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Europe needs to scale up defence: President Marcon

Detailed News On Page-07

Maryam attends police passing out parade in uniform

Detailed News On Page-07



Bismah Maroof retires from all forms of cricket

Detailed News On Page-06



SC to hear IHC judges letter case on 30th

Got no complaint of interference in judiciary: CJP Isa

"Now, if there has been any interference in their work it has not been reported to me and all the incidents that were mentioned were before my watch... before I took the oath as the CJP"

NAZIR SYAL / DNA

KARACHI: Chief Justice of Pakistan (CJP) Justice Qazi Faez Isa on Thursday said he did not receive any note of grievance from any high court judge claiming the meddling of other institutions in the judicial process. "Since I have been chief justice [of Supreme Court of Pakistan], I have not received a single complaint from any high court judge that there has been any interference in their work," Justice Isa said while speaking at Sindh High Court Bar Association (SHCBA). "Now, if there has been any interference in their work it has not been reported to me and all the incidents that were mentioned were before my watch... before I took the oath as the CJP. So, this is a thing to bear in mind that interference is not acceptable but at the same time nothing has been reported to me during... my watch." He said mention was made of the support that the SHCBA extended to the six judges of the Islamabad High Court (IHC), who had written to him as well. "I thank them on their behalf," the CJP added. Last month, six judges of the IHC — comprising Justice Mohsin Akhtar Kiyani, Justice Tariq Mehmood Jahangiri, Justice Babar Sattar, Justice Saeed Ejaz Ishaq Khan, Justice Arbab Muhammad Tahir, and Justice Saran Rafiq Ijaz — wrote a letter to the Supreme Judicial Council (SJC), seeking its guidance on "interference" of the intelligence agencies in the courts' affairs. "We are writing to seek guidance from the Supreme Judicial Council (SJC) with respect to the duty of a judge to report and respond to actions on [the] part of members of the executive, including operatives of

Continued on Page 06

CJP blasts Centre, provincial govt for encroachments

SC orders removal of barricades outside Sindh Rangers HQ, CM House

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

KARACHI: The Supreme Court (SC) has directed the authorities to remove the barriers placed outside various buildings including Sindh Rangers headquarters, Chief Minister House and Governor House and present the report within three days. "No one is allowed to obstruct the free movement of people... Blocking roads and creating obstacles is illegal," Chief Justice of Pakistan Qazi Faez Isa said on Thursday. CJP Isa's remarks came as he led a three-member bench, comprising Justice Naeem Akhtar Afghan and Justice Jamal Khan Mandokhal, during the hearing of multiple cases including those relating to encroachment and Nasla Tower at the SC Karachi Registry. At the onset of the hearing today, the chief justice underscored

Continued on Page 06

From May 1 Petroleum prices likely to decline

Petrol price expected to cut by Rs3.75 a litre

NAZIR SYAL

KARACHI: Prices of petroleum products are expected to decline in Pakistan in the next price review on April 30 owing to an international downward trend in oil prices. The prices of diesel and gasoline have dropped in the global market by \$4.3 a barrel and \$1.86 a barrel respectively, due to which prices in the domestic markets are expected to fall by Rs7.85 and Rs3.75. The per barrel price of diesel in the international market is

Continued on Page 06

3 terrorists killed in Khyber IBO

Terrorist hideout busted by security forces, two ringleaders among militants killed

STAFF REPORT

RAWALPINDI: At least three terrorists were killed by security forces during an intelligence-based operation (IBO) in Khyber district, said a statement by Inter-Services Public Relations (ISPR). The military's media wing said an exchange of fire took place between security troops and terrorists, as a result of which three terrorists including ringleaders, Sohail Sias Amato and Haji Gul alias Zarkar, were killed. The hideout of the terrorists was also destroyed during the IBO.

Continued on Page 06



Abbottabad: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif interacts with the children of Customs Inspector Shaheed Husnain Ali Tirmazi. — DNA

Launches Shuhada Package

PM Shehbaz vows to eradicate smuggling, strengthen economy

I want to tell the federal and provincial govt representatives that smuggling is our common enemy and we have to fight this out, says PM

BUREAU REPORT

ABBOTTABAD: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif on Thursday launched the Shuhada Package to support the families of the federal government officials martyred in the line of duty, comprising cash assistance, housing allowance as well as free education and medical treatment. The prime minister, who visited the family of late Customs Inspector Syed Hassan Ali Tirmazi, who was martyred in a firing incident in Lera Ismail Khan a few days ago, handed over a cheque under the Shuhada Package to the grieving family and assured his government's all-out efforts for the security of the customs officials serving to purge the country of smuggling. Offering Fateha for the martyred soul and sympathizing with the bereaved family, he said that the Shuhada Package, earlier

Continued on Page 06

Imran Khan, Bushra barred from issuing statements

Court orders media to limit its reporting to court proceedings

COURT REPORTING

ISLAMABAD: An accountability court in Islamabad barred on Thursday PTI founder Imran Khan and his wife Bushra Bibi from issuing statements against state institutions and officials. During the hearing of a petition seeking a fair trial, Judge Basir Javed Rana

Continued on Page 06

Briefs

Dar holds out olive branch to opposition

Dar expressed regret over lack of Senate elections in KP

FAISAL SEKHI

ISLAMABAD: Foreign Minister Ishaq Dar on Thursday made an offer to the opposition to work together for the betterment of the country. Speaking in the Senate, Leader of the House Dar, saying, "Let's work together to restore the sanctity of the house and resolve the country's issues." Dar expressed regret over the lack of Senate elections in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, questioning why elections did not take place there. The Leader of the House further stated that conducting elections was the responsibility of the Election Commission, not the caretaker government.

'Bushra was poisoned in Ramadan'

"We found out that two or three drops of toilet cleaner were added to Bushra Bibi's Iftar meal"

ADIL SHAHEEN

ISLAMABAD: Spokesperson of Bushra Bibi, Mashal Yousofzai, on Thursday, alleged that at least two to three drops of 'toilet cleaner' were mixed in the food of the wife of the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) founder on Shab-e-Berat, February 24. "We found out that two or three drops of toilet cleaner were added to Bushra Bibi's Iftar meal," claimed Yousofzai during a private news channel program. She added that after consuming the meal, Bushra's health deteriorated and it was getting worse every day.

