prime Minister Fumio Kishida instructed Nomura to withdraw the statement and apologize only serves to show how rigorously Tokyo is trying to cover up the danger of the ocean discharge and misguide international public opinion. Tokyo should do the right thing and make decisions based on science, and share the full truth of the matter with the world.

Unlocking Pakistan's inland waterway potential

Qamar Bashir



1 Simultaneously, the policy recognized the significance of Pakistan's maritime sector, considering it a potential engine of economic growth through support for international trade and regional transit. It proposed the development of international ports and their integration into global supply chains, with a focus on efficient, private sector-led terminal operations

PAKISTAN possesses a vast potential for developing a robust ferry or ship liner service, utilizing its extensive river system, coastline, and canal network. With a coastline spanning approximately 2,000 kilometers and five major rivers, including the Indus, Jhelum, Chenab, Ravi, and Sutlej, Pakistan boasts a natural transportation network capable of efficiently and sustainably moving people and goods. Recognizing this potential, the World Bank, in March 2022, emphasized the need for establishing a federal-level Inland Waterway Authority (IWA) in Pakistan aimed to standardize inland waterways transportation (IWT) through legislative measures. It's noteworthy that the World Bank has been advising Pakistan on the development of its inland waterways since 1961. An earlier confidential report dated November 8, 1961, revealed the World Bank's keen interest in enhancing Pakistan's inland water transport system, offering financial assistance of around \$2 million for the initial phase of improvements. Despite decades of recommendations and discussions, Pakistan has yet to harness the highly promising economic benefits of maritime and inland waterway transportation. This delay is attributed to a combination of factors, including shifting priorities, political challenges, and the influence of vested interests in various sectors of the economy. In 2017, former Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif welcomed a proposal to establish a ferry service between Karachi, Gwadar, and Muscat, emphasizing its potential to provide an affordable alternative mode of transportation for the people regularly traveling these routes. The Ministry of Maritime Affairs subsequently proposed the creation of a ferry service, linking Karachi, Port Qasim, and Gwadar with ports in Iran, Iraq, Oman, and the UAE. The proposal also included plans for the establishment of ferry terminals and related operational facilities.

In parallel, the Planning Commission developed Pakistan's first comprehensive transportation policy, which incorporated inland waterway development and maritime transportation. The Inland Waterway Transport National Transport Policy of Pakistan 2018 outlined the strategic direction for inland waterway transport, promoting it as a cost-effective and environmentally friendly mode of transportation. The policy envisioned the integration of inland waterways into an intermodal transportation system, emphasizing the use of navigable waterways along the Indus River for both freight and passenger transportation. Moreover, the policy highlighted the importance of developing an inland waterway transport master plan to explore additional navigable rivers and canals while emphasizing effective riverine water management planning. Simultaneously, the policy recognized the significance of Pakistan's maritime sector, considering it a potential engine of economic growth through support for international trade and regional transit. It proposed the development of international ports and their integration into global supply chains, with a focus on efficient, private sector-led terminal operations. Fast forward to 2023, Pakistan's President, Dr. Arif Alvi, reiterated the importance of sea transportation, both for the movement of goods and the development of ports, resorts, and coastal tourism. He emphasized the need for Pakistan to adhere to international standards in developing its coastal areas and harness its blue economy. While Pakistan has not yet established a federal-level Inland Waterway Authority, the Punjab government has taken a positive step by establishing the Inland Waterway Development Company. This company aims to develop a 200-kilometer stretch of the Northern Indus as a pilot project to showcase the potential of waterborne transportation. This initiative demonstrates the feasibility of revitalizing the vast network of waterways from

Karachi to the North, spanning the entire country. The Punjab government's survey of the Indus River Channel, funded by private sector entrepreneurs, evaluates the feasibility of phase-wise development, initially focusing on transporting goods and passengers between Daudkhal and Attock. The project envisions expanding throughout Punjab and eventually connecting with waterways in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and Sindh. The ultimate goal is to create a comprehensive national inland water transport plan, generating significant financial and social benefits by creating employment opportunities and diversifying transportation avenues. To fully capitalize on this potential, Pakistan must overcome various challenges, with political will being the foremost requirement. Addressing issues related to infrastructure, investment, and security concerns, such as potential misuse for anti-national activities, is critical. Other countries have successfully managed similar security challenges and harnessed the economic and environmental advantages of waterborne transportation. Investing in a ferry or ship liner service in Pakistan can lead to a wide range of benefits, including boosting tourism, job creation, increased revenue, reduced transportation costs, and the development of essential infrastructure. It's essential for Pakistan to redefine its security priorities and place economic and financial security at the forefront. By doing so, Pakistan can fully leverage waterborne transportation to transport goods, connect remote regions with urban centers, and promote sustainable and efficient transportation while ensuring the economic prosperity of its citizens. In conclusion, Pakistan stands at a pivotal moment where it can tap into the immense potential of its waterways to reshape its economy and secure its future. Embracing waterborne transportation is not just a transportation alternative; it's a path to economic prosperity, job creation, and a sustainable future for the nation.

The Elusive Strategy of China

Dr. Muhammad Akram Zaheer



In 2019, Secretary of State Mike Pompeo claimed in a statement that would surely infuriate any Chinese citizen that the United States and its allies needed to put China "in its rightful place." China's sin, according to Pompeo, is that it spends more on its military than it needs on its defenses. The same, of course, applies to the United States and France, Russia, Great Britain and other large countries. In fact, a useful definition of a great power is a country that cares about more than its own immediate security. The political climate in Washington always pushes policymakers to be "hard" rather than "soft"...

CHINA'S rise as a global superpower has been accompanied by a perceived sense of ambiguity and uncertainty surrounding its foreign policy strategy. China has articulated its foreign policy objectives through official channels its actual intentions and methods have been subject to speculation and debate among policymakers and scholars. This has led to concerns about China's long-term goals and the potential implications for global security and stability. The elusive nature of China's strategy can be attributed to several factors, including the country's historical and cultural context, its complex domestic politics, and its rapidly evolving economic and military power. China's emphasis on non-interference and sovereignty combined with its assertive actions in the South China Sea and elsewhere, has created a paradoxical image of a country that is simultaneously defensive and expansionist. Economic development: China has been pursuing a policy of economic growth and modernization for several decades, and this remains a key component of its strategy. The country has become a major player in the global economy, with a focus on exports, foreign investment, and technology development. China is also working to modernize its military, investing heavily in new technologies and capabilities such as cyber warfare, space technology, and artificial intelligence. This is seen as part of China's broader effort to assert itself as a major global power. China's Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) is a massive infrastructure development project that aims to connect China with countries in Asia, Europe, and Africa through a network of roads, railways, ports, and other infrastructure. The BRI is seen as a way for China to extend its economic and political influence beyond its borders. China is also engaged in a range of diplomatic efforts, including building alliances and partnerships with other countries, promoting its own version of international law and order, and using soft power to influence public opinion and perceptions of China. China's strategy is also shaped by its Communist ideology and its view of itself as a major power with a distinct political and cultural identity. This is reflected in China's domestic policies, such as its strict controls on the media and the internet, as well as its efforts to promote its own version of international human rights and democracy. China's foreign policy has also become more ambitious under Xi Jinping. The country's growing belligerence marks a break with its earlier passivity, shaped by Deng Xiaoping's proverb "Hide your strength, seize your time". The military build-up in particular, shows that China is pursuing a long-term plan. Deng advised other Chinese leaders to wait and see in the 1990s, the country was impoverished with a weak economy. This economy has grown by 800% and now has a large population. China has bided its time and expanded its power, and today it has aspired to a broader regional and global role, as do all great powers with escalation of wealth and power. Since 1945, the great states that have risen to prosperity and prominence have been

