



Islamabad POST

Tuesday, September 05, 2023

Pakistan's Credible Daily Newspaper

Price Rs. 25

South Africa did not supply weapons to Russia: Ramaphosa

Detailed News On Page-07

Umerov, new Ukrainian defence chief

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Defending champion Iga out of US Open

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Govt to come up with relief plan

Pakistan's economic conditions were affected by the international financial institutions

KHAYAM ABBASI / DNA

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Anwaar-ul-Haq Kakar on Sunday said the government would come up with short, medium and long-term plans to resolve the issue of electricity bills and initiate reforms in the power sector. In an interview with a private television, he also assured that the government would implement a plan for the conservation of electricity as was practiced in the Western world and taught by Islam. To a question about public agitation on the issue of electricity bills, the prime minister said extreme political and social attitudes were not beneficial for society. He said the system of taxation was meant to tax the rich and spend on the poor but at present the system was in the clutches of profiteers and was marred with inefficiency, adding indirect taxation system was responsible for many of the woes of the poor. "We needed to tax different sectors which are still not brought under the tax net." He said Pakistan's economic conditions were affected by the international financial institutions and "we have to fulfil the agreements made with them." The government also had to fulfil the agreements made with the power companies in the past decades, he continued. He said flaws in the power sector and generation and transmission system were acute, adding the issue of electricity bills was multidimensional and the government

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IMF rejects Pakistan power relief plan

The IMF has now sought a proposal on how Pak intends to cover this fiscal space of Rs.15 bln

COMMERCE DESK

ISLAMABAD: The International Monetary Fund (IMF) has turned down Pakistan government's proposal designed to provide relief to the impoverished for exorbitant electricity bills, sources in the Finance Department said Monday. They said a consensus could not be achieved with the IMF over the relief plan. In the proposal, the IMF was informed by the Pakistan government that relief provision would have an impact of less than Rs6.5 billion. The IMF, however, put the impact at about Rs15 billion, and dismissed the plan as a result. The IMF has now reportedly sought a proposal on how Pakistan intends to cover this fiscal space of Rs.15 billion. Once the new plan is shared with the global lender, the Finance Ministry and IMF authorities will head into talks again. Pakistan has assured the IMF that providing relief for inflated power bills will not result in a budget deficit, sources added. The IMF was requested to approve a plan seeking payment of electricity bills by consumers in installments over the course of four months. The interim government devised a strategy to provide relief to power consumers on exorbitant electricity bills, with a reduction of Rs3000 for users consuming 300 units. Reports suggest that bills for power consumers using 300 units in September will be decreased by the aforementioned amount. The government, a few days ago, shared a plan with the IMF seeking relief for the impoverished people in connection with electricity bills. The government held out an assurance that none of the targets agreed upon by the previous government would be compromised. Caretaker Minister for Finance Dr Shamsah Akhtar said a team comprising Pakistani authorities met with IMF officials. While she was not part of the team, she reiterated Pakistan's commitment to honour the IMF programme.



ISLAMABAD: Caretaker PM Anwaar-ul-Haq Kakar chairs a meeting regarding power sector. - DNA

DG ISI Lt. Gen Nadeem may continue for another year

DNA

KARACHI: As military leadership under General Asim Munir gears up to salvage Pakistan from its worst economic crisis, a surge in terrorism, and respond to very important geopolitical developments, well-informed sources confidently claim that the relevant leadership has decided to extend the services of Lt. Gen. Nadeem Ahmed Anjum as Director General of Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI).

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'Restoration of Constitution' Lawyers threaten to launch mass movement soon

Prominent lawyers including Sardar Latif Khosa and Chaudhry Aitzaz Ahsan outlined a series of demands

BUREAU REPORT

LAHORE: The Pakistan Lawyers Action Committee (PLAC) issued a stern warning during a press conference at the Lahore High Court (LHC) on Monday, indicating their intention to convene an All Pakistan Lawyer's Convention to launch a nationwide movement. The primary objective of the movement is to demand the complete restoration of and compliance with the Constitution, emphasising that bills not signed or deemed to have been signed and assented to should not be considered Acts of Parliament. Prominent lawyers including Sardar Latif Khosa and Chaudhry Aitzaz Ahsan led the press conference and outlined a series of demands. The lawyers called for recognition that all military

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Niazi moves SC against military trials

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Journalist Hafeezullah Niazi moved the Supreme Court (SC) on Monday to declare the trial of civilians in military courts unconstitutional as he fights the case for his son Hassan Niazi, also nephew of former prime minister and chairman Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) Imran Khan. Niazi, in his petition, argued that no parallel judicial system should be established under the Constitution.

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Briefs

Situation in GB completely peaceful

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Caretaker Federal Minister for Information and Broadcasting Murtaza Solangi said on Sunday that situation in Gilgit-Baltistan was completely peaceful and speculative news about deployment of Pak Army were completely baseless. In a post on his X account, quoted a statement released by the Home Department of Gilgit-Baltistan which said "it has been clarified that situation in Gilgit-Baltistan is completely peaceful and the news and speculations circulating in media regarding deployment of Pak Army are completely baseless."

PTI renews call for judicial commission

STAFF REPORT

ISLAMABAD: PTI spokesperson called the Caretaker PM Anwaar ul Haq Kakar's statement in the context of May 9 events very surprising and concerning, reiterating his party demand to constitute an empowered judicial commission to bring the truth before the nation in this regard sans any further delay. Reacting to the caretaker PM's interview to a private TV, PTI spokesperson said that the Caretaker PM gave statements on all issues except of holding free, fair and transparent polls within the constitutionally mandated timeframe.

Pak Navy helicopter crashed at Gwadar

President, PM others grieved over the death of soldiers



NEWS DESK

GWADAR: Two officers and a soldier of the Pakistan Navy were martyred after a helicopter crashed during training in Balochistan's Gwadar due to a technical issue, a navy spokesperson said in a statement on Monday. The spokesperson said an inquiry into the crash has been launched. "As a result of the crash, two officers and one sailor of the Pakistan Navy embraced martyrdom," the spokesperson said adding that the Pakistan Navy has initiated an investigation into the incident. As soon as the reports of the unfortunate

incident started circulating, condolences from the government leaders and politicians started pouring in. Caretaker Prime Minister Anwar-ul-Haq expressed deep grief on the loss of precious lives and prayed for the patience of the martyrs' families. In his message, President Arif Alvi said that he equally shares the grief of the martyrs' families in this difficult hour. Moreover, he also prayed for the martyrs and paid tribute to their services for the country. Meanwhile, Caretaker Interior Minister Sarfaraz Bugti also offered his condolences and prayed for the high ranks of the martyred navy officers and personnel. "We salute those who got martyred during the fulfilment of duties," Bugti said. Former prime minister Shehbaz Sharif also expressed sorrow over the deadly crash and solidarity with the martyred families. "Martyrs are making great sacrifices for the country and people," Shehbaz said while paying his tribute. He also prayed for the high ranks of the martyrs and the patience of the bereaved.

Iran's envoy set to begin mission in KSA

DNA

RIYADH: Iran's new ambassador to Saudi Arabia, Alireza Enayati, is set to begin his diplomatic mission in Riyadh on today (Tuesday). "I will leave for Riyadh on Tuesday," Enayati told the Iranian state news agency. He said the new Saudi ambassador to Iran will also start his mission in Tehran "in the same period of time." The Iranian diplomat said relations between Tehran and Riyadh "have progressed well in terms of formation." "This is a prelude to more work at the bilateral and multilateral level," he added. Iran and Saudi Arabia severed diplomatic ties in January 2016 after the Saudi Embassy in Tehran and consulate in Mashhad were stormed by angry mobs following the execution of a Saudi Shia cleric.

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China's Xi Jinping will skip G20 summit in India

Premier Li Qiang will elaborate on China's views and propositions on G20 cooperation, promote the G20 to strengthen solidarity

AGENCIES

BEIJING: Chinese President Xi Jinping is apparently skipping this week's Group of 20 summit in India as bilateral relations remain icy. Instead, Premier Li Qiang will represent China at the Sept. 9-10 gathering, the Foreign Ministry said Monday in a one-sentence notice on its website. Relations between China and India have grown frosty over their disputed border. Three years ago, the tensions resulted in a clash in the Ladakh region that killed 20 Indian and four Chinese soldiers. It turned into a long-running standoff in the rugged mountainous area, where each side has stationed tens of thousands of military personnel backed by artillery, tanks and fighter jets. Frictions have also risen over trade and India's growing strategic ties with China's main rival, the United States. Both India and China have expelled the other's journalists. India recently overtook China as the world's



Biden says he's disappointed

NEWS DESK

WASHINGTON: US President Joe Biden has said he is "disappointed" that his Chinese counterpart Xi Jinping plans to skip the upcoming G20 summit in India. "I am disappointed... but I am going to get to see him," Mr Biden told reporters on Sunday, but did not say when that meeting may take place. Beijing said on Monday that its premier Li Qiang would lead China's delegation at the summit in Delhi this week. Mr Xi and Mr Biden last met at the G20 summit in Indonesia last year. US-China ties remain tense despite a flurry of diplomatic visits from Washington this year to revive dialogue. China's foreign ministry

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NCB urges attention to depleting marine resources

MUHAMMAD ADIL

ISLAMABAD: The International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN-Pakistan) Monday organised the 22nd meeting of the National Coordinating Body (NCB) of the coast to discuss issues and depleting coastal resources, especially in the wake of climatic impacts, calling for the need to create more marine protected areas in Pakistan. The NCB meeting was a key feature of one of IUCN's long-running Mangroves for the Future Programme that ended in 2018, and has thereafter been supported by IUCN in partnership with organizations such as Engro Foundation, Monaco Foundation and other funding sources, a news release said. Distinguished experts in the meeting included representatives from the government line departments, coastal agencies, Pakistan Navy, as well as from civil society organizations and academia. Stakeholders emphasized the urgent necessity of designating marine and coastal areas as Protected Areas. "Presently, less than 1% of the coast enjoys protection, and Pakistan, as a dedicated CBD signatory, needs to declare at least 30% of its coast as Marine Protected Areas (MPAs) under the 30x30 agenda," said Country Representative of IUCN, Mahmood Akhtar Cheema. In pursuit of this urgent need for MPA declaration, the NCB platform, through its IUCN-MFF

programme, established a dedicated sub-committee which identified coastal and marine areas suitable for MPA designation including Ras Malan, off Pasni, Kalamat Hor, Charna Island, Miami Hor, and Jewani, explained the Inspector General of Forests, Ghulam Qadir Shah. In his remarks, he praised NCB as a prime example of collective achievements in the domain of coastal preservation. NCB is the only forum that has not only persevered but thrived, remaining active even after the culmination of the IUCN-MFF programme across the region, he added. Further enhancing this commitment, the 22nd meeting has taken a significant step forward by officially reviving the subcommittee responsible for MPA designation. The NCB meeting also launched Building Resilience of Coastal Ecological and Social Systems of Pakistan; project, generously funded by the Prince Albert II of Monaco Foundation. "This project will primarily focus on the establishment and strengthening of MPAs, with the main emphasis on the development of a management plan for pre-existing Astola Island MPA. Furthermore, the project aims to rehabilitate degraded coastal ecosystem, enhance capacity building and diversify livelihoods of local communities, thus contributing to the holistic well-being of both people and the environment," said Naveed Soomro, Manager Sindh Programme at IUCN. Riaz Wagan,

Conservator Forest, Sindh Forest Department, shared the achievement of Sindh Forest Department in increasing mangrove cover to about 160,000 hectares. He also emphasized the significance of the carbon-offsetting potential of mangroves in the blue carbon market. Captain Badshah of the Pakistan Navy highlighted the Pakistan Navy's contributions to marine protection, particularly through their water treatment, desalination, and mangrove restoration projects. During the event, Ghulam Muhammad, Chief Conservator of Forests at Balochistan Forest and Wildlife Department, shared their coastal conservation initiatives under the Green Pakistan Program, an extension of the Ten Billion Tree Tsunami Program. He also highlighted successful mangrove restoration initiatives in collaboration with IUCN within the Balochistan Integrated Water Resources Management project, and emphasized the eco-tourism potential of turtle conservation at Naran Beach. Giving the vote of thanks, Mahmood Akhtar Cheema, Country Representative of IUCN Pakistan, stressed the importance of a collaborative approach to coastal governance and the active involvement of diverse stakeholders in safeguarding and conserving marine ecosystems. He further emphasised establishing a dedicated consortium focused on the restoration of marine and coastal ecosystems.