'Biased and politicised' Pakistan rejects US HR report

Contents of report are unjust, relying on inaccurate information and disconnected from ground realities, says FO

KHAYAM ABBASI

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan has outrightly dismissed the 2023 Country Report on human rights practices recently released by the United States State Department. "The contents of the report are unjust, relying on inaccurate information and are disconnected from the realities on the ground," stated the foreign office on Thursday. In a strongly worded statement, the foreign office criticised the annual practice of the US State Department in preparing such reports, labeling them as lacking objectivity and biased in methodology. It accused these reports of applying a domestic social lens to judge human rights situations in other nations, driven by political biases. The 2023 Human Rights Report from the US State Department, unveiled this week, accused Pakistan and India of

Continued on Page 06

Kh. Asif hopeful about Pak-Iran gas pipeline

Minister insists regional stakeholders "protect their interests"

MEHTEB PIRZADA

ISLAMABAD: Defence Minister Khawaja Asif has expressed hope that the obstacles in the Iran-Pakistan gas pipeline project will be removed and it will be completed. The minister, in conversation with a private news channel, maintained that regional stakeholders

Continued on Page 06

Poland concerned over civilian casualties in Gaza: ambassador

Pak-Poland trade volume satisfactory; needs to be further enhanced: Maciej Pisarski

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

ISLAMABAD: "The Polish Ambassador to Pakistan, Maciej Pisarski has said that the relations between Pakistan and Poland are based on solid foundations. We are working with Pakistani partners in the development sector, and the volume of bilateral trade between the two countries stands at \$30 million dollars, with the potential to increase to \$1 billion," 30% of Pakistan's exports go to Europe through Poland. Polish gas company is providing Pakistani gas to Pakistani consumers, and Polish companies are playing a role in addressing Pakistan's energy crisis. Polish oil and gas company is working in Sindh. The ambassador said, thirty Polish pilots and instructors had come to Pakistan to enhance the capacity of the Pakistan Air Force after independence of Pakistan. The Polish Ambassador expressed these



views while addressing a meet the press at the National Press Club, where he was invited by the club's office bearers. The ambassador said, the relations between Pakistan and Poland are based on solid foundations, and both countries have trade, cultural, and other ties. The trade volume between the two countries is near \$1 billion, with the potential to increase to \$1 billion. "My priority is to strengthen the relations between the two countries, and we are working to address Pakistan's energy crisis through Polish companies." We have established a vocational school in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and a complete project for women in Hunza, which has been named "Safe Space". 30% of Pakistan's imports go to Europe through Poland, and Polish investment is present in Sindh and other provinces. There are friendly and close relations between Poland and Pakistan, and economic cooperation is the center of our relations. Despite the distance, both countries have economic, political, and public ties.

Continued on Page 06

Summer Camp Season 7

Package	1 Activity	2 Activity	3 Activity
1 Child	55,000	70,000	85,000
2 Children	45,000	60,000	75,000
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 session will run for three consecutive weeks, starting from 1st till 31st of the month.

The basic information will be available at the club.

10% discount of all bills will be provided for members for the participation of their parents for registration, please visit the QR code and read the participant rules and conditions and photographs. WhatsApp: 0300-10000000000, 0300-10000000000, 0300-10000000000, 0300-10000000000.

Please ensure the children are well supervised at all times.

Participants are responsible for their own safety.

Participation in this program will be contingent on the terms of registration. For more program, however, changing the form will be subject to availability.

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For more information please visit QR code on each 101 20242024

Valid from 1st April to 31st August, 2024

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President praises IUI, vows higher education support

DNA

ISLAMABAD: President Asif Ali Zardari on Wednesday lauded the role of the International Islamic University Islamabad (IUI) in the promotion of higher education in the country and assured his all-out support for the institution's uplift. The president said this in a meeting with IUI President Professor Dr. Hathaib Homoud Alotaibi and Rector Professor Dr. Samina Malik here at the Awami-Side. The university rector apprised the president of the IUI's performance and services in the higher education sector. In the meeting, they discussed the overall performance of the institution as well as its administrative matters. The president was told that the IUI had formulated a Strategic Plan 2022-2026 to promote research and development, innovation and digitalisation that would help improve the university's financial and administrative affairs. In the meeting, President Zardari was told that Kingdom of Saudi Arabia was extending assistance for the university's uplift and development as it had already funded the construction of a new university block and for the provision of modern educational facilities.

Collective efforts needed to curb terrorism: Barrister Saif

PESHAWAR: The recent spate of targeted attacks, security forces, customs and police in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, is a national issue which must be addressed with collective efforts, said Barrister Dr. Saif here on Thursday. "We can overcome and eliminate the menace of terrorism with united efforts," Barrister Dr. Saif said, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Chief Minister's Advisor on Information and Public Relations Barrister Dr. Saif further said that terrorism is our country's serious matter and police, security forces and law enforcement agencies are fighting war against terrorism with available resources.—APP

Ethiopia-Pakistan business forum held at LCCI

Ambassador Jemal Bekir highlighted business, trade and investment opportunities in the diverse economic sectors of the FDR Ethiopia

ABD RAZA

LAHORE: The Embassy of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia (FDRE) in collaboration with the Lahore Chamber of Commerce and Industry (LCCI) organised an "Ethio-Pakistan Business Forum" at the LCCI Headquarters to encourage the business community to participate in the trade delegation to Ethiopia coordinated by the Ethiopian Embassy Islamabad from May 20th to May 31st, 2024. A large number of business community took part in the "Ethio-Pakistan Business Forum" from diverse economic sectors including manufacturing, textile, fertilizer, pharmaceutical, surgical, agriculture, chemicals, construction, tourism and ICT. Upon arrival, H.E. Jemal Bekir, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the FDRE to the Islamic Republic of Pakistan, was accorded warm welcome by the LCCI President H.E. Mr. Kashif Anwar and his team. Ambassador Jemal Bekir highlighted business, trade and investment opportunities in the diverse economic sectors of the FDR Ethiopia which reforms home-grown economic undertakings by H.E. Dr.