Washington's closest allies, if not quasi-protectors: Germany, Japan, and South Korea. A typically disruptive feature of international politics the rise of new powers was therefore unusually benign for the United States. Not only is the People's Republic of China much larger than the rising powers of its predecessors it has always been outside the US alliance structure and sphere of influence. American foreign policy from both parties has become adapted to a world in which America is the undisputed leader. Secretary of State, Madeleine Albright has explained "We are America; we are the indispensable nation," she said. "We stand tall and look further into the future than other countries." In 2019, Secretary of State Mike Pompeo claimed in a statement that would surely infuriate any Chinese citizen that the United States and its allies needed to put China "in its rightful place." China's sin, according to Pompeo, is that it spends more on its military than it needs on its defenses. The same, of course, applies to the United States and France, Russia, Great Britain and other large countries. In fact, a useful definition of a great power is a country that cares about more than its own immediate security. The political climate in Washington always pushes policymakers to be "hard" rather than "soft" a dangerous way of conducting international affairs. The real question is, can they be smart instead of stupid? America's new hawkish consensus on China is awkward, without any discussion of how its target will respond. Beijing has its own hawks who have warned for years that the US wants to hold China down and even seek regime change in Beijing. More importantly, the Trump administration's stance has validated these voices, giving them the leverage to encourage the very kind of aggressive and destabilizing behavior in China that US policy seeks to prevent. This dynamic, with each side arm reinforcing the other, increases tension and increases the risk of collision. It's important to note that Trump's tough tactics have achieved none of his goals from closing the US trade deficit to winning Beijing's support in dealing with North Korea and Iran. In the result China is being more aggressive on the outside and more repressive at home. American determination is rooted in the fear that China might one day take over the entire world. This is a dangerous fear because in the history, when a prominent power perceives that it is losing ground, it often anticipates and exploits the "window of danger" that its rise does not fall. It was this kind of rationality that drove European politicians to war in 1914. During its rise Washington neither succeeded in conquering the world, the Soviet Union, Japan or Afghanistan despite of some horrible events. On the other hand, China with all its successes and strengths is facing of internal challenges from a shrinking population to a mountain of debt. The Communist Party also faces an uncertain political future. Despite a decade of political repression on the mainland, it is true that the rise of the middle class is fueling aspirations. Most importantly, China's rise has unsettled nearly all of

its neighbors, from Japan to India to Australia. Xi's foreign policy has dramatically increased these countries' fears, prompting many of them to fundamentally reconsider their foreign policies. Ever since the June 2020 border skirmish that left dozens dead, India appears to be pursuing a long-term strategy to balance China. Despite its heavy reliance on the Chinese market, Australia now views China as its main adversary, particularly given Beijing's many cyberattacks on Australian targets, and has called for a global probe into how Beijing mishandled the first Covid-19 outbreak. Japan revived the Trans-Pacific Partnership, bringing other countries on board and ensuring implementation of the agreement. Even Vietnam, wary of its larger neighbor, has embarked on what was once unthinkable: if not an alliance but a military partnership with its old enemy the United States. Taiwan's people have re-elected an anti-China president and are turning more hostile to the mainland, making military options more difficult and expensive for Beijing. China's greatest geostrategic weakness has always been its abundance of neighboring countries who oppose his rise. Far from addressing this deficiency, Xi's policies have exacerbated it. China is emerging today but embedded in a vast continent with hostile neighbors who are becoming more hostile. China has been pursuing a strategy of economic expansion to become a global economic power. Its emphasis on infrastructure development, technological advancement, and industrial upgrading has enabled it to achieve impressive economic growth over the past few decades. The outcome of this strategy is that China has become the world's second-largest economy, and its economic influence is felt globally. China has been actively promoting its cultural and political values through soft power projection. Its focus on cultural diplomacy, education, and media has helped to increase its influence in the world. The outcome of this strategy is that China is increasingly seen as a global leader in certain areas, such as climate change, technology, and development. China has been increasing its military capabilities in recent years, including the modernization of its armed forces and the expansion of its naval presence. The outcome of this strategy is that China is becoming a more assertive player in regional and global security issues, which has raised concerns among its neighbors and other countries. China has been expanding its geopolitical influence by developing close relationships with other countries through its Belt and Road Initiative and other economic and diplomatic initiatives. The outcome of this strategy is that China is becoming an increasingly important player in global politics, challenging the traditional dominance of Western powers. The outcome of China's elusive strategy is complex and multifaceted, and its long-term effects are difficult to predict. While China has achieved significant success in some areas, such as economic expansion and soft power projection, its increasing assertiveness and geopolitical ambitions have also raised concerns among other countries.

Briefs

Army deployed for Chehnum...

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According to officials, a case had been registered against Qazi Nisar at the City Police Station, Gilgit, while another FIR against Agha Baqir Al-Hussaini had already been registered in Skardu. Unrest spread in the region after protesters in Chilas in Diamer blocked the Karakoram Highway and the Babusar Pass road for three days, demanding Agha Baqir's arrest. The unrest spread to Astor and Gilgit where call for registration of a case against Agha Baqir become vociferous. However, the action did not go down well with his supporters and a shutter-down and wheel-jam strike was observed in Skardu, with the protesters also blocking Juglot-Skardu Road and other thoroughfares on Aug 25. The government suspended two police personnel and a school teacher on allegations of sharing sectarian posts on social media and 12 others were taken into custody for posting controversial posts.

Is Pak situation impacting...

FROM PAGE 01
settled in different western and European countries. Despite tall claims on the part of rulers, the Emirate Islamic Afghanistan had failed in having good and cordial relations with neighbouring countries. China had declared executing a number of projects with collaboration of Pakistan. But from last several months, Islamabad and Kabul are in loggerheads towards each other. Besides issue of banned TTP camping or sheltering in Afghanistan, Taliban regime made angry with recent act by setting ablaze figs worth 300,000 US dollars in Baluchistan. The figs loaded in trucks were on way to India via Pakistan. Pakistan is still silent over the issue but Taliban officials in Kabul are highlighting and criticizing it through media talks and statements.

President House 'meeting'...

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The Ministry of Law also had the same response to the president's request for advice. There were speculations that the president could announce the date of elections under Article 58 of the constitution, and Friday's meeting was important in that context. Another aspect of the meeting could be the amendments to the Army Act and the Official Secrets Act regarding which the president had tweeted that he had not signed and ratified the bills, which had later become law. A third aspect is the completion of the term of the president, which will end on Sept 8. There has been no confirmation from the President House that he will go home after completing his term as president.

Sanaullah slams Imran for hiring...

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human rights abuses." A PTI source in Islamabad said that the decision to hire Robertson was taken by Khan on the advice of Omar Ayub Khan, Zulfi Bukhari and his lawyers in Pakistan after consulting "some important people in the UK". Subsequently, on September 2, PTI revoked the services of Geoffrey Robertson KC after backlash and severe criticism in the media. Doughty Street Chambers said it has been told by PTI that Robertson's services will not be required due to criticism in Pakistan. In a statement today, Sanaullah took a jibe at Khan saying the "blue-eyed" of the judicial system did not need to go abroad. "Who is spending money on Imran Niazi?" the former interior minister asked. "Those he works for are trying to save him. First, they made him a hero, gave him foreign funding and brought him to power after which Pakistan's economy and foreign relations were destroyed."

