



Islamabad POST

Monday, April 29, 2024

Pakistan's Credible Daily Newspaper

Price Rs. 30

Abbas: US to be held responsible if Israel invades Rafah

Detailed News On Page-08

Musk in China to discuss full self driving

Detailed News On Page-08

Kirsten named Pakistan's white ball coach

Detailed News On Page-06



On WEF sidelines

PM, IMF chief discuss new bailout package

Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif reiterates commitment to put economy back on track

NEWS DESK / DNA

RIYADH: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Sunday discussed new bailout package with the International Monetary Fund (IMF) Managing Director Kristalina Georgieva on the sidelines of the World Economic Forum Special Meeting in Riyadh. In his first meeting with the IMF chief since his re-election, PM Shehbaz reiterated his government's commitment to put Pakistan's economy back on track, according to a statement issued by the PM Office. Pakistan is seeking a new long-term Extended Fund Facility (EFF) after a current \$3 billion Stand-By Arrangement (SBA) expires this month. "Both sides also discussed Pakistan entering into another IMF program to ensure that the gains made in the past year were consolidated and its economic growth trajectory remained positive," the statement added.

PM Shehbaz thanked IMF chief Georgieva for her support to Pakistan in securing the \$3 billion SBA from the international lender last year that was now nearing its completion. The development came a day before the expected meeting of the IMF Executive Board to decide on the final tranche of \$1.1 billion under the \$3 billion short-term loan programme. IMF chief Georgieva appreciated the leadership of PM Shehbaz for timely securing SBA last year, as per the statement. During the meeting, the prime minister said that he had directed his financial team, led by Finance Minister Muhammad Aurangzeb, to carry out structural reforms, ensure strict fiscal discipline and pursue prudent policies that would ensure macro-economic stability and sustained economic growth. The IMF MD shared her institution's perspective on the ongoing programme with the premier, including the review process.

PM calls for bridging North-South gap

PM draws attention to global health inequities

DNA

RIYADH: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Sunday drew attention to the inequities in global healthcare, calling it the first and foremost problem. Addressing a session on the global health agenda during the World Economic Forum's (WEF) special meeting in Riyadh, PM Shehbaz spoke about the time he was struck with a "nasty cancer". "I was struck by a very nasty cancer, 'Adenocarcinoid', and I was flown to New York. At that time I had to pay thousands of dollars from my pocket and I wondered how many people in my country could afford this kind of expensive treatment and I said 'not very many'". Speaking about the issue of global healthcare inequities, PM Shehbaz said that COVID-19 exposed these imbalances and gaps hugely. "Imagine global north and south, distribution of vaccines and so on and so forth,"

Continued on Page 06



RIYADH: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif meets the Amir of Kuwait Sheikh Meshal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah on the sidelines of a special meeting of the World Economic Forum. – DNA

Meets Kuwaiti Amir PM calls for transforming Pakistan-Kuwait ties

Bilateral ties, the regional situation, particularly with regards to the crisis in Gaza, were discussed

FOREIGN DESK

RIYADH: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif met the Amir of Kuwait, His Highness Sheikh Meshal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah on the sidelines of the World Economic Forum (WEF) Special Meeting in Riyadh today. The Prime Minister thanked His Highness the Amir for sending him a warm congratulatory letter upon his re-election. While congratulating His Highness Sheikh Meshal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah on assuming the role of Amir, the Prime Minister expressed his desire to work

Continued on Page 06

Relaxation in visa for tourists also mullied

ECO members agree to develop more airlinks

Pakistan's suggestion in the ECO Summit for making more efforts for human resource development and for more airline connectivity was highly lauded

CENTRELINE REPORT

SHAHNISABZ: The Economic Cooperation Organization (ECO), during its summit held yesterday, unanimously adopted Pakistan's suggestions for developing more airline connectivity and relaxation of visas within and to the region. Secretary General ECO directed its Secretariat to also consider Pakistan's suggestions for the inclusion of the World Bank and Asian Development Bank in the coordinating functions of the recommended ECO Tourism Advisory Committee. Pakistan's suggestion in the ECO Summit for making more efforts for human resource development and for more airline connectivity was highly lauded by the participating members.

Continued on Page 06

Experts stress broadening of tax base

Experts urge privatisation of companies to overcome crisis

KHAYAM ABBASI

ISLAMABAD: The financial experts and top businessmen of the country have laid emphasis on broadening of the tax base, increasing the tax to GDP ratio, digitalisation among other measures to

Continued on Page 06

Briefs

No dialogue unless PTI adopts mindset

Rana Tanveer says desire for dialogue with establishment has revealed PTI's true face

ADIL SHAHEEN

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister Rana Tanveer Hussain has stated that Shehryar Afridi's statement has exposed the true face of Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI). Interacting with reporters here on Sunday, the minister remarked that the PTI founder and his party were already under the influence of the establishment and now they are attempting to capitulate. Hussain emphasised that unless PTI adopted a political mindset, meaningful negotiations could not take place.

Abbasi stresses need for course correction

Cannot move forward until justice system is corrected

ABID RAZA

LAHORE: Former prime minister Shahid Khaqan Abbasi has said issues cannot be fixed until course of politics is corrected. Speaking at the Asma Jahangir Conference in Lahore on Sunday, the former prime minister said economies hit by the political turmoil were always weak. In such circumstances, price reduction was impossible, he said. "Relief to the public in the present conditions was out of question while going to the IMF means we have failed. We cannot work in any sector by buying expensive electricity," he highlighted.

Babar holds only Pakistani nationality

IHC denounces 'false, malicious' campaign against Justice Babar

The IHC's public relations officer in the statement said: "Justice Babar Sattar has never had any nationality other than that of Pakistan. He studied law at Oxford University as a Rhodes Scholar and pursued graduate education at Harvard Law School

COURT REPORTER

ISLAMABAD: The Islamabad High Court (IHC) on Sunday slammed a "malicious" social media campaign against Justice Babar Sattar, accusing him of holding a US nationality and having a business interest in a private school in the country. The IHC said as a part of the "false, malicious and contemptuous" campaign, the judge's confidential information was posted and shared on social media platforms which included travel documents of Sattar, his wife and kids. Details provided in tax returns regarding his properties were also being posted on social media with false and malignant allegations, it said. The IHC's public relations officer in the statement said: "Justice Babar Sattar has never had any nationality other than that of Pakistan."

Continued on Page 06

FM Dar appointed as deputy PM

FAISAL SHEIKH

ISLAMABAD: In a surprise move, Foreign Minister Ishaq Dar has been appointed as deputy prime minister of the country, according to a notification issued by the Cabinet Division on Sunday. "The Prime Minister has been pleased to designate Mr Mohammad Ishaq Dar, Federal Minister for Foreign Affairs, as Deputy Prime Minister with immediate effect and until further orders," read the notification. Dar was appointed as the country's foreign minister after the Pakistan

Continued on Page 06

Security forces kill 2 terrorists

ISPR reaffirms security forces' resolve to eliminate terrorism

STAFF REPORT

RAWALPINDI: Two terrorists involved in target killing and extortion were shot dead during an intense exchange of fire between militants and security forces in Dera Ismail Khan District of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Inter-Services Public Relations (ISPR) said on Sunday. As per the military's media wing,

Continued on Page 06

Germany envoy's speech disrupted during Asma Jahangir conference

Unruly youth chanted slogans against West for siding with Israel in Gazans genocide

BUREAU REPORT

LAHORE: Pro-Palestinian activists disrupted the speech of German Ambassador to Pakistan Alfred Grannas when he took the podium to speak at the Asma Jahangir Conference 2024 in Lahore. The German envoy was called out by the representatives of the Progressive Students' Collective when he began his speech during the annual conference, the theme of which this year is 'The People's Mandate: Safeguarding Civil Rights in South Asia'. As Grannas started speaking, one of the guests at the event, an activist, who was standing in the middle of the conference hall, said: "Excuse me Mr ambassador. Excuse me. I'm shocked by your audacity that you are here to talk about civil rights." The activist also questioned the envoy about his government's complicity in the ongoing genocide, as his speech was largely aimed at exploring the state of human and civil rights in South Asia,



including Pakistan. "Why your country is brutally abusing the people speaking for the rights of Palestinians," the activist said, addressing the German envoy. Ambassador Grannas, who was visibly taken aback, began shouting while asking the protesters not to shout. He also gestured at the students while waving his left hand in the air, asking them to "go out". "If you want to shout, go out, and there you can shout because shouting is not a discussion. That it is [sic]... if you want to discuss..." the envoy said, soon after which the conference went off-air for a while on a digital media platform's YouTube channel. However, the speech by Ambassador Grannas resumed in a matter of few minutes. The protest by the activist came days after the conference organisers shared that the envoy would participate in the event. However, the curtain raiser about his participation in the event garnered immense criticism from users on X, formerly Twitter, who questioned his presence owing to Germany's support for Israeli offensive in Gaza.

Summer Camp Season 7

Package	1 Activity	2 Activity	3 Activity
1 Child	55,000	70,000	85,000
2 Children	65,000	80,000	95,000
3 Children	75,000	90,000	105,000
4 Children	85,000	100,000	115,000
5 Children	95,000	110,000	125,000
6 Children	105,000	120,000	135,000

ACTIVITIES

- Swimming
- Kids Aerobics
- Taekwondo
- Kids Yoga

RULES & REGULATIONS

Each activity will run for three consecutive weeks, missing days will not be compensated.

15% discount on all Maisha services and food bar menu for the participants and their parents.

For registration, please scan the QR code and email the participant's birth certificate and photograph to Maisha@serena.com.pk mentioning "summer camp 2024" in the subject line.

The offer cannot be combined with any other discounts or promotions.

Participants can participate in one activity per day.

Participating children are to be accompanied by one of their parents.

The timings of the children will be assigned at the time of registration for the entire program, however, changing the time will be subject to availability.

Lowest seats available.

All prices are subject to government taxes.

For more information please scan QR code or call: 051 2005249

Valid from 1st April to 31st August, 2024

DRC treats over 5700 drug addicts hailing from SP

MULTAN: Since its inception in 2011-12, the Drug Rehabilitation Center has managed to treat over 5700 drug addicts, and there has seemed to be no decline in the number of patients.

The common reason behind the decline of drug addicts is the easy availability of drugs across south Punjab, said an official of the Social Welfare Department. "A drug rehabilitation center was introduced in the city in order to treat chronic drug addicts, and it successfully treated a large number of patients, but the phenomenon of drug addiction is still prevalent in the region," he added. During treatment at DRC, the drug addicts undergo three months of training, and all the expenses are covered by the Punjab government. The sources remarked that over 500 addicts, including 70 percent heroin addicts, were treated at the Drug Rehabilitation Center annually. The Drug Rehabilitation Center in Multan is the only center across the province, working under the supervision of the Social Welfare Department. There was a lower number of rehab patients from 2011-2013, as people had no information about the center. However, a good number of people are contacting the center for rehabilitation of drug addicts these days. Replying to a query, the sources informed me that the center offered its services for those drug addicts who were willing to get treatment. However, chronic or violent drug addicts were referred to the Nishtar Hospital.—APP

Punjab's agriculture land's fertility on decrease

MULTAN: Punjab's soil, the country's food basket, is facing a deficiency in essential nutrients for agriculture resulting in decreased crop productivity and the agriculture department urged farmers to utilize green to get handsome production. The total cultivation land in Pakistan is about 79.61 million hectares, out of which 20.63 million hectares are in Punjab. In Punjab province, 14.41 million hectares are irrigated areas while 6.22 million hectares are arid areas. According to agriculture experts, the fertility of the land was decreasing at a fast pace due to a lack of nitrogen, phosphorus, potassium, zinc and some other ingredients. Similarly, the organic matter is also less than one per cent. Although, the farmers are trying to address the issue of organic matter but unable to reach standards and ensure fertility. The deficiencies are causing infertility by damaging the soil's texture. Despite efforts to address nutrient deficiency through various means like cattle manure, poultry litter, and compost, the shortfall persists, leading to lower crop yields and inadequate soil fertility. However, the use of green manure in wheat and rice cultivation has shown promising results, enhancing soil water retention and nutrient absorption. About green manure, the experts stated, the crops that are grown specifically to be ploughed back into the soil while still green or shortly after flowering.—APP



ISLAMABAD: Solidarity photo exhibition for oppressed Palestinians organized by Palestine Foundation Pakistan and Islamabad Arts Gallery in Islamabad. Renowned artists Jamal Shah, Dr. Sabir Abu Maryam, Liaquat Baloch, Allama Ahmed Iqbal, Hurriyat leader Sheikh Mateen, Abdul Hameed Lone, Harmeet Singh, and other personalities will participate in the inauguration ceremony.—Photo Mudassar Raja

Non-conventional sectors like gemstone can increase exports

RCCI President Saqib Rafiq said that export targets can be met by promoting non-traditional sectors

DNA

RAWALPINDI: The gems and jewellery sector can play a vital role in enhancing exports of the country, contributing immensely in earning of foreign exchange and providing employment to the youth. Rawalpindi Chamber of Commerce and Industry (RCCI) President Saqib Rafiq while speaking to the participants of the International Workshop for Technical Expert Service Program on Gems and Jewellery at

Chamber House, said that there are many opportunities in the nonconventional sectors like Gemstones and Jewellery. He remarked that "Our industry has huge potential for value addition and profitability but due to lack of interest this industry is far below our regional competitors, who are engaged in the mining, cutting/polishing and trading of gemstones." He said there was a need to focus on non-conventional sectors to increase exports. RCCI President Saqib

met by promoting non-traditional sectors, there is a need to review the Strategic Trade Policy Framework (STPF) 2020-25.

Pakistan is the fifth largest country rich in precious stone reserves, minerals. The share in the gross domestic product is only three percent. The main objective of this program is to review international standards on gemstone products, to provide comprehensive knowledge of cutting, polishing, designing and heating techniques, and to

enhance understanding of best practices and technological advances in gemstone value chains including manufacturing, standardization and trading. On this occasion, Vice President Faisal Shahzad, former Vice President Fayyaz Qureshi, Chamber members and representatives from the National Productivity Organization (NPO), Pakistan and Asian Productivity Organization (APO) from Thailand and Japan, and other distinguished guests were also present on the occasion.