Abiy Ahmed, Prime Minister of Ethiopia. He urged the business community of Lahore to join the trade delegation of the Ethiopian Embassy Islamabad and explore business, trade and investment opportunities in the land of origins and opportunities. The Ambassador lauded the Government

of Pakistan for launching the Look Africa and Engage Africa policy to enhance its relations especially trade with Africa which is a market of more than 1.4 billion people. Ethiopia is a gateway to Africa, he said while highlighting the Enter and Operate in Africa through Ethiopia Initiative of the

Ethiopian Embassy Islamabad to help the business community of Pakistan to connect with their counterparts in Africa. "To this end, we have facilitated exchange of business delegations between the two countries within one year of establishment of the Ethiopian Embassy Islamabad," he

remarked. The Ambassador said last year in March, the Ethiopian Embassy Islamabad mobilized more than 75 Pakistani businessmen to visit Ethiopia to help them foster connections with their counterparts in Ethiopia. Resultantly, more than 50 businessmen and industrialists from Ethiopia visited Pakistan in May 2023 to boost the bilateral trade between the two countries. H.E. Ambassador Jemal Bekir said the Ethiopian Airlines had started its operations in Karachi last year which enabled the business community of Pakistan to enter and operate in Africa. On the other hand, LCCI President H.E. Mr. Kashif Anwar lauded the economic development in the FDR Ethiopia led by H.E. Abiy Ahmed, Prime Minister of Ethiopia, who had successfully built a home grown economy through massive reforms. He also assured the Ambassador of the full support of the Lahore Chamber of Commerce in making the planned trade and business delegation to Ethiopia successful. Later on, H.E. Ambassador Jemal Bekir held an interactive session with the business community of Lahore and addressed their queries related to the Ethiopia's economy and business and trade delegation being coordinated by the Embassy next month.

Poverty to be ended by establishing border markets

QUETTA: Governor Balochistan Malik Abdul Wali Khan Kakar on Thursday said that the economic development and prosperity of the country was related to Balochistan while unemployment and poverty could be eradicated in the province by establishing border markets and promoting border trade. He expressed these views while talking to Pak Navy Commander Central Punjab Rear Admiral Ashraf Mahmood (Star Intiaz Military) during a meeting here. During the meeting, the development of the coastal areas of the province, equipping the children with the jewel of education, stabilizing the border trade, law and order situation and new possibilities regarding sea trade were also discussed. On this occasion, Governor Balochistan Malik Abdul Wali Khan Kakar said that the time has come for us to take bold decisions for the economic development and political stability of the country and the province. He said that Balochistan was a province rich in natural resources and minerals despite it was the largest province in terms of area and the population here was small but scattered due to which it was very difficult to provide all the basic facilities to the people.—APP

Pakistan falters due to taxes, awareness issues

DNA

ISLAMABAD: A study has witnessed major decline in retail volume sales of cigarettes in Pakistan due to higher taxes and awareness amongst cigarette consumers of the potential health risks caused due to smoking. The Euro monitor report has revealed the retail volume sales decreased by 1% in 2022, resulting in the sale of 60 billion sticks annually, the sale was set to decrease by 2% over the forecast period to 55 billion sticks, Pakistan Tobacco Company

was the leading player in 2022, with a retail volume share of 71% in the market, the report added. Euro monitor further said that following the ban on advertising tobacco products in Pakistan, and in the wake of the COVID-19 experience, there is an increasing awareness among consumers of the potential health risks of smoking tobacco actively and passively, individually or in any social setting. Pakistan's commitment to the Framework Convention on Tobacco Control (FCTC) underscores the importance of a unified pricing system for cigarettes to

regulate the industry effectively and discourage consumption. The WHO advocates for robust tax measures to reduce tobacco consumption, citing the effectiveness of a 10% increase in tobacco prices, typically leads to a 4% decrease in overall tobacco consumption in high-income countries and up to an 8% decrease in low- and middle-income countries. A study by the Pakistan Institute of Development Economics (PIDE) highlights the dire consequences of smoking-related diseases and deaths, with costs amounting to Rs615.07 billion in 2019, equivalent to 1.6% of the GDP. Meanwhile, the International Monetary Fund (IMF) has recently, in its study, suggested applying a single-tier tax structure on all international and national cigarette brands. Currently, cigarettes were taxed in two tiers, which was not only resulting a low collection of taxation from the cigarette industry but also resulting in 337,000 deaths annually in Pakistan. The objective of IMF recommendations was to ensure equitable taxation across cigarette products and it was widely appreciated by health advocates.

SMC officers from NIM receive briefing on BISP operations

Secretary Ahmad shed light on BISP's core initiatives, including flagship programs such as Benazir Kafaalat, Benazir Taleemi Wazafi, and Benazir Nashonuma

DNA

ISLAMABAD: The 35th Senior Management Course (SMC) Officers from the National Institute of Management (NIM) Islamabad, under the guidance of Director General, Benazir Income Support Programme (BISP) Headquarters, today, Secretary Ahmad elaborated upon the foundational

principles of BISP, its extensive nationwide presence, and its overarching mission of empowering disadvantaged communities. During the session, Secretary Ahmad shed light on BISP's core initiatives, including flagship programs such as Benazir Kafaalat, Benazir Taleemi Wazafi, and Benazir Nashonuma. He apprised the participants about the registration process for beneficiaries and underscored BISP's pivotal role in responding to shocks and crises within the community. Furthermore, Secretary BISP, Mr. Amer Ali Ahmad, warmly welcomed the officers at BISP and provided them with an insightful briefing. Secretary Ahmad elaborated upon the foundational

vehicles (MRVs), and the initiation of Digital and Financial Literacy Programs. He also outlined BISP's commitment to inclusivity through initiatives such as the Hybrid Social Protection Scheme and the enrollment of widows in BISP. An interactive question-answer session was also conducted, wherein the participants actively queried about BISP's budgetary allocations and its partnerships with International Donors. In closing, the participants expressed their gratitude for the comprehensive briefing particularly regarding Cash Transfer (CCT) and Conditional Cash Transfer (CCT) programs, as well as its newfound focus on financial empowerment initiatives.