ISLAMABAD: Guest of honor Ismat Gul Khattak, Director General Pakistan National Accreditation Council in a group photograph with participants during International Training Course for Assess of the Productivity Specialists Certification Program.— DNA

Researchers, artists, writers received Latif awards

HYDERABAD : On the third and last day of the 280th Urs of great sufi saint and poet of Sindh, Hazrat Shah Abdul Latif Bhitai (R.A), Latif awards were distributed to researchers, artists and writers who explored poetry, art, thoughts and message of Bhitai. According to an official handout, the ceremony was graced by the presence of caretaker provincial minister for Culture Syed Junaid Ali Shah, as a special guest. Among the recipients of Latif Award 2023, Shah's Best Ragi (Singer) award went to Rano Junejo, Best Researcher as Taj Jojo (award revived by his son Ruplo Taj Jojo), while Best Sughar award went to Khalil ur Rahman Mehesar, Best Drummer Mohammad Nawaz, Best Alghoza Composer Akbar Khamiso Khan, Best Raagi Wahid Lashari, Best Singer Late Ustad Seengar Ali Saleem's award was given to his grandson Asad Ali Seengar. Minister for Culture Dr. Junaid Ali Shah distributed Latif award and shields, while award was also given with a cash prize of Rs. one lac to recipients. Addressing the gathering during the award distribution ceremony, Dr. Syed Junaid Ali Shah expressed his heartfelt sentiments, stating that the memorable moments of participation in all three days of the Urs celebrations would remain etched in his memory, he commended the efforts made during the urs celebrations to understand the message of Shah Latif during. Dr. Shah also extended his gratitude to the district administration, the health department, the police and media.—APP

Pak joins regional 'butterfly month' celebrations

NAZIR SAYAL

PESHAWAR :The recently launched Pakistan Butterfly Society has decided to take part in regionally observed 'Butterfly Month' and walks have been planned to be held in different cities for highlighting importance of butterflies. "This is first time that Pakistan is taking part in 'Butterfly Month' to be observed in South Asian region in the month of September and will help in promotion of butterfly monitoring through capturing of pictures in the country," observed Muhammad Akram Awan, an ardent butterfly lover, researcher and founder of Pakistan Butterfly Society. Talking to APP here on Monday, Muhammad Akram informed that for the first time in August 2023, Pakistan Butterfly Society has been launched with members from different cities of the country. The Pakistan Butterfly Society has developed its facebook page and the team members are uploading pictures of butterflies be-

ing found in different parts of the country. Recording of butterfly species and its population was very important for evaluating environmental impacts on any area, Akram observed. He said the first victim of environmental degradation was butterfly because of its very sensitive and fragile nature. As part of observance of Butterfly month in Pakistan, walks are planned and first one will be held in Swat in second week of September, Akram informed. He said the team members of Pakistan Butterfly Society, college and university students, would go to a school and give a presentation to students about importance of butterfly and their recording. The students will also be informed as how pictures of butterfly can be taken and uploaded on facebook page of Pakistan Butterfly Society. Later a walk will be held in Mingora city of Swat to be participated by people belonging to different sections of life. After holding walk in Swat, similar activity will also

be organized in Karachi and Islamabad cities in current month to create awareness about butterfly importance, he added. Akram also informed that all the data collected in shape of information and pictures of butterflies from different parts of the country will be uploaded on an international web portal 'iNaturalists'. iNaturalists is an online portal set up for collection of data from across the globe about different species of butterflies and details of their population in different areas. Pakistan Butterfly Society is also working in translating names of butterfly species found in different parts of the country in Urdu, Pashto and Balochi languages for better understanding of local people. Akram said butterfly population is on constant decline in our country due to different threats including habitat fragmentation, forest degradation, reduction in flowering plants, pollution, over grazing, use of pesticides in agriculture land.

COURT NOTICE

In the court of Mr. Mohsin Ali Sahib Civil Judge Gujrat. Case Title Javed Iqbal. V/S Muhammad Ilyas etc. Notice to, Muhammad Ilyas, Faisal, Jjaz, Muhammad Yousaf S/O Muhammad Sadiq, Aqsa W/O Muhammad Yousaf R/O Mohallah Mehmda Sharqi Tehsil & Distt. Gujrat. Suit For, Permanent Injunction. The above mentioned defendents are not be served in ordinary way. It is therefore proclaimed that If the said defendents with not appear personally or through a duly authorized agent or pleader in court at 8 AM on 11-09-2023 the proceedings will be taken ex-parte against you.

Conference on trade, tourism opportunities held at LCCI

MEHTAB PIRZADA

LAHORE : As part of the efforts of Lahore Chamber of Commerce and Industry (LCCI) aimed at exploring new avenues for trade, investment and economic gains, a Trade and Tourism Conference on ASEAN was held here on Monday. Governor Punjab Muhammad Baligh-ur-Rehman, LCCI President Kashif Anwar, High Commissioner of Malaysia Mohammad Azhar Mazlan, Ambassador of Indonesia Adam Mulawarman Tugio, Senior Vice President Zafar Mahmood Chaudhry, Vice President Adnan Khalid Butt, spoke on the occasion while Convener LCCI Standing Committee on ASEAN Raja Hassan Akhtar and EC Member Fareeha Younas were also present. The governor congratulated the LCCI president for organising a conference on the topic. He said that it is also a primary responsibility of

the chamber to look for new opportunities. The governor said that the country was going through extraordinary circumstances. "At present we are witnessing the devaluation of the rupee and our economy is slowing down." He said that the country was going to default in 2022 and many economists said that we had already defaulted. But we came out of that situations and now we are moving towards new opportunities. The governor said that there are many opportunities for the businessmen in ASEAN. "We now have to target our untapped export potential and the import potential of ASEAN," he said and asserted that Pakistan has to improve its halal standards to make its place in the halal market. He said that all institutions and government are fully ready to facilitate the investors. Talking about tourism, he said that Pakistan has a lot of potential in terms of tourism. He said that investment is needed in

tourism infrastructure, hospitality, hotels and restaurants. He said that LCCI Research department should conduct research in collaboration with embassies and work together in each area. LCCI President Kashif Anwar said that this conference serves as a pivotal platform for fostering collaboration and improving connectivity among private sector representatives from Pakistan and the member states of ASEAN. It is our shared goal to boost mutual trade and explore new horizons of economic cooperation. He said that ASEAN region has long been recognized as a dynamic economic powerhouse, and Pakistan is keen to harness the immense potential, it offers for our mutual benefit. LCCI President Kashif Anwar said that LCCI has always been at the forefront of supporting the economic growth of Pakistan through facilitating exporters and empowering the local business community. He reaffirmed that solid commitment to this cause.

Chaghi had potential to produce renewable electricity

DNA

QUETTA : Balochistan's Chaghi and Panjur districts have the potential to produce thousands of megawatts (MW) of renewable electricity (RE) from wind and solar energy but financial, administrative and political problems are hampering this potential from becoming a reality. These views were expressed by speakers while addressing a consultative conference held in Quetta on Monday. They highlighted various electricity problems faced by the people of Balochistan, such as low levels of access to electricity, high electricity costs and long hours of load-shedding, and said that the most effective option to address these problems is to produce electricity from renewable sources close to where people need it. They also underscored the fact that Balochistan-based electricity projects in general and renewable energy projects being planned in the province, in particular, get neglected because of the fragile law and order situation, lack of policy preparation and policy planning at the provincial level and the absence of coordination between the provincial and federal authorities. The conference, titled Balochistan's Renewable Energy Journey: Making accessible, affordable and sustainable power in the Province, was organized by the Institute for Development Studies and Practices (IDSP), a non-governmental organization working in Balochistan since 1998. It was helped in this endeavour by two Islamabad-based think tanks, Renewables First and Policy Research Institute for Equitable Development (PRIED). Rabia Mirani and Zubair Khan, two young researchers working with IDSP on a draft renewable energy policy for Balochistan, told the participants of the conference that the governments as well as the private sector are highly reluctant to invest in the province's electricity sector. "This reluctance owes to many factors including extremely low recovery of electricity bills, especially from the owners of agricultural tube-wells, and the requirement to lay very long transmission and distribution networks to take electricity to the highly dispersed and sparse provincial population," they said. Ammar Qaseem, a researcher associated with Renewables First, briefed the conference on how the federal government's planning document for the energy sector, Indicative Generation Capacity Expansion Plan (IGCEP), is made and how its low focus on renewable energy is hurting Balochistan's interests. "Not a single renewable energy project from Balochistan has been included in the latest edition of IGCEP. This means that no renewable energy project will be installed in Balochistan in the next ten years unless the makers of IGCEP change their policy focus and prioritize renewable energy over other sources of energy," he said. Fayyaz Chaudhry, director of LUMS Energy Institute and a former managing director of the National Electric Power Regulatory Authority (NEPRA), informed the conference that Balochistan could start its renewable energy journey by setting up wind and solar power plants in Chaghi district.

DC reviews arrangements made for Chehllum

HYDERABAD : Deputy Commissioner Shariyar Gul on Monday presided over a meeting to review arrangements made for maintaining law and order in the district and ensure cleanliness in the limits of mourning processions and

majaalis on the occasion of Chehllum of Shuhada-e-Karbala. Addressing the meeting, the DC asked the citizens belonging to all faiths to play their role for creating religious cohesion and brotherhood so that majaalis, mourn-

ing procession and other religious programmes could be organized peacefully. He said that Shaheed Benazirabad district had always remained peaceful. The police have ensured foolproof security arrangements besides Sindh

Rangers were also assisting the police for maintaining law and order situation. The DC directed officers of Municipal committee and all town committees to ensure cleanliness and lighting arrangements on Chehllum. — DNA

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Briefs

Concern expressed over Kashmiri detainees' plight in jails

DNA

ISLAMABAD: All Parties Hurriyat Conference (APHC) leaders Khawaja Firdous, Syed Bashir Andrabi and Muhammad Shafi Lone have expressed concern over the plight of illegally detained Hurriyat leader languishing in different jails of India and the territory. According to Kashmir Media Service, the APHC leaders in a joint statement issued in Srinagar lamented that the Modi's government is using illegal and crude tactics to prevent Kashmiri Hurriyat leaders from the freedom movement. They said Kashmiri leaders have been illegally arrested and imprisoned for demanding their rights and urged the international community to take notice of the plight of Kashmiri leaders and help in their immediate release.

Literary icon Mushtaq Yousufi remembered

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Famous Urdu literary icon and humorist Mushtaq Ahmed Yousufi was remembered on his birth anniversary on Monday. Mushtaq Ahmed Yousufi was born on September 4, 1923, in Jaipur, India and migrated to Pakistan after independence. Banker by profession, he held high positions in various banks. His writings, including essays, humor, and satire, exhibit a subtle flow of humor that every reader of Urdu humorous literature associates with Mushtaq Ahmed Yousufi. His writings offer glimpses of social, political, and cultural aspects, interwoven with the beautiful recollections of the past. Mushtaq Yousufi's 5 books, among which include "Chiragh Talay", "Khakam-Badaham", "Zarguzasht", "Aab-i-Gum", and "Shame-Sheri-Yaran," have been published.