Match was in hands

Shaheen Afridi remarks after match with India washed out

Afridi has expressed confidence that had the rain not disrupted match between Pak and India, the Green Shirts would have won the game

OUR CORRESPONDENT

LAHORE : National side fast bowler Shaheen Afridi has expressed confidence that had the rain not disrupted Saturday's Asia Cup match between arch-rivals Pakistan and India, the Green Shirts would have won the game. "The match didn't happen – if it had, the result was in our hands," Shaheen remarked. "But we can't do anything about the weather," he added. The left-arm fast bowler further said that the team had managed to secure what they wanted. "We took two important wickets first. In the partnership that followed, Hardik Pandya's wicket was important at that time." The 23-year-old added that the overall performance of the team in the innings was very good. He shared that he was trying to swing from the front, however, the ball was not swinging in the right areas. "The combination of in-swing and out-swing proved to be quite helpful, Shaheen said, adding that it was this combination that helped him take the first two wickets. The national side player further remarked that they were trying to hit more dot balls to put pressure on India. Furthermore, Shaheen praised Virat Koh-



li, terming him a "great player" with more runs against Pakistan. "Virat Kohli's wicket was the most important for us as he is the backbone of the Indian batting lineup. However, I will give full credit to the team because it is a team game," Shaheen remarked. He added that Pakistan's men's cricket team Director Mickey Arthur always

says that fast bowlers win tournaments and the Pakistan team's bowlers tried to play in partnership, "Harris Roof's role is to scare the next team with his pace and bouncers, while Naseem Shah and I try to go higher on the swing," he remarked. "Harris, Naseem and I try to get the team out for as few runs as possible so that it be-

comes easier for our team," he said, adding that playing in front of your own people was a different kind of fun. Expressing confidence in the team's skills and performance, he added: "Hopefully, the Gaddafi Stadium will be a house full, and the fans will come to support us." While Saturday's match left the fans disappointed since it was washed out due to rain, Pakistan and India could face each other twice, Super 4 and the final, in the remaining matches of the Asia Cup. However, to do that, India will have to avoid defeat against Nepal in their final group-stage game during the Asia Cup to qualify for the Super 4 round. The traditional rivals will also clash during the ICC World Cup 2023 in India. On the other hand, Naseem termed his experience of playing against India "good". "I have played T20 matches against India before. In ODI cricket, you have to bowl with a little patience," he said. Praising his teammates' game, Naseem said: "Shaheen Afridi bowled exceptionally early and Harris Roof's bowling was also good." He further added that he would enjoy playing and winning in Lahore. "I have played a lot of cricket in Lahore. It feels good to play where you played cricket as a child."

WC squad finalized

Saud Shakeel in, Abdullah out of World Cup squad

The Pakistan Cricket Board faces a deadline of September 5 to finalize their 15-member squad for the World Cup

DNA



ISLAMABAD: Saud Shakeel is likely to make the cut as Pakistan gears up to announce their 15-member squad for 2023 ICC World Cup. Pakistan added Shakeel in their 17-member Asia Cup squad during the third ODI of the recently-concluded series against Afghanistan. As a result, Tayyab Tahir was left out of the equation. Shakeel's prowess against spin is expected to work in his favour as Pakistan will be playing on spin-friendly tracks in India. The Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) faces a deadline of September 5 to finalize their 15-member squad for the World Cup. Consequently, it's highly probable that two members from the current Asia Cup squad will not make the cut. Following careful deliberations between the selectors and team management, it appears that Abdullah Shafique may find himself on the outside looking in when it comes to the World Cup squad. Selectors are also considering leaving Faheem Ashraf out of the squad, considering Mohammad Wasim Jnr is already part of the squad as back-up pacer, who can score handy runs down the order. It's worth noting that adjustments to the squad can still be made up until September 28th, but any further alterations beyond that date will necessitate approval from the International Cricket Council (ICC).

Pakistan likely 15-member squad: Babar Azam (captain), Shadab Khan (vice-captain), Fakhar Zaman, Haris Rauf, Iftikhar Ahmed, Imam-ul-Haq, Mohammad Harris (wk), Mohammad Nawaz, Mohammad Rizwan (wk), Mohammad Wasim Jnr, Naseem Shah, Salman Ali Agha, Saud Shakeel, Shaheen Afridi and Usama Mir.



Former Zimbabwe captain Streak passes away

Zimbabwe's all-time leading wicket-taker dies after a battle with cancer

HARARE: Heath Streak, former Zimbabwe cricket captain and the nation's all-time leading wicket-taker, has died at the age of 49 after battling liver and colon cancer. "In the early hours of this morning, Sunday, 3 September, the greatest love of my life and the father of my beautiful children, was carried to be with the angels from his home where he wished to spend his last days surrounded by his family and closest loved ones," his wife, Nadine Streak, wrote on social media. An outstanding fast bowler and capable batsman, Streak was a key member of Zimbabwe teams that were competitive against cricket's bigger nations in the late 1990s and early 2000s. However, his cricket career ended in ignominy in 2021 when he was banned for eight years for breaching the International Cricket Council (ICC) Anti-Corruption Code. It was announced in May this year that Streak was seriously ill, and it was reported in August that he had died, following a message on social media from former teammate Henry Olonga. Streak himself was quick to assert that he was still alive, but not before numerous former teammates and opponents paid tribute to him. A strongly-built fast bowler able to extract movement from unhelpful pitches, Streak took 236 wickets at an average of 28.14 in 65 Test matches. No other Zimbabwean has taken more than 80 Test wickets. – Agencies

Hockey training camp underway

ISLAMABAD: The training camp of national players, under the auspices of Pakistan Hockey Federation (PHF), in preparations for the Asian Games, was underway at the Naseer Banda Hockey Stadium of the Pakistan Sports Complex. According to Camp commandant and head coach Olympian Shahnaz Sheikh, the players were training in morning and evening sessions in the camp. The selected team from the players would feature in the Asian Games to be played in Hangzhou, China from September 23 to October 8. He said a lot of players were new in the camp and were preparing hard for the mega event. To a question, he said he was fully satisfied with the facilities, accommodation, food, and other amenities provided by the Pakistan Sports Board (PSB). The hostel employees were also very cooperating, he added. The 36 players participating in the camp from all over the country include Goalkeepers: Akmal Hussain (Wapda), Abdullah Ishfaq Khan (Mari Petroleum), Waqar (Wapda), Ali Raza (Punjab), Abdullah Sheikh (Sindh), Defenders: Muhammad Abdullah (Mari Petroleum), Arbaaz Ahmed (Mari Petroleum), M Sufyan Khan (KP), Aqeel Ahmed (WAPDA), Hamza Fayyaz (Punjab), Abdul Rehman (PAF) and others. – DNA

ICC Men's WC trophy to reach Pakistan on September 5

LAHORE: The trophy of the ICC Men's Cricket World Cup to be held in India later this year, will reach here on September 5 to embark on a two-day trophy tour of Pakistan. The World Cup Trophy will be taken to educational institutions, historical places and shopping malls on September 5 and 6. The trophy toured Pakistan with a slight day after it was initially supposed to tour Pakistan in early August. The ICC Cricket World Cup trophy embarked on the tour across the globe, on June 27, 2023, marking 100 days prior to the extravaganza starting on October 5. The trophy will tour 18 ICC member countries across five regions – Africa, the Americas, Asia, East Asia Pacific and Europe during this 100-day tour. The trophy will then return to the host India for the final 30 days before the event to be exhibited across the country to hype up the fans for the upcoming event. The 2023 edition Trophy Tour will provide cricket fans around the globe with a chance to

recreate the celebratory and carnival atmosphere witnessed during the marquee event. Through innovative activations and events in different countries, the ICC Men's Cricket World Cup 2023 Trophy Tour will provide a chance for one million fans to have their own personal interactions with the coveted piece of silverware. On the launch of the Trophy Tour, ICC Chief Executive Geoff Allardice said, "The ICC Men's Cricket World Cup Trophy Tour is an important milestone in the countdown to what will be the biggest ICC Men's Cricket World Cup ever. This Tour will see the iconic silverware meet heads of states, launch community initiatives and support cricket development programmes in addition to visiting some of the most iconic landmarks around the globe. "Cricket has more than a billion fans and we want to give as many people as possible the opportunity to get up close to this famous trophy that has been held aloft by some of greatest legends of our sport." – DNA