CM vows to increase women's representation in police

DNA

LAHORE: Punjab Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz on Thursday vowed to increase the representation of women in the police force. Addressing the passing-out parade at Chung Police Training Centre, while wearing a police uniform, CM Maryam said, "Nearly 7,000 women officers are rendering their service in Punjab police. It has always made me happy to see the representation of women in the police force." She also said that when the inspector general of Punjab police invited her to the passing out parade she eagerly wanted to attend the parade. "When I saw the female police officers today I realised that they would have taken their training seriously," CM Maryam said. Talking about the police uniform she wore, the chief minister said when she donned the uniform she realised that how



big of a responsibility it is. In her address, Maryam also spoke about the challenges

she had to face in the police journey that led her to become the chief minister of

the province. "I had to wade through a river of fire to reach where I am today. The times that trained me have made it possible for no one to say that I am Nawaz Sharif's daughter which is why I am here," CM Maryam said, adding that it was not a "difficult task" for her as she had to prove herself. Maryam, who is the first female chief minister of any province in the country, urged parents to trust their girls. She also thanked the new officers that she had no room for space in her heart and told them that she hoped they would take "cruelty" to its logical end and her father, like daughter CM Maryam is not the first chief minister of Punjab who has donned a police uniform on such an occasion. A picture collage shared by the Pakistan Muslim League Nawaz (PML-N) on X, formerly Twitter, showed that Maryam's father, Nawaz Sharif, also wore a police uniform on such an occasion during the time he held the provincial chief executive's post.

US institute of peace delegation meets IGP

IGP said with the support of the USIP, the establishment of Women Police Council and modern training of victim support officers were successfully completed

DNA

LAHORE: Inspector General of Police (IGP) Punjab Dr. Usman Anwar has said that under the "Police Awaraz Saath Saath" project of the United States Institute of Peace (USIP), measures were taken to be taken for community policing and help, protection and support of vulnerable groups. He expressed these views during a meeting with a USIP delegation, which met him at the Central Police Office here on Wednesday. The IGP said with the support of the USIP, the establishment of Women Police Council and modern training of victim support officers were successfully completed. With the USIP support, measures would continue to increase the capacity of women police officers. He said that Punjab police were creating a legal framework for establishing of trust in the name of "Ta-

haffuz" for effective supervision of community policing projects. The IGP said more steps had been ensured to provide medical facilities and easy medical diagnosis of transgender in all hospitals; a quota had been allocated for recruitment of transgender for recruitment as senior station assistant and police station assistant. The USIP delegation was informed about Tahaffuz Manzil Foster Home, other welfare projects. During the meeting, it was agreed to increase mutual cooperation and take steps for modern training of Punjab police. Program Managers USIP Sadia Sabir and Rana Hamza Ejaz, Senior Analysts Maryam Razvi were part of the delegation. During the meeting, joint measures were discussed for protection of vulnerable sections and to solve their problems. CTO Lahore Ammara Alhar said that MoUs had been signed with 387 organisations and institutions to pro-

vide community policing and help citizens suffering from social problems. She briefed that registration of children living in Foster Home is complete, fashionboard is also being created. Earlier on, Inspector General Police Punjab Dr. Usman Anwar is ensuring priority measures for the welfare of police employees and their families, due to which all kinds of problems faced by the employees and their families are being solved on a priority basis. IGP Punjab Dr. Usman Anwar met the police employees and their families at the Central Police Office and after listening to the application and problems presented by the police employees, issued orders. IGP Punjab instructed AIG Admin and security to provide relief on the recruitment request of late Head Constable Irfan Ali's son. Dr. Usman Anwar forwarded the request of reinstatement into service on the appeal from

Ex-constable Muhammad Khalid Rasheed to DIG Establishment-II for review. IGP Punjab has directed RPO Sargodha to provide relief to the request of financial assistance from the widow of head constable of Sargodha. Dr. Usman Anwar directed DIG Establishment-II to provide relief to the request of financial assistance from the widow of head constable of Sargodha. IGP Punjab directed AIG Admin to provide relief to the request of Kausar Bibi, widow of late Inspector Ahmad Ali, for her son's recruitment in the department on family claim. IGP Punjab Dr. Usman Anwar directed that relief should be provided with immediate action on all the requests and applications submitted by police officers and citizens. IGP Punjab said that the problems faced by police employees and citizens should be resolved at the local level through effective supervision.

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- Office Removals
- Fine Art Handling
- Project Management
- Pet Relocation
- Warehousing
- Storage

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.....0334-5421212



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 9270901-20 Women Police Stations Islamabad.....9225500 Rawalpindi.....92706120

Enquiry

- Ethi Ambulance.....315 PIA Flight Info.....114 PIA Cargo.....9280979 Railway Enquiry.....117 Railway Exchange 9270831-5 WASA Rawalpindi.....5554589 CAA.....9281092

Hospitals

- CMH.....5611111 MH.....5611116 Cant Hospital.....9270907-11 DHQ.....5556311-4 BGIH.....9290301-7 Holy Family.....9290322-7 PIMS.....9261170-79 Polyclinic.....9218300-09 Shifa International 4639066

Departments

- CDA.....9221334-43 CDA.....9208301-04 Met Office.....9250306-6 RDA.....5555864 TMA.....5770886 Cantonment Board 9270153-3

Water Tank

Islamabad.....0321-5744480



ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Planning and Development Ahsan Iqbal presenting 100 CEOs books to Ambassador of Morocco Mohamed Karmoune and Charge d Affaires of the Indonesian Embassy Rahmat K Hindiarta. Zahid Latif Khan is also present on the occasion.--DNA

President stresses joint efforts to control Malaria

PM for political commitment, adequate investment to achieve goal of malaria-free world