PIAF urges joint efforts for Pak fiscal challenges

PIAF Chairman observed that country's GDP growth rate has always remained below its potential despite efforts to boost economic growth

DNA

LAHORE: The Pakistan Industrial Associations Front (PIAF) has asked the government to give priority to the economic recovery, emphasizing the necessity of joint efforts to tackle Pakistan's economic difficulties. PIAF Chairman Faheem Rehman Saigol observed that country's GDP growth rate has always remained below its potential despite efforts to boost economic growth, as the development of important sectors and investment prospects was hampered by inadequate revenue collection, structural problems, and governance issues. Since it has been causing serious economic issues for years, the cost of goods, food, petrol, and other necessities has increased, and inflation has almost reached 45 percent, which is not bearable for the common man. On the other hand, there has been an increase in dissatisfaction among the public that no state institution is performing well

and to save them from the haughtiness and bad administration pervasive in the system. The only way for this to go from a failure to a success story, as in other countries, is if the federal and provincial governments defy them and pursue fundamental changes in governance, fairness, openness, accountability, and the consistent economic policies minimum for 15 years. Faheem Saigol expressed confidence in the country's ability to overcome these challenges and highlighted the new government should fulfill the commitment to eradicating poverty and unemployment. He said that the government should remain steadfast in its commitment to guide Pakistan through its current economic and political challenges, with a focus on unity, effective governance, and public welfare. The PIAF Chairman said that the country has had trouble raising enough money to cover its expenses. Due to the low tax-to-GDP ratio, borrowing and outside help are heavily relied upon to close the

fiscal imbalance. In Pakistan, there is a recurring budget deficit because the government spends more than it takes in. The national debt burden has risen, as a result, needing substantial financial resources for debt repayment. Both internal and external debt in Pakistan has been constantly rising. The PIAF leader said that budget is largely consumed by debt servicing; leaving little money for social welfare and development initiatives. Circular debt, which is the accumulation of unpaid invoices and pending payments among power generation firms, distribution companies, and the government, is a problem in Pakistan's energy sector. Other troubling issues also exist, posing obstacles to our economy's expansion. Pakistan is ranked 173rd internationally for tax payments. According to a World Bank analysis, Pakistani businesspeople pay 47 taxes yearly. A single business that conducts business in four different Pakistani provinces annually disburs-

es five corporate income taxes, twelve employer-paid pension contributions, twelve Social Security payments, one property tax, one professional tax, one vehicle tax, one stamp duty payment, one fuel tax payment, and twelve payments of goods and sales tax. An exporter needs 75 hours to complete border compliance and document compliance. Additionally, Pakistan dropped 23 spots on the indicator for corporate loan availability. He said that the government will have its work sharply cut out as far as the economic challenges are concerned. Coming at the back of fast-unfolding climate change crisis and recent COVID pandemic that pushed millions into poverty with little fiscal capacity of government to provide anywhere near close to what was needed in stimulus spending. He said that even though Pakistan's economic crisis is a recurring factor in the country's political unrest, it has a history of ignoring the nation's true issues, which include poor governance, a broken judicial system, outdated laws, complicated tax system, lack of transparency, duplication in the government system, ineffective bureaucracy, improper use of our human, natural and water resources, lack of efficient local government, inadequate/unreliable data for country's planning, and the consistent flaws in policies in execution by the government departments.

Katas Raj Temple significance to be resorted

Q.A.HASHMI

LAHORE: Initiatives to restore the historical significance of the Katas Raj Temple by the Evacuee Trust Property Board is being mullied. In light of Chairman Board Arshad Farid Khan's special directives, Board Secretary Farid Iqbal, accompanied by the board's technical branch, visited Katas Raj Temple. An assessment was conducted of the temple's decoration, arrangements, residential rooms for pilgrims, dining hall, and other construction and developmental works. The consultant provided a comprehensive briefing to the Board Secretary regarding the construction works. Highlighting the administrative and security measures taken in the temple by the Operations Branch of the Board, the Board Secretary also commended the work of the Technical Branch and instructed to complete ongoing developmental works by June 30.

WASA sets up advanced lab for water quality

RAWALPINDI: Water and Sanitation Agency (WASA) Rawalpindi had established a state-of-the-art laboratory to check water quality at Rawal Dam Filtration plant and the lab was regularly monitoring and analyzing the quality of water being fetched from all resources, said Managing Director (MD) WASA Muhammad Saleem Ashraf.

He informed that WASA on the directives of the Director General (DG) Rawalpindi Development Authority (RDA) Kinza Murtaza, had launched a comprehensive campaign to test the quality of water.

The MD said that the agency under a comprehensive campaign would continue to test the quality of water being fetched from all resources including Rawal Dam, Khanpur Dam, WASA tube wells and water filtrations plants of WASA and being supplied to the consumers. Currently WASA Lab was analyzing three types of water quality parameters namely physical, chemical and bacteriological parameters, he said adding, physical parameters included water appearance, temperature, pollution, oxygen concentration and TDS level in water while chemical parameters included alkalinity, hardness, sulphate, calcium, magnesium, chlorides, chlorine, sulphite, nitrate, ammonia, iron and arsenic of water. Bacteriological parameters included total coliform and faecal coliform count, he said.

He further informed that the Assistant Director (Water Quality)/Junior Research Officer was responsible for obtaining, analyzing and submitting reports of water samples to assess water quality as per W.H.O.'s global standards for safe drinking water.

A comprehensive plan for regular monitoring of the quality of WASA's surface and ground water sources had been developed and implemented, he said adding, Rawalpindi city had been divided into six zones namely West-I, East-I, West-II, East-II, PP-12 and PP-13. Assistant Director, Water Quality along with laboratory staff inspects and collects samples of water from 40 tube wells and 10 filtration plants on weekly basis. Water testing and monitoring project for WASA areas had been completed in three months period, the MD informed. WASA is running 127 filtration plants in its jurisdiction which were rehabilitated and activated under the government's cleanliness drive. He said that the agency had adopted a zero tolerance policy on contaminated water and all Standard Operating Procedures were strictly being followed in this regard.—APP

RIPJA's annual elections see photojournalists panel sweep

Photojournalists panel has taken all the seats of the executive and governing body, Sohail has won 33 votes of the photojournalists panel

DNA

ISLAMABAD: In the annual elections of Ripja, the panel of photojournalists took the field. The panel of photojournalists took the field, Sohail Shahzad Cheetha President, Shahid Qureshi aka Raju Secretary while Syed Mehdi was elected Finance Secretary, polling continued uninterruptedly from 11 am to 4 pm in the National Press Club Islamabad, in which the twin cities Photojournalists actively participated, the total number of voters was 60, out of which 53 votes were cast, the results were announced by Chairman Election Committee Faisal Hakeem along with Election Committee members Nadeem Chaudhry and Izharul



Haq Khan Niazi, according to details, Rawalpindi. About the annual elections of Islamabad Photojournalists Association (RIPJA) in the year 25.2024, the photojournalists panel has done a clean sweep, the photojournalists panel has taken all the seats of the executive and governing body, Sohail has won 33 votes of the photojournalists

panel. Shahzad was elected as the president while against him, Ahmad Arif Sheikh, president of Ripja Photojournalists Panel, got 18 votes. Secretary, Raja Imran was elected press secretary by getting 33 votes, while Adnan Bukhari 34, Agha Mehroz 32, Aamir Qureshi 34, Anjad Hussain 31, Anjum Naveed 33, Imran Jafari 30, while Irfan Ali was declared successful by getting

with 34 votes. His opponent Ramzan Mughal, candidate of Ripja Photojournalists Panel, got 18 votes. Secretary, Raja Imran was elected press secretary by getting 33 votes, while Adnan Bukhari 34, Agha Mehroz 32, Aamir Qureshi 34, Anjad Hussain 31, Anjum Naveed 33, Imran Jafari 30, while Irfan Ali was declared successful by getting

29 votes. While his opponents are Dr. Mushtaq 17, Irfan Haider 21, Sajjad Hussain 15, Syed Fateh Ali Gilani 16, Tahir Naveed 13, Ahmed Kamal 16, Azhar Ali Khan 28, Khurshid Ahmed 22, Taha Warsi 21, Raja Sajid Rashid 18, Sunny Ghori 18, and Kamran Ali Abbasi 17 votes, the total number of voters was 60, out of which 53 voters exercised their right to vote, polling continued peacefully, after the polling was over, Election Committee Chairman Faisal Hakeem, announced the results along with the committee members Nadeem Chaudhry and Izharul Haq Khan Niazi, the newly elected president of Ripja Sohail Shehzad addressed the Ripja members Mian Khurshid, Muzamil Pasha, Azhar Abidi, Agha Mehroz.

The Smooth Moving Connection

freeline MOVERS

PACKING, SHIPPING & FREIGHT FORWARDING

Our Services

- Packing
- Shipping
- Freight Forwarding
- Land, Sea & Air Freight
- Custom Clearance
- Relocations
- Office Removals
- Fine Art Handling
- Project Management
- Pet Relocation
- Warehousing
- Storage

Head Office
3rd Floor, Yasin Plaza, 74-West, Blue Area, Islamabad.
Tel: (+92 51) 2822471, 2274221, 2878029, 2272273, 2822711, 2874289 - Fax: (+92 51) 2825132, 2274227.
E-mail: moving@freelinemovers.com - Website: www.freelinemovers.com

Branch Offices

Karachi Plot No. 8/12, 3rd Floor, Kalkaji Road, Main Bazaar, Lahore. Karachi: Tel: (+92 21) 3633008, 34119479 Fax: (+92 21) 3452147 E-mail: karachi@freelinemovers.com	Lahore F-4, Gulberg Centre, Main Bazaar, Lahore. Lahore: Tel: (+92 42) 3679881, 36791088 Fax: (+92 42) 3671920 E-mail: lahore@freelinemovers.com	Peshawar Office No. C/8, 3rd Floor, Zafar Plaza, Laff Road, Ring Road, Peshawar. Peshawar: Tel: (+92 91) 2820778 Fax: (+92 91) 2820290 E-mail: peshawar@freelinemovers.com	Kabul House #4, Street #4, Charahi Anwar Road, Doha+Ham, Kabul, Afghanistan. Tel: (+92 9021) 772, 93 793956 918, 93 79469 208. E-mail: kabul@freelinemovers.com
---	---	---	---

National Days and Armed Forces Days

April

- April 04/Senegal National Day
 April 07/W. H. O. World Health Day
 April 12/Somalia Armed Forces Day
 April 15/DPR Korea The Day of the Sun
 April 16/Denmark National Day
 April 17/Iran Army Day
 April 17/Syria Independence Day
 April 18/Zimbabwe Independence Day
 April 24/Holy See Anniversary of His Papacy of his Pontificate
 April 25/DPR Korea Armed Forces Day
 April 26/Tanzania National Day
 April 27/Sierra Leone Independence Day
 April 27/South Africa Freedom Day
 April 30/Sweden Birthday of His Majesty
 April 30/Netherlands Birthday of Queen

Hotels & Restaurants



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



Turkish Airlines.....8494949



Emergency

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



Enquiry

Edhi Ambulance.....115
 PIA Flight Info.....114
 PIA Cargo.....9280979
 Railway Inquiry.....117
 Railway Exchange9270831-5
 WASA Rawalpindi..5555489
 CAA.....9281092



Hospitals

CMH.....5611111
 MH.....5611116
 Cantt Hospital...9270907-11
 DHQ.....5556311-4
 RGH.....9290301-7
 Holy Family.....9290322-7
 PIMS.....9261170-79
 Polyclinic.....9218300-09
 Shifa International 4603666



Departments

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

Water Tank

Islamabad.....0321-5744480

Inflation - a challenging task for nascent govt

Amidst hopes of betterment after agreement with International Monetary Fund (IMF) and subsequent pouring in foreign investment, the government hopes to put economy on right track and ease out common consumers

ISLAMABAD: Although going down on trajectory during past couple of months, inflation continues to be a major challenge for Pakistan's economy, affecting the market dynamics, lives of citizens and stirring a significant concern among policymakers, businesses and general populace. No doubt that the government, soon after assuming power had embarked on an ambitious plan of bringing about structural reforms to boost revenues and put economy on growth path, the challenge still persist necessitating continuity of policies and political stability. As the situation started improving gradually as revealed in the Pakistan Bureau of Statistics (PBS), figures for March 2023, showing headline Consumer Price Index (CPI)-based inflation rate slowed to 20.7% from February's 23.1%, other measures like action against hoarders and cutting down prices of agricultural and industrial inputs may also have better impacts. Amidst hopes of betterment after agreement with International Monetary Fund (IMF) and subsequent pouring in foreign investment, the government hopes to put economy on right track and ease out common consumers. Federal Minister for Finance and Revenue, Muhammad Aurangzeb

has also mentioned that inflation was on a declining trend. In an interactive session with Atlantic Council's Geo-Economics Center and South Asia Center in Washington DC, he said the inflation had come down from the peak of 37-38 percent to 20-22 percent last month (March). However, economic and business experts have stressed the need for comprehensive measures to stabilize economy and alleviate inflationary pressures for providing relief to masses and create conducive business environment. "As cost of energy and transportation have a pivotal role in running business and production; their prices have direct impact on inflation," remarked President Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry, Ahsan Bakhtavari. "Both sectors are intricately linked, as each feeds into cost structure of the other, compounding the effects on inflation." He suggested reduction in prices of key energy inputs like oil and electricity for a broader deflationary impact as well as modernizing industry to boost productivity to lower unit costs of production and consequently, consumer prices. Bakhtavari also highlighted role of the government in utilizing administrative measures to influence mar-

ket forces and curb inflationary pressures. The global financial institutions have indicated that continuing on the path leading to sustainable and inclusive economic growth, there is hope that inflation would come down during fiscal year starting from June 2024. The Asian Development Bank (ADB) also optimistically predicted a decrease in headline inflation to 15.0% for fiscal 2024-25, attributing it to macroeconomic stabilization. However, it mentioned that cost of energy would be a major factor in achieving this target. According to ADB, the Central Bank has maintained a tight monetary policy, keeping the policy interest rate at 22.0% and it is also committed to continue with a policy that lowers down inflation to medium-term target range of 5%-7%. Amidst the economic challenges, the experts also attribute inflationary movement to international phenomena like heightened inflation in United States and geopolitical tensions in Middle East significantly influencing Pakistan's inflation through their impact on global interest rates and oil prices, respectively. "As the economic challenges are enormous, so we need a multi-pronged approach for economic revival and controlling inflation," said Dr

Usman Chohan, renowned Economist and Managing Director, Center for Aerospace and Security Studies (CASS). He said, by enforcing stricter regulations on pricing of essential commodities and tackling hoarding practices, the government can help prevent exploitative pricing and artificial shortages. "Setting maximum retail prices for staple goods and improving market surveillance could ensure compliance and stabilize prices." Dr Usman also suggested the government to discuss concessional oil terms with Saudi Arabia to mitigate the costs associated with oil imports, a major expense feeding into various sectors of economy. As food inflation significantly impacts overall inflation figures in Pakistan, improving agricultural productivity and optimizing distribution channels are critical. These steps would ensure stable food supply and prevent sudden spikes in food prices. "We also need to integrate these approaches to provide a robust strategy for economic growth and inflation control," Dr Usman advocated as he also laid stress on improving industrial efficiency and regulating market practices. "Strategic international negotiations and better

agricultural policies could also help improve economy and address immediate and structural causes of inflation." In view of the present recession inflicted on the nation by non-prudent economic policies of the PTI government, there was dire need of concerted efforts from all sectors of the government and industry. These efforts may include policy formulation backed by empirical research, transparent and accountable governance to enforce regulations and collaborative initiatives by public and private sectors as well as modernizing industries by benefitting from technological advancements. Furthermore, a comprehensive and well-coordinated strategy including domestic reforms and strategic international negotiations could also pave way for a more stable economic environment in the country. The recent successful visit of the Saudi delegation with commitments of investment in different areas has raised hopes for more investment by friendly countries that would definitely pave way for economic activity and bring some respite to the lives of common people.—

Agencies

Political reforms a must for economic recovery

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Dr. Mur-taza Mughal, President of Pakistan Economy Watch (PEW), said on Sunday that economic reforms are only practical with political reforms. He said that economic reforms will only achieve goals other than wasting time and resources if political reforms are introduced. He added that economic reforms are being carried out under the pressure of the IMF, but the elite are spared, and all the burden is being placed on the poor. Mur-taza Mughal said in a statement issued today that more attention should be paid to political reforms, otherwise process of economic reforms will remain incomplete and ineffective. He said that a person who used to work at a roadside tea stall has become prime minister of India and has been changing the destiny of his country. The son of an African migrant has served as president of the US, and the son of an Indian migrant is presently the prime minister of the UK. However, politics has transformed into a money game in Pakistan. Our politicians are often considered disgustingly rich, self-serving, and uncaring of the people they govern.