Novak Djokovic fights back to win an epic match

It marked the 38th time Djokovic has won a five-setter

SPORTS DESK

NEW YORK : Novak Djokovic saw his U.S. Open hopes nearly sunk by a fellow Serb while defending women's champion Iga Swiatek sailed into the fourth round of the year's final Grand Slam as an American wave swept across Flushing Meadows. On the ropes and reeling after dropping the opening two sets of his match to compatriot Laslo Djere, a tenacious Djokovic lifted himself up off the floor, as he has done so many times before, to claim a 4-6 4-6 6-1 6-1 6-3 win. It marked the 38th time Djokovic has won a five-setter and kept alive the 36-year-old's quest for a fourth U.S. Open crown that would pull him level with Margaret Court's

record haul of 24 Grand Slams. "I hope you enjoyed the show, it was not so enjoyable for me especially in the first two sets," Djokovic told the crowd. "It was one of the toughest matches I have played here in many years." While Djokovic needed almost four hours to get the job done, Swiatek needed only 49 minutes to book her spot. The Pole showed her best friend on Tour Kaja Juvan no mercy, thrashing the Slovenian qualifier 6-0 6-1. Americans Taylor Fritz, Frances Tiafoe, Tommy Paul and Ben Shelton all moved safely through to the last 16, raising hopes of a first homegrown men's champion in two decades. It has been 78 Grand Slams since Andy Roddick won the 2003 U.S. Open and there is growing belief that

the talent is there to end the drought of American champions. Ninth seed Fritz is seen as the main U.S. contender for the title and he blasted his way into the fourth round with a 6-1 6-2 6-0 demolition of 18-year-old Czech qualifier Jakub Mensik. Tiafoe, who electrified the tournament with his run to the semi-finals last year, is once again exciting the home crowd, advancing

with a 4-6 6-2 6-3 7-6(6) victory over crafty French veteran Adrian Mannarino. Fourteenth seed Paul overcame a third-set hiccup to dispatch Spaniard Alejandro Davidovich Fokina 6-1 6-0 3-6 6-3 and will next face 20-year-old compatriot Shelton, a 6-4 3-6 6-2 6-0 winner over Aslan Karatsev. "Tremendous," said Tiafoe, summing up the U.S. results so far. "We're going to continue to do so. "This

is a group that had a lot of ability. Always had a lot of talent. "You look at a guy, Tommy Paul, took him a while to get going. He believes more than anybody right now. "Taylor obviously has been playing well for a while. Myself. "Ben, he's had an up-and-down year, but now he's playing great tennis. "It's good to see a lot of players playing well. Hopefully we will see keep doing it." It was not as productive a day for U.S. women, with only Coco Gauff moving on, and the sixth seed needed to dig deep to keep from joining Jennifer Brady, Taylor Townsend and Bernard Pera at the exit. Coming off titles in Washington and Cincinnati, Gauff had to work hard to see off Belgium's Elise Mertens 3-6 6-3 6-0. Gauff could yet have pen-

ty of company with Jessica Pegula, Madison Keys and Peyton Stearns all playing third round matches on Saturday. Caroline Wozniacki won the battle of U.S. Open comeback queens, rallying to beat Brady 4-6 6-3 6-1. Wozniacki and Brady have been the feel-good stories at Flushing Meadows, and their storylines converged on a sun-kissed Arthur Ashe Stadium court with the 33-year-old Dane continuing her dazzling return by reaching the last 16. It seemed improbable just weeks ago that ex-world number one Wozniacki, back playing competitive tennis after a three-year break to raise a family, and Brady, rising star and Australian Open finalist in 2021 but sidelined for two years with knee and foot injuries, would face each other at a major.



COAS for propelling nation...

FROM PAGE 01
substantial investments of up to 100 billion dollars from countries such as Saudi Arabia, the UAE, Kuwait and others. To bolster economic decision-making, he revealed the formation of task forces focused on economic matters and different sectors. Kashif Anwar, in alignment with the broader business community, recommended active engagement with all chambers to incorporate diverse perspectives into the task force's agenda. Addressing critical issues faced by the public, Kashif Anwar proposed a reduction in income and sales tax rates on electricity bills. He noted that the populace grapples with the burden of high taxation on electricity, impacting daily lives, businesses and common people. Additionally, Kashif Anwar introduced a pragmatic approach to fuel adjustment charges, advocating for their collection during the winter months when electricity consumption is lower, alleviating financial stress on consumers.

US ambassador meets...

FROM PAGE 01
the American government during the most difficult conditions of COVID-19 pandemic and floods. Earlier, Pakistan, USAID Deputy Administrator Isobel Coleman announced \$16.4 million in additional development and humanitarian assistance to support the resilience of communities in Pakistan that experienced 2022's historically severe floods, which impacted an estimated 33 million people and had a devastating impact on infrastructure, crops, livelihoods, and livestock throughout the country. This new funding will reach over 20 million flood-affected individuals to assist in their recovery, risk reduction, and resilience. The assistance will address worsening food insecurity and malnutrition and help curb the spread of disease. In addition, this funding will support humanitarian partners to provide nutritious food to mothers and their children, help families rebuild local infrastructure to protect them from future disasters, and increase protection services to prevent gender-based violence and support survivors.

Inflated electricity...

FROM PAGE 01
However, the IMF raised questions about how the required subsidy amount would be financed without increasing the overall size of the agreed allocated amount of power sector subsidy of Rs967 billion for the current fiscal year. The Ministry of Finance replied that they would comply with all the targets of the IMF, including a ban on supplementary grants for additional subsidy amounts. However, under the IMF programme, the provision of a Technical Supplementary Grant (TSG) is allowed, so the diversion of funds could be done without hiking the envisaged targets under budget deficit and primary deficit for the current fiscal year. The Ministry of Finance presented its plan under which the required additional resources from the provision of an emergency allocation of Rs250 billion could be diverted towards the provision of additional requirement of subsidy for the power sector.

Sirajul Haq announces...

FROM PAGE 01
Pakistanis had to pay bills due to the flawed agreements made with the Independent Power Producers (IPPs). According to the JI chief, the sole beneficiaries of the agreements with the IPPs were the elite class. Citing a certain official announcement detailing power connections would be severed over non-payment, Haq warned that his party would not allow any such move by any power distribution company. "Instead of burdening the masses, steps should be taken to prevent power pilferage," advised the JI chief, adding that the burden of line losses should not be passed onto the poor populace.

Briefs

Iran sentences two more women journalists to jail

TEHRAN: Two female Iranian journalists will spend around a month behind bars as part of a three-year partly suspended prison sentence for "conspiracy and collusion", local media reported on Sunday. Under the sentence, Negin Bagheri and Elnaz Mohammadi will serve one-fortieth of the term, or less than a month, in prison, their lawyer Amir Raisian told the reformist Ham Mihan daily newspaper, where Mohammadi works. "The remaining period is suspended over five years," during which time they will be required to take "a professional ethics training" and "prohibited from leaving the country," the lawyer added. Raisian did not elaborate on whether the verdict can be appealed, and the report did not detail the allegations against the reporters. Mohammadi's sister, Elahe, who also works for Ham Mihan, has since September 2022 been in prison after reporting on the funeral of Mahsa Amini, 22, who died in police custody. —DNA

Curfew lifted after deadly unrest in Iraq city

KIRKUK: A curfew was lifted in the multi-ethnic Iraqi city of Kirkuk on Sunday after protests turned violent and led to the deaths of four people. Prime Minister Mohammed Shia al-Sudani imposed the curfew on Saturday evening after rival protests - between Kurdish residents on one side and Turkmen and Arabs on the other - descended into deadly unrest despite a security presence. Tensions had been brewing for nearly a week in Kirkuk, a northern city which has historically been disputed between the federal government in Baghdad and authorities in the autonomous Kurdistan region of the north. The curfew "has been lifted," General Kawa Gharib, the police chief in Kirkuk, told AFP. "The situation is now stable throughout the city." Sudani called for a commission of inquiry into the incident. Four Kurds were killed and 15 people wounded during Saturday's violence, according to the latest toll issued Sunday by Amer Shuani, the local police spokesman.