ISLAMABAD: President Asif Ali Zardari on Thursday urged all provincial governments and stakeholders to collaborate in controlling the spread of malaria and make Pakistan a Malaria free country. "I urge our healthcare providers both in the public and private sector, the non-governmental organizations, private entities, philanthropists, community leaders, media and other stakeholders to raise awareness about the Malaria control issues but also in alleviating the sufferings of ailing human beings through improved diagnostic and therapeutic procedures," the president said in a message on World Malaria Day. He said the day which is observed every year on April 25, is a reminder of the need to undertake concerted efforts in raising awareness and finding solutions to meet the growing challenges to control Malaria in the endemic areas of the country. Malaria is preventable, easy to diagnose and treatable, which entails collective

efforts by all stakeholders. The global theme for WORLD MALARIA DAY 2024 is "Advancing health equity, gender equality and human rights". He said the government of Pakistan is committed to cater to the health needs of the population and is committed to implementing the Global Malaria Programme's new initiative, T3 Strategy: TEST, TREAT, TRACK. This initiative is built on the principle that every suspected Malaria case is tested, confirmed and treated with a quality-assured antimalarial medicine. It is also imperative that the disease is tracked through timely and accurate surveillance systems to guide policy and operational decisions, the president added. "I am pleased to note that the Ministry of National Health Services, Regulations & Coordination has made concerted efforts through the Common Management Unit-CMU Malaria to address various risk factors. I am also pleased to know that a holistic strategy has been adopted by Common Management Unit-Malaria focusing both on prevention and treatment

of the disease with special attention to vulnerable groups", he remarked. Unfortunately, he said the devastating floods in 2022 have caused an exponential rise in Malaria cases in different parts of the country. All the progress made in Pakistan towards malaria control over the last decade, has been greatly undermined by this massive natural disaster. "I therefore, call upon all Provincial governments, UN Agencies, Development Institutions, Foundations and international partners to come together to cope with this alarming situation and gear up for a concerted effort towards controlling Malaria in the country." PM for political commitment, adequate investment to achieve goal of malaria-free world. As the world observes World Malaria Day on Thursday, Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif called for a vigorous political commitment and adequate investment strategies to reach the goal of a world free from the disease. The prime minister, in a message on the Day, stressed the need to learn from each others' experiences and support each others' efforts in combating the disease. He said the theme for World Malaria Day 2024 was "Advancing health equity, gender equality and human rights" which was an undertaking to involve multiple stakeholders i.e. policy makers, donors, healthcare providers, and community members from all walks of life in the fight against malaria. He said the research and academic institutions needed to flag scientific advances to both experts and the general public, international partners, companies and foundations to showcase their efforts and reflect on how to further scale up malaria control interventions. "The aim of research and academic institutions is to get more people, professionals, and individuals to understand the disease that affects more than 1 million Pakistanis every year," he remarked. Prime Minister Shehbaz said that despite the country's achievements in malaria control, sustaining the gains remains a challenge. "It is my belief that every individual has the right to live a healthy and prosperous life

with dignity. Everyone must have access to quality-assured malaria testing and treatment facilities, free of cost, at their doorstep," he added. The prime minister said that the Ministry of National Health Services and Coordination through Common Management Unit Malaria, National and international partners, provincial counterparts, NGOs and private stakeholders had significantly enhanced the free malaria testing and treatment facilities in the malaria endemic districts across the country. He said that as the government strived to provide equitable health services to the citizens, the role of the private sector and the global partners was appreciated. He called upon all partners, organizations, healthcare professionals, and individuals to unite in their efforts to end malaria. "We must work collaboratively to strengthen healthcare systems, increase access to quality diagnosis and treatment, and raise awareness about the importance of prevention and controlling measures of malaria," the prime minister added.

with dignity. Everyone must have access to quality-assured malaria testing and treatment facilities, free of cost, at their doorstep," he added. The prime minister said that the Ministry of National Health Services and Coordination through Common Management Unit Malaria, National and international partners, provincial counterparts, NGOs and private stakeholders had significantly enhanced the free malaria testing and treatment facilities in the malaria endemic districts across the country. He said that as the government strived to provide equitable health services to the citizens, the role of the private sector and the global partners was appreciated. He called upon all partners, organizations, healthcare professionals, and individuals to unite in their efforts to end malaria. "We must work collaboratively to strengthen healthcare systems, increase access to quality diagnosis and treatment, and raise awareness about the importance of prevention and controlling measures of malaria," the prime minister added.

HEC's quality assurance workshops

SAIFULLAH ANSAR (ISLAMABAD/LAHORE: The Progress Review Meeting and Consultative Workshop for Understanding and Effective Implementation of Pakistan's Precept, Standards, and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (PSG-2023) has begun at the higher education institutions (HEIs) in the Punjab. As the third part of the series of workshops HEC is conducting across four regions of the country, the first consultative meeting for the Punjab region is held at Farman Christian College (a chartered university), Lahore. This significant event is being held in collaboration with Forman Christian College University. The consultative workshop signifies a pivotal step forward in advancing quality assurance practices and transforming the HEIs across Pakistan. Esteemed dignitaries and representatives of Quality Enhancement Cells of various educational institutions, including Rector FCCU Dr. James Adleton; Registrar FCCU Dr. Nayer Fardows, and Director General, Quality Assurance HEC, Mr. Nasir Shah are participating in this workshop. Their presence underscores a collective commitment to implementing the quality of education through effective implementation of PSG-2023. Following a welcome note by Dr. James Adleton, Registrar FCCU, Mr. Nasir Shah shared the significance of the workshop in understanding and implementing PSG-2023. He provided a comprehensive overview of the workshop's objectives and initiatives aimed at ensuring adherence to quality standards across HEIs. He elaborated on the multifaceted benefits of PSG-2023 and emphasised how quality assurance frameworks contribute to maintaining and elevating educational standards, enhancing the reputation of HEIs both nationally and internationally, and fostering a culture of continuous improvement and accountability.