Naqvi directs new IG ICT Police to wipe out crimes

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Interior Mohsin Naqvi on Saturday directed the new Inspector General of Police Islamabad to improve law and order situation and crackdown against those involved in crimes. In a high level meeting, Mohsin Naqvi assigned a task to the police officials to conduct a strong crackdown against the gangs involved in the sale and purchase of drugs and apprehend the drug mafia using modern technology. He said that drug paddlers are the enemies of the future of Pakistan and thus strictest action be taken against them while the surveillance outside educational institutions also be increased to stop the sale of intoxicants including ice and arrest the sellers. The new Inspector General of Police Ali Nasir Rizvi gave a detailed briefing to the Interior Minister about law and order situation in the meeting which was also attended by all DIGs and CTOs. Minister Naqvi ordered to ensure foolproof security of foreign nationals living in Islamabad and to establish a special protection force for the security of foreign nationals in Islamabad while special



attention should be given to the security of all important offices and places including the red zone and diplomatic enclave, he added. He also ordered an effective action against beggar mafia and professional beggars in the city roaming freely in the city. The minister asked the police to ensure 100% registration of First Information Report (FIR) on the complaints of citizens while using delaying tactics or denying registration of FIR will initiate an action against concerned

police station and SHO, he warned. The minister also directed IG police to immediately deal with promotion cases of capital Police saying that the promotion is the employee's right that he should get on time because promotion will improve morale of police force. The minister ensured the police officials that the steps will be taken to bring the salaries of Islamabad Police at par with the Punjab Police while ordered to fill the vacant posts in Islamabad police through fair

rand competitive recruitment process. The minister also sought a comprehensive plan to solve the traffic problems in Islamabad while identifying areas of high traffic congestion and suggesting workable solutions, adding that Islamabad Safe City system will have to be equipped with modern requirements like Lahore Safe City. He said that the government is determined to improve the condition of police stations in Islamabad and good results will be obtained in a few months' time.

44 outlaws held, narcotics, weapons seized

The safety and security of the citizens is our foremost priority, and no laxity will be tolerated in this regard," he maintained.

ISLAMABAD: Islamabad Police apprehended 44 outlaws from different areas of the city during the last 24 hours and also recovered narcotics and weapons from their possession. A public relations officer said that, following the special directions of the Inspector General of Police (IGP) in Islamabad, Syed Ali Nasir Rizvi, the Islamabad Police has intensified the crackdown against the criminal elements in order to eliminate the crime in the city. Meanwhile, Kohsar police arrested an accused, namely Atif Shahzad, and recovered 210 grams of heroin from his possession. The Karachi Company police team arrested two accused, namely Daniyal and Muhammad Aamir, and recovered 167 grams of ice from their possession. The Ramna police team arrested an accused, namely Rashid Maqsood, and recovered 14 dancing pills and 65 grams of ice from their possession. Likewise, the Sumbal police team arrested two accused, including a lady, namely Noreen Bibi and Abdullah, and recovered 170 grams of ice from his possession. The Tarnol police team arrested the accused, namely Imran

Yousaf, Ahmed Gul, Bilawal Khan, and Sheraz Khan, and recovered 2450 grams of heroin, seven liquor bottles, and 155 grams of ice from their possession. The Shalimar police team arrested three accused, including Tahir Ali, Waqas Jilil, and Sameena Bibi, and recovered one Kalashnikov, 55 grams of Ice, and two dancing pills from their possession. Similarly, the Industrial Area police team arrested two accused, namely Iftikhar Ahmed and Muhammad Taimoor, and recovered 30 liters of liquor and one 30-barrel pistol from their possession. The Shams Colony police team arrested five accused, namely Bilal, Farhan, Arslan, Muhammad Nadeem, and Kashif, and recovered 515 grams of heroin, 180 grams of hashish, and 84 grams of ice from their possession. The Kirpa police team arrested two accused, namely Muhammad Usama and Muhammad Saleem, and recovered 582 grams of hashish from their possession. Moreover, the Sihala police team arrested an accused, namely Amir Altaf, and recovered a 32-bar revolver from his possession. The Humak police team arrested two

accused, namely Iftikhar Zafar and Shahzad Ali, and recovered 227 grams of hashish from his possession. The Phulgrun police team arrested two accused, namely Muhammad Yousaf and Qasir Ali, and recovered 530 grams of hashish and one 30-bar pistol from his possession. Furthermore, the Bhara Kahu police team arrested three accused, namely Muhammad Wasim, Saim, and Bawar Hussain, and recovered 3520 grams of hashish from their possession. The Shahzad Town police team arrested four accused, namely Umer Hayat, Aqeel Ahmed, Muhammad Yousaf, and Jameel Khan, and recovered 570 grams of heroin, 154 grams of ice, and two 30-barrel pistols from their possession. The separate cases have been registered against the nabbed accused, and further investigation is underway. DIG Operations Islamabad, Syed Shehzad Nadeem Bukhari, directed the police officials to further intensify the crackdown against the criminal elements. "The safety and security of the citizens is our foremost priority, and no laxity will be tolerated in this regard," he maintained.

Pak Professionals Forum held

ISLAMABAD: The Pakistan Professionals and Students Forum was held on Saturday, themed "Building Bridges between Academia and Industry." This timely discussion explored the critical relationship between Pakistan's educational institutions and the professional world, particularly students, according to China Economic Net (CEN). Pakistan's Ambassador to China, Khalil Hashmi addressed the PPSF Forum that as Pakistan continues to strengthen its economic ties with China through initiatives like the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC), it is essential to ensure that the country's workforce is equipped with the necessary skills and knowledge to thrive in this evolving landscape. The forum provided a platform for key stakeholders from academia and industry to engage in constructive dialogue and identify strategies to better align educational curricula with the needs of enterprises. Afifa Shajia Awais Education Attaché at Pakistan's Embassy in Beijing said that one of the key focal points of the forum was the role of academia in equipping students with the skills and knowledge needed to thrive in today's dynamic job market. The event brought together diverse participants, including students, researchers, educators, industry professionals, and policymakers, all united by a common goal of fostering stronger ties between academia and industry. Through panel discussions, workshops, and networking sessions, attendees explored various strategies and best practices for enhancing collaboration and promoting mutual understanding between these two vital sectors. Ghulam Qadir, Trade and Investment Counsellor at Pakistan's Embassy in Beijing told the audience that by integrating industry perspectives into academic programs and fostering closer ties with companies, educational institutions can ensure graduates are equipped with the practical skills and insights needed to excel in their careers. Prominent speakers highlighted the importance of fostering closer collaboration between universities and businesses, emphasizing the need to bridge the gap between theoretical knowledge and practical application.—DNA

GOVERNMENT OF PAKISTAN MINISTRY OF INFORMATION & BROADCASTING DIRECTORATE OF ELECTRONIC MEDIA AND PUBLICATIONS

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

Government of Pakistan through Ministry of Information and Broadcasting is providing financial grant up to 50 percent of the Film budget (maximum 50 Million PKR) to rejuvenate film industry of Pakistan and to support amateur film makers. In this regard, Directorate of Electronic Media and Publications (DEMP), an attached department of M/o Information and Broadcasting, invites proposals for films from producers and filmmaking companies to apply for this generous opportunity. Applicants should ensure the provision of the following as per the eligibility criteria:

1. Genre and proposed title of the film project
2. Synopsis of the film, in compliance with any of the preferred themes (Culture, Tourism, Business or Infrastructure Development, National Defense Fortification, Counter Terrorism Efforts, Education Development, Social Issues)
3. NTN of SECP registered Production Company or NTN of submitting producer / Production Company
4. Planned budget outlay of the film (grant included) and production schedule
5. Format of the film HD/UHD/4K or any other
6. Any financier/ financial institution already engaged
7. Bank certificate of partial finance (Pre-arranged or invested by producer, not less than 50% of budget)
8. Distribution arrangement (International, National, Regional)
9. Proofs of ownership of story and screenplay through affidavits, certificate of copyright, etc.
10. Completed screenplay
11. Confirmation of contracts with talent
12. Name, CNIC and Contact details of the Producer

If you are able to provide all the above information with proof at the time of shortlisting, feel free to apply for this grant through the online form available at www.demp.gov.pk

Last date of submission is **May 12, 2024**.

DISCLAIMER

Final Decision of provision of grant lies with the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting.

M/o I & B reserves the right to cancel this grant at any time at its discretion

For Contact:
DIRECTOR (FILMS) PID(0)# 6518/23
 DEMP Zero Point, Islamabad. Ph #: 051-9252162

Briefs

G-13 residents
enjoy cleaner,
more organized
neighborhood

DNA

ISLAMABAD: In a commendable effort to uphold community standards, the Enforcement Wing of the Federal Government Employees Housing Authority (FGEHA) recently executed a comprehensive cleanup operation in G-13, Islamabad. Targeting illegal car sheds, encroachments in the main bazaar, and unauthorized billboards and banners along main roads, the initiative aimed to reclaim public spaces and ensure adherence to regulations. The meticulously planned operation was met with enthusiastic support from the residents of G-13, who expressed gratitude for the restoration of order and cleanliness in their neighbourhood.

The removal of illegal structures and encroachments not only enhanced the aesthetic appeal of the area but also contributed to improved traffic flow and pedestrian safety. Moreover, the receipt of an appreciation letter from the Enforcement Wing, acknowledging the voluntary efforts of residents who assisted in the removal of fences and car sheds, further strengthened the sense of community spirit and cooperation.

FRIA calls for
long-term sus-
tained growth

FAISAL SHEIKH

ISLAMABAD: The Ferozpur Road Industrial Association (FRIA) has asked the government that its strategies should not only focus on short-term gains but also encompass a long-term vision for sustained progress. FRIA senior vice chairman Shahbaz Aslam emphasized that such transparency from the government is crucial for instilling confidence in the business community and investors. He observed that the country has had trouble raising enough money to cover its expenses. Due to the low tax-to-GDP ratio, borrowing and outside help are heavily relied upon to close the fiscal imbalance. There is a recurring budget deficit because the government spends more than it takes in. The national debt burden has risen, as a result, needing substantial financial resources for debt repayment. Both internal and external debt in Pakistan has been constantly rising. FRIA SVC called upon the government to announce clear and robust economic strategies, as the country has stuck in low economic growth situation, where double-digit policy rate for the last few years has diminished capacity to increase domestic production, and exports, negatively impacting domestic resource mobilization. Shahbaz Aslam said that the new government that comes into office will have its work sharply cut out as far as the economic challenges are concerned. Coming at the back of fast-unfolding climate change crisis.

Chairman PRCS meets Morocco
envoy to discuss humanitarian issues

Concluding the meeting, Chairman Laghari presented a memento to Ambassador Mohammed Karmoune, along with a souvenir, symbolizing the spirit of humanitarian collaboration

SAIFULLAH ANSAR

ISLAMABAD: The Chairman Pakistan Red Crescent Society (PRCS), Sardar Shahid Ahmed Laghari, held a courtesy meeting with His Excellency Ambassador of Kingdom of Morocco in Pakistan, Mohammed Karmoune, at the Embassy of Morocco. This meeting marked a crucial moment in the humanitarian relationship between Pakistan and Morocco. The meeting provided a platform for both parties to deliberate on matters of mutual interest, particularly focusing on humanitarian aid and disaster management. Chairman Laghari emphasized on the substantial partnership between the two nations in addressing humanitarian challenges. During the discussions, Chairman Laghari provided insights into the ongoing programs and projects of the Pakistan Red Crescent Society, emphasizing the organization's commitment to serving vulnerable communities nationwide. He underscored the importance of international cooperation and solidarity in effectively addressing humanitarian crises, expressing gratitude for Morocco's past participation in PRCS-organized events such as the International Donors Conference. Chairman Laghari specifically emphasized PRCS's anticipation of support from the Government of Morocco, especially in the recovery phase following the devastating



Monsoon 2022 floods. He also expressed a strong desire to enhance cooperation, particularly with the Moroccan government

and the Moroccan Red Cross, and other humanitarian organizations aligned with the Red Crescent mandate, aiming to alleviate

the suffering of vulnerable communities in Pakistan. Chairman Laghari extended an invitation to His Excellency Ambassador Mo-

ammed Karmoune to visit the PRCS National Headquarters, which was graciously accepted. H.E Ambassador Mohammed

Karmoune expressed gratitude to Chairman Laghari for the comprehensive information and insights provided regarding disaster management during the floods, noting the impressive execution. He commended the Pakistan Red Crescent Society for its relentless efforts, led by Chairman Sardar Shahid Ahmed Laghari, in providing assistance to those in need, especially during times of crisis. The Moroccan Ambassador pledged to facilitate Chairman Laghari's visit to Morocco, arranging meetings with counterparts from the Moroccan Red Cross and heads of humanitarian organizations. The aim is to investigate opportunities for collaboration and address any gaps in interventions, such as shelter, livelihood, health, and cash assistance, being carried out by PRCS during the recovery phase. He recognized the indispensable role of humanitarian organizations like PRCS in mitigating human suffering and promoting resilience within communities. In his remarks, Ambassador Mohammed Karmoune reaffirmed Morocco's commitment to supporting Pakistan in its humanitarian endeavors, pledging continued cooperation and collaboration between the two nations. Concluding the meeting, Chairman Laghari presented a memento to Ambassador Mohammed Karmoune, along with a souvenir, symbolizing the spirit of humanitarian collaboration.