Police arrest 13 drug peddlers on recovery of 21 kg charras

DNA

RAWALPINDI: Rawalpindi police in an action against suspected drug peddlers conducted raids in different areas and rounded up 13 accused on recovery of over 21 kg charras, two rifles and other items. According to a police spokesman, Taxila police netted Adil with 1500 grams of charras, and Almas for having 1650 grams of charras, two rifles and ammunition. Rattaamral police held Zahid for having 3765 grams of charras, Tamoor for possessing 2400 grams of charras, Arham for carrying 1600 grams of charras and Jahanzaib for recovery of 1300 grams of charras. Sadder Wah Police rounded up Shaheer with 1100 grams of charras and Shafique with 1650 grams of charras.

Pakistan, Iran discuss energy cooperation

Ambassador of the Islamic Republic of Iran to Pakistan H.E. Dr. Reza Amiri Moghaddam called on Caretaker Federal Minister for Power and Petroleum Muhammad Ali

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Ambassador of the Islamic Republic of Iran to Pakistan H.E. Dr. Reza Amiri Moghaddam called on Caretaker Federal Minister for Power and Petroleum Muhammad Ali today in Islam-



abad. Both sides discussed areas of mutual interest and promotion of brotherly relations between two countries. The Energy minister welcomed the Iranian ambassador and expressed his resolve for further strengthening the ties.

Ambassador extended his good wishes for the minister upon assuming new portfolio. Muhammad Ali remarked that Iran and Pakistan have huge potential for cooperation in energy sector. "We are keen to explore all options and work together," reiterated the Energy minister.

The increasing energy needs of Pakistan present an opportunity of cooperation with neighboring country Iran which is rich in energy reserves. The ambassador appreciated minister's interest in the regional cooperation and affirmed his full support. He presented his good office for any assistance needed by the Pakistani side.

ANF seizes 8520 liquor bottles, over 30 kg charras; arrests five

RAWALPINDI: Anti-Narcotics Force (ANF) while conducting seven operations across the country managed to arrest five accused on recovery of 8520 bottles of liquor and over 30 kg charras, said an ANF Headquarters spokesman here on Monday. He informed that in an operation at Karachi International Container

Terminal, ANF recovered 8520 imported bottles of liquor booked from Dubai for a Karachi based private company. In second operation, ANF conducted a raid near Motorway Toll Plaza and recovered 2 kg charras and 480 grams Ice drug from the possession of two passengers traveling in a bus. In third operation in Toba Tek Singh,

ANF recovered six packets of charras weighing 7.2 kg from the possession of a motorcyclist. The spokesman further said that in an operation on University Road Peshawar, an accused resident of Hangu, allegedly involved in supplying drugs to the university students was netted and ANF recovered 464 intoxicated tablets (Ecstasy) from his posses-

sion. In fifth operation at Bacha Khan International Airport, ANF recovered 86 heroin-filled capsules from the possession of a Dubai-bound passenger, resident of Khyber going on flight number EK-637. In two operations conducted in Zakha Khel area of Khyber, ANF seized 20 kg charras concealed for smuggling.

Trade deficit narrows by 40% in two months

ISLAMABAD: The trade deficit contracted by 40.29 percent during the first two months of the current fiscal year compared to the corresponding period of last year, Pakistan Bureau of Statistics (PBS) reported Monday. The Trade deficit during July-August (2023-24) was recorded at \$3.763 billion as against the deficit of \$6.302 billion in July-August (2022-23), showing negative growth of 40.29 percent. During the period under review, the exports declined by 6.38 percent to \$4.431 billion compared to the exports of \$4.733 billion during the corresponding period of last year, according to latest PBS data. On the other hand, the imports narrowed by 25.75 percent and were recorded at \$8.194 billion compared to \$11.035 billion last year. Meanwhile, on year-on-year basis, the exports from the country declined by 4.83 percent in August compared to the exports of the same month of last year. The exports during the month were recorded at \$2.363 billion as against the exports of \$2.483 billion in August 2022. On the other hand, the imports during August 2023 were recorded at \$4.489 billion compared to the exports of \$6.054 billion in August 2022, showing decline of 25.85 percent, according to the data. On month-on-month basis, the exports from the country increased by 14.27 percent and were recorded at \$2.363 billion in August 2023 compared to the exports of \$2.068 billion in July 2023. The imports into the country also went up by 21.16 percent by going up from \$3.705 billion in July 2023 to \$4.489 billion in August 2023, PBS reported.—APP

16 months' performance of Interior Ministry

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan's governance trajectory observed a major shift in the midst of constitutional, political and economic chaos in last five years but yet achieved country's name cleared from Financial Action Task Force (FATF) grey list in October 2022, through effective diplomacy and hard work. The ministry of interior during 16 months coalition government of Pakistan Democratic Movement (PDM) also executed many tasks which bore fruit for the country, the exclusive document available with APP disclosed. The ministry established Foreign Nationals Security Cells (FNCS) with nationwide reach extending down to district levels. Eight Anti Money Laundering (AML) and Counter Financing for Terrorism (CFT) Police stations and ten Counter Terrorism Wing (CTW) Police stations for inquiry, investigation and prosecution of cases. The ministry also established 4 foreign link offices at Dubai, Spain, UK and Turkey to facilitate immigration process for Pakistani and other nationals and Bhutan, Maldives, Nepal, Rwanda, Belarus and Slovakia were added in Business visa list. Ministry's wing National Database Registration Authority (NADRA) issued 49,623 CNICs for disabled persons and 133

CNICs for Transgender during this time period beside 28 new NADRA Registration Centers were made operational. Immigration and Passport office of the ministry started issuing E-Passport initially for official and diplomatic categories and 1064 E-Passports were issued. The ministry also allowed Chinese nationals to change their visa categories from business to work and vice versa until the end of 2022. For planning and development of the capital city, the ministry started Blue Line, Green Line and Orange Line Metro Bus Services for commuters while procuring Electric Buses for Metro Bus Service. For smooth flow of traffic, the ministry also completed a project of Traffic management Solution at Rawal Dam Chowk in a record time period while the construction of Flyover on 7 Avenue was also completed. Other projects, the ministry executed during this time period were completion of Interchange at 7th Avenue & Srinagar Highway Intersection, construction of I.J.P Road, construction of Margalla Highway - N5 to D-12, connectivity of Margalla Ave with Khayaban-e-Iqbal (11th Avenue), construction of Bhara Kahu Bypass, construction of Islamabad Expressway, signal Free Park Road.—APP

Excise department to conduct token tax drive

ISLAMABAD: The Excise Department of ICT is going to conduct a vehicle registration, transfer and token tax drive in the parking lot of Fatima Jinnah Park Bolan Gate F9 from 3 to 5 pm Monday (today). The drive has been organized on the instructions of Deputy Commissioner Islamabad Irfan Nawaz Memon, ICT Spokesman said, adding that citizens have the option to register their vehicles, transfer them, and pay their token tax. In addition to the excise staff, the Facilitation Center Doorstep ICT Vehicle will also be present at the drive. The ICT Doorstep Service was offering a variety of services, including the issuance of domicile certificates, birth certificates.—APP

Crackdown professional beggars in Islamabad

ISLAMABAD: The Assistant Commissioners of Islamabad have launched a crackdown against price gouging, encroachment, professional beggars and other societal issues in their respective areas. In a series of operations, they have fined shopkeepers for overcharging, sealed two shops, arrested one person and eight professional beggars, and taken action against illegal clinics and shisha cafes, The ICT spokesman Abdullah Tabasum said on Monday. The crackdown was launched on the directions of Deputy Commissioner Islamabad Irfan Nawaz Memon. The Assistant Commissioners conducted inspections at 105 places and imposed fines of Rs. 10,000 on shopkeepers who were found overcharging, while two shops were also sealed. Moreover, one person was arrested for selling prohibited polythene bags and eight professional beggars were also arrested.—APP

Concern expressed over Kashmiri detainees' plight in jails

DNA

ISLAMABAD: All Parties Hurriyat Conference (APHC) leaders Khawaja Firdous, Syed Bashir Andrabi and Muhammad Shafi Lone have expressed concern over the plight of illegally detained Hurriyat leader languishing in different jails of India and the territory. According to Kashmir

Media Service, the APHC leaders in a joint statement issued in Srinagar lamented that the Modi's government is using illegal and crude tactics to prevent Kashmiri Hurriyat leaders from the freedom movement. They said Kashmiri leaders have been illegally arrested and imprisoned for demanding their rights and urged the international community to take notice of the plight of

Kashmiri leaders and help in their immediate release. The Hurriyat leaders said the Indian troops have been committing atrocities on the innocent people in occupied Jammu and Kashmir for the past seven decades. It should be raised in the Security Council and the human tragedy happening in occupied Jammu and Kashmir should be stopped, they added. They said the Kashmiri people have made a lot of sacrifices for the Kashmir cause which will not be allowed to go waste. They also paid tributes to the martyrs of Kashmir and expressed their determination that the Kashmiri people would continue their struggle till taking it to its logical conclusion.

Askari Bank inaugurates PAC Kamra branch

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Askari Bank Limited (AKBL) is continuously moving towards enhancing its services for customers with the inauguration of its PAC Kamra Branch. The ceremony was inaugurated by Air Vice Marshal Nadeem Akhtar Khan SI(M), Chairman PAC Kamra and Mr. Arif R. Bokhari, President & CEO, AKBL. AKBL's PAC Kamra Branch offers a wide range of banking solutions. The branch is staffed with professionals who are equipped to provide high-quality services to its customers. Highlighting the occa-

sion, Mr. Bokhari said, "Askari Bank has been consistently providing quality experience to its

clientele. The expansion of our branch network shows the bank's commitment towards increas-

ing its footprint to cater to the diverse banking needs of residents of Kamra.