Plaque unveiling ceremony of S.M.Munir auditorium held

ISLAMABAD: S.M.Three Patron-in-Chief United Business Group has said that the life of late S.M.Munir is a beacon light for the business community of the country and he will continue to serve the community with the same spirit from the platform of United Business Group in pursuance of the mission of his late father. He said this while addressing as chief guest the plaque unveiling ceremony of S.M.Munir auditorium at Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry. It merits to mention here that late S.M.Munir was a renowned industrialist, former President FPCCI, former Chief Executive TIAP and the founder Patron-in-Chief of the United Business Group. S.M. Tavir said that business community all over the world is inspired as the backbone of the economy of each and every country and the United Business Group will continue to serve it without any discrimination for its success and prosperity. President Federation of Pakistan Chambers of Commerce and Industries Atif Ikram Sheikh said that late S.M.Munir was his mentor and role model and that he holds Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry in high esteem especially its President Ahsan Zafar Bakhtawar. He added that FPCCI is working day and night to incorporate some of the important suggestions in the coming budget for the benefit of the country as well as the business community. President Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry Ahsan Zafar Bakhtawar while recounting the achievements of S.M.Munir vowed to follow his footsteps for the cause of the business community. He narrated some of the success of Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry under his leadership like signing of an MoU with Gurbuz Greeces for the construction of a state of the art expo center. Acceptance of the proposal for the construction of an Industrial Estate, linking of an agreement with GDA for the up gradation of the washrooms of different markets, Establishment of the Mediation Centre at ICCI for settling rent matters between tenants and owners, holding of a successful Business Opportunities Conference in Dubai, Establishment of NADRA facilitation Centre at ICCI, installation of filtration plants in commercial as well as residential areas of Islamabad.--DNA

Competitive business environment needed: Atif

MEHTAB PIRZADA (ISLAMABAD: The President of the Federation of Pakistan Chambers of Commerce and Industry Atif Ikram Sheikh welcomed Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif's meeting with businessmen and industrialist. Atif Ikram stated that while creating a competitive environment it is not possible to increase exports. Other countries in the region have lower electricity rates than Pakistan, which puts us at a disadvantage in the competitive field. The functioning of industries will create employment opportunities and bring happiness to the people. Federation President Atif Ikram said that to achieve an increase in exports, attention needs to be given to Pakistan's image building at the global level. In order to facilitate industries, administrative barriers must be removed and measures such as timely energy supply and competitive rates, including tax refunds, need to be implemented. Atif Ikram further stated that in Pakistan, industrialists and businesspersons pay the highest amount of taxes. The role of industrialists and traders is crucial for economic development. Immediate steps need to be taken in consultation with stakeholders to reduce the production cost of exportable goods so that we can easily compete with other countries in the region.

PIDE Talk: gutierrez urges bold fiscal reform

ISLAMABAD: The Pakistan Institute of Development Economics (PIDE) hosted a public lecture on "Sustainable Fiscal Reforms: International Experience and Applications for Pakistan," featuring Arturo Herrera Gutierrez, Global Director for Governance at the World Bank, as the keynote speaker. At the core of his presentation, Arturo Herrera Gutierrez emphasized the urgent need for sustainable fiscal reforms in Pakistan. Drawing from international experiences, he highlighted the criticality of establishing a stable and sustainable debt path as a cornerstone for Pakistan's economic future. "Pakistan stands at a crucial juncture where it can either pave the path for sustained economic growth or fall into the recurring traps of debt distress," remarked Gutierrez. In parallel, he discussed the historical context of economic challenges faced by countries like Mexico during the 1980s and how these experiences shape fiscal strategies today. Moreover, Gutierrez outlined the necessity of strong macroeconomic frameworks, robust debt management practices, and the establishment of institutional arrangements to ensure discipline in fiscal policy. He emphasized that ensuring fiscal sustainability requires a comprehensive long-term strategy, not just balancing budgets annually. These measures are crucial for building credibility and securing access to financial markets. The World Banker emphasized the need to maintain consistency over time to avoid the economic problems of the past. He brought to the attention the concerning resurgence of debt distress globally, particularly post-COVID-19, necessitating a reevaluation of fiscal sustainability approaches. His presentation mentioned countries with gross public debt issues; notably, countries like the US, Canada, Japan and Pakistan, which have debt-to-GDP ratios exceeding 75%. Japan, with a debt ratio of 252% of GDP and a low interest rate of 0.88%, contrasts sharply with Greece, which faces a higher interest rate of 3.5% despite a lower debt ratio of 168%. This indicates that the debt-to-GDP ratio is significant, but the sustainability of fiscal finances also sends a critical signal to the market, impacting interest rates. During the lecture, Gutierrez imparted critical insights on sustainable fiscal policies across the globe, focusing specifically on how these strategies can be adapted to Pakistan's economic context. In contrast, the PIDE team proposed a nuanced perspective, asserting that Pakistan's economic woes transcend simple accounting measures. They advocate for comprehensive healing rather than superficial fixes. Pacing growth at the center of its reform agenda, PIDE emphasizes prioritizing economic expansion over mere revenue accumulation. They advocate for allowing the economy to flourish before imposing additional taxes, suggesting a re-regulation to facilitate transactions and stimulate economic activity, ultimately leading to improved revenue generation by default.--DNA

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Briefs Meeting regarding drug use in educational institutions held at ANF headquarters

RAWALPINDI: A meeting regarding drug use in educational institutions was held here at Anti-Narcotics Force (ANF) Headquarters...

Persian collection titled 'Gulnagar-Arzo' on April 27

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan Academy of Letters (PAL) would organize an unveiling ceremony of Persian collection of Dr. Aslam Ansari titled 'Gulnagar-Arzo' on April 27...

Madecha Gohar remembered

ISLAMABAD: Renowned television and stage actress, playwright, director of social theater, and women's rights activist Madecha Gohar was remembered on the occasion of her death anniversary on Thursday...