At least three of the four victims were shot dead, health officials said, but it was unclear who was responsible. Security forces had been deployed as a buffer to keep the rival groups apart, and an AFP correspondent said they had to fire warning shots to disperse the Kurds. Arab and Turkmen demonstrators had staged a sit-in near the headquarters of the Iraqi security forces in Kirkuk province on August 28, after media reports that Sudani had ordered the site to be handed over to the Kurdistan Democratic Party (KDP), which used to occupy it. —APP

Finland tests digital passports in world first

HELSINKI: The Finnish Border Control says Digital Travel Credentials are "equally reliable" as a physical passport. Finnish people flying from Helsinki to the UK may now be able to show a digital ID on their phone rather than their physical passport. Travellers on some flights with Finnair will be able to pass through border control using Digital Travel Credentials (DTC) rather than waiting in line for border control. The Finnish Border Control says it is the first time a digital passport will be accepted "in a real border control environment, reportedly for the first time in the world". They claim that it will make the experience "faster and smoother than usual". The country has launched the groundbreaking trial in partnership with Finnair, the Finnish police and airport operator Finavia but it could be a sign of things to come in the EU. —APP

Overseas Pakistanis facilitation
Pakistan consulate in New York takes drastic steps

Consul General Amir Ahmed Atozai said that the problems of overseas Pakistanis will be their top priority, giving details of the steps to be started in the future, he said that in the next one to two weeks, the Police Electronic Service Center will start working

DNA

NEW YORK: Amir Ahmed Atozai, the newly appointed Consul General of Pakistan in New York, has started efforts to resolve the problems of the countrymen as soon as he took charge. He says that the Police Electronic Service Center will soon start working for the fastest acquisition, verification or registration of an online FIR against anyone in Pakistan. Addressing the Meet the Press after taking charge in New York, Amar Ahmad Atozai said that like the citizens of the rest of the countries living in The United States, especially New York, Pakistanis will also have some problems, it is very important to identify, highlight them and make efforts to solve them. He said that unless any issue is discussed, neither will they come to the notice of the consulate nor the local authorities here will know. He hoped that the media would cooperate with the Consulate in resolving the problems of the countrymen. Consul General Amir Ahmed Atozai said that the problems of overseas Pakistanis will be their top priority, giving details of the



steps to be started in the future, he said that in the next one to two weeks, the Police Electronic Service Center will start working, due to which the process of issuing and verifying many concerns of overseas Pakistanis, especially character certificates and other documents, will become very easy and efficient. Earlier, the Ministry of Homeland Security used to write a letter to the Ministry of Interior in Pakistan for a character certificate, then the case was sent to the concerned police station by the Ministry of Interior, during this period it used to take about 6 months,

so now this work will be possible through the Police Electronic Service Center. He said that due to this center, immigrants will be able to register an online FIR against anyone in Pakistan sitting in the United States, initially this center is being started only in Punjab, but later its scope will be

extended to the whole country. He said that a hotline is also being set up to redress complaints of encroachment of land and properties of overseas Pakistanis. He said that keeping in view the difficulties in issuing various types of certificates to overseas Pakistanis, online applications can be made for obtaining birth certificates, marriage certificates, death certificates etc. from NADRA. At the same time, expatriates will also be able to verify their tenants in Pakistan. On the question of news diplomacy about the method of submission of online applications, Head of Chancery Adil Nawab said that any Pakistani consulate will come and make a picture of himself and register the relevant data online, after which the consulate will send these details online. It will happen. He said that initially there will be no fee for online applications. On the occasion, Consul General New York appreciated the positive role of the media and said that neutral and positive reporting not only highlights the problems of immigrants, but the media plays the role of a bridge to enhance Pak-US relations and people-to-people contacts between the two countries.

UN rights experts call Iran's draft hijab law amounts to 'gender apartheid'

They serve in their individual capacity, are not UN staff and do not receive payment for their work

UNITED NATIONS, A group of UN Human Rights Council-appointed experts Friday expressed grave concern on Friday over a proposed law in Iran sanctioning new punishments for women and girls who fail to wear the headscarf, or hijab, in public. "The draft law could be described as a form of gender apartheid, as authorities appear to be governing through systemic discrimination with the intention of suppressing women and girls into total submission," the experts said in a joint statement. They stressed that the proposed parliamentary Bill to Support the Family by Promoting the Culture of Chastity and Hijab and existing de facto restrictions are inherently discriminatory and may amount to gender persecution. "The draft law imposes severe punishments on women and girls for non-compliance which may lead to its violent enforcement," the experts warned. It also violates fundamental rights such as the right to take part in cultural life, freedom of opinion and expression, the right to peaceful protest, and the right to access social, educational, and health services, they added. "After months of nationwide protests over the death of Jina Mahsa Amini and against restrictive veiling laws, the authorities have introduced a tiered system of punishments targeting women and girls," the experts said. The 22-year-old was arrested in Tehran and taken into custody nearly a year ago by the so-called morality police for her alleged failure to comply with the already strict hijab laws. She reportedly fell ill at a police station with witnesses testifying that she had first been severely beaten, and later died in hospital. Iranian authorities denied that she had been assaulted. The UN-appointed added the proposed new punishments under the draft legislation would "disproportionately affect economically marginalized women". The use of culture by the Iranian government as a tool to restrict the rights of women and girls is misplaced, the experts warned, noting that "culture is formed and evolves with the participation of all". By using terms such as "nudity, lack of chastity, lack of hijab, bad dressing and acts against public decency leading to disturbance of peace", the draft law seeks to authorize public institutions to deny essential services and opportunities to those who will not comply. Directors and managers of organizations who fail to implement the law could also be punished; the independent experts warned. "The weaponization of 'public morals' to deny women and girls their freedom of expression is deeply disempowering and will entrench and expand gender discrimination and marginalization, with wider negative consequences for children and society as a whole," the experts said. They note that the so-called morality police have also been reportedly redeployed in some areas since early July, potentially to enforce compulsory veiling strictures. The bill was submitted to parliament by the Government and the judiciary on 21 May, the UN said. Since then, it has been amended several times, with the latest draft significantly increasing the number of punishments for non-compliance. "We urge authorities to reconsider the compulsory hijab legislation in compliance with international human rights law, and to ensure the full enjoyment of human rights for all women and girls in Iran," the experts said. Special Rapporteurs and other independent human rights experts are appointed to monitor and report on specific country situations or thematic issues. They serve in their individual capacity, are not UN staff and do not receive payment for their work. —DNA

China willing to resolve maritime disputes with neighbors

BEIJING: China says it is willing to resolve "through dialogue" the simmering maritime disputes with neighboring countries. "China is always willing to resolve differences through dialogue with relevant countries and seek effective ways to manage the maritime situation," Beijing's top diplomat Wang Yi was quoted as saying by local English daily Global Times on Sunday. Wang was addressing at the Global Town Hall 2023 via video link on Saturday. His remarks came days after China released its new map "China Standard Map Edition 2023," triggering reactions from many neighboring nations, including Malaysia, the Philippines, Vietnam and India. The map of China's famous U-shaped line racks up about 90% of the South China Sea, one of the world's most contested waterways and a source of over \$3 trillion in trade annually. "Attempts by certain forces outside the region to undermine peace in the South China Sea will not succeed," Wang further said. Drawing a parallel to the ongoing Russia-Ukraine conflict, he said the Ukraine crisis "must never" be repeated in Asia, and that regional security should be promoted through dialogue and cooperation. Malaysia said on Wednesday it does not recognize Beijing's claims in the disputed South China Sea as outlined in the new Chinese map.