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NLC to open land routes of Pakistan to China

ISLAMABAD: The National Logistic Cell (NLC) is trying to open the land routes of Pakistan to the Central Asian states through China to materialize the prospects of the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) flagship project, said Director General, NLC, Major Gen. Farrukh Shahzad Rao. "We're trying to open the land routes of Pakistan to Central Asia especially through China to materialize the prospects of China Pakistan Economic Corridor," he told APP on the sidelines of the China International Fair for Trade in Service (CIFTIS) in Beijing. The NLC has set up a booth in the Pakistan Pavilion at CIFTIS to showcase their accomplishment particularly their role in promoting trade between the regional countries. He informed that the NLC has been able to open trade route from Kashgar, Xinjiang to Karachi and has joint ventures with Chinese logistic companies.—DNA

Training course for assessors of productivity

ISLAMABAD: The National Productivity Organization (NPO), Pakistan, in partnership with the Asian Productivity Organization (APO) headquartered in Tokyo, Japan on Monday announced the commencement of an International Training Course for Assessors of the Productivity Specialists Certification Program. Scheduled from September 4th to September 8th, 2023, this event was inaugurated at a local hotel in Islamabad. This essential training program is set to welcome 17 esteemed overseas participants representing 10 APO member countries, alongside 5 local participants. The course curriculum will be expertly delivered by renowned international resource speakers hailing from Singapore, Malaysia, and Mongolia. The primary objectives of this intensive workshop are to nurture and equip proficient assessors within National Productivity Organizations.—APP

Pakistan's First And Only Diplomatic Daily

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Deputy Editor: Abid Raza

Member APNS / ABC Certified

Vol: 04 Issue: 334

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High-level dialogue between China and Australia

Since Australia's Labor government took office last year, Canberra has made a departure from its predecessor's anti-China stance and sought to mend fences with Beijing. Thanks to the efforts of both sides, bilateral ties have not only witnessed a thaw but seen a significant uptick. The upcoming high-level dialogue between China and Australia is the first since 2020. It will provide a good opportunity for both sides to continue to build on the current upward momentum in bilateral ties. By deepening mutual understanding, the two sides can build a meaningful consensus on bringing bilateral cooperation to a higher and more stable terrain. An Australian delegation with representatives from industrial sectors, government agencies, academia and media are heading to China for the highly anticipated dialogue with their Chinese counterparts, which is scheduled for Thursday. By reviving the dialogue mechanism established in 2014, both Beijing and Canberra clearly want to send a message that they now want to consolidate the improvement in relations in such areas as the economy and trade ties and people-to-people exchanges. With the thaw in relations, bilateral trade, which was frosty in 2020 and 2021, has seen signs of a turnaround. In April, China and Australia reached an agreement in their barley dispute, and Canberra subsequently suspended its World Trade Organization complaint against China. In a media release on Saturday, Australian Minister of Foreign Affairs Penny Wong said the upcoming dialogue "represents another step towards increasing bilateral engagement and stabilizing our relationship with China". That speaks volumes about Canberra's strong political will to join hands with the Chinese side and build on the current good momentum in bilateral relations. China and Australia have no fundamental disputes. For years, China has remained Australia's largest trading partner, export market, source of imports, source of tourism revenue and source of international students. Hence, Canberra has everything to gain from working with Beijing to put bilateral ties back onto the right track. Canberra should not let itself be swayed by Washington. If it views China objectively, it will recognize China's development presents an opportunity, not a threat, to Australia. Canberra needs to know no matter how close it draws to Washington, it should not let the US dictate its relations with China. Developing China-Australia ties caters to the fundamental interests of both peoples. It is natural for the two countries to have differences in various fields, and efforts such as the upcoming dialogue is the right approach for the two countries to reduce misunderstandings, deepen mutual understanding and build more mutual trust.



The past is a work in progress

The pope has ventured into treacherous territory. In impromptu remarks to young Russian Catholics in recent days, he told them not to forget their heritage: "The great Russia of Peter I, Catherine II, that empire." The Kremlin found the remarks "very pleasing"; not surprising when Vladimir Putin has compared himself to Peter the Great and harks back to 18th-century imperial glory to deny the existence of an independent Ukrainian identity. Ukrainians responded with fury, accusing the pontiff of using Russian talking points. The Vatican stressed that Pope Francis's remarks were not praising Russian imperialism, and he has repeatedly condemned the invasion of Ukraine – though he did draw controversy last year by suggesting that Nato's expansion might have been a contributory factor. But the past is particularly fraught terrain because Mr Putin has made it his battlefield. Though latterly he has reached further back, towards the empire, his nationalistic account of a greater, stronger Russia draws primarily upon the Soviet Union's victory in the second world war: "The answer to the implosion of 1991... was the triumph of 1945," writes the Guardian correspondent Shaun Walker in his book *The Long Hangover*. This narrative has not merely been used to justify aggression – claiming the need to "denazify" Ukraine – but has also paved its way. "This war was perhaps the only possible outcome of Russia's preoccupation with policing the past," argues Dr Jade McGlynn in *Memory Makers*, adding: "Putin and those around him have started to believe their own lies." Last February's invasion was preceded by Mr Putin's 7,000-word essay "On the historical unity of Russians and Ukrainians". New school textbooks portray the "special military operation" as part of the country's historical mission. But while his obsession with the past has ramped up in recent years, it was evident much earlier. In 2009, the government launched a special commission "to counter attempts to falsify history". As discontent with his leadership grew, the efforts to inculcate "correct" history and target alternatives intensified. In 2021, Memorial, the human rights group founded to document Soviet political terror and its victims, was forced to close. Authoritarians around the world heed the Party's maxim in George Orwell's 1984: "Who controls the past controls the future: who controls the present controls the past." They aim not merely to promote themselves, and erase taints to their own reputations or those of their movements, but to forge a national identity that will cement their power. This practice is seen from Hungary and Poland to India – where school textbooks were recently edited to remove references to Mahatma Gandhi's opposition to Hindu nationalism and chapters on the history of the Muslim Mughal emperors. The most striking parallels with Russia, however, can be found in China. There, too, history is central to the political project. The appeal of a narrative of glorious national recovery from foreign aggression is rooted in multiple 20th-century traumas. Like Mr Putin, Xi Jinping has created what Dr McGlynn calls a "constructed constancy" that blurs contradictions – though Beijing invokes 5,000 years of history to Russia's mere 1,000 – and presents a choice between tight political control or chaos. He too sees alternative narratives as an existential threat to the regime, outlawing "historical nihilism" – what others might call memory, or fact. As the old Soviet joke suggests, the future is certain under these leaders: it's the past that has proved unpredictable.

China-Pakistan sociocultural influences

Dr. Abdus Sattar Abbasi

Pakistan is also a nation of diverse ethnicities although living together happily but still have some serious strategic conflicting priorities. It is the religion and patriotism which binds them together bringing "unity in the diversity". But this unity falls apart when people's political affiliations come to the fore. Sometimes they put everything at stake for a fear of losing their political space, therefore, exploit their popular support to secure instant partisan gains. The same happened to the CPEC, relatively slow progress during last ten years, since inception, is probably due to the inability to inculcate consensus among all stakeholders on the project

CPEC and China-Pakistan relationships perfectly represent the idea of "unity in diversity and diversity in unity". China is a multiethnic society representing "unity in diversity", taking into account the social structures, the interaction between ethnicities, unifying the diverse cultural and communal networks, inculcating the unity across the country would not have been an easy task. China is well-versed in accommodating and negotiating to develop harmony and consensus on different issues including economic and development projects. Pakistan is also a nation of diverse ethnicities although living together happily but still have some serious strategic conflicting priorities. It is the religion and patriotism which binds them together bringing "unity in the diversity". But this unity falls apart when people's political affiliations come to the fore. Sometimes they put everything at stake for a fear of losing their political space, therefore, exploit their popular support to secure instant partisan gains. The same happened to the CPEC, relatively slow progress during last ten years, since inception, is probably due to the inability to inculcate consensus among all stakeholders on the project. There are extensive sociocultural similarities between two nations with the history of cooperation and confidence at governmental level. But still, we observe clear hiccups in the implementation of CPEC. If we look at the progress of CPEC disinterestedly, we can't excuse any of the sides. However, much of the onus lies on Pakistani counterparts; because they exposed CPEC to their internal differences and political rivalries. China and Pakistan can create an exceptional synergy to make CPEC an historic success by utilizing the Chinese pattern of "Ge" and "Ju" proposed by Fei Hsiao-tung. "Ge" helps to understand the unity in diversity and "Ju" helps to understand the dimensions of diversity. With so much in common in sociocultural aspects both nations can capitalize on the understanding of "Ge" and "Ju". The case of diversity in China with 56 ethnicities is much challenging than that of Pakistan. We can broadly divide ethnic diversity in Pakistan into two distinct groups of conservatives and relatively less conservatives; rest of the customs and traditions are more or less same across the country. It is probably lack of understanding of the dimensions of diversity i.e., "Ju" which needs attention to inculcate unity in

the diversity. Numerous commonalities between Pakistan and China represent "unity in diversity" e.g., approaches towards benevolence, righteousness, modesty, loyalty and harmony truly manifest this concept. Religion constitutes beliefs, ideas, preferences and considerations about what is holy, sacred, absolute and worthy of special reverence in human lives. Social and ethical considerations are usually at the heart of any religion which determine the way of life of adherents of any religious belief. Islam is an established religion; however, Confucianism has been characterized as a system of social and ethical philosophies. In terms of social cohesion, moral values, spiritual evolution, and respect for humanity there are stark similarities between the two e.g., the concept of 'filialpiety' can be considered corresponding to the familism in Pakistan. Filialpiety is the core concept in Confucianism that requires one to give parents and elders utmost respect and devotion. Filialpiety is akin to the reverence of one's ancestors and may entail unconditional obedience of seniors. Surprisingly, roles defined in filialpiety are similar to those determined in the notion of familism in Pakistan. Husband (&/or) father being head of the family unit is responsible for all provisions while wife (&/or) mother is accountable for daily routine in the households. I feel excited putting forward the concept of "Easternism" as a foundation to determine the sociocultural impact of CPEC. The concepts of Eastern connectedness and solidarity developed considerable popularity in some of the Asian nations in the period between the two World Wars primarily focusing on Arab or Muslim cooperation and unity. However, that squeezed to an almost paralyzed body of Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC). Intense illiteracy, intentional distance from modern and evolving sciences and latest technologies coupled with lack of visionary leadership throughout Islamic world for the last few centuries, Muslim world failed to capitalize on the concept. I am intentionally distancing from terms such as "orientalism" and "Easternization". Because, Easternization is generally considered as an influence with ideas, customs, etc., characteristic of eastern Asia. It is also used to explain the influence, ideas, customs, and characteristics of the eastern U.S. Whereas, orientalism probably carries somewhat negative implications these days as a label for literary analyses deprived of

social or historical context.

However, emergence of CPEC as an epitome of OBOR (One Belt One Road) initiative carries different circumstances. Eastern nations have started making their mark on global front with their economic, scientific and technological excellence. Therefore, it is probably the right time to promote Easternism to inculcate unity and foster swift development of Asian nations. Recent developments in Asia e.g., settlement of decades old frictions between Saudi Arabia and Iran suggests that nothing is impossible in bringing Asian nations closer for the benefit of entire planet. It is just a natural phenomenon that nations when dominating other societies remain subject to several internal depletions which occupy prominence once there is decline to the civilization. Those who were struggling keep eye on leading cultures to adopt their strengths and by the time of decline they emerge as strong contenders to fill the gap. There is no surprise that the trend will continue and people from era of deprivation may emerge as leaders for tomorrow. During this course there remain a discussion on several fronts including scientific development, societal values, and socio-cultural preferences. Western developments are awe-inspiring, extending comfort and ease to the daily lives of people, explored all new dimensions of human life, extending human approach beyond this planet. But still there are certain fronts where West has remarkably failed in promoting transcending empathy and benevolence which is indeed a strength of Easternism. Theoretically Sino-Pakistan sociocultural similarities suggest a strong bond between two neighbors, practically there is proven depth in the relationships of both countries but perceptually there seems a gap between two societies which needs attention. There is a need to educate civil societies on both sides that philosophically we are akin to each other, therefore, we need to work hand in hand to transform the fate of this region, to uplift the quality of life of relevant communities, and to expand Sino-Pakistanian relations.