ISSI-FES international conference Pakistan in the emerging geopolitical landscape

The speakers of the session provided a comprehensive analysis of the evolving landscape in Afghanistan, emphasizing the long-term consequences of investing in militarized education

FAISAL SHEIKH

ISLAMABAD: Working Session 1 on the theme of 'Unravelling Afghanistan: Shifting Landscape' was moderated by Ms. Anis Khan, Director CAMEA. The speakers of the session included: Rangina Hamidi, Former Minister of Education of Afghanistan...



and engagement with locals, building the economic capacity of Afghanistan through connectivity, trade, and transit routes, and adopting a broader perspective on the Afghan issue. Lastly, the speakers concluded by recognizing the need for a nuanced understanding of the on-ground situation and the potential consequences of different policy interventions...

that the current geopolitical landscape of the Middle East is marked by a multitude of dynamic shifts and evolving alliances. Amid efforts towards economic diversification in the region, there is a growing apprehension surrounding security arrangements, particularly in light of the United States' strategic reorientation towards the Asia-Pacific region...

tion is well-placed to engage constructively with Middle Eastern countries. By prioritizing diplomacy and cooperation, Pakistan can play a proactive role in fostering stability and prosperity in the region. The third working session, titled 'Rising Non-Conventional Security Threats in Afghanistan, Central Asia, and the Middle East', was moderated by Dr. Simbal Khan, Conflict Prevention and Stabilization Expert at UNDP Pakistan...

China's Linyi Trade City eyes on investment opportunity in Pakistan

ISLAMABAD: An economic and trade cooperation & exchange meeting between Pakistan and China was held in Linyi, China. Expanding Chinese investment in Pakistan was discussed in the meeting...

Delegation visits from CMCC, CMPak PTA

The meeting served as an opportunity for both parties to explore collaboration avenues and share insights on advancements in the telecommunications industry

DNA

ISLAMABAD: A senior-level delegation of China Mobile Communications Group Co. Ltd. (CMCC) and the CEO of China Mobile Pakistan (CMPak) visited the Pakistan Telecommunication Authority (PTA) and

met with the Authority. Chairman PTA, Major General (R) Hafeez Ur Rehman shared Pakistan's telecom sector achievements with the delegation. On the occasion, Member Finance (PTA) Muhammad Naveed and Member Compliance & Enforcement

(PTA), Dr. Khawar Sidique Khokhar, were also present and shared insights about the sector, said a news release issued here on Thursday. Mr. Tong Tongde, Group Leader of Discipline Inspection and Supervision, and Liu Junli, Chairman and CEO of

High-profile UK delegation visits NUST

ISLAMABAD: Marking a significant milestone in bilateral higher education relations between the UK and Pakistan, a high-powered British delegation is currently on an official visit to Pakistan to explore collaborative opportunities.

The delegation, accompanied by senior officials from the British Council and the Higher Education Commission (HEC) of Pakistan, visited the National University of Sciences and Technology (NUST). Led by Sir Steve Smith, UK Government International Education Champion, the delegation comprised eminent personalities from the government and academia, seeking to explore opportunities for academic collaboration and research partnerships...



Iranian gas can propel Pakistan's sinking economy

The business leader said Pakistan is facing a severe energy crisis, and Iranian gas is the cheapest solution. In contrast, the United States has advised Pakistan to import gas from Central Asia, but it would have been done by now if it was feasible

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Former President of the Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry (ICCI), Dr. Shahid Rashid Butt, said on Thursday that natural gas from Iran has the potential to revive Pakistan's flagging economy. The opposition from the United States to the project is a setback to Pakistani interests, which Washington should reconsider, he said. The United States needs to reconsider its strategy as Iran has flourished despite 45 years of sanctions, and its influence has increased on a global level, he added.

Iranian gas pipeline. The help of friendly countries should also be sought in this regard, US policymakers should be apprised that forty-five years have passed since the American sanctions on Iran, but it has not gone bankrupt, nor has there been any major revolution. Iran has developed despite its sanctions, and its influence is increasing instead of decreasing. Shahid Rashid Butt continued that the US authorities need to be convinced that the economic sanctions have failed, so another way should be adopted in which Pakistan can fully benefit from Iran. He noted that the United States needs better relations with Iran to advance its regional interests. The source said this fact is recognized, the better. If Pakistan buys a few billion dollars worth of gas from Iran, it will not matter to Iran, but Pakistan's economy will recover.

IRSA releases 163,300 cusecs water

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Indus River System Authority (IRSA) on Thursday released 163,300 cusecs water from various rim stations with an inflow of 110,500 cusecs. According to IRSA, water level in River Indus at Tarbela Dam was 14,075 feet and was 49.05 feet higher than its dead level of 1,398 feet. Water inflow and outflow in the dam was recorded as 31,400 cusecs and 5,000 cusecs respectively. The water level in River Jehlum at Mangla Dam was 11,020 feet, which was 90.60 feet higher than its dead level of 1,050 feet. The inflow and outflow of water in the dam was recorded as 46,400 cusecs and 20,000 cusecs respectively. The release of water at Kalabagh, Tarbela, and Mangla Dam was recorded as 58,800, 87,400, 51,000 and 27,600 cusecs respectively. Similarly, from River Kabul, a total of 65,800 cusecs of water released at Nowshera and 10,200 cusecs were released from River Chenab at Marala.

Advertisement for Dino Valley featuring a dinosaur and the text '10 Minutes Drive From The Monal'. Includes contact information for IRSA and DINO VALLEY.