APBF asks govt to
announce special
incentives for SMEs

MEHTAB PIRZADA

ISLAMABAD: The All Pakistan Business Forum (APBF) has asked the government to announce special incentives for a cash-strapped SMEs with a view to save the economy, as they represent more than 90 percent of around 3.2 million business enterprises in Pakistan, contributing 40 percent to the GDP, employing more than 80 percent of non-agricultural workforce, and generating 25 percent of export earnings. APBF President Syed Maaz Mahmood said that Pakistan has remained a potential market for foreign investors, who still have plans to make fresh investment in the country, but they have continued to wait for the return of economic stability. He highlighted uncertainty in the rupee-dollar parity as one of the major concerns of foreign investors. He said a slowdown in the economy had badly impacted business confidence. It is must for the authorities concerned to first create an enabling environment for the local businessmen desiring to make new investment. Maaz Mahmood advocated the need for raising the

country's tax base so that tax-to-GDP ratio improves from current poor level. He urged the trade officers to explore opportunities to diversify exports of goods and services in their respective areas, asking them to meet the challenges faced by Pakistan in European markets. APBF Chairman Ibrahim Qureshi also suggested the ministry to devise strategies for promotion of Pakistani products, calling upon trade officers to take advantage of opportunities offered by China-Pakistan Economic Corridor. Ibrahim Qureshi said that previously, foreign investors mostly poured money into the sectors which did not pose a risk to their profit margins due to rupee depreciation such as the power sector. It is hoped that Pakistan's economy will now gain growth momentum, which should encourage foreign investors to invest in new projects, he added. Maaz Mahmood said that poor economic and political climate have been additional factors in bogging down the business and investment in the country over the last one year. What is worrisome is the fact that the consecutive decline over the last 4 years was

also seen in FDI inflows. The APBF President said that the economic crisis has forced the global investors to put their new investment plans on hold, foreign direct investment was 25 percent lower than the investment registered last year. He said there is no visible improvement in employment while the small and medium industries (SMEs)—the main providers of jobs—are struggling because of lack of funds and demand. The job losses at the original equipment manufacturers not significant but at auto vendors, where bulk of auto-related jobs exist are operating with minimum possible staff. It is to be noted that inflows of Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) in the country declined by 10 percent during the first nine months of this fiscal year (FY24). The State Bank of Pakistan reported that the country fetched FDI amounting to \$1.1 billion during July-March of FY24 compared to \$1.216 billion in the same period of last fiscal year (FY23), depicting a decline of \$118 million. During the period under review, FDI inflows were \$1.959 billion against \$860 million.

Economic
recovery
impossible
in presence
of energy
crisis

ISLAMABAD: Chairman of National Business Group Pakistan, President Pakistan Businessmen and Intellectuals Forum, All Karachi Industrial Alliance, and former provincial minister Mian Zahid Hussain said on Saturday that complete economic recovery and development is impossible in the presence of a serious energy crisis. He said that until the energy crisis is resolved and the price of electricity and gas is reduced, the economic downturn and recession will continue. Mian Zahid Hussain said that the mismanagement of the energy sector has been affecting the GDP for years, and the policy of continuously increasing the tariff has backfired. Talking to the business community, the veteran business leader said that the policy of continuous hikes in the power tariff has been adopted to reduce the losses of this sector, which has led to a fall in production and exports. Poverty is increasing rapidly and the power sector has not seen any noticeable improvement despite burdening masses, he observed. The business leader said that despite the huge increase in electricity and gas prices, the performance of these sectors has remained the same which is unfortunate.—APP

ICCI President
boosting employment

SAIFULLAH ANSAR

ISLAMABAD: Federal minister for commerce Jam Kamal Khan has pledged government's support to promote partnerships and collaborations between government, industry, academia, and civil society to drive innovation and entrepreneurship, particularly emphasizing technologies supporting Sustainable Development Goals achievement. The Minister while speaking at a ceremony organized by Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry Ahsan Zafar Bakhtawari said that the business community especially the Islamabad Chamber is committed to promote the cause of intellectual property rights for the promotion and strengthening of the businesses. Ahsan Zafar Bakhtawari said that the establishment of a world class Expo Centre, an IT Park and an Industrial Estate in Islamabad will assuredly create employment opportunities for youth, nurture exports and augment badly needed foreign exchange earnings. He also mentioned Islam-

abad Chambers' initiatives for the purpose by citing the holding of a Business Opportunities Conference in UAE and Thailand to attract foreign investments through joint ventures. Chairman Intellectual Property Organization (IPO) Pakistan, Farukh Amil said adherence to IPRs will enhance Pakistan's reputation as a business and investment-friendly country adding that SMEs should benefit from the services of IPO-Pakistan for better protection of their patents, copyrights, and trademarks. The guest of honour, US Intellectual Property Counselor for South Asia John Cabeca gave a comprehensive briefing over the subject. Chairman Founder Group Khalid Iqbal Malik while underscoring the significance of Intellectual Property Rights demanded the shortening of traders elected bodies terms to one year for enabling maximum members to represent the community.

Revitalizing Agriculture: Enhancing Food Security in Pakistan


MUHTASIM AFRIDI

For a huge period in the history of Pakistan agriculture has been the most common practice of landlords. In parts of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Sindh, Balochistan and specifically Punjab, people are widely into farming and raising livestock – given the abundance of fertile land and the presence of freshwater rivers. That is perhaps the reason why Pakistan has remained an agrarian society since its inception. However, there are problems with the traditional methods of crop production and distribution, which undermines the agriculture sector, consequently, leading to food insecurity in Pakistan. The population of the country is snowballing with each fleeting year. It currently stands at 241.5 million, increasing annually with an average of 2.55% since 2017 – according to the National Population and Housing Census 2023. The scientific community has continuously been warning states about the negative impacts of overpopulation. The disparity between population growth and production growth ultimately contributes to food insecurity. However, Pakistan seems oblivious to this issue – as per a report, the country stands 99th on the Global Hunger Index, which is a serious situation and will continue to be worse if not taken care of. On top of that, floods remain a huge problem for farmers in Pakistan. Since its independence, the country has received 29 floods – and

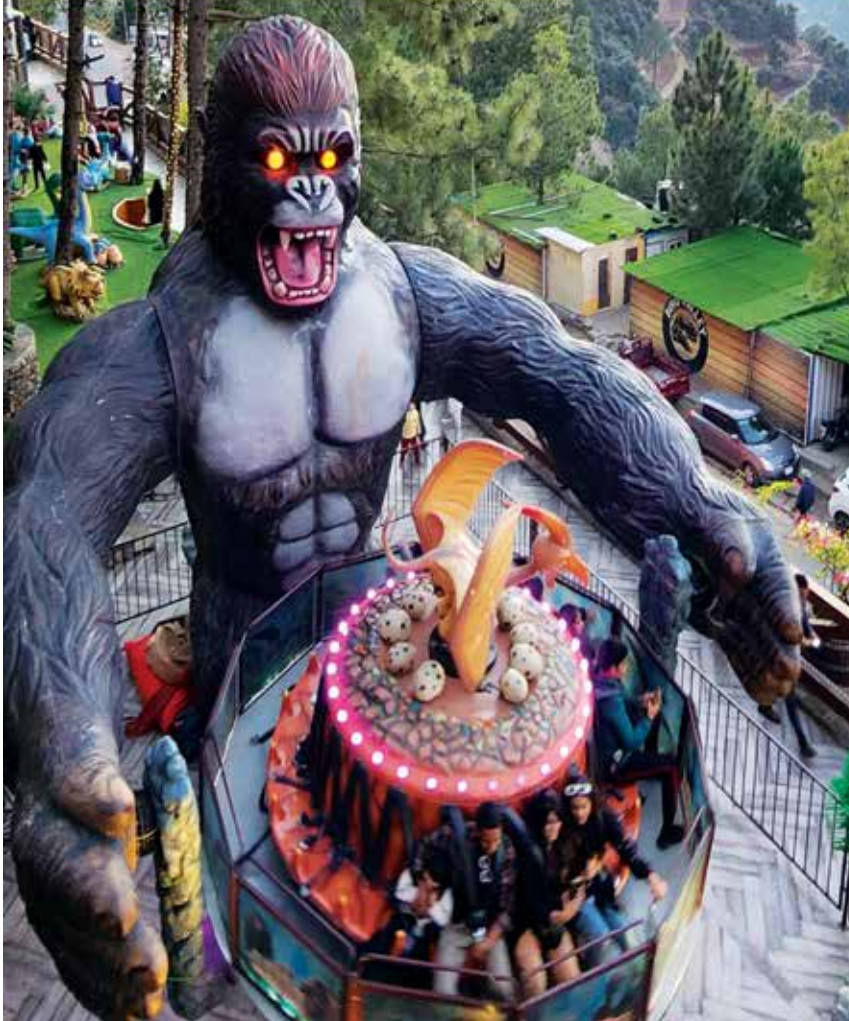
in the last decade, it has witnessed floods each year consecutively. The 2022 floods destroyed crops on a massive scale, hence resulting in food shortages all over the country. This ultimately led to all-time high prices of wheat, rice, fruits and vegetables – making it difficult for consumers to buy. Each time floods hit the country; the farmers demand subsidies from the government which is never a long-term solution. Instead, the construction of dams and widening of irrigation canals might help in overcoming this issue. To meet the needs of the public, countries around the globe are on a quest to develop more efficient means which could accelerate the processes – particularly in the field of agriculture to double up the yield. Unfortunately, Pakistan is an oligarchic state – ruled and driven by the old people, where the decisions favour ancient methods of agriculture. Hence, it lacks the touch of technology, ultimately affecting the outcome. Contrary to that, various states adopted innovative concepts such as precision agriculture technology, agroforestry, and vertical farming. Similarly, Pakistan needs to keep up the pace in the race of technology. The failure to address food insecurity reveals the weakness of the government – one thing is for sure it cannot work in isolation from the private sector. The government can collaborate with educational institutions or private firms for research and development. There are 33 top organizations in Pakistan working on developing efficient means for agriculture. For instance, 'Crop2x' is a private limited

which provides IOT and AI services to increase crop yield. Similarly, LUMS University provides research on technology to enterprises such as Nestle and Bayer. Regrettably, the government rarely welcome innovation, which is the reason for technical backwardness. It sounds absurd to criticize the government alone, while not mentioning other stakeholders contributing to food insecurity. The role of middlemen, wholesalers, and retailers in the distribution process is central to the discussion. In most cases, these stakeholders, specifically the middlemen, exploit the prices for their interest, eventually making it hard for daily wagers to buy food at cheap and convenient prices. The lower and middle-class citizens are already struggling to survive the inflation storm, and with the additional misadventures of middlemen, their lives are further at stake. The world has now transformed to a greater extent, it has become more connected than ever. The decision-makers must consider new methods to revitalize the agriculture sector, otherwise technological backwardness will take Pakistan on the back foot. Agriculture used to be one of Pakistan's major sources of economic growth – given the large number of exports to other countries. However, the figure has decreased over the period. A recent report shows that Pakistan's wheat production is estimated at 29.69 million tons against the set

target of 32.2 million tons for the Rabi season 2023-2024, which is a loss. The irony is that wheat was once among Pakistan's top exports, and now things are on the contrary – it imports from Russia and Ukraine. However, the government can still decrease the gap between population growth and food production with the adoption of precision agriculture technology. It will not only help in increasing the yield but also reduce waste and function more efficiently. The initial cost might be high but dreams of becoming an Asian tiger come at a high cost. In addition, since the government is battling with other problems, the fate of the poor and undernourished segments of society remains in question. There are various cases of suicides reported each year just because of non-availability or high prices of food. The state is a creation of people; therefore, the individuals must be the key priority of the state. A little investment by the government can transform the agriculture sector – consequently increasing economic activity and ensuring food security in the country. Furthermore, a hard check on middlemen in the distribution process would be a sigh of relief for the people. The government must get rid of these exploiters that have plagued Pakistan for decades. —The writer is an editorial intern at the Associated Press of Pakistan; he can be reached at: muhtasimafriid166@gmail.com



10 Minutes Drive From The Monal



☎ 051 8770065 / 66 / 67 📞 0300 8881811 / 0300 5221018 / 0345 5555335
UAN: 051 111 777 778 📷 @dinovalleypk 🌐 dinovalley.pk

Pakistan's First And Only Diplomatic Daily

Editor-in-Chief: Ansar Mahmood Bhatti
Deputy Editor: Abid Raza

Member APNS / ABC Certified

Vol: 05 Issue: 160

Email: dailyisbpost@gmail.com

Phone: 051-2266165 / 051-2261960

Off: Awan Plaza, Block 18-A, G-8 Markaz Islamabad

US-led arms race

ACCORDING to recent findings of the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI), the total global defense expenditures in 2023 reached a staggering \$2.44 trillion. SIPRI's annual Trends in World Military Expenditure review concludes that this was the highest yearly increase in defense spending since 2009 and that never before had mankind spent so much money on military preparations. Nation-states spend, or waste, 2.3 percent of their collective GDP to protect themselves from each other. Incidentally, this dubious achievement is well above the stated NATO goal to oblige all of its members to allocate no less than 2 percent of their GDP to defense. No doubt, national leaders find many compelling reasons for their decisions to raise the stakes in global military competition. As many times before, they are actively engaged in an endless blame game with a clear intention to impose all the responsibility for the arms race on their geopolitical opponents. However, cold hard data leaves little room for ambiguities - the US remains an indisputable global leader with the Pentagon's budget of \$916 billion. NATO spends \$1.34 trillion or 55 percent of the global expenditure. If you add to these statistics the rapidly growing defense budgets of such countries as Japan, South Korea and Australia, the undeniable responsibility of the West in the global arms race will look even more explicit. The same clear trend can be traced in the global arms trade. According to SIPRI, over last five years the US export of arms has increased by 17 percent and the US share of the global market has jumped from 34 to 42 percent. The statistic on NATO is also indicative - the Alliance share in providing arms to foreign countries in 2019-23 has grown from 62 to 72 percent. A particularly steep growth of 47 percent in five years was demonstrated by France. Most of the forecasts suggest that the US and its allies will continue to enhance their positions in providing weapons to the rest of the world. Given all these trends, it comes as no surprise to hear that the US leadership has often been skeptical about arms control. In 2002, under president George W. Bush, the US withdrew from the Anti-Ballistic Missile (ABM) Treaty that for 30 years served as a foundation for strategic stability between Moscow and Washington. In 2019, the Donald Trump administration terminated the US participation in the INF Treaty, which since 1987 banned Moscow and Washington from producing, testing and deploying ground-based missile systems with an effective range of between 500 and 5,500 kilometers. The US never ratified the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty. The SIPRI review appropriately links the ongoing defense boom to the conflicts in places like Ukraine and Palestine, as well as growing tensions in many other corners of the world. The chances for 2024 to become the decisive turning point from wars and crises to peace and reconciliation are very low. Even if the ongoing conflicts were somehow miraculously stopped tomorrow, the global arms race would still continue. Modern military procurement programs have a lot of internal inertia. Strategic ballistic missiles, strike submarines and aircraft carriers that are being designed today are likely to be fully deployed only in 15 to 20 years from now and they are going to define the global strategic landscape for most of the second half of the 21st century.