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Tharparkar: A land of beauty, challenges, and hope

Tarachand Kolhi

Despite its challenges, Tharparkar is not a land of despair. It is a land of potential and resilience. The people here are determined to break free from the shackles of poverty and build a prosperous future. With increased investment in education, healthcare, and sustainable water management, Tharparkar can continue to progress and offer its residents a better quality of life. While Tharparkar may be a harsh and unforgiving environment, its unique beauty lies in its ability to sustain life, its resilient people, and the captivating

Tharparkar, Sindhis a region of stark contrasts which nestled in the southeastern part of Pakistan. It is a land of breathtaking beauty, with its rolling sand dunes, attractive scenes, and a vibrant culture deeply rooted in centuries-old traditions. Yet, it is also a land of enduring challenges, where extreme aridity, water scarcity, and poverty have posed formidable obstacles to its people. As we delve into Tharparkar's unique blend of resilience and struggle, we uncover a story of hope and determination. Tharparkar's defining characteristic is its arid desert terrain, which presents significant challenges for its residents. The region is known for its scanty rainfall, resulting in water scarcity being a perennial issue. The Thar Desert, one of the largest in the world, stretches across the landscape, making agriculture a difficult pursuit. Despite these adversities, the people of Tharparkar have developed ingenious ways to adapt and thrive. What stands out most in Tharparkar is the resilience of its people. The residents have harnessed the power of community and tradition to overcome the challenges of their environment. They have preserved their unique way of life, characterized by colorful clothing, intricate embroidery, and a rich oral history. The Thari people are known for their warmth and hospitality, making any visitor feel like part of their extended family. Water scarcity remains a major concern in Tharparkar. With erratic rainfall and limited natural water sources, access to clean drinking water is a daily struggle for many. Organizations and government initiatives have been working tirelessly to provide water solutions, including the construction of reservoirs and the drilling of boreholes. These efforts have improved the situation, but more work is needed to ensure sustainable access to water. Another challenge that Tharparkar faces is limited access to education and healthcare. The region has made progress in recent years, with the establishment of schools and medical facilities, but there is still room for

improvement. NGOs and government agencies are collaborating to enhance these services and create a brighter future for Tharparkar's children. Despite its challenges, Tharparkar is not a land of despair. It is a land of potential and resilience. The people here are determined to break free from the shackles of poverty and build a prosperous future. With increased investment in education, healthcare, and sustainable water management, Tharparkar can continue to progress and offer its residents a better quality of life. While Tharparkar may be a harsh and unforgiving environment, its unique beauty lies in its ability to sustain life, its resilient people, and the captivating cultural heritage that has developed in this arid region over centuries. It's a place where the beauty is not just in the landscape but also in the human spirit and the traditions that endure. Scenic Desert Landscapes: Tharparkar is part of the larger Thar Desert, one of the largest deserts in the world. The desert landscape is stunning, with vast expanses of golden sand dunes that stretch as far as the eye can see. The shifting patterns of the dunes, especially during sunrise and sunset, create breathtaking vistas. Despite its arid climate, Tharparkar is home to a surprising diversity of wildlife. You can find various species of birds, reptiles, and even the elusive Indian desert wolf. The desert blooms with colorful wildflowers during the monsoon season, adding a burst of vibrancy to the landscape. Tharparkar is a melting pot of different cultures, including Sindhi, Rajasthani, and various tribal communities. The people of Thar are known for their warm hospitality and strong sense of community. The region's unique culture is reflected in its music, dance, and art forms. The traditional villages in Tharparkar are a sight to behold. Mud-brick houses with intricately designed facades dot the landscape. The architectural styles have evolved to cope with the harsh desert environment, making them both

functional and aesthetically pleasing. Many communities in Tharparkar practice nomadic herding, and you can often see camel caravans or flocks of sheep and goats moving across the desert. This nomadic way of life adds to the region's allure and offers a glimpse into the age-old traditions of the people. Tharparkar boasts several historical and archaeological sites, including the ruins of ancient Indus Valley Civilization settlements like Chanhu Daro. These sites provide a window into the region's rich history. Tharparkar celebrates various festivals with enthusiasm and color. Diwali, Holi, and Eid are some of the major festivals celebrated with traditional rituals, music, and dance performances. The people of Thar are known for their delicious cuisine, which includes dishes like dal pakwan, saag, and various types of bread. Visitors are often welcomed with open arms and treated to authentic Thari food. Tharparkar is famous for its handwoven textiles and traditional handicrafts. The colorful embroidery and mirror work found in Thari textiles are particularly renowned. The clear desert skies of Tharparkar offer incredible stargazing opportunities. The unobstructed views of the night sky, along with the stunning sunsets, make for a mesmerizing experience. Tharparkar's beauty lies not only in its stunning desert landscapes but also in its vibrant culture, history, and the resilience of its people. It's a place where nature and tradition coexist harmoniously, making it a captivating destination for those who want to explore its unique charm. At end, I would like to thank Dr. Muhammad Akram Zaheer whose guidance and expertise in writing this article were invaluable. I couldn't have done it without his insightful input.

—The writer is Student of BS Health and Nutrition University of Okara tarachandkolhi@gmail.com

Briefs

Govt to come up with relief plan

FROM PAGE 01
had held numerous meetings related to issues of taxation and the power sector. He assured that the Finance Ministry would come up with recommendations to provide relief to vulnerable sections of society. He said he was misquoted about the recent protests on the issue of electricity bills. He understood that there was a section of society which was heavily burdened with electricity bills and he could identify with the social and economic problems of people as he himself faced these problems in the past, he added. To a question about privatization, he said the privatization of state sector entities including Pakistan International Airlines was on the agenda of the government and work was being done on it. He said the caretaker government was the continuation of the constitutional order and it would not remain in place any extra time on the expiry of its term. He clarified that the Election Commission would announce the date for the election. "According to the law of the land, Election Commission will decide about elections," he said adding however, the superior judiciary after listening to the legal experts could decide about the elections. "Law and a binding judgment of the Supreme Court will decide. The respect and reverence of judiciary is important for democratic dispensation and social order and these should not be disturbed," he remarked. He said according to its constitutional role, the Supreme Court will remove any doubt about the timing of elections.

China's Xi Jinping will skip G20...

FROM PAGE 01
most populous nation and the two are rivals in technology, space exploration and global trade. Asked why Xi would not be attending the summit, Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesperson Mao Ning declined to answer. "The G20 is a major forum for international economic cooperation. China has always attached great importance to and actively participated in relevant activities," Mao told reporters at a daily briefing. "Premier Li Qiang will elaborate on China's views and propositions on G20 cooperation, promote the G20 to strengthen solidarity and cooperation and work together to address global economic and development challenges," she said. Mao said China is ready to work with all parties "to jointly promote the success of the G20" summit and "make positive contributions to promoting the stable recovery of the world economy and promoting sustainable development." Chinese and Indian military commanders met just last month and pledged to "maintain the peace and tranquility" along their disputed border, in an apparent effort to stabilize the situation. The Line of Actual Control separates Chinese- and Indian-held territories from Ladakh in the west to India's eastern state of Arunachal Pradesh, which China claims in its entirety. India and China fought a war over their border in 1962. As its name suggests, the line divides the areas of physical control rather than territorial claims. According to India, the de facto border is 3,488 kilometers (2,167 miles) long, but China promotes a considerably shorter figure.

Iran's envoy set to begin mission...

FROM PAGE 01
The two regional rivals formally agreed to resume their relations last April after mediation from China. Iran reopened its embassy in Riyadh, the consulate and the Organization of Islamic Cooperation mission in the port city of Jeddah in June. Saudi Arabia reopened its embassy in Iran last month.



LAHORE: Captains of Pakistan, Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka and Nepal, Chairman PCB Management Committee Zaka Ashraf, Governor Punjab Baligh Ur Rehman and BCCI delegation led by President Roger Binny and Vice-President Rajeev Shukla at Governor's House in Lahore. — DNA

Relocating the Asia Cup

Ashraf contacts Shah to shift AC matches to Pak

Today's match between India and Nepal in Kandy is also likely to be affected by rain

SPORTS DESK

LAHORE: Chairman of the Management Committee of the Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB), Zaka Ashraf, has suggested the possibility of relocating the Asia Cup 2023 matches to Pakistan due to concerns over adverse weather conditions in Sri Lanka. Ashraf's proposal comes after a telephone conversation with Jay Shah, President of the Asian Cricket Council (ACC), where they discussed

rain-affected matches involving Pakistan and India in Sri Lanka. The PCB chairman's stance is rooted in the uncertainty of the weather in Sri Lanka, prompting him to advocate for a comprehensive weather assessment in the coming days. As a solution, he proposed moving the Asia Cup matches to Pakistan, and specifically mentioned the Pakistan-India matches could be played in Dubai if needed. Meanwhile, there is a possibility of relocating the Su-



per 4 stage matches of the Asia Cup, originally planned for Colombo on September 9, to alternate venues such as Pallakele or Hambantota. According to the media reports by the Daily Mirror, ongoing discussions between the Asian Cricket Council and Sri Lanka Cricket (SLC) have been

confirmed by an SLC official. "A decision will be taken tomorrow or the day after," the official, speaking on the condition of anonymity, said adding that Dambulla was not one of the venues being considered. Ashraf had previously emphasized the significance of the Asia Cup as a premier cricket tournament and stressed the need to prevent its disruption due to rain. Therefore, in the event of unfavorable weather conditions in Sri Lanka, he believes that serious consideration should be given to relocating the matches to Pakistan. In response to Ashraf's proposal, Jay Shah has conveyed his assurance in evaluating the situation. It is worth noting that the Pakistan-India match in Kandy was significantly impacted by rain, resulting in no conclusive outcome. Nevertheless, the match scheduled for today between India and Nepal is also at risk of being washed out due to the adverse rainy conditions.

Defending champion Iga Swiatek out of US Open

The world number one and top seed lost by two sets to one to Latvia's Jelena Ostapenko



DNA

NEW YORK: Iga Swiatek arrived at the U.S. Open as its reigning champion, as the winner at three of the past six Grand Slam tournaments and as the owner of the No. 1 ranking for nearly 1 1/2 years. None of that mattered against Jelena Ostapenko, whose powerful style disrupts Swiatek's rhythm — and beats her every time. Swiatek's title defense at Flushing Meadows ended in the fourth round with a 3-6, 6-3, 6-1 loss to 2017 French Open champion Ostapenko in the fourth round at Arthur Ashe Stadium. The result also means Swi-

atek's stay at atop the WTA will end next week, when current No. 2 Aryna Sabalenka will rise to the top spot for the first time. "There are some sad emotions" about falling from No. 1, Swiatek acknowledged, while also saying of her reign atop women's tennis: "It was pretty exhausting." Coco Gauff is the 1st US teen since Serena Williams to reach consecutive US Open quarterfinals Not long after being assured of losing her grip on that perch, the 22-year-old from Poland already was thinking ahead to returning there. "For sure when I'm going to be, next time, in the same situation, I'm going to do some stuff differently," Swiatek said, "because it was a little

stressful, and it shouldn't be." She also sounded mystified about what happened out there. "I'm just surprised that my level changed so drastically, because usually when I play bad, I play bad at the beginning, then I kind of catch up or just problem solve. This time it was totally the opposite," Swiatek said. "I don't really know what happened with my game. I felt no control suddenly." The 20th-seeded Ostapenko, a 26-year-old from Latvia, offered a theory. "The main thing is that she doesn't really like to play against big hitters. ... She likes to have some time," said Ostapenko, who accumulated 31 winners to 18 for Swiatek. "When I play fast, aggressive and powerful, she's a little bit in trouble." Ostapenko also finished with just 20 unforced errors — quite an improvement from the 80 she had in her second-round victory last week. When a reporter mentioned Sunday's total, Ostapenko smiled and said, "Not bad." In truth, this was not necessarily a huge surprise, based on their previous matchups: Ostapenko improved to 4-0 against Swiatek over their careers. No other player owns four victories against the woman who has led the WTA rankings since April 2022. After getting off to a terrific start to the second set, which she led 4-1, Ostapenko wavered for a bit. That allowed Swiatek to get a break back and pull to 4-3. But that was only a blip.