DHAKA: Pakistan High Commissioner, Imran Ahmed Siddiqui pays a farewell call on the President of Bangladesh Mohammed Shahabuddin. — DNA

Sudan conflict displaces 4.8 million civilians: UN

ANKARA: Around 4.8 million civilians have been displaced by the ongoing clashes between the Sudanese army and the Rapid Support Forces (RSF) paramilitary group, according to the United Nations.

As of August 29, "about 4.8 million people have been displaced inside and outside the country due to the conflict that erupted on 15 April," the UN Humanitarian Affairs Office (OCHA) said in a statement. It said while more than 3.8 million people have been displaced internally, one million have crossed their country's border into neighboring countries. "People have been displaced across all 18 states," the statement said, adding that nearly 72.3 percent of internally displaced people are originally from the capital Khartoum. Sudan has been ravaged by fighting between the army and the RSF since April, in a conflict that killed more than 3,000 civilians and injured thousands, according to local medics. On Friday, the RSF claimed that it had killed hundreds of Sudanese army soldiers in an attack on the army's Special Task Forces headquarters in Omdurman, west of Khartoum. The army didn't comment on the paramilitary group's claim, but said its forces continued its artillery shelling of RSF targets across Khartoum. Several ceasefire agreements brokered by Saudi and US mediators between the warring rivals had failed to end violence in the country. — APP

Turkish FM emphasizes coop in Iran visit

TEHRAN: Hakan Fidan made his first visit to Iran since he took the post as Türkiye's new foreign minister this summer. Fidan met his Iranian counterpart Hossein Amir-Abdollahian in Tehran and the two top diplomats held a joint news conference later. Fidan said Türkiye and Iran were two great states in the region and with this "great power came great responsibility." "This is a responsibility to maintain peace and stability in our region," Fidan said. Türkiye and Iran enjoy warm ties as two neighbors although they are on different sides in several regional issues, particularly in the Syrian civil war. Türkiye long called for a political solution to the conflict while Iran has been a staunch supporter of the Assad regime, which Ankara severed ties after the war broke out. Iran is now, along with Russia, sponsoring normalization talks between Ankara and the Assad regime. Fidan said they exchanged views on regional issues during their talks. "We discussed Syria in particular, along with issues related to Iraq, Palestine, the Southern Caucasus region, Yemen, Afghanistan, Ukraine and Libya. — Agencies

We are stronger together!

ADIL ALIYEV



The situation in the region is still tense. Despite Azerbaijan's desire for peace and stability in the region, the Armenian authorities and the Karabakh separatists, including their patrons around the world, are doing everything they can to increase tensions. Despite its heavy defeat in the Second Karabakh War, Armenia continues its provocations. Armenian Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan is playing with fire, he has declared that he recognizes the territorial integrity of Azerbaijan, including Karabakh, but on the other hand, he is delaying the reflection of what he said in the document. The President of Azerbaijan, Mr. Ilham Aliyev, has said several times the importance of Nikol Pashinyan signing the peace agreement. At the root of all problems lies Armenia's avoidance of recognizing Azerbaijan's territorial integrity. If this does not happen, the termination of borders will be

prolonged. In fact, the non-normalization of relations with the neighboring state should worry Armenia more. Mr. Ilham Aliyev openly said: "If Armenia does not recognize the territorial integrity of Azerbaijan, Azerbaijan will not recognize the territorial integrity of Armenia and will officially declare it." If you do not recognize Karabakh as the territory of Azerbaijan, why should I recognize Western Zangezur as the territory of Armenia? This is our message to the international world and pro-Armenian centers that if you really want peace and stability in the region, make Armenia recognize the territorial integrity of Azerbaijan! Unfortunately, some in the international world still prefer to voice the "whims" of Armenians. These are the centers that turned a blind eye to the occupation of Azerbaijani lands for 30 years, avoided telling the truth, preferred to remain silent, but as soon as the occupation ended and Azerbaijan began to subjugate Karabakh, they "became active" and could not hide their anti-Azerbaijani policies. This also has a popular name: "Double standards!" France's policy is obvious. This state did not hide its sympathy for the invader Armenia in the past years, but at least tried to create a certain image of balance. With the election of Emmanuel Macron as president, they completely forgot the "balance", France completely sided with

Armenia in the Second Karabakh War and the period after it. Macron's one-sided statements, a group of mayors of French cities coming to the beginning of the Lachin road and making provocative statements are steps that encourage separatism in Azerbaijan. This is done by the country whose history is full of black pages, the recent coups in African countries are a lesson for Paris. There are also such in the US Congress. A group of pro-Armenian congressmen have recently become "active", making statements against Azerbaijan and sending their representatives to Armenia. However, unlike France, the official circles of the USA understand the role and importance of Azerbaijan in the region, so they try to maintain an equal distance with both sides. This is not without reason. First, Washington attaches importance to security and energy cooperation with Azerbaijan. Azerbaijan has had an important position in Europe's energy supply in recent years. This meets the interests of both the European Union and the United States against the backdrop of the Russia-Ukraine war. On the other hand, Washington also sees and appreciates Azerbaijan's humanitarian aid to Ukraine. However, let those pro-Armenian congressmen answer our one question: Which of the things Azerbaijan did for Ukraine, which you also defend, has Armenia done for Ukraine? Nevertheless, Armenia and the Armenian

lobby have mobilized all their capabilities to launch pressure tools against Azerbaijan in the international world. It appeared again in the discussions of the UN Security Council that this pressure was ineffective. Azerbaijan's friends in the world have also increased. While the Armenian officials and their patrons in the world talk about the "food problems" of the Armenians in Karabakh, they are preventing the reception of 40 tons of flour products intended for the Armenians living in the region via the Aghdam-Khankendi road of the Azerbaijan Red Crescent Society. Logically, if you need flour products, you should take that flour. However, the Armenian authorities and separatists do not let go of their grip and demand the opening of the road to Lachin. It is impossible. During the occupation, they used the Lachin road as they wanted, carried weapons, laid mines on the roads. The Azerbaijani army put an end to this and a border crossing point was established at the beginning of the Lachin road. Currently, Karabakh Armenians use that road and getting used to being checked by Azerbaijani border guards at the border crossing point. This does not serve the interests of the separatists and those whose hands are covered in blood will not be able to use the border-crossing point and leave Azerbaijan, as now some are caught at the border while trying to cross to Ar-

menia. It cannot be otherwise. It is inevitable that the Armenian criminals who killed civilians and participated in massacres should be arrested and brought to justice. As for the opening of the Lachin road, Hikmet Hajiyev, assistant to the president of Azerbaijan, has a clear statement about it: "24 hours after the opening of the Aghdam-Khankendi road, the Lachin road will be opened." Karabakh Armenians must make a choice. They must either accept to live under the laws of Azerbaijan or leave Azerbaijan. Those who describe it as "ethnic cleansing" are wrong. If someone in France or another country says, "I don't want to live under the laws of this country and carry its passport", they will immediately deport him from the country. Azerbaijan has the same right. There is still chaos in the part of Karabakh that is not liberated from occupation. The leader of the separatists has resigned, and someone else has been "appointed" in his place. It will not save them. Their only alternative is to disarm and accept Azerbaijan's conditions. If the Armenian community of Karabakh refuses to dialogue with Baku and to open the Aghdam-Khankendi road, it will become urgent for the Azerbaijani army to establish law and order in the region. If the Armenian authorities have a little logic left, they should advise the Karabakh

separatists to do so. However, it seems that the Armenian authorities chose to increase the tension by giving preference to provocations on the border. Probably, they believe in Armenia that they will be able to distract Azerbaijan from creating order in Karabakh through provocations on the border. This "trick" will not pass. The strength of the Azerbaijani army is sufficient both to maintain our superiority on the border and to eradicate separatism in Karabakh. The communication lines of Karabakh are under the control of the Azerbaijani army. Do not forget this. Those communication lines were built illegally during the occupation. Sarsang reservoir under occupation is also under our attention. During the occupation, Armenian separatists created an environmental disaster in the Sarsang reservoir, which had a total water capacity of 560 million cubic meters. The relevant resolution of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe on the Sarsang water reservoir also creates a basis for taking control of the management of the Sarsang water reservoir in Azerbaijan. We are stronger together! Thanks to Mr. President's foreign and domestic policy, Azerbaijan has great power, and we protect our unity! This is enough for us to fulfill the task we want and aim for!