Muzzling out anti-genocide voices

PRO-PALESTINIAN activism reached new heights in some of the most reputed institutions in the world. Students from all walks of life, averse to genocide and the demonic, sustained, and apathetic killing of innocent women and children living under occupation, are seen tussling with university administrations and pro-status quo protestors to keep Palestine alive in the collective conscience. Yet activism anchored on principles, rationality, morality and adherence to international law is being muzzled out both systematically and deliberately. This is both criminal and abhorrent. Take the University of Columbia in New York as an example. Columbia is known for its dedication to academic excellence, freedom of thought, protests and agitation. The ripple effects of defiant pro-Palestinian students on the varsity's campus is also palpable with similar protests taking place across the United States. The protestors demand an end to unfettered military aid to a genocidal regime, divestment from an apartheid government in "Israel" and suspension of ties with Israeli universities. Their demands are consistent with other pro-Palestinian groups such as the Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions movement which continue to champion Palestinian rights in the face of genocide. What is even more disturbing is that the head of the institution who claims to be a champion of freedom of speech, expression, and beliefs has considered the encampments of protestors as a 'clear' and 'present' danger to the substantial functioning of the university. Columbia University's President, Nemat 'Minouche' Shafiq, said this in a memo to the local police that more than 100 people were occupying the area. Nemat, herself born to Egyptian Muslim parents, also testified before a House Education and the Workforce Committee on 'Columbia University's Response to Antisemitism' and stated that she found comments from protestors shouting 'long live the Intifada' and 'from the river to sea.' as offensive and anti-Semitic. Not a lot was different at Barnard either. The staff of the women's liberal arts college of Columbia identified students at the encampment and told them to leave or be sanctioned. The university also placed certain students on interim suspension without stating how long it would last. The rationale given from the administration was equally bogus. The university apparently sought to prioritize student's learning while living in an inclusive environment which is free of harassment. The truth is that it's the protestors who are the ones suffering from harassment over raising the Palestinian flag and calling for an end to genocide which has been confirmed by the United Nations Special Rapporteur on the Occupied Palestinian Territories Francesca Albanese, Amnesty International and Human Rights Watch. Calls to ending genocide is precisely what prompted South Africa to approach the International Court of Justice to hold "Israel" accountable and it is unfathomable that students of which many of them are drowned with student loans and personal crises and being shut down by Columbia University and prevented from thinking and expressing themselves freely.

The EU's response to the Russian threat

Dr. Muhammad Akram Zaheer



Some people don't see the Ukraine war as a concern for the United States.

But in Europe, they are getting ready for more fighting. They think there will be lots of shells fired, so they are planning to make more shells to keep up. Russia is making even more weapons, so they can keep shooting more than Ukraine. What Europe does to protect itself depends on what happens in Ukraine. Both sides are getting ready for more fighting, but they are also trying to get help to win. The outcome of the war will depend on how strong Russia is and how much help Ukraine gets from the West

FOR the past seventy years, the EU has been very important for keeping Europe stable. It has helped keep peace and security around the world. The EU has 27 countries and 450 million people. It is the biggest market in the world. Many countries trade with the EU. It also takes part in to other countries development and peace keeping. Russian war against Ukraine is a big challenge for European Union. Now the EU is more united than before against Russian attack and is determined to restore peace. A stronger EU in security and defense will help for global peace and security. The European Union is setting out a plan for the security and defense for the next 5-10 years. It will be start working on it right away.

On 13th March, European Union agreed to give an extra 5 billion euros (which is about \$5.4 billion) to the European Peace Facility by the end of this year. This almost matches the 6.1 billion euros that Brussels promised since the start of 2022. The European Peace Facility didn't do much in 2023 because countries decided to help Ukraine on their own instead of working together. There was a problem with Hungary disagreeing with the decision but they changed their mind later. This back and forth has made people think about changing how the European Peace Facility works so it can help Ukraine better. Even though politics might slow down or stop these changes, people are talking a lot about defense in Europe because of upcoming elections. The European Commission just shared its plan to make Europe better at defense and some people think there should be a special person in charge of defense in the European Commission. The upcoming U.S. elections are also making people talk about this. Some people are worried that if Trump wins, the U.S. might stop helping Europe and Ukraine. This makes European countries think they need to work together more for security. The

U.S. might not have enough money to keep giving weapons to Ukraine. So, some leaders like David Cameron from the UK and Kaja Kallas from Estonia, suggest giving old weapons to Ukraine and working together to make and send more ammunition. A company in the Czech Republic called Excalibur Army with support from the Czech government is now trying to change one of its factories into a place where they can make and send weapons and ammunition to Ukraine.

Some people don't see the Ukraine war as a concern for the United States. But in Europe, they are getting ready for more fighting. They think there will be lots of shells fired, so they are planning to make more shells to keep up. Russia is making even more weapons, so they can keep shooting more than Ukraine. What Europe does to protect itself depends on what happens in Ukraine. Both sides are getting ready for more fighting, but they are also trying to get help to win. The outcome of the war will depend on how strong Russia is and how much help Ukraine gets from the West. Russia has a plan for the next few months. First, they will keep fighting everywhere in Ukraine, even though they can't win quickly. Second, they will try to get more weapons and resources, even from countries like Iran and North Korea. Third, they will try to make other countries stop supporting Ukraine, maybe by spreading false information and causing trouble elsewhere. If Russia succeeds, support for Ukraine might decrease, and Russia could win a big victory. But this war is not just about Ukraine; it affects the whole region and even the world. For Ukraine, things are tough. They don't have as many resources as Russia, so they need help from outside. They're also trying to improve their military, especially by using drones. They know they have to act fast to survive, but they are also preparing for the worst, building more defenses and securing their coast. While Ukraine might have an ad-

vantage at sea, Russia is still a threat. They are even talking about using nuclear weapons which could cause a lot of damage to everyone involved. So, while Ukraine fights for its survival, the whole world is watching closely. This entire means there is a bigger chance the fighting might spread, especially in the Black Sea area. Even if Russia gets what it wants in Ukraine and Western countries stop helping Ukraine, things will still be worse for Russia. They will have more problems with their relationships with other countries, their money and their plans for the future. Russia's actions have worried its neighbors, even the ones who didn't take sides during the Cold War. Russia wants to stop these neighbors from teaming up against it, especially by joining NATO. Russia is in a tough spot now, so it might try to make NATO weaker, no matter what happens in Ukraine. One idea could be for Russia to attack a NATO country but not something that would cause a big problem for NATO's overall goals. If this happens, NATO would have to choose whether to fight back against Russia and risk a big war, or ignore the attack and make NATO look weak which could lead to more attacks in the future. For the Western countries, it is really important that both NATO and the EU stay strong and stick together. Coming elections, especially in the U.S. and Europe, could give Russia a chance to get more power and split these organizations up. Elections might also push Western leaders to take clearer stances on issues like Ukraine and defense. In Europe, there is a big debate about whether to spend more on defense or on other things like social programs. Either way, defense spending will probably go up which could help the weapons industry and create jobs, but many people will want their governments to focus on different areas. These debates and the chance of protests could give Russia more chances to spread its ideas through the media.

A voyage to explore healthcare frontiers

Saniya Ismail



Dr. Shazia recounted her initial encounter with a diabetic patient, recalling that she initially advised the patient to avoid sugar completely. However, she emphasized to the students the importance of not just focusing on academic performance and GPA but also on gaining exposure to real patients. She urged them not to be driven solely by financial gain...

TOURING hospitals offers a unique and valuable perspective on the intricate workings of healthcare institutions. Beyond textbooks and online resources, stepping into these medical facilities provides firsthand insights into patient care, innovative technologies, and the dedication of healthcare professionals. In this article, we delve into the enriching experience of touring different hospitals, each with its own distinct character, services, and impact on the communities they served. The University of Okara is an up-and-coming institution with numerous achievements across various departments. Recently, they introduced new departments on campus, such as Medical Lab Technology and Human Nutrition and Dietetics. Given that these departments are still emerging, they currently lack extensive facilities and activities. However, the faculty is working tirelessly to unlock the full potential of their students. In this regard, a study tour was organized for the students of the Department of Human Nutrition and Dietetics on April 19, 2024. The tour was supervised by Dr. Muhammad Wajid Pro Vice-Chancellor University of Okara, Organized by Dr. Saira Sattar, and Dr. Muhammad Faisal Nisar and accompanied by Ms Kashaf Aslam, Ms Amna Latif and Ms Iqra Munir respectively. The organizers of the tour faced significant challenges, but with the help of some students, they managed to pull it off. The primary goal of this tour was to expose students to various career paths, including roles as lecturers, administrators, clinicians, and more. The tour itinerary included visits to NUR International University, Sheikh Zayed Hospital, and Fatima Memorial Hospital. The journey commenced with great enthusiasm as every student was eager to learn and explore. After approximately two and a half hours, the students arrived at their first destination, NUR International University. There, they had the privilege of meeting Dr. Najma Najam, a renowned figure in Pakistan's neuropsychology field, and Dr. Tahir Zahoore, the Dean of the Faculty of Applied Sciences at NIU, among others. These distinguished individuals shared their inspiring journeys with the students, introduced their respective departments, and even extended internship opportuni-

ties to interested students. A group photo was taken to commemorate the occasion, making it a memorable experience for everyone involved. To everyone's surprise and delight, NIU arranged refreshments for the UO students, leaving them overjoyed and on cloud nine. The journey resumed, this time heading towards Sheikh Zayed Hospital. The students from the Department of Human Nutrition and Dietetics were brimming with energy, excited for their inaugural glimpse into the professional realm as nutritionists. Dr. Rabail, the Head of the Nutrition Department at Sheikh Zayed Hospital, graciously arranged refreshments for the students upon their arrival at Sheikh Zayed Hospital. During their visit to Sheikh Zayed Hospital, the students had the opportunity to explore the hospital's kitchen facilities. They gained insights into how dietary plans are tailored for patients across various wards, learned about the meticulous hygiene standards and food handling procedures implemented on a large scale, and observed firsthand how meals are served to patients and their caregivers. The journey continued, fueled by the students' enthusiasm and heightened thirst for knowledge. Their next stop was FMH. Dr. Shazia Zara, the Clinical Director at FMH, delivered an inspiring speech detailing her own journey and struggles in establishing the Department of Human Nutrition and Dietetics at FMH. She shed light on various aspects of study, including body sciences and pathology. Dr. Shazia recounted her initial encounter with a diabetic patient, recalling that she initially advised the patient to avoid sugar completely. However, she emphasized to the students the importance of not just focusing on academic performance and GPA but also on gaining exposure to real patients. She urged them not to be driven solely by financial gain but rather to cultivate a thirst for learning and professional growth. In essence, Dr. Shazia encouraged everyone to embark on a journey of practical application and hands-on experience in their chosen field, emphasizing the significance of practical knowledge over theoretical learning. Following her motivational talk, the hospital faculty guided the students on a

tour of their facilities, allowing them to visit various wards where patients were undergoing treatment. The students emerged from this tour enriched with valuable insights that transcended mere academic knowledge. They gained a profound understanding of their future roles as professional nutritionists, realizing their potential to make a substantial impact in healthcare. The experience instilled in them a sense of confidence, recognizing that their contributions are equally significant to those of MBBS students. Furthermore, they grasped the holistic approach of nutritionists, not only treating ailments but also preventing diseases through dietary interventions. They acknowledged that their role extends beyond that of a clinician, as they have the capacity to initiate innovative programs and initiatives, even from the comfort of their homes. The key takeaway for the students was the importance of consistency and persistence in their journey towards excellence in their field. They embraced the notion that with enthusiasm, energy, and a continuous thirst for learning, they can achieve remarkable milestones and contribute meaningfully to the health and well-being of individuals and communities. The voyage through hospital tours undertaken by the students of the Department of Human Nutrition and Dietetics at the University of Okara was not just a physical exploration but a profound educational experience. From meeting esteemed professionals to witnessing the intricate workings of hospital departments, the tour provided invaluable insights into the multifaceted role of nutritionists in healthcare. As they return to their classrooms, these students carry with them not only theoretical knowledge but also a deeper understanding of their future impact on patient care and community health. With newfound inspiration and a commitment to continuous learning, they stand poised to embark on a journey of excellence in their chosen field, armed with the belief that their contributions are integral to the broader landscape of healthcare.

- The writer is Student of BS Health and Nutrition University of Okara. Email: saniyaismail01@gmail.com

Briefs

PM calls for bridging North...

FROM PAGE 01
he added. The PM then talked about the issues faced by Pakistan including climate change, which he said completely changed the landscape. "Pakistan does not contribute even a fraction of emissions yet we are on the red list for climate change and in 2022, we experience the worst climate change floods in Pakistan. "Everything was devastated from hospitals to schools to land and agriculture and we had to invest hundreds of billions of rupees to rehabilitate people," added the premier, questioning whether a developing country can afford to do that. PM Shehbaz in his speech also highlighted the work done by his government when he was the chief minister, saying that he was able to provide resources to the far corner of Punjab.

IHC denounces 'false...'

FROM PAGE 01
He studied law at Oxford University as a Rhodes Scholar and pursued graduate education at Harvard Law School. He worked as a lawyer with a law firm in New York and while living and working in the US, was issued the Permanent Resident Card (also called green card) after being regarded as a person of extraordinary ability. He left his job in the US in 2005 and returned to Pakistan and has lived and worked in Pakistan since then. "Justice Babar Sattar's wife and children are citizens of Pakistan and the US. They were living in the US till 2021, but returned to Pakistan after Justice Babar Sattar was appointed as a judge of the IHC and now live in Islamabad."

FM Dar appointed as deputy PM

FROM PAGE 01
Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) formed a coalition government following the February 8 elections. Dar, 73, a chartered accountant and a seasoned politician, is also a close relative of, and close aide to, PML-N supremo Nawaz Sharif. The appointment of four-time finance minister as foreign minister suggested a ramped up role for economics in the nation's diplomacy as the country tries to secure another International Monetary Fund Deal and shore up external financing from foreign capitals. "Economic diplomacy is the need of the hour for sure," Dar had told Reuters following his appointment in March.

ECO members agree to...

FROM PAGE 01
The meeting of the ECO Commission, which met in Shahrizabz, was attended by the Head of the ECO Tourism Sector, elected Uzbekistan, as Chairman of the summit on the proposal of Pakistan. Meanwhile, the Summit adopted a joint communiqué recommending the formation of an ECO Advisory Committee on Tourism after incorporating suggestions from Pakistani representatives, Salman Javid, Senior Member of PTDC BOG, to include efforts for joint marketing for the promotion of inter- and intra-regional tourism.