BCCI delegation reaches Pakistan for Asia Cup

LAHORE: The delegation of the Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) under the leadership of BCCI President Roger Binny has reached Pakistan today on a two-day visit amid the ongoing Asia Cup 2023. BCCI vice-president Rajeev Shukla, Director BCCI Yudhvir Singh and Secretary to Vice President Muhammad Akram are also part of the delegation on their historic visit to Pakistan after 15 years. This is the first visit to Pakistan by a BCCI delegation since 2008. The Indian delegation will reach the local hotel shortly and will be welcomed by the Chairman of the Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) Management Committee Zaka Ashraf. The BCCI delegation will discuss matters of mutual interest with the Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) officials before watching the Asia Cup 2023 fixture between Sri Lanka and Afghanistan at the picturesque Gaddafi Stadium. The delegation will also be attending an official dinner at the Governor's House. Earlier this week, Chairman of the PCB Management Committee Zaka Ashraf announced that the BCCI President and vice-president will visit Pakistan. While talking to the media at Gaddafi Stadium during the national men's team's jersey unveiling ceremony for the upcoming ICC Men's Cricket World Cup 2023, Zaka Ashraf welcomed the players and officials who are visiting Pakistan for the Asia Cup. "BCCI President and Vice President are coming to Pakistan for the opening ceremony of Asia Cup," Zaka Ashraf said. "We welcome everyone who is coming to Pakistan [during Asia Cup]." He also showed confidence and faith in the Pakistan team and expressed his hope that the national team will continue the recent good form and perform well at the Asia Cup as well as the upcoming ICC Men's World Cup in India. "Our team is currently united and performing well, and consequently is number one in the ODI team rankings," he said. "Looking at the recent performances of the team, it is hoped that our team will be successful in the World Cup, however, at the moment all the attention is focused on the Asia Cup," he added. Talking about the recently unveiled Pakistan jersey for the World Cup, he said: "The Star Nation Jersey bears witness to the enduring bond between our cricketers and the passionate fans who stand by them through every match. This jersey encapsulates our rich cricketing heritage and the luminous future that awaits." — DNA

Mbappe strikes as ruthless PSG hammer Lyon

Kylian Mbappe nets four times in 13 minutes as PSG hammer Lyon

OUR CORRESPONDENT

PARIS: Kylian Mbappe scored twice as Paris Saint-Germain romped to a 4-1 win away at Lyon to leave their crisis-hit opponents bottom of Ligue 1. Mbappe's two goals in the first half sandwiched strikes by Achraf Hakimi and Marco Asensio as PSG produced a ruthless performance that augurs well for the rest of the season. Corentin Tolisso pulled one back with a penalty for Lyon but the seven-time former French champions are enduring a miserable start to the campaign and are bottom with just one point from four games. Laurent Blanc's side prop up the division on goal difference behind last season's runners-up Lens and Clermont. PSG, meanwhile, are up to second, two points behind early league leaders Monaco, after a second straight win to follow draws in their opening two games. "It is a great result. It is not easy to come and win here, regardless of what the opposition are going through," said PSG captain Marquinhos. "We are not yet playing exactly the way the coach wants us to but we are making great progress. "He is very demanding, very hard with us. He has said there is still room for

improvement." Luis Enrique's team are building towards the start of their Champions League campaign which will see them come up against Borussia Dortmund, AC Milan and Newcastle United in the group stage. They still have Randal Kolo Muani to

come into the team after the France striker joined from Eintracht Frankfurt in a reported 90 million-euro (\$97m) deal just before the transfer window closed on Friday. This game came too soon for Kolo Muani to make his debut, but there was a first appear-

ance for Bradley Barcola after he joined from Lyon on Thursday for a fee that could reach 50 million euros. Barcola came off the bench late on to a chorus of jeers and whistles from the home support, but the game was well and truly over by then. PSG went ahead in the fourth minute as Mbappe netted a penalty after Manuel Ugarte's pressing led to him being brought down in the box by Tolisso. Hakimi made it 2-0 in 20 minutes, following in to score after Lyon goalkeeper Anthony Lopes had turned a low Ousmane Dembele cross out into his path. The visitors needed Gianluigi Donnarumma to make fine saves from Rayan Cherki and Tolisso, while in between that Hakimi hit the bar at the end of a lightning PSG counter-attack. They scored again on 38 minutes in clinical fashion, Ugarte releasing Asensio for the former Real Madrid man to score his second goal in as many games. Asensio turned provider as PSG made it 4-0 in first-half stoppage time, sending Mbappe through to beat Lopes for his second of the night and his fifth in three games since returning to the team following a contract dispute. The final score could have been embarrassing for Lyon but Dembele hit the bar with a header early in the second half and the hosts then won a penalty in the 73rd minute.



Biden says he's disappointed

FROM PAGE 01
neither confirmed nor denied Mr Xi's attendance at the Delhi summit when asked pointedly at Monday's press briefing. "Li Qiang will lead Chinese delegation to attend G20 summit. It's a major and important global economic forum. China has always attached importance on it and actively participated related events," a foreign ministry spokeswoman said. But news reports, citing unnamed sources familiar with the matter, said last week that Mr Xi does not plan to attend. The news comes amid worsening relations between China and India. Among other things, the two countries are facing off against each other along their disputed border in the Himalayan region. 0

DG ISI Lt. Gen Nadeem...

FROM PAGE 01
These sources assert that Lt. Gen. Nadeem Anjum will continue to hold the position of Director General of Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI) for another year. Nadeem, a graduate of the National Defense University (NDU), obtained his master's degree from King's College London and completed Advanced Security Studies courses at the US Department of Defense-run Asia-Pacific Center for Security Studies (DKI APCSS). When his extension is formally confirmed, Lt. Gen. Nadeem will not be the first to receive an extension as DGI. Previously, Gen. Akhter Abdul Rehman Khan and Lt. Gen. Ahmed Shuja Pasha had also served as DG ISI for extended tenures on national security grounds.

Lawyers threaten to launch...

FROM PAGE 01
courts are incompetent to try civilian citizens on any charge, urging the discontinuation of the policy to establish military courts. Moreover, the PLAC demanded the holding of general elections within 90 days, with the insistence on the right of full and free participation for all political parties, their members, and leaders on a truly level playing field. They also called for the immediate revision of all utility bills and the rationalisation of all taxes payable by the people of Pakistan. Ahsan and Khosa expressed deep concern about the current state of the country. They argued that the country was descending to a level where it can be justifiably depicted as a nation without a constitution. They cited recent incidents such as the disappearance of anchorperson Imran Riaz Khan, the daylight kidnapping of former Punjab CM Chaudhry Pervez Elahi by unidentified individuals believed to be affiliated with the Islamabad police, and the arrest of political workers, suggesting these events were aimed at altering loyalties rather than upholding the law.

Niazi moves SC against military...

FROM PAGE 01
The petition asserted that Article 10-A guarantees the right to fair trial and fulfills legal requirements, and hence should be upheld. The petitioner also moved the apex court for Sections 2(1)(d)(ii) and 59(4) of the Army Amendment Act (AAA) to be exempted for those involved in the events of May 9. He further requested the court to also declare Section 94 to be declared unconstitutional. The opposed section states that any "competent Army Officer could investigate a case of any Army personnel, if he was implicated in a civil offence, provided such army officer made such demand from police authorities." Hafeezullah presented a letter from the commanding officer from August 17 regarding his son's arrest and asked for it to be declared illegal as well. "The act of transferring him to military custody by the police should also be declared unconstitutional," he argued.

Briefs

People protest against racism in Finland

LONDON : Thousands of people gathered in the Finnish capital on Sunday to protest racism and the government's policy towards it, according to local media reports. More than 10,000 protesters and members of over 100 organizations, including human rights groups, gathered in Helsinki's Senate Square and later marched towards Toonlahti Park, said public broadcaster YLE. They expressed their disappointment over the government's policy against racism, referring to its anti-racism briefing last week. Demonstrators called on the government to respect Finland's constitution and the international agreements it has signed, said the report. On Thursday, parties of the Finnish coalition government unveiled a joint statement on eradicating racism and promoting equality within Finnish society. It came after a series of racism scandals involving ministers that engulfed the new government and led to the appointment of a working group tasked with proposing concrete measures to tackle racism and discrimination. In June, the four-party government, including the anti-immigration Finns Party, formed Finland's new government, which holds 108 seats out of 200 in parliament.—APP

1 dead, 2 injured in terrorists attack

SYRIA : One civilian was killed and two others were injured in an attack by the PKK/YPG terrorist group in northeastern Syria, local sources said on Monday. From the occupied town of Ayn Isa, north of Syria's Raqa province, the PKK/YPG terrorists launched an attack on the village of Sahiyah, south of Tel Abyad town, with heavy weapons, said the sources on condition of anonymity. According to initial reports, one civilian was killed and two others were injured in the attack, they added. The town was cleared of all terrorist elements in October 2019, thanks to Operation Peace Spring by Türkiye. The PKK/YPG terrorists, who attempt to enter the operation zone frequently, target civilian houses with missile attacks. Since 2016, Ankara has launched a trio of successful anti-terror operations across its border in northern Syria to prevent the formation of a terror corridor and enable the peaceful settlement of residents: Euphrates Shield (2016), Olive Branch (2018), and Peace Spring (2019). In its more than 35-year terror campaign against Türkiye, the PKK — listed as a terrorist organization by Türkiye, the US, and the EU — has been responsible for the deaths of over 40,000 people, including women, children, and infants.—APP

\$1B needed to help Sudan people : UN

GENEVA: Over 1.8 million people are expected to flee war-torn Sudan and \$1 billion are needed to meet their needs, the UN refugee agency said on Monday. The UNHCR and 64 humanitarian and national civil society organizations appealed for \$1 billion "to provide essential aid and protection to over 1.8 million people expected to arrive in five neighboring countries by the end of 2023, fleeing the ongoing conflict in Sudan," the agency said in a press release. This represents a twofold rise from the initial May estimate of what would be needed to address the crisis, given the ongoing surge in displacement and requirements, according to the UNHCR. Over a million refugees, returnees, and third-country nationals have already left the country. "The crisis has triggered an urgent demand for humanitarian assistance, as those arriving in remote border areas find themselves in desperate circumstances due to inadequate services, poor infrastructure, and limited access," said Mamadou Dian Balde, the UNHCR regional refugee coordinator.—APP

Africa climate summit to urge investment in continent

Civil society groups are expected to protest near the summit at its opening against what they call its "deeply compromised agenda" and focus on rich-nation interests

NAIROBI : Kenya's president said Africa had a chance to "guide the globe" on climate action as he prepared to open a landmark climate summit in Nairobi on Monday aimed at reframing the continent as a budding renewable energy powerhouse. The first Africa Climate Summit comes ahead of a flurry of diplomatic meetings leading to the November COP28 climate summit in the oil-rich United Arab Emirates, which will likely be

dominated by clashing visions for the world's energy future. The Nairobi meeting is billed as bringing together leaders from the 54-nation continent to define a shared vision of Africa's green development — an ambitious aim in a politically and economically diverse region whose communities are among the most vulnerable to climate change. Kenyan President William Ruto said on Monday that an African position on climate



action would be to "save lives and the planet from calamity". "We aspire to chart a new growth agenda that will deliver shared prosperity and sustainable development," he said on X, formerly Twitter. "Africa is committed to taking advantage

of this unique opportunity to guide the globe towards inclusive climate action."