—The writer is MP is the Deputy Chairman of the Parliament

Briefs

**Asia Cup 2023
Bangladesh
beat
Afghanistan
by 89 runs**

SPORTS DESK

LAHORE: Allrounder Mehidy Hasan Miraz and Najmul Hossain Shanto smashed cracking centuries to help Bangladesh to a solid 334-5 in their must-win Asia Cup match against Afghanistan in Lahore on Sunday. Miraz hit a 119-ball 112 for his highest One-Day International (ODI) score while Shanto scored a 105-ball 104 as Bangladesh - who won the toss and batted - put up their highest ODI total outside their own country. The pair lifted their team from the loss of Mohammad Naim (28) and Towhid Hridoy (0) through a third-wicket stand of 194 off 190 balls, punishing Afghanistan's spinners on a flat Gaddafi stadium pitch.

**Putin set
to meet
Erdogan in
grain talks**

DNA

MOSCOW: Russia attacks Ukrainian port ahead of Putin's meeting with Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan on Monday. Two people have been hospitalized following Russian drone barrage on a port in Ukraine's Odessa region on Sunday which lasted for more than 3 hours, officials say. The attack on the Reni seaport comes a day before Russian President Vladimir Putin is due to meet with his Turkish counterpart Recep Tayyip Erdogan to discuss the resumption of food shipments from Ukraine under a Black Sea grain agreement that Moscow broke off from in July. Russian forces fired 25 Iranian-made Shahed drones along the Danube River in the early hours of Sunday, 22 of which were shot down by air defences, the Ukrainian air force said via Telegram. Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy's chief of staff, Andriy Yermak, described the assault as part of a Russian drive "to provoke a food crisis and hunger in the world".

**Pak issues new
guidelines for
Afghanistan
flights**

DNA

KARACHI: The Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) on Saturday issued new guidelines for flights originating from Afghanistan and entering Pakistan's airspace. Under the new directives, all flights entering Pakistani airspace from Afghanistan are required to provide a minimum of 15 minutes advance notice. According to the CAA, air traffic services will be available to flights within Pakistan's airspace upon prior notification. This service will be extended through the Karachi, Lahore, and Islamabad Area Control centers. In addition, flights will receive air traffic service via the Dushanbe and Islamabad Area Control Air Link, further enhancing communication and coordination for flights traversing the region. The CAA issued a Notice to Airmen (NOTAM), highlighting these changes and urging all airlines and operators to adhere to the new procedures.

**Protests in
Niger call for
French forces
to leave**

NIAMEY: Tens of thousands of protesters gathered outside a French military base in Niger's capital Niamey on Saturday demanding that its troops leave in the wake of a military coup that has widespread popular support but which Paris refuses to recognise. The July 26 coup - one of eight in West and Central Africa since 2020 - has sucked in global powers concerned about a shift to military rule across the region. - Agencies

Britain, Canada advise citizens against travelling to Pakistan

According to the UK's Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office (FCDO), they should avoid all travel to Bajaur, Mohmand, Khyber, Orakzai, Kurram, North Waziristan and South Waziristan districts of erstwhile tribal area in KP

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Citing the risk of terrorism and violent protests, the United Kingdom has updated its advisory, directing the British nationals against travelling to different parts of Pakistan - a day after the Canadian government issued similar directions. According to the UK's Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office (FCDO), they should avoid all travel to Bajaur, Mohmand, Khyber, Orakzai, Kurram, North Waziristan and South Waziristan districts of erstwhile tribal area in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. The list also includes Charsadda, Kohat, Tank, Bannu, Lakki, Dera Ismail Khan, Swat, Buner, Lower Dir and Peshawar districts. Meanwhile, the British nationals have been advised against using N45 from the north of the Mardan Ring Road to the edge of Chitral district - and the section of the N35 (or Karakoram Highway) between the Mansehra Ring Road and the N15/N35 Chilas Interchange. On the other hand, the advisory covers the entire Balochistan province, excluding

American citizens advised not to visit Gilgit-Baltistan

ISLAMABAD: The US government has advised its citizens not to travel to Gilgit-Baltistan. The statement says, 'American citizens should exercise heightened caution in Gilgit-Baltistan due to recent protests in Skardu and Diamer and the potential for additional demonstrations, road closures, and associated disruptions to local mobile and internet networks in the region. Even large gatherings intended to be peaceful may become violent with little or no warning. The U.S. Embassy strongly encourages U.S. citizens to avoid large gatherings, monitor local media reports, and to remain vigilant of their surroundings at all times. Actions to Take: Avoid the areas of large public gatherings, Exercise caution if unexpectedly in the vicinity of a large gathering and/or demonstration, Review your personal security plans, Monitor local media for updates, Keep a low profile. Carry identification and cooperate with police. - DNA

the southern coastal region, as well as the region in Azad Kashmir within 10 miles of the Line of Control (LoC), dividing the regions administered by Pakistan and India. At the same time, the FCDO advises against all but essential travel to Gilgit-Baltistan, Arandu town and the road between Mirkhani and Arandu in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, and the southern coast of Balochistan.

In the case of Sindh, the advisory applied to Nawabshah (Shaheed Benazirabad) and region located north of the city. The British government has warned of violent political rallies and protests, some of which may have an anti-western dimension. It also says that "terrorists are very likely to try to carry out attacks in Pakistan" and added that there's a high threat of terrorism, kidnapping and sectarian violence

throughout the country, including the major cities of Islamabad, Rawalpindi, Lahore and Karachi - with the westerners may be directly targeted. The Canadian government too cited a threat of terrorism while describing the security situation in Pakistan as fragile and unpredictable. In this connection, it warned of possible targeted killings and kidnappings, armed assaults, suicide bombings and improvised explosive devices. About the possible targets, it mentioned sects or minority groups; government and military assets as well as personnel; places of worship; airports and other transportation hubs and networks; public areas such as tourist attractions, restaurants, bars, coffee shops, shopping centres, markets, hotels and other sites frequented by foreigners; elections-related events and polling stations; and civil aviation facilities, including aircraft. It advised against all travel to Gilgit-Baltistan and the areas within 50 kilometres of the border with Afghanistan and within 10 kilometres of China, India and Iran. Entire Khyber Pakhtunkhwa except Haripur, Abbottabad, Mansehra, Buner and Chitral as well as Balochistan fall in the category.

Arab tribes' fight against PKK lingers in Syria

DNA

ANKARA: Syria's north-eastern areas are the scene of deadly attacks and clashes as the PKK terrorist group's Syrian wing, the United States-backed YPG, tries to overpower ethnic Arab tribes resisting the PKK/YPG's push for power. The first clashes that erupted in the last week of August in Deir el-Zour province quickly ended but have resparked again over the past few days. On Saturday, more tribes joined the Arab opposition to the terrorists and clashes have reached the rural areas of Manbij, a city of tension between the Arab population and the PKK/YPG, which controls several areas in the region. A surge is apparent in support of tribes fighting the terrorist group, which relies on U.S. support, from military equipment to training. A U.S.-led coalition force is the main ally of the PKK/YPG under the pretext of fighting Daesh, another terrorist group that had been active in the region until recently. Türkiye helped Syrian opposition forces clear out Syria's north of Daesh and the PKK/YPG in a string of operations and is concerned over cross-border attacks by the PKK/YPG.