Security forces kill 2 terrorists

FROM PAGE 01
the security forces conducted an intelligence-based operation (IBO) in Dera Ismail Khan on reported presence of terrorists today (April 28). "During conduct of the operation, intense fire exchange took place between own troops and terrorists, and resultantly two terrorists; terrorist Faheem Nawaz alias Gandapuri and terrorist Mohsin Nawaz were successfully neutralised and sent to hell," the ISPR stated.

Pakistan hockey squad announced for Azlan Shah tournament

Roelant Oltmans said that he tried to prepare the best team by looking at the current talent as our target is the Nations Hockey Cup, adding that after the Azlan Shah cup, the team for the Nations Cup can be changed

AFZAL JAVED

ISLAMABAD: Ammad Shakeel Butt will lead the 18-member Pakistan squad in the upcoming Sultan Azlan Shah Hockey Cup, set to be held in Malaysia from May 4. The squad was announced on Sunday by the head coach Roelant Oltmans who has been given all the powers to decide on the selection of the Pakistan national squad till the time the government decides on the fate of Pakistan Hockey Federation (PHF). Taking immediate measures by Rana Mashood, Prime Minister Advisor on Youth Affairs who empowered Dutch coach Roelant Oltmans to select the final travelling squad in coordination with the Deputy Director General Pakistan Sports Board Shahid ul Islam and representative of Pakistan Olympic Association (POA) Manzoor ul Hassan have done their job according to given mandate. Around 44 players including ten from the Karachi camp also attended trials which were conducted into different sessions at the Naseer Bunda Hockey Stadium Islamabad. Ammad Shakeel Butt has been appointed as the captain of the nation-



al hockey team along with Abu Bakar will assist Ammad as vice-captain while seven reserve players were also included in the Pakistan squad. Other players include Abdullah, Muneebur Rehman, Osama Bashir, Ehtsham, M Abdullah, Sufyan, Salman Razzak,

Arshad Liaquat, Moin Shakeel, Zakaria Hayat, Murtaza Yaqoob, Ghazanfar Ali, Abdul Rehman Senior, Hunain Shahid, Rana Waheed and Ijaz Ahmed. Speaking to the media, Roelant Oltmans said that he tried to prepare the best team by looking at the cur-

rent talent as our target is the Nations Hockey Cup, adding that after the Azlan Shah cup, the team for the Nations Cup can be changed. He said that we are not worried about the results of the Azlan Shah Cup, we have to prepare a better team, if the

players show good results, then we can win the event President Pakistan Hockey Federation Tariq Hussain Bugti and Secretary General PHF Rana Mujahid along with a number of former international hockey players also witnessed the final trials session.

Katsuragawa clinches ISPS Handa Championship

TOKYO: Yuto Katsuragawa continued Japan's impressive run on the DP World Tour by firing a stunning final-round 63 to clinch the ISPS Handa Championship on home turf this Sunday. The 25-year-old prodigy showcased his prowess with seven birdies, flawlessly navigating the course to finish at 17-under par. Equaling the course record, Katsuragawa secured a commanding three-stroke victory over Sweden's Sebastian Soderberg at the scenic Taiheiyo Club in Gotemba, set against the breathtaking backdrop of Mount Fuji in central Japan. This triumph marks the first instance of Japanese players securing consecutive wins on the DP World Tour, following Keita Nakajima's recent triumph at the Indian Open. For Katsuragawa, this maiden victory on the European-based circuit brings with it a coveted DP World Tour card, propelling him into the top 25 of the 2024 Race to Dubai standings as he sets his sights on realising his dream of competing on the US PGA Tour. "I've dedicated countless hours to preparing for moments like these," expressed the elated world number 434. "Earning a spot on the DP World Tour is an incredible achievement, and I couldn't be happier. My ultimate goal is to secure membership on the PGA Tour in the future." Before last year, Japan had only celebrated four victories in the history of the DP World Tour. Remarkably, this tally has now doubled in just seven months, with notable wins from Ryo Hisatsune, Rikuya Hoshino, Nakajima, and Katsuragawa. Entering the final day trailing by three shots, Katsuragawa remained unfazed, delivering two crucial birdies on the front nine to stay within striking distance. — Agencies

PCB appoints Kirsten, Gillespie as head coaches

Naqvi Confirms Kirsten as White-Ball Coach, Gillespie as Red-Ball Coach; Azhar Mahmood to Remain Assistant for Both Formats

SPORTS DESK

ISLAMABAD: South Africa's Gary Kirsten and Australia's Jason Gillespie on Sunday reacted to their appointment as the Pakistan team's white and red-ball coaches, respectively. The former Proteas batter will be in charge of the side for next year's ICC Champions Trophy 2025 in Pakistan, ACC T20 Asia Cup 2025 and the ICC Men's T20 World Cup 2026 in India and Sri Lanka while Gillespie will manage the team in their pursuit of the ICC World Test Championship (WTC) 2023-25. Talking after their appointment, Kirsten expressed gratitude for being named as Pakistan's head coach, saying it is a big responsibility and he would be eager to contribute to the team's success. "It's a tremendous honour to be entrusted with the responsibility of coaching the Pakistan men's national team in white-ball cricket and to rejoin the international cricket arena after some time. I eagerly anticipate this opportunity and aim to contribute

positively to the Pakistan men's national team in limited-overs cricket," Kirsten said as quoted by the PCB.

"My perspective on Pakistan cricket has remained consistent over time. There's always an inherent expectation for the team to perform at a high level consistently. However, in team sports, maintaining peak performance is not always guaranteed. As a coach, it's immensely gratifying to assist players in unlocking

their full potential. I eagerly anticipate collaborating with the individual players and the team, facilitating their growth and development. "My primary objective is to ensure the team operates at its optimal level. Success on the field is contingent upon the team performing at its best. Consistency and continuity are values I hold dear. While player form fluctuations are inevitable, maintaining a stable environment is crucial.



Messi scores twice as Miami beat New England

WASHINGTON: Lionel Messi continued his rich vein of scoring in MLS, finding the target twice as league leaders Inter Miami came from behind for a 4-1 win at the New England Revolution. With his brace Messi, the top scorer in MLS, took his tally to nine goals from seven appearances this season. A crowd over 65,612 turned up at Gillette Stadium in Foxborough, Massachusetts, the stadium the Revolution share with the NFL's New England Patriots, to see the Argentine World Cup winner. New England, who had been hit by a virus in the build-up to the game and bottom of the Eastern Conference, delighted the bumper home crowd after just 40 seconds through an Argentine of their own - Tomas Chanccalay. Miami defender Nicolas Freire gave the ball away to Spanish midfielder Carles Gil who clipped a ball over the top to Chanccalay, who spotted Drake Callender well off his line and chipped it over the stranded Miami keeper for the opening goal. Messi got Miami back on level terms in the 32nd minute when he was found by

Robert Taylor's through pass and the 36-year-old made no mistake, slotting home. The eight-times Ballon d'Or winner struck again to put Miami ahead in the 68th minute when he collected a superb defence-splitting pass from his former Barcelona team-mate Sergio Busquets and finished with his usual ease. Miami added two more in the final stages - both created by Messi. Substitute Benjamin Cremaschi made it 3-1 in the 83rd minute, pouncing after a Messi shot was parried out. Luis Suarez completed the scoring, finding the top corner after a pass inside from Messi. Miami have won three straight games since their exit from the CONCACAF Champions Cup at the hands of Mexican club Monterrey with Messi scoring five times in that run which includes wins at Kansas City and at home to Nashville. Coach Gerardo Martino said the team were starting to come together as he had hoped. "The Kansas City game was a key for us, because we had just been eliminated by Monterrey and the team showed their character. Now we have three wins in a row and it is getting more solid every time," he said. Martino said the rest of his players had now got used to playing in front of the large crowds that Messi is drawing. "We've handled it well. That was a learning curve last season and now we are dealing with it well," he added. New England coach Caleb Porter said he was disappointed that his defenders had allowed Messi the space for his goals but said the Argentine had shown his class in making them pay.

QAU's ZRC offers digital solutions to make Islamabad roads safer

ISLAMABAD: Road safety should not be confused with traffic management, says Prof Muhammad Zaman, head of Zaman Research Center (ZRC) at Quaid-i-Azam University (QAU). He was speaking at a function to evaluate performance of his team, dedicated to HEC's Grand Challenge Fund (GCF) project titled Optimal Use of Available Resources: A Prototype Model of Road Safety in Islamabad. He said that road safety is a concept that includes countering pollution, saving lives and offering solutions. He said Islamabad needs 300 busses to overcome its mass transit needs. "We have developed Apps after thorough research that can tell commuters which bus to take and how long they have to wait for it. We have monitored movement of people digitally on different routes and roads," he said. "On the basis of our work, we are able to offer the city managers solutions to traffic problems. We can tell them which new routes are to open. Our Apps are working and QAU students are benefiting from these," he said. He said that his team has developed smart parking mechanism for Islamabad. He said there is a need to pool buses in the federal capital so that available resources are used optimally. — DNA

Anchors XI triumphs over London Media XI

Anchors XI beat London Media XI by 60 runs in the exhibition cricket match to straighten the relationship between Pakistani and UK media

OUR CORRESPONDENT

ISLAMABAD: Anchors XI beat London Media XI by 60 runs in the exhibition cricket match to straighten the relationship between Pakistani and UK media here at the Islamabad Club cricket ground oval. Top media anchors including Kashif Abbasi, Hamid Mir, Muhammad Malik, Talat Hussain, Summar Abbas, Asim Raza and others participated in the match and helped anchors XI team won the friendly cricket match which witnessed the Chairman Muslim Hands International Syed Lakhte Hassanain, Pakistan Sports Board (PSB) Deputy Director General Mansoor Ahmed, former Deputy Mayor Islamabad Zeeshan Naqvi, Hamid Khan of the British media, Shamaila Siddiqui, representative of Islamabad Chamber of Commerce & Industry (ICCI) and different stakeholders of the society. Anchors XI won the toss and elected to bat. They put up a target of 192 runs in 20 overs for the loss of 4 wickets. Kashif Abbasi with 58 runs



was the top scorer from Anchor XI while Hamid Mir Hamid Mir 43, Kashif Majeed 30, Zeeshan Naqvi 19, Muhammad Malik and Afzal Javed scored 8 and 8 runs respectively. Gulam Hussain Awan and Mohsin Jafri took one wicket each. In reply, London Media XI managed to score 132 runs for 9 wickets. Yasir Abbas 34, Shani Khan 31 and Mohsin Jafri 17 were the main scorers from the losing side. Mohammad Malik, Asim Raza, Afzal Javed took two wickets each while Hamid Mir and Zeeshan Naqvi took one wicket each for Anchors XI. Kashif Abbasi was declared the Man of the Match and Muhammad Malik was declared the best bowler for his excellent performance in the match. Speaking at the occasion, Chairman Muslim Hands International Syed Lakhte Hassanain, said that the sports events were an important source of keeping people healthy and generating economic activities. He also appreciated the efforts of the organizers and sponsors for organizing a friendly cricket match between anchor-persons and London media in a successful manner.

Experts stress...

FROM PAGE 01
stabilise and boost the country's economy. The economic indicators paint a bleak picture of the country's economy amid plethora of economic challenges including sky-high inflation, depleting foreign exchange reserves, stagnant exports among others while the government continues to make promises of stabilising the economy. Lucky Cement Chief Executive Officer (CEO) Muhammad Ali Tabba, Chairman of Banks Association Zafar Masud, Chairman of Arif Habib Group Arif Habib, President and CEO of Habib Bank Limited Nassir Salim, Economist Syed Ali Hasnain, Managing Director Systems Limited and CEO Asif Peer, Director of Gul Ahmed Textiles Ziad Bashir and Topline Securities CEO Muhammad Sohail participated in the private news channel programme. Expressing his views during the debate, Masud highlighted Rs3.5 trillion leakages in the tax collection. He suggested that subsidies will have to be eliminated. Meanwhile, Peer said that increase in employment is a source of hike in tax revenue. "Provision of employment opportunities will increase income because the salaried class pays the most taxes," he added. Meanwhile, Bashir said that the industries have been burdened. "Retailers' share in the GDP is 17% but only 1% in tax," he said. Economist Hasnain was of the view that it wasn't the country which is poor but the government. "Today, 80% lending from the banks is going to the government," he said, adding that the private sector doesn't have the capability of taking loans. Topline Securities CEO Muhammad Sohail said that there were leakages in the industries' taxes.

PM calls for transforming Pakistan...

FROM PAGE 01
closely with His Highness to transform bilateral ties into a mutually beneficial economic partnership that would serve the best interests of the peoples of both countries. Pakistan and Kuwait had signed a number of MoUs and agreements to deepen cooperation in trade and investment in November 2023. The Prime Minister assured the Kuwaiti leadership that these MoUs and agreements would be implemented in an efficient and timely manner. In addition to bilateral ties, the regional situation, particularly with regards to the crisis in Gaza, was also discussed. The Prime Minister reiterated his invitation to the Amir of Kuwait to undertake an official visit to Pakistan at his earliest convenience.