To meet those aspirations, Ruto has said that the international community must help unblock financing for the continent and ease the mounting debt burden on African countries. Joseph Nganga, Ruto's appointee to head the summit, said the conference would demonstrate that "Africa is not just a victim but a dynam-

ic continent with solutions for the world". Security has been tightened and roads closed around the summit venue in central Nairobi, where the government says 30,000 people have registered to attend the three-day event. Civil society groups are expected to protest near the summit at its opening against what they call its "deeply compromised agenda" and focus on rich-nation interests.—Agencies



WASHINGTON: Malik Sohail Hussain Secretary General Islamabad Industrial Association IIA,USPICC & PWCTA & Chief Coordinator UBG with Saddique Sheikh Chairman & Founder President USPICC,Mr Najeeb Choudary Board Member USPICC and Sajjad Ahmed Choudary Prominent Pakistan American Businessmen called on Pakistan Ambassador to the United States Masood Khan in Pakistan Embassy Washington.—DNA

Pakistan learns Chinese experience in e-commerce

FOREIGN DESK

BEIJING : Pakistani Ambassador to China, Moin ul Haque said that Pakistan is learning from the invaluable Chinese experience in e-commerce, and these partnerships exemplify the strength of our collaboration. Addressing a side-line forum titled "China E-Commerce Convention" at the China International Fair for Trade in Services (CIFTIS), Haque said that China's visionary Belt and Road Initiative has paved the way for increased connectivity and economic collaboration between our two nations, Gwadar Pro reported.

"Through initiatives like the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC), we are witnessing the creation of modern infrastructure that facilitates trade, investment, and e-commerce. We are looking for viable solutions to transform our E-commerce by looking at the Chinese benchmarks, and remove the obstacles creating market distortions in the way of economic prosperity", he added. He further said that as a testament to our commitment to expanding our e-commerce footprint, Pakistan has established online pavilions on various e-commerce plat-

forms in China, including JD and Douyin. Chinese companies like Kuaishou and Alibaba are also doing business in Pakistan. "These initiatives have allowed Pakistani products to find their way into Chinese markets, offering a taste of our nation's rich culture, craftsmanship, and trade potential. We are learning from the invaluable Chinese experience in e-commerce, and these partnerships exemplify the strength of our collaboration", Haque stated. The ambassador further said that in August this year, more than 200 Chinese businessmen visited the 1st Food and Agri Expo

in Karachi, showing a lot of interest in buying Pakistani agro and food products and introducing them on E-Commerce platforms. Recently China and Pakistan have finalized 5 protocols allowing Pakistani boiled meat, dairy products, chilies, cherries, herbal medicines, and other livestock to be imported into China for the first time. I invite the business and entrepreneurs from both sides to benefit from these new opportunities for expanding bilateral routes through traditional routes and e-commerce platforms", the ambassador added.

Corruption charges dropped against Malaysian deputy premier

DNA

ISTANBUL : A Malaysian court on Monday dropped corruption charges against deputy Prime Minister Ah-

mad Zahid Hamidi, state media said. The Kuala Lumpur High Court granted Ahmad Zahid, who was facing 47 charges of criminal breach of trust, bribery and money laundering, a

"discharge not amounting to an acquittal," state news agency Bernama reported. He pleaded not guilty in all cases. Justice Datuk Sequerah made the ruling after prosecution decided to halt

the case and investigate the case in depth. "My family and I are grateful to God because the court decided to drop the 47 charges against me," Ahmad Zahid told reporters outside the court. The deputy premier faced corruption charges including misappropriation of funds of his charitable foundation Yayasan Akalbudi. He was charged in 2018 and the trial began on Nov. 18, 2019.

Russian-Swede on trial suspected of spying

NEWS DESK

STOCKHOLM : A Russian-Swede arrested last year in a dramatic dawn raid on his quiet suburban home goes on trial in Stockholm on Monday accused of passing Western technology to Russia's military. Sergei Skvortsov, a 60-year-old dual national, has lived in Sweden since the 1990s where he has run import-export companies. He is to appear in a Stockholm district court charged with carrying out "unlawful intelligence activities" against the United States and Sweden for a decade until his arrest in November 2022.

The prosecution believes Skvortsov and his companies provided a platform for "the Russian military intelligence service GRU and part of the Russian state system" to illegally procure Western technology, mainly electronic devices which were off-limits to Moscow due to international sanctions. Skvortsov faces up to four years in prison if found guilty. In detention since his arrest, he has denied the allegations. Sweden's charge of "unlawful intelligence activities" is a notch lower than espionage. "There was a severe risk for national security interests, both in Sweden and the US," prosecutor Henrik Olin told AFP last week when Skvortsov was formally charged, adding the implications reached even further. "You only have to look at the battlefield in Ukraine to see that there's a real need for this from the Russian military industrial complex," Olin said. In the indictment, the prosecution accused Skvortsov of gathering "information and the actual acquisition of various items that the Russian state and the defence forces could not acquire on the open market due to export rules and sanctions." It accused him of "locating the items requested by the Russian state and the armed forces, negotiating and carrying out the purchase and further organising the transport of the goods while concealing the actual end user."

South Africa did not supply weapons to Russia

Presidency says allegations leveled against South Africa had damaging effect on its currency, economy and world standing

NEWS DESK

JOHANNESBURG : An independent inquiry probing allegations that South Africa supplied weapons to Russia has found no supporting evidence. "The panel found that there was no evidence to support the claim that a ship transported weapons from South Africa destined for Russia," a statement from President Cyril Ramaphosa's office said. The US ambassador to South Africa, Reuben Brigety, told reporters in May that his country was convinced that South Africa had supplied arms to the Russian military despite the country claiming to be neutral.

"Among the things we noted was the docking of the (Russian) cargo ship in the Simon's Town naval base between Dec. 6 and 8, 2022, which we are confident uploaded weapons and ammunition...as it made its way back to Russia," said Brigety. Following the allegations, Ramaphosa established an independent inquiry led by a retired judge to probe the claim. "The panel established that the ship (Lady R) docked at Simon's Town to deliver equipment that had

been ordered for the South African National Defense Force in 2018 by Armscor, the

country's arms procurement company," the statement added. The panel also said that



"in terms of the contract for the supply of the arms, neither Armscor nor the South African National Defense Force had any control over the means through which the supplier of the ordered equipment would transport it to South Africa."

The presidency said the allegations leveled against South Africa had a damaging effect on its currency, economy and world standing. "South Africa has clear laws that regulate the issuing of permits regarding the importation and exportation of conventional arms."

All relevant permits had been obtained for the importation of the equipment that was delivered by the ship. No permit was issued for the export of arms and no arms were exported," it said. The three-man panel was chaired by retired Judge Phineas Mojapelo and included advocate Leah Gcabashe SC and retired politician Enver Surty. South Africa's Department of International Relations and Cooperation (DIRCO) said in mid-May that Ambassador Brigety had apologized to the government and people of South Africa for his comments about a Russian ship loading weapons and ammunition from South Africa.

Int'l workshop on "Advances in Nuclear Medicine"

ISLAMABAD: OIC Ministerial Sanding Committee on Scientific and Technological Cooperation (COMSTTECH) in collaboration with Pakistan Nuclear Society (PNS) and Pakistan Society of Nuclear Medicine (PSNM) has planned to arrange an International Workshop on "Advances in Nuclear Medicine and its Applications" from September 19-20.

According to the COMSTTECH, the international and local experts of nuclear medicine and its applications will present lectures during the workshop while local faculty and researchers will share their research findings as contributed talks. The theme of the workshop would be on the changing horizons of Nuclear Medicine, incorporating the translation of basic laboratory research to clinical practice, establishment of clinical and technical standards, and the translation of molecular technological advances in diagnostic and therapeutic nuclear medicine. Nuclear technology has transformed health sector by advancements in diagnostic and therapeutic modalities for non-communicable pathologies. Hybrid imaging, especially PET-CT has altogether changed the diagnostic horizon, especially in the management of cancer patients. However, not only Pakistan but most of the OIC countries are still lagging behind in hybrid imaging facilities, especially PET-CT imaging. The indispensable role of PET-CT and hybrid imaging needs to be highlighted for the benefit of various stakeholders and patients.

Furthermore, the emergent role of theranostics and advanced radionuclide therapies using alpha and beta emitters has given new insights in cancer treatment paradigms. These rapid advancements in the field of nuclear medicine warrant continual education of referring physicians, oncologists, nuclear physicians, medical physicists and technologists from OIC countries. Clinical practitioners, Oncologists, Researchers and students in nuclear medicine and Medical technologists will attend the event which will be in hybrid mode.—DNA

Importance of the charter of economy underlined

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Chairman of National Business Group Pakistan, President Pakistan Businessmen and Intellectuals Forum, and All Karachi Industrial Alliance, and former provincial minister Mian Zahid Hussain said on Monday that most of the finance ministers have tried to prove themselves as the Messiah instead of correcting the economic corruption. These finance ministers have caused irreparable damage to the economy in a bid to gain popularity, he said. Mian Zahid Hussain said that instead of increasing exports, boosting the tax-to-GDP ratio, and luring foreign investment, the finance ministers have been busy tampering with the exchange rate and interest rate, giving the impression of artificial growth. Talking to the business community, the veteran business leader said that foreign ministers' gimmickry remained counterproductive and damaged our relations with the IMF and other international institutions. He said that after signing any agreement with the IMF, we cheated the institution by reducing the prices of gasoline and electricity against the agreement, which worsened the situation. In the past several decades, assurances have been given to the people and international institutions to sell off failed government institutions, implement necessary reforms, provide relief to taxpayers, bring non-taxpayers into the tax net, reduce deficits, and end smuggling, but this is not the case, he observed. In order to reduce the budget deficit, action is taken against taxpayers instead of tax evaders, and the people are squeezed more, but these policies will not last long because the entire country is protesting.—APP

Premier technology event attracts visitors

ANKARA : Türkiye's premier technology and aerospace event TEKNOFEST was visited by 943,000 people last week, organizer T3 Foundation stated on social media on Monday. The five-day event, which ran from Wednesday to Sunday in the capital Ankara, hosted a wide array of attractions, including air shows, competitions, workshops, and exhibitions. The Ankara edition followed the event's first gathering in 2023, which was held in the Turkish metropolis of Istanbul in April. The third edition of the event will be organized in the country's Aegean city of Izmir at the end of this month. TEKNOFEST has been held in various Turkish cities outside of Istanbul in even years and in the metropolis in odd years, but to mark the centenary of the Republic of Türkiye in 2023, the event has been planned in three different provinces. Anadolu, a Turkish news service provider, has been the event's global communications partner since its inception in 2018.—Agencies

Briefs

PTI requests SC to provide justice

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) Core Committee expressed great resentment over the dilly-dallying tactics in the bail issue of the PTI Chairman Imran Khan to deprive him of right to fair trial on various technical grounds so as to perpetuate his detention in Attock jail. PTI Core Committee, in its crucial meeting, held on Monday said that after the special judge's week-long leave, the refusal of the duty judge to hear the bail application of PTI Chairman was a matter of great concern. They stated that Imran Khan's cases were the worst examples of discriminatory justice, as first he was awarded punishment in the false case of Toshakhana in an extraordinary haste by flouting the law and justice and now efforts were being made to deprive him of justice by making various tricks to delay hearing of cipher case. PT Core Committee said that the case of PTI Vice Chairman Shah Mehmood Qureshi was also put on hold under the guise of the departure of the special judge. He said that the process of depriving the PTI leaders from justice and keeping them in prison on technical grounds should be stopped immediately. PTI Core Committee also reviewed the Lahore High Court's hearing on the arrest of PTI President Chaudhry Pervaiz Elahi despite the court order.