North Korea stages tactical nuclear attack drill

PYONGYANG: North Korea staged a "simulated tactical nuclear attack" drill at the weekend with mock atomic warheads attached to two long-range cruise missiles that were test-fired into the ocean, state-controlled media reported Sunday. The Korean Central News Agency said the operation early Saturday was a "counteraction drill" in response to joint military activity by US and South Korean forces that KCNA said has escalated tensions in the region. "A firing drill for simulated tactical nuclear attack was conducted at dawn of September 2 to warn the enemies of the actual nuclear war danger," KCNA reported. "Two long-range strategic cruise missiles tipped with mock nuclear warheads were fired" from North Korea's west coast, into the sea to the south, it said. - Agencies

Pakistan registers 83% rise in terror attacks in August

ISLAMABAD: A sharp increase in militant attacks across the country has been recorded in the month of August with 99 terror incidents reported so far, a report compiled by the Pakistan Institute for Conflict and Security Studies (PICSS) stated. This, according to the report, is the highest number recorded in any single month since November 2014. These attacks have resulted in 112 deaths and 87 injuries, mostly targeting security forces personnel and civilians. The News reported on Sunday. The data stated an 83% rise in August when compared with July, as the month saw 54 attacks. The PICSS report also mentioned four suicide attacks, three in tribal districts of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP) and one in mainland KP. The month of July, meanwhile, witnessed five suicide attacks, the highest in a year. Overall, the country witnessed 22 suicide attacks in the first eight months of 2023, in which 227 people have been killed and 497 injured. The PICSS data also shows that security forces responded effectively to the militant threat, averting many attacks killing at least 24 militants, and arresting 69 others in various operations across the country. The data showed that Balochistan and erstwhile Federally Administered Tribal Area (FATA) were the most affected regions by militant violence in August, compared to the previous month. Balochistan witnessed a 65% increase in militant attacks, from 17 in July to 28 in August, while erstwhile FATA witnessed a 106% increase, from 18 in July to 37 in August. However, both regions also saw a decrease in fatalities, by 19% and 29% respectively. KP, excluding its tribal districts, also saw a significant increase in militant attacks, from 15 in July to 29 in August, an 83% rise. The deaths and injuries also increased by 188% and 73% respectively. The province was mainly targeted by the TTP and its splinter groups, who claimed responsibility for several attacks. The province of Sindh witnessed a slight increase in militant attacks, from three in July to five in August. The deaths also increased from one to four. The province of Punjab remained relatively peaceful, with no militant attack reported in August. The only attack reported in July was a low-intensity blast near a police station in Lahore, which caused one injury. - DNA

Iranian ambassador condemns disrespect of Holy Quran in Europe

ISLAMABAD: Iranian Ambassador Reza Amiri-Moghaddam, in a recent gathering of religious scholars and leaders from various faiths and sects, raised concerns about the increasing incidents of disrespect towards religious symbols, particularly the Holy Quran, in European nations. The event, titled 'Honoring the Holy Quran from the Perspective of Religions and Sects,' witnessed a unified call for safeguarding religious sanctity and promoting mutual coexistence. Ambassador Amiri-Moghaddam, speaking at the event organized by the Iranian Cultural Consulate in collaboration with Majlis Wahdat-e-Muslimeen, underscored the distressing trend of disregarding the sanctity of religious symbols. He pointed out that over the past six months, the Holy Quran had been desecrated on more than six occasions in Europe. Expressing his pleasure in joining the assembly of learned individuals, the Ambassador extended his appreciation to those involved in organizing the event, which brought together scholars and devotees from diverse religious backgrounds, including Shia, Sunni, Christian, Sikh, and Hindu. The event focused on the importance of honoring and revering the Holy Quran from a multi-religious perspective. Ambassador Amiri-Moghaddam emphasized its timeliness given recent incidents in European countries that showed disrespect for the Holy Quran. He specifically highlighted the permission granted by the Swedish government for such disrespect under the banner of freedom of expression, labeling it a dangerous precedent. He expressed disappointment over the lack of preventive actions and raised concerns about similar incidents in the future. Ambassador Amiri-Moghaddam stressed that the desecration of the Holy Quran transcended religious boundaries, representing an affront to all divine scriptures. He noted that condemnation for such acts came from religious leaders globally, uniting against such unacceptable behavior. Moreover, the Ambassador pointed to the violation of international law that prohibits the propagation of religious hatred,



highlighting the contradiction between these actions and international agreements and human rights principles. He characterized the act of disrespecting the Holy Quran as emblematic of an agenda seeking to create discord among Islamic nations and expressed concerns about the silence of European nations on these matters within their borders. In the age of technological advancements that amplify ethical and spiritual capacities, Ambassador Amiri-Moghaddam urged scholars to promote positive discourse and create an environment where all religions can effectively counteract the trend of disrespect. Concluding his address, he commended Pakistan's resolute stance against the disrespect of the Holy Quran and praised the country's commitment to safeguarding religious symbols. Iranian Cultural Counsellor Ehsan Khazaei echoed these sentiments, stating that defaming the Holy Quran was an affront to all religions and humanity. He quoted Supreme Leader Ayatollah Khamenei's assertion that such insults revealed an imperialistic agenda aimed at Islam and its sacred text. - Agencies

Permanent board essential to formulate and update IT policies



KHAYAM ABBASI

ISLAMABAD: Building digital trust and improving the reliability of ICT and technology infrastructures through proper policies and frameworks can lay the foundation for meeting pre-defined IT objectives. Besides, an established policy management and review procedure led by a permanent body is required to multiply the efficiency and fill the policy implementation gap. The ideas emerged during a seminar on 'IT Policy Landscape in Pakistan: Challenges and the Way Forward' held at IPS. The guest speaker was Humayun Zafar, ICT specialist, while Khalid Rahman, chairman, IPS, and other experts also presented their views at the session moderated by Naufil Shahrukh, GM Operations, IPS. Talking about the IT policy landscape in Pakistan, Humayun Zafar stated that the biggest concern is that the policies are designed in a way that restricts the sector rather than facilitates them. Most of the time, it is due to the lack of vision, a clear roadmap, and a predefined target goal behind policy formulation. He stressed that policies must be developed to promote an orderly environment conducive to innovation and conflict resolution rather than to create hurdles and impediments. He lauded the current IT leadership in Pakistan for its vision to meet the annual IT export target of \$10 billion. He noted significant digital mistrust among people due to the risks of failure as one of the hurdles impeding the proper execution of IT policy to achieve the goal. Consequently, people are resisting digital transformation. To address this issue, regulatory frameworks

and policies aiming at increasing confidence in ICT and technology infrastructures are required, he said. At this time, it is necessary to embrace and learn about emerging technologies and build capacities accordingly. He mentioned that present policies do not address Artificial Intelligence (AI) and the Internet of Things (IoT). These areas must be addressed in a proactive and forward-thinking manner. Furthermore, IT policy must also address concerns such as digital fraud and information security. Because IT is such a vibrant, ever-evolving, and dynamic industry, he proposed establishing a permanent body committed to analyzing policy results and reviewing policies on a broader scale, at least biannually. Khalid Rahman said that governance deficit and political instability are major contributors to this digital gap. He endorsed that a dynamic structure or mechanism devoted to performing biannual interim reviews is required for effective policy evaluations. In addition, he stated that this evaluation or assessment should be consistent with other policies and sectors to maximize outputs. Furthermore, it is critical to prioritize resources and emphasize e-governance to increase public awareness for a multiplier impact. Many problems can be solved by e-governance, but in the long run, questions of will, capacity, and interests must be addressed, he added. Dr Fakhr-ul-Islam stressed that instead of comparing the progress of Pakistan with other countries and feeling distressed, we need to adopt a learning approach. There is tremendous potential in the IT sector of the country; it just needs to be tailored with the right policy to confront the barriers associated with the IT industry.

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