Briefs

Everyone in Gaza drinking unsafe water

ISTANBUL : Everyone living in the Gaza Strip is drinking unsafe water, the Palestinian Health Ministry said Saturday. "Because of the closure of the public health laboratory and the inability to test drinking water, all citizens of the Gaza Strip are drinking unsafe water that puts their lives at risk," said the ministry in a statement. The ministry attributed this to Israel's refusal to allow the use of chlorine or any alternative for treating drinking water. Also, the accumulation of waste in the streets and the camps could lead to spread of disease, the ministry warned. On Wednesday, cases of meningitis and hepatitis were detected, the ministry said. Israel has waged a brutal offensive on the Gaza Strip since a cross-border attack by the Palestinian group, Hamas, on Oct. 7, which Tel Aviv said killed less than 1,200 people. Nearly 34,400 Palestinians have since been killed, mostly women and children, and over 77,400 injured amid mass destruction and severe shortages of necessities. Israel is accused of genocide at the International Court of Justice. An interim ruling in January ordered Tel Aviv to stop genocidal acts and take measures to guarantee that humanitarian assistance is provided to civilians in Gaza.—APP

Tesla CEO Elon Musk arrives in China

BEIJING : Tesla CEO Elon Musk arrived in China on Sunday, state media said, the tech billionaire's second trip in less than a year to the world's biggest market for electric vehicles. "At the invitation of the China Council for the Promotion of International Trade, Tesla (US) CEO Elon Musk arrived in Beijing this afternoon," state broadcaster CCTV said. State media said Musk met with Ren Hongbin, the head of the China Council for the Promotion of International Trade, "to discuss next steps in cooperation and other topics". Musk has extensive business interests in China and his most recent visit was in June last year. Tesla did not respond to AFP's earlier requests for confirmation that Musk was visiting China or share his itinerary for the trip. The mercurial magnate is a controversial figure in the West, but in China Tesla's electric vehicles have become a staple of middle-class urban life. Musk's arrival in China coincides with a cut-throat price war between firms desperate to get ahead in the fiercely competitive EV market. It also comes as Beijing hosts a massive auto show. China's local car giant BYD - "Build Your Dreams" - beat Tesla in last year's fourth quarter to become the world's top seller of EVs. Tesla reclaimed that title in the first quarter of this year, but BYD remains firmly on top in its home market.—Agencies

One dead after migrant boat sinks

ATHENS : Greece's coastguard said on Sunday it had found the body of a man believed to have drowned when a migrant boat sank near the island of Samos. It said 25 people it described as "foreigners" were spotted on a "semi-submerged dinghy ... and rescued from the sea west of the South Aegean island". They were transferred in good health to the port of Vathi, the coastguard added. Searches for missing people were underway with the help of European Union border agency Frontex. State-run TV channel ERT reported survivors as saying four people were missing. Greece has seen a rise in undocumented migrants this year. More than 7,000 people arrived in January and February, an increase of 184 percent compared to 2023 according to official data. The country of 10.4 million has received more than 460,000 applications for asylum since 2013, including over 12,500 this year.—APP

ICCI, CCCI call for Nilla Dulla industrial estate

Ahsan Zafar Bakhtawari said that the availability of the proposed industrial estate would also pave the way for exploitation of rich mineral resources of the area

DNA

ISLAMABAD: President Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry Ahsan Zafar Bakhtawari has said that ICCI would fully support the Chakwal Chamber of Commerce and Industry in its efforts to get realized its long standing demand of an industrial zone in the region. He said that Chakwal enjoys the most suitable location for having an Industrial Estate at Neela Dulla, as it is situated on the motorway and offers simplest access to Rawalpindi and Islamabad adding that the completion of this paramount project would accelerate the business and industrial activities in the area and usher in a new phase of growth and prosperity. He said this while addressing a large representative delegation of Chakwal Chamber of Commerce and Industry which visited Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry under the headship of its President Waqar Zafar Bakhtawari. Ahsan Zafar Bakhtawari said that the availability of the proposed industrial estate would also pave the way for exploitation of rich mineral resources of the area. President Chakwal Chamber



of Commerce and Industry Waqar Zafar Bakhtawari expressed his determination to make the business community of Chakwal a major player in national and international market by connecting the area to the global supply chain adding that Chakwal has immense potential for tourism as it has Katas Raj

Temple, Kalar Kahar lake and a number of other beautiful lakes and small dams. He demanded that besides an Industrial Zone, a national level park at Kallar Kahar, a lake dam at Talla Gang and an Agriculture Research Centre at Chakwal should also be developed for the promotion of international

tourism and promotion of agriculture in the area which in turn will bring beneficial results for the economy. Secretary General United Business Group Zafar Bakhtawari highlighted the importance of unity among the traders to get materialize their dreams. On his proposal an eight member committee 4 from

ICCI and 4 from CCCI Chakwal was formed to vigorously pursue the cause of an Industrial Estate at Nilla Dulla. Vice President FCCI Qazi M. Akbar hailed the collaborative efforts of Chakwal Chamber under the leadership of its sitting President Waqar Zafar Bakhtawari.

Istanbul summit: Palestine integral to Pakistan's identity

Mushahid tells Istanbul International Conference on Palestine: 'Rightful Hamas resistance has altered Middle East status quo, Palestine part of Pakistan's DNA'

NEWS DESK

ISTANBUL : In his address to the International Conference on Palestine, Senator Mushahid Hussain Sayed said that 'Palestinians armed resistance to brutal Israeli occupation was fully justified under International Law and the UN Charter', adding that 'Palestine is part of Pakistani DNA'. The three day conference, inaugurated by President Erdogan, is being attended by parliamentarians and political leaders from 80

countries. Mushahid Hussain, who is member of the 12-member Executive Board of Parliamentarians for Palestine & Al Quds, said the 'entire people and political parties of Pakistan support the just cause of Palestine, as Pakistan's policy on Palestine was first enunciated by the Father of the Nation, Quaid e Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah, even before the independence of Pakistan'. Condemning the Gaza Genocide by Israel, Mushahid termed it the 'first live televised genocide in modern history', adding

that 'both Muslim regimes and West countries have let down the Palestinians, except for public opinion in Muslim and Western countries'. He said the 'Al Aqsa Storm' unleashed by Hamas on October 7 has altered the global political landscape, especially in the Middle East by shattering the myth of Israeli invincibility'. Giving Pakistan's track record of supporting Palestine, Mushahid Hussain referred to Pakistan being the only non-Arab country to take part in two Arab-Israeli Wars in 1967 and 1973, plus first

recognition of PLO under Yasser Arafat took place at the Lahore Islamic Summit in 1974. Mushahid urged an immediate ceasefire & steps to establish an independent Palestine with Jerusalem as its capital. The Pakistan Parliamentary Delegation attending the conference includes Senator Mushtaq Ahmed, MNAs Sheryar Mehar, Chaudhry Shahbaz & Junaid Akbar. The Pakistani delegates also met President Erdogan and Speaker of Turkish Parliament, Dr Noman Kurtulmus.

Pak, China boost professional skills collaboration in education

BEIJING : Pak, China educational Institutions will enhance collaboration for promoting professional skills. Speakers at a Professionals and students Forum held here underlined the need of exploring various strategies and best practices for promoting mutual understanding between these two vital sectors. The theme of the Forum was "Building Bridges between Academia and Industry," China Economic Net reported. The forum provided a platform for key stakeholders from academia and industry to engage in constructive dialogue and identify strategies to better align educational curricula with the needs of enterprises. Pakistan's Ambassador to China, Khalil Hashmi addressed the Forum, stating, as Pakistan continues to strengthen its economic ties with China through initiatives like the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC), it is essential to ensure that the country's workforce is equipped with the necessary skills and knowledge to thrive in this evolving landscape. Afifa Shajia Awais Education Attaché at Pakistan's Embassy in Beijing said that one of the key focal points of the forum was the role of academia in equipping students with the skills and knowledge needed to thrive in today's dynamic job market. The event brought together diverse participants, including students, researchers, educators, industry professionals, and policymakers, all united by a common goal of fostering stronger ties between academia and industry.—DNA

BD schools reopen amid extended heatwave alert

DHAKA : Millions of students have returned to their schools across Bangladesh despite a heatwave that prompted a nationwide classroom shutdown last weekend. The reopening of schools on Sunday came as the authorities issued another heatwave alert for three more days as the South Asian country faces its longest heatwave in 75 years. The heatwave reached a 29th day on Sunday, the longest since the government started keeping records in 1948, said meteorologist Shaheenul Islam. The season's highest temperature at 42.7 degrees Celsius was recorded in the southwestern district of Chuadanga on Friday. Extensive scientific research has found climate change is causing heatwaves to become longer, more frequent and more intense. Classes resumed on Sunday with anxious relatives accompanying their children to school gates for the start of classes in Bangladesh, which follows the Sunday-Thursday Islamic work week. "I went to the school with my 13-year-old daughter. She was happy her school was open. But I was tense," said Lucky Begum, whose daughter is enrolled at a state-run school in Dhaka. "The heat is too much," she told the AFP news agency. "She already got heat rashes from sweating. I hope she does not get sick." About 32 million students were kept at home by the school shutdown, Save the Children said in a statement this week. directive from education authorities announcing the resumption of classes said preschools would remain shut while primary school hours would be shortened. Bangladesh's weather bureau on Sunday said the heatwave would continue for at least three days. The previously record hot spell of 23 days was recorded in 2019, according to data tracked by Bangladesh's meteorological department.—APP

WEB DESK

TEHRAN : Iranian Foreign Minister Hossein Amir-Abdollahian has lauded the South African government's decisive actions against Israel, saying it shows that the struggle initiated by the country's first black president and anti-apartheid icon Nelson Mandela is still alive. Amir-Abdollahian made the remarks in a post published on the social media platform X on Saturday as he congratulated the South African government, and counterpart Naledi Pandor on Freedom Day, which is celebrated on April 27 annually. "South Africa's decisive legal action against the Zionist regime's genocide accompanied with

Mandela cause still alive

Iran FM hails South Africa's pro-Palestine stance

Johannesburg's commendable position in defending Palestine illustrated that Nelson Mandela's causes in combating oppression and uprooting apartheid remain alive," he wrote. The Iranian foreign minister went on to hail extensive cooperation between Tehran and Pretoria, which he said was achieved partly due to the importance of multilateralism in Iran's foreign policy. Amir-Abdollahian finally wished more prosperity and wellbeing for the South African nation, and further success and continued progress for its friendly government. Separately, the top Iranian diplomat held a telephone conversation with Pandor, where he described South Africa as among the frontrunners of the fight for

freedom. Amir-Abdollahian expressed Tehran's eagerness to continue cooperation with Pretoria in the international arena, alongside the development of bilateral relations. South Africa's genocide case against Israel at the International Court of Justice (ICJ), also known as the World Court, was filed at the end of December, after nearly three months of Israeli aggression against Palestinians in Gaza. Before filing the lawsuit, the country stated that the occupying regime had failed to uphold its commitments under the 1948 Genocide Convention. In its interim ruling on January 26, the top UN court ruled that Pretoria's claims were plausible, ordering provisional measures. The Hague-

based court also said that the Israeli regime had to implement steps to prevent genocidal acts and allow humanitarian aid to flow into Gaza. Israel launched the war on the coastal sliver on October 7 after Palestinian resistance groups carried out a surprise retaliatory operation into the occupied territories. Concomitantly with the war, the regime has been enforcing a near-total siege on Gaza, which has reduced the flow of foodstuffs, medicine, electricity, and water into the Palestinian territory into a trickle. Hitherto, during the recent military onslaught, the regime has killed more than 34,000 Gazans, most of them women, children, and adolescents.

Death toll from Kenya floods rises to 76

NAIROBI : The death toll in Kenya from floods caused by heavy rains has risen to 76, the country's government spokesperson said.

Since the onset of these rains, beginning 1 March 2024, we deeply regret to announce the tragic loss of an additional 6 lives in the last 12 hours bringing the total to 76," Isaac Mwaura said at a news conference. Mwaura added that 29 Kenyans have been injured and 19 persons have been reported missing. He said that police and the military have been deployed to provide assistance and support in affected areas. Kenya has experienced relentless rainfall accompanied by severe storms and above-average precipitation during the ongoing March-April-May (MAM) long rainy season. The Kenya Meteorological Department on Saturday issued warnings, urging the public to prepare for even heavier rainfall in several regions, notably in the Rift Valley, highlands West, and East of the Rift Valley, including Nairobi, Southeast Lowlands, Lake Victoria Basin, and the coastal region. The ongoing floods have taken a toll on all 47 counties, leading to widespread displacement, destruction of property and infrastructure, and the tragic loss of lives.—APP

Deadly ammunition blast rocks military base in Cambodia

PHNOM PENH : The explosion not only claimed the lives of at least 20 soldiers but also led to the destruction of four buildings and damage to several military vehicles and 25 villagers' homes. An ammunition explosion at a base in south-western Cambodia has killed 20 soldiers and wounded several others, Prime Minister Hun Manet said. Hun Manet said in a Facebook post on Saturday that he was "deeply shocked" when he received the news of the blast at the base in Kampong Speu province. It wasn't immediately clear what caused it. Images from the scene showed several badly damaged buildings still smouldering, at least one with its roof blown off, and soldiers receiving treatment in a hospital. Four buildings - three for storage and one work facility - were destroyed and several military vehicles damaged, Col. Youeng Sokhon, an army officer at the site, said in a brief report to army chief Gen. Mao Sophon, posted on social media. Cambodia, like many countries in the region, has been suffering from an extended heat wave, and the province where the blast took place registered a high of 39 degrees Celsius (102 F) on Saturday.—DNA

Turkish police arrest 147 PKK suspects nationwide

Ankara : Joint operations by police and gendarmerie troops were carried out in 29 provinces against the PKK on Sunday, from Istanbul to Ar in the east. Some suspects are accused of carrying out PKK propaganda on social media, as well as membership of a terrorist group, and aiding and abetting the said group. Intelligence and counter-terrorism units of police raided several locations in the operations targeting the group's "media networks." The Interior Ministry said in a statement that the suspects were running news websites acting as mouthpieces of the terrorist group, as well as social media accounts glorifying the group. Some operations focused on suspects who attended Nevruz celebrations they exploited to celebrate the terrorist group. A group of suspects were accused of helping PKK terrorists captured while trying to infiltrate into Türkiye in 2022 and were already wanted on those charges. Along with the suspects, authorities seized a large number of unlicensed pistols, rifles and digital evidence. Operations are part of efforts to eliminate the PKK's presence within Turkish borders, in tandem with Turkish airstrikes in Syria and Iraq against the terrorist group's members holed up with Türkiye's neighbors close to its border. PKK terrorists often hide in northern Iraq to plot cross-border attacks in Türkiye.—APP

Neuralink Telepathy: Mind controlled actions finally become a reality!