Gabon coup leader vows free elections

ADDIS ABABA: The leader of Gabon's military junta has vowed to return power to civilians after "free, transparent" elections. However, in a speech after being sworn in as interim president, he did not give a date for military rule to end. Gen Brice Ngouma led last Wednesday's coup against Ali Bongo, toppling the president shortly after he was named winner of a disputed election. Crowds of cheering civilians turned up at the inauguration - the coup was welcomed by many eager for change. However, some say Gen Ngouma's rule will be a continuation of the 55-year Bongo dynasty. Ali Bongo's father, Omar, was in power for 41 years before he died in 2009 and was succeeded by his son. The general spent most his career in the Bongo's inner circle and is even thought to be Ali Bongo's cousin. At Monday's inauguration, Gen Ngouma gave a defiant speech, referencing the likes of South African Archbishop Desmond Tutu, French statesman Charles Fe Gaule and former Ghanaian leader Jerry Rawlings. "This patriotic action will be a lesson learnt that will be taught in the books of our schools," said the new president, dressed in the red ceremonial costume of the Republican Guard. - Agencies

Niger junta reopens airspace after coup

FOREIGN DESK

NAMEY: Niger's military leaders have reopened the country's airspace to all commercial flights after closing it on Aug. 6 after they seized power in a coup, a transport ministry spokesperson said on Monday. The closure had forced Air France (AIRF.PA) and other European carriers to suspend some flights and take longer routes across the African continent. Landlocked Niger is more than twice the size of France and many flight paths across Africa would normally pass above it. The junta had initially closed Niger's airspace citing the threat of military intervention from the West African regional bloc. They did not immediately give a reason for lifting the ban.

Erdogan meets Putin in bid to unblock grain deal deadlock

One of Moscow's main demands is for the Russian Agricultural Bank to be reconnected to the SWIFT international payments system. The EU cut it off in June 2022

NEWS DESK

MOSCOW: President Recep Tayyip Erdogan on Monday arrived in the Black Sea resort of Sochi for a summit with his Russian counterpart Vladimir Putin, as Turkey and the United Nations seek to revive a key agreement that allowed Ukraine to export grain and other commodities from three Black Sea ports despite the 18-month war. The visit comes more than one month after Moscow put on hold the deal, which was brokered by Turkey and the U.N. and was seen as vital for global food supplies, especially in Africa, the Middle East and Asia. Ukraine and Russia are major suppliers of wheat, barley, sunflower oil and other goods that developing nations rely on. Erdogan said the grain deal was the headline issue at the daylong talks between the two leaders. "Everyone is looking at the grain corridor issue," Erdogan said in opening remarks. A lot is riding on the talks for the world food supply. "I believe that the message we will give after our meeting will constitute an important step for the world, especially for the underdeveloped African countries," the Turkish leader said. Russia broke off the deal, complaining that a parallel deal promising to remove obstacles to Russian exports of food and fertilizer hadn't been honored and that not enough Ukrainian grain was going to countries in need. It said restrictions on shipping and insurance hampered its agricultural trade even though it has shipped record



amounts of wheat since last year. Putin told Erdogan that Russia was "open" to talks on restoring the Black Sea initiative. "I know you intend to raise the issue of the grain deal. We are open to negotiations on this issue," he said in televised comments. Since Moscow withdrew from the grain initiative, Erdogan has repeatedly pledged to renew arrangements that helped avoid a food crisis in parts of Africa, the Middle East and Asia. The trip to the Black Sea resort city marks a rare visit by a leader of a NATO country to Russia amid Moscow's all-out war in Ukraine. But Erdogan has taken on the role of mediator between Ukraine and Russia and has been one of the few leaders within the NATO alliance to maintain open access to Putin. Monday's talks mark the first meeting between the two leaders since Erdogan's

reelection for a third term as president in May. Erdogan was accompanied by a large delegation that included Turkey's defense, foreign, energy and finance ministers. Turkey and Russia have enjoyed growing ties in several areas, including energy. Erdogan said his government wanted to boost annual trade with Russia to \$100 billion from \$62 billion, adding that he supported Moscow's push to switch a part of that trade into Turkish liras and rubles. "I believe that switching to local currencies is extremely important in bilateral relations," he said. For his part, Putin said the two leaders had raised relations between the two countries to a "very good, high level." He mentioned various areas of bilateral cooperation, such as a proposed Russian gas hub in Turkey and the construction of the first nuclear power plant, Akkuyu, in which Moscow is actively involved.

He also said he hoped they would wrap up talks soon on creating a hub in Türkiye for exports of Russian gas. Türkiye has positioned itself to facilitate any peace talks between Ukraine and Russia. It has opposed the Russian invasion but also the Western sanctions on Moscow. Erdogan, who previously played a significant role in convincing Putin to stick with the grain deal, has maintained good relations with Putin and helped broker prisoner exchanges between the warring sides. The Turkish leader has repeatedly called on the Western countries to consider Russia's demands and said he hoped his talks with Putin could lead to the restoration of the Black Sea Grain Initiative. The Sochi summit follows last week's talks between Turkish Foreign Minister Hakan Fidan and his Russian counterpart Sergei Lavrov and Defense Minister Sergei Shoigu, during which Russia handed over a list of actions that the West would have to take in order for Ukraine's Black Sea exports to resume. Shoigu said it was not Russia's fault that the grain deal had failed and repeated the Russian position that Moscow would return to it if all the promises made to Russia were fulfilled. "It's not our fault today, but it's stopped," Shoigu said in a statement released by the Defense Ministry. "Here we can say only one thing, that if everything that was promised to Russia is fulfilled, the deal will be extended." "It turned out that it is more difficult to do this than to build new corridors, new ground routes," said Shoigu, who attended the signing ceremony for the Black Sea deal in Istanbul in 2022.

Crimean Tatar set to become Ukrainian defense ministe



DNA

KYIV: Ukraine's President Volodymyr Zelensky has tapped Rustem Umerov, a Crimean Tatar, to become his next defense minister, replacing Oleksii Reznikov at a critical time for Ukraine's counteroffensive. Umerov will have a bulging in-tray if and when the Ukrainian parliament approves his appointment. The change in leadership comes as Ukraine's relationships with allies and donors enter a new phase. Kyiv is trying to accelerate the training and deployment of F-16 combat planes and acquire a host of other equipment and weapons from its western allies to help push forward its counteroffensive. But the Defense Ministry is also trying to develop an indigenous weapons production base in concert with western defense firms, including efforts to develop new long-range capabilities that could be used against targets inside Russian territory.

Pakistan Navy siezed 9.5 tons of narcotics at sea

DNA

KARACHI: In an intelligence based joint counter-narcotics operation, Pakistan Navy and ANF seized 9.5 Tons of narcotics and over 10 thousand bottles of Liquor at sea. The apprehended drugs were stowed in hidden compartments of a fishing boat that was successfully intercepted by a PN Ship. The estimated value of seized narcotics is US \$ 112 million in international market. The seized drugs were subsequently handed over to Anti-Narcotics Force for further legal proceedings. The successful execution of joint Anti-Narcotics Operation is a strong demonstration of Pakistan Navy's resolve to deter and disrupt illegal activities in maritime zones of Pakistan.



ISLAMABAD: Caretaker Minister for Finance Dr. Shamshad Akhtar called on caretaker Prime Minister Anwaar-ul-Haq Kakar. - DNA

Cipher case Judge hearing bail pleas goes on leave

ISLAMABAD: Special Court Judge Abulhasnat Zulqarnain, who is hearing the cipher case against PTI Chairman Imran Khan and Vice Chairman Shah Mehmood Qureshi, is on leave, it emerged on Monday. The cipher case pertains to a diplomatic document which reportedly went missing from Imran's possession. The PTI alleges that it contained a threat from the United States to oust Imran from power. Proceedings against Qureshi, the former foreign minister, are also under way in the same case. Following the suspension of Imran's three-year jail term in the Toshakhana case, it emerged that the ex-premier had been in judicial remand in the cipher case, which was extended till September 13 last week. The same day, Imran had approached the Islamabad High Court (IHC) against the appointment of Judge Zulqarnain, an anti-terrorism court (ATC) judge, to the special court established to hear cases filed under the Official Secrets Act. He had also filed a post-arrest bail plea in the special court, which had been fixed for hearing on September 2, with notices issued to the Federal Investigation Agency (FIA) and other relevant authorities. However, on September 2, the hearings on the bail pleas of Imran and Qureshi were adjourned till today since the validity of the special court was under scrutiny in the IHC. - DNA

Mandatory to inform IHC before arresting Imaan

ISLAMABAD: The Islamabad High Court (IHC) has barred authorities from arresting human rights lawyer ImaanZainabMazari-Hazir in any case before informing it. The order was issued by Justice Miangul Hasan Aurangzeb while hearing petition of Imaan on Monday. Imaan and former lawmaker Ali Wazir were arrested last month and criminal cases were registered against them by Tar-nol police and Counter-Terrorism Department (CTD) police station. On August 28, Imaan was granted bail in the sedition case but was re-arrested within hours by the Islamabad police in connection with a freshly filed terror case. An anti-terrorism court (ATC) had remanded her in police custody for three days. On August 30, the IHC barred police from arresting Imaan in any case registered after August 20 - when she was first arrested. On September 2, she was granted bail in the terror case and was released. At the outset of hearing today, Justice Aurangzeb took up Imaan's plea seeking the details of the FIRs registered against her and protective bail. The plea was filed last week. Additional Attorney General (AAG) Munawar Iqbal Dogal informed the court that after the previous hearing, he had written to the provinces seeking the details of the cases against Imaan, as well as communicated the same over fax and WhatsApp. - DNA

Pakistan-Saudi joint counter-terrorism exercise concludes

STAFF REPORT



RAWALPINDI: The military contingents of Pakistan and the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia concluded the joint counter-terrorism exercise Al-Battar-1 on Saturday, said the Inter-Services Public Relations (ISPR). Special forces teams from the two countries participated in the two-week-long maneuvers. During the closing ceremony today, the kingdom's envoy to Pakistan, Nawaf Saeed Al Malkiy, along with senior military leadership witnessed the final day of activities. "Combat aviation along with the special forces of both countries displayed their professional excellence. The exercise concluded with a fly past," said the ISPR. "The exercise was aimed at further harnessing the historic military-to-military relations between both brotherly countries, including nurturing of joint employment concept against counter-terrorism and identifying areas of mutual interest for future military collaborations." The two nations routinely conduct such exercises. In February, joint exercise "Al-Samsaam-VIII-22" was held in K-P's Pabbi area. In December, a joint military counter-IED (improvised explosive device) exercise, Al-Kassab-III, also commenced between the two countries at King Khalid Military City Hafar Al-Batin in Saudi Arabia.

LHC issues contempt notice to Islamabad IG

LAHORE: The Lahore High Court (LHC) issued a show-cause notice for contempt of court to Islamabad Inspector General (IG) Dr Akbar Nasir Khan while hearing a plea for PTI President ParvezElahi's production in court. On Friday, Islamabad police had re-arrested Elahi near his residence soon after the LHC had set him free with a restraining order against his possible arrest by an agency or preventive detention. An Islamabad police team, assisted by Lahore police, had intercepted a white SUV near the FCC underpass in which Elahi was travelling with lawyer Sardar Latif Khosa to his house and dragged him into a white car with no licence plate. Visuals of the arrest had gone viral on social media and were condemned by the Pakistan Bar Council among others. The Islamabad police had said the former chief minister, who was later moved to Attock Jail, was taken into custody under Section 3 of the Maintenance of Public Order. After his re-arrest on Friday, Elahi had approached the Islamabad High Court for release while his wife, QaisaraElahi, had filed two pleas in the LHC, seeking directions for relevant authorities to present Elahi in court and contempt proceedings against Punjab police officials on grounds of "wilful disobedience". Taking up Qaisara's plea for Elahi's production in court today, LHC's Justice AmjadRafiq summoned Punjab IG Dr Usman Anwar and Lahore Capital City Police Officer (CCPO) Bilal Siddique Kamanya. The plea named the Punjab police chief, CCPO, the caretaker government of Punjab, the provincial home secretary, DIG investigation, DIG operations, and SP Model Town as respondents in the case. It prayed that the respondents be directed to produce Elahi in court to the petitioner's satisfaction that her husband was not in illegal custody. It also requested that the former chief minister be released if the court found him to be in "unlawful custody". - DNA

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