AMNA BUTT

Could anyone believe that the childhood fantasy of moving objects with just a thought would one day become a reality? Well, technological development never ceases to impress, and now in the year 2024, Elon Musk's newly launched product "Neuralink Telepathy" vows to accomplish just that. This small coin shaped device - a brain computer interface chip - is designed to connect your brain both to your phone and computer. These chips consist of flexible hair like fibers that are precisely inserted into the brain using a surgical sewing machine like robot, understanding the underlying patterns in the human brain signals, and decoding them into specific actions. The company initially commenced trials on primates (and pigs) in 2017 to ensure the chip worked. However, in December 2022,

the company came under federal investigation due to allegations of mistreatment, including the killing and mishandling of animal participants. For example, in 2021, Neuralink implanted 25 out of 60 pigs with devices that were the wrong size. Afterward, the company killed all the affected pigs. Furthermore, veterinary reports indicate that Neuralink's monkeys also suffered gruesome fates. In one monkey, a bit of the device "broke off" during implantation in the brain. The monkey scratched and yanked until part of the device was dislodged, and infections took hold. Another monkey developed bleeding in her brain, with the implant leaving parts of her cortex "tattered." Both animals were euthanized. [1] "The agency's major safety concerns involved the device's lithium battery; the potential for the implant's tiny wires to migrate to other areas of the brain; and

questions over whether and how the device can be removed without damaging brain tissue," the employees said. [2] Despite all allegations, Neuralink received the green signal from FDA for human clinical trials. The project then gained immense popularity in January 2024, when the first human trial was conducted on Noland Arbaugh, a 29-year-old patient with quadriplegia. Arbaugh was able to play chess by simply visualizing his moves, deeming the project successful. This demonstration highlighted the potential for Neuralink's technology to enable new forms of interaction between humans and computers while still leaving room for improvement. The real question is, will this invention prove to be an asset or a liability? Originally, Musk claimed that its neural device would allow disabled people to regain

movement and restore vision to the blind. But this is not his end goal, rather a step on the way to achieving a much wider long-term objective. That objective is, "to achieve a symbiosis with artificial intelligence." He hopes to counter the fear of AI eventually surpassing human intelligence. Elon states: "Generally, people underestimate the capability of AI. They sort of think it's like a smart human, but it's going to be much more than that. It'll be much smarter than the smartest human." Musk's proposed solution: "If you can't beat 'em, join 'em." Alongside Neuralink, companies like Synchron and research institutions like Rice University offer promising solutions for treating depression and neurological diseases with less invasive methods, further shaping the future of human-AI interaction. While the concept seems captivating

at first glance, it risks intruding on privacy and complicating thought processes. Experts worry that such brain devices may be vulnerable to hacking. What will happen if someone intercepts the connection and uses it to control your thoughts and hence your actions? Neuroethicists refer to this as brainjacking. In conclusion, Neuralink's "Telepathy" offers an alluring glimpse into a future where humans and AI merge minds. While promising newfound freedoms, it also raises alarms about privacy, manipulation as well as the relating biological side effects. As we stride forward, let us ensure innovation is tempered with caution, steering toward a future where technology enriches rather than encroaches upon humanity. —The writer is along with group members Haleema Jawaad, Minahil Aftab and Soha Tufail under the Supervision of Instructor Miss Ayesha Aziz of COMSATS UNIVERSITY, LAHORE.

Briefs

Russia shot down 17 Ukrainian drones

AGENCIES

MOSCOW: Russian air defense systems have shot down 17 Ukrainian drones overnight in several western parts of the Russian territory, according to the country's defense ministry. "The air defense systems intercepted and destroyed seventeen Ukrainian UAVs," the ministry said in a Telegram post on Sunday. According to the ministry, three drones were shot down in the Kaluga region, nine were downed in Bryansk, three in Kursk, and two in Belgorod. A regional official said the attack in Kaluga region, south of Moscow, targeted an oil storage facility. Kaluga's governor, Vladislav Shapsha, said the drones fell close to an oil depot near the town of Lyudinovo. There were no casualties or damage, he said. Ukraine has been making repeated attempts to strike Russian targets inside the country, including buildings and towers, refineries, and oil storage facilities. Russia has retaliated, striking Ukraine's energy facilities, and triggering major blackouts and energy shortages in the country. On Saturday, Russian missiles targeted DTEK, Ukraine's largest private electricity company. Till now, four of its six thermal power plants have been damaged in the strikes. In another development, several explosions were reported in western Ukraine's Khmelnytskyi region. However, there have been no reports regarding the cause or specific location of the explosions.

Musk in China to discuss enabling full self driving

BEIJING: Elon Musk is visiting Beijing with media reports saying he aims to discuss enabling autonomous driving mode on Tesla cars in China. Mr Musk wants to enable Full Self Driving (FSD) in China and transfer data collected in the country abroad to train its algorithms. FSD is available in countries including the US but not in China. The news came after a US report tied Tesla's autonomous driving modes to at least 13 crashes, involving one death. During a meeting with Chinese Premier Li Qiang, Mr Musk was quoted by state media as saying Tesla was willing deep cooperation with China to "achieve more win-win results". In response, Mr Li told Mr Musk the Chinese market would "always be open to foreign-funded firms," according to the reports. China is Tesla's second-biggest market. Other carmakers such as Xpeng - headquartered in Guangzhou - have been attempting to compete with Tesla by rolling out similar self-driving functions in their cars. - Agencies

US to be held responsible if Israel invades Rafah: Abbas

President Abbas at WEF: Palestinians never to accept displacement from Gaza or West Bank

NEWS DESK

RIYADH: President Mahmoud Abbas expressed today his concerns that the Israeli occupation might resort to expelling Palestinians from the West Bank after the conclusion of its ongoing aggression on Gaza, affirming that the Palestinian people and leadership will never allow this move to pass. During his address at the World Economic Forum's special meeting in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, President Abbas emphasized that Jordan and Egypt have vehemently rejected the displacement of Palestinians from their homeland to their territories. He asserted that a political solution must be reached to unite Gaza and the West Bank, including Jerusalem, in an independent Palestinian state through an international conference. The President reiterated his demand for an immediate halt to the Israeli aggression on Gaza and the immediate entry of essential food and supplies to citizens throughout the territory. President Abbas reaffirmed that "Palestinians will never accept the displacement of Palestinians from Gaza or the West Bank, their homeland, and will not allow a repetition of the tragedies of 1948 and 1967."

Hamas delegation to respond to truce plan

FOREIGN DESK

CAIRO: A senior Hamas official on Sunday said that the group would deliver its response to Israel's latest counterproposal for a Gaza ceasefire on Monday in Egypt. "A Hamas delegation headed by Khalil Al-Hayya will arrive in Egypt tomorrow... and deliver the movement's response" to the Israeli proposal during a meeting with Egyptian intelligence officials, said the official who declined to be named told AFP. Mediator Egypt had sent its own delegation to Israel this week to jump-start stalled negotiations even as fighting in the Gaza Strip rages. Egypt, Qatar and the United States have been unsuccessfully trying to broker a new Gaza truce deal ever since a one-week halt to the fighting in November saw 80 Israeli hostages exchanged for 240 Palestinians held in Israeli prisons. The health ministry in Gaza said on Sunday that the Israeli occupation army committed seven massacres in different areas of the Gaza Strip during the past 24 hours, killing at least 66 civilians and injuring over 138 others, while a large number of victims are still under the rubble of bombed buildings or lying on roads. In a statement, the health ministry said that the Israeli army killed and injured a large number of civilians in different areas of Gaza during the past 24 hours, but only 204 of them, including 66 martyrs, were transported to hospitals. The health ministry added that the death toll from the ongoing Israeli bombardments and shooting attacks, which started on October 7, climbed to 34,454 martyrs and number of the wounded surged to 77,575 people.

He warned once again of "an imminent Israeli attack on the city of Rafah, currently home to 2.2 million Palestinians, which would constitute a new catastrophe for the Palestinian people." President Abbas called for pressure on Israel to stop its imminent invasion of Rafah, particularly from the United States, as the only country capable of preventing it from committing this crime. "The situation in Gaza is extremely unfortunate," the President told the conference. "Over 200 days have passed, during which Israel exploited the opportunity to attack the Palestinian people under the pretext of revenge against Hamas, but in reality, it was exacting revenge on the entire Palestinian population." He stated that Israel had killed more than 34,000 civilians, mostly children, women, and the elderly, and injured 75,000, in addition to destroying 75% of buildings, institutions, roads, mosques, and universities in the Gaza Strip. President Abbas urged countries that have not yet recognized the State of Palestine to do so immediately, as they did with Israel, as a prerequisite for future negotiations with Israel on borders and other matters.

Germany grapples with wave of spying threats

BERLIN: Six suspected spies have been arrested in Germany this month alone, in what has become a torrent of allegations of Russian and Chinese espionage. For the far-right Alternative for Germany (AfD) party it has proved especially embarrassing, because their top two candidates for the European elections in June have been caught in the crosshairs. An aide to MEP Maximilian Krah, who heads the party's list, has been arrested on suspicion of spying for China. Jian G is accused of being an "employee of a Chinese secret service". Prosecutors have also begun preliminary investigations into the politician himself over alleged payments from pro-Russian and Chinese sources. Mr Krah denies any wrongdoing. Days earlier, Petr Bystron, the second name on the AfD list, denied allegations that he received cash from the Voice of Europe website, alleged by European intelligence to have been a front for Russian intelligence. But the allegations go well beyond the AfD. Two German nationals of Russian origin have been arrested on suspicion of plotting to sabotage Germany's military aid to Ukraine while three Germans have been detained for allegedly planning to pass on advanced engine designs to Chinese intelligence. "It is really unusual to have detentions of three networks [allegedly] engaged in some sort of espionage for Russia and China coming all at the same time," said Noura Chalati, a research fellow at the Leibniz Centre for the Modern Orient. In all three espionage cases, the efforts of Germany's BfV domestic intelligence agency are believed to have been crucial. "Our security authorities... have massively strengthened their counter-espionage efforts," Interior Minister Nancy Faeser said. - Agencies



RIYADH: Managing Director of International Monetary Fund calls on Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on the sidelines of a special meeting of the World Economic Forum. Detail news on Page 01. - DNA

Punjab CM's dictionary doesn't include 'No': Azma

MEHTAB PIRZADA

ISLAMABAD: Punjab Information Minister Azma Bukhari asserted that Punjab CM Maryam's dictionary was devoid of the phrase "can't be done," referring to the CM's dedication to resolving public crises. Speaking at the Islamabad Press Club, Punjab Information Minister insisted that her party and government were media-friendly and vowed to facilitate the media. She affirmed that, as an information minister, she would only censor false and fake news; otherwise, there would be no censorship or hindrance in the dissemination of news. She vowed that journalists' issues would be solved on a priority basis and that a deadline system would be implemented to clear the backlog on journalists' applications. Azma Bukhari announced plans to build Media Town Phase 2 in Islamabad, making it accessible to the metro station. She revealed plans for a new housing phase for journalists in Islamabad, similar to Lahore. She also highlighted that her party was the only one that hadn't reduced media funds, as funds were being withheld for journalist support. The media, she emphasized, was active as it served as an accountability watchdog for incumbent governments. She highlighted CM Maryam Nawaz's belief in public access to facilities and her dedication to working day and night.

KU faculty expresses solidarity with US protests

NAZIR SIYAL

KARACHI: Over two hundred professors, including several deans and senior academics from the University of Karachi, alongside the president of the Karachi University Teachers Society, penned a letter to professors and students of various universities in the United States, expressing solidarity with ongoing campus protests against atrocities in Gaza on Sunday. The letter expressed "unwavering" solidarity with the ongoing protests against the persistent human rights violations in Gaza. This gesture also criticised policies on US campuses and of the government, while reaffirming the paramount significance of academic freedom. The message from the faculty members of KU is addressed to more than 40 universities, notably Columbia University in New York, New York University, the University of Texas in Austin, Yale University, the University of Southern California, Emory University in Atlanta, Ohio University, George Washington University, Indiana University, and Arizona State University. The letter also strongly condemned Israel's actions in Gaza as genocide against Palestinians. It also condemned the atrocities perpetrated by Israel and decried the provision of arms by various governments enabling such violence.

Over 60% of Americans term Biden's tenure as failure: Poll

Trump's support in the poll among registered voters holds steady at 49% in a head-to-head matchup against Biden

WEB DESK

WASHINGTON: Donald Trump continues to hold an advantage over President Joe Biden as the campaign - and the former president's criminal trial - move forward, according to a new CNN poll conducted by SSRS. And in the coming rematch, opinions about the first term of each man appear for a second four years in the White House now appear to work in Trump's favor, with most Americans saying that, looking back, Trump's term as president was a success, while a broad majority says Biden's has so far been a failure. Trump's support in the poll among registered voters holds steady at 49% in a head-to-head matchup against Biden, the same as in CNN's last national poll on the race in January, while Biden's stands at 43%, not significantly different from January's 45%. As per the CNN report, looking back, 55% of all Americans now say they see Trump's presidency as a success, while 44% see it as a failure. In a January 2021 poll taken just before Trump left office and days after the January 6 attack on the US Capitol, 55% considered his time



as president a failure. Assessing Biden's time in office so far, 61% say his presidency thus far has been a failure, while 39% say it's been a success. That's narrowly worse than the 57% who called the first year of his administration a failure in January 2022, with 41% calling it a success. Republicans now are more unified around idea that Trump's presidency was a success than Democrats are that Biden's has been one.

Nadra partners with Ebryx

ADIL SHAHEEN

ISLAMABAD: The Nadra Technologies Limited (NTL) has partnered with Ebryx Private Limited, a leading provider of cybersecurity services, to develop a more robust cyber security infrastructure. According to a news release, the memorandum of understanding (MoU) signed to this effect will enable the NTL to enhance its cyber security portfolio and extend its reach in both local and international markets. Under the agreement, the NTL will integrate custom engineering solutions from Ebryx to strengthen its cybersecurity capabilities and achieve self-sufficiency in this critical technology area. This collaboration underscores NTL's commitment to addressing emerging cyber threats and enhancing the resilience of critical infrastructure.

Hundreds of university students arrested in US as protests spread

Police out in full force, some using chemical irritants and Tasers to disperse the students, as more universities join movement

NEW YORK: Hundreds of students have been arrested across universities in the United States as protesters continue to demand a ceasefire in Gaza and divestment from companies enabling Israel's nearly seven-month war on the Palestinian enclave. Police were out in full force on college campuses on Saturday, some using chemical irritants and Tasers to disperse the students, as more universities witnessed protests against the continued bombing of the Gaza Strip and seeking an end to US military assistance for Israel. In Boston, police detained about 100 people while clearing a protest camp at Northeastern University, with social media posts showing security forces in riot gear and officers loading tents onto the back of a truck. In a statement on X, Northeastern said the area on campus where the protests were held was now "fully secured" and "all

campus operations have returned to normal". The school said its move came after "what began as a student demonstration two days ago was infiltrated by professional organisers with no affiliation to Northeastern". It added that detained individuals who produced a valid school ID were released and will face disciplinary proceedings, not legal action. Northeastern claimed that "Kill the Jews" was heard at the protests, using the chants to justify the crackdown on demonstrators by security forces. However, members of the pro-Palestinian protest movement at the university pushed back on those claims, and video posted from the site appears to show people holding Israeli flags using the slur, in an apparent attempt to antagonise pro-Palestinian demonstrators. In Bloomington in the Midwest, the Indiana University Police Department arrested 23 people as they cleared a campus protest camp, the Indiana Daily Student newspaper reported. On the opposite side of the country, the Arizona State University Police Department arrested 69 people for trespassing after the group set up an "unauthorised encampment" on campus. - Agencies

APRIL 2024

Pakistan's Premier News & Diplomatic Affairs Magazine

Find us on:
www.centreline.com.pk
www.dnanews.com.pl
www.islamabadpost.com.pk

@PostIslamabad/ @Editordnanews

A sister concern of

Islamabad POST

11# Block 18-A, Awan Plaza,
G-8 Markez, Islamabad-Pakistan
Ph: 051-2261960, 051-2266165

MEMBER ALL PAKISTAN NEWSPAPERS SOCIETY (APNS)

CENTRELINE

Pakistan's Premier News & Diplomatic Affairs Magazine

YEAR IN REVIEW

"2023"

LARGEST CIRCULATED DIPLOMATIC MAGAZINE