European court's climate ruling

The political battle against climate change has, so far, largely been driven by legislation and regulation by national governments. However, a key European Court of Human Rights ruling this month set a new and potentially important legal precedent in the 46 member states of the Council of Europe. Some eight years ago, the Senior Women for Climate Protection, a group of 2,000 Swiss women over the age of 64, began legal action against their government for failing to take stronger action against climate change. On April 5, the European Court of Human Rights in Strasbourg (which is unrelated to the EU) surprised the Swiss government by upholding the Greenpeace-backed lawsuit, ruling that its insufficient measures against global warming infringe the human rights of the female senior citizens involved in the case. A sign of the importance of the case that it was heard by the 17 judges of the so-called Grand Chamber. This is the court's most prestigious chamber. It ruled 16:1 in favor of the Senior Women for Climate Protection. Swiss President Viola Amherd expressed surprise at the decision. She asserted that sustainability, biodiversity and nature are key goals for Switzerland. However, Swiss politicians are divided on the ruling. The Swiss People's Party and the Centre are critical of it, while the Swiss Socialist Party and the Green Party support the decision. To be sure, some nongovernmental organizations and activists have had domestic legal successes, both inside and outside Council of Europe member states. For instance, a judge in the US state of Montana ruled last year that state agencies are infringing a constitutional right to a clean environment by allowing fossil fuel development. However, the European court's ruling is the first time an international court has upheld a climate case. So, it could now influence the law in a cross-section of the diverse members of the Council of Europe. The decision will probably also encourage other bodies to bring similar cases to the European Court of Human Rights. Indeed, some such litigation had already been suspended prior to the ruling on this case. There is also more scope for domestic legal challenges in Council of Europe member nations, plus the possibility that the ruling may mean that the European Convention on Human Rights needs to be formally amended to include the right to a clean, healthy and sustainable environment. There are also ramifications for cases of a comparable nature in wider jurisdictions, including the Inter-American Court of Human Rights in Costa Rica, with cases pending that relate to the human rights impacts of climate change. While the decision may be a boon to NGOs and activist groups, there has already been a political backlash in some member states. One common criticism is a perception that the judges are acting as de facto legislators. UK government lawyer Sudhanshu Swaroop asserted that the court was seeking "to legislate for a global challenge without having global jurisdiction." The content of this statement is the significant growth in domestic laws and regulations that address global warming, which are being passed at an increasing rate, especially since the 2015 Paris Agreement. In a recent report by the Grantham Research Institute at the London School of Economics, it was revealed there are more than 800 climate change laws and policies now in place across the world, up from 54 in 1997.

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Espionage fever in UK

In certain types of events or topics become a regular part of the news cycle, they are almost guaranteed to receive extensive coverage in the British media. These subjects typically include the weather, the Royal Family, cute animals and children, corrupt politicians, and espionage. Britain has a particular fondness for the latter. The peak of espionage narratives in the UK, as well as in the wider Western world, was likely during the Cold War era, when hardly a year went by without news of a spy ring being uncovered, or covert operatives being arrested, tried, jailed or expelled from the country. This reality was mirrored in popular culture at the time, with James Bond standing out as perhaps the most well-known fictional British spy in novels, television and film. Today, the gears appear to be making a comeback as intelligence communities seek out new foes. On Monday, two British men were charged and three German citizens arrested over separate allegations of sharing confidential technology intelligence with Beijing. The British cases are at a more advanced stage, as the two accused will appear before a preliminary hearing at a lower court in London on Friday. It sounds - and is - very serious, though few people know how the strict rules controlling the release of information connected to the legal proceedings limit what can be shared. Ironically, it means that for now the secrets of the trial will remain a secret. Chris Cash, a 29-year-old former parliamentary aide for senior British politician Alistair Kearns and close associate of security minister Tom Tugendhat - both China hawks linked to a China-centric think tank where Cash once worked - is accused under Britain's 113-year-old Official Secrets Act of providing prejudicial information to a foreign state. A colleague, Christopher Berry, 32, faces a similar charge. The allegations are framed in archaic language which claim that they obtained, recorded and published information "for a purpose prejudicial to the safety or interests of the state" and which could be "directly or indirectly, useful to an enemy." In its announcement of the charges, London's Metropolitan Police force specified that the other country said to be involved was China. That is, they regard China as "an enemy." The Chinese embassy in London said the allegation that China was trying to steal British intelligence was "completely fabricated." "We firmly oppose it and urge the UK side to stop anti-China political manipulation and stop putting on such self-styled police, with a view to an embassy spokesperson said in a statement. The air of intrigue and mystery that typically surrounds such stories is unintentionally intensified by the reporting restrictions which apply to court cases in England. Once charges are filed, few details of the allegations are allowed to be made public before trial. Naturally, as a matter of interest, there has been some speculation in some circles in the past few days in social media, but the evidence against the accused will not be revealed until the trial is referred to a higher court for disposal. Even then, because this is classed as a matter of national security, legal rules allow for some evidence to be heard in secret if deemed necessary, never to be reported. So, theoretically at least, Messrs Cash and Berry are supposed to have done away with any made public. This situation reflects the current febrile atmosphere pervading Britain, as well as its allies in Europe and America, where anything associated with China is automatically assumed to involve espionage.



\$ 90 billions to stoke wars

Qamar Bashir



Unlike the "America First" policy and the withdrawal of U.S. forces from conflict zones advocated by Donald Trump, the Biden administration, in collaboration with Congress and the Senate, is reaffirming America's role as a global hegemon. In contrast to redirecting funds away from global engagements to prioritize domestic needs and elevate living standards for American citizens

The recent US bipartisan approval of a \$90 billion aid package to fuel wars in three conflict-ridden regions underscores a significant shift in U.S. foreign policy, signaling a departure from the isolationist stance of the former Trump administration. Unlike the "America First" policy and the withdrawal of U.S. forces from conflict zones advocated by Donald Trump, the Biden administration, in collaboration with Congress and the Senate, is reaffirming America's role as a global hegemon. In contrast to redirecting funds away from global engagements to prioritize domestic needs and elevate living standards for American citizens, the current administration is asserting U.S. dominance on the world stage. While the previous approach sought to minimize U.S. involvement abroad, the new strategy imposes America USA as the only global leader which is characterized by regime changes, declaring sovereign countries as enemies and raiding them, destroying society, and resort to killing rampage with total impunity, promoting, prolonging and fueling the conflicts as tools to rule the world as unchallenged power. The components of the bill, \$60.8 billion for Ukraine, \$26.4 billion for Israel as well as \$8.1 billion for Taiwan reflects the USA's priorities to raise tensions and stakes higher by pumping US war machines, including weapons and ammunition, into these regions. This approval of massive aid is not for the love of these recipient countries, but to keep the US defense industry afloat, as divulged by Senator Collins, who said in an interview with Newsmax, "Seventy-five percent total funding would stay within the United States. That's what a lot of people don't realize. This goes to our defense industry; this goes to replenishing our munitions." While fifteen hardright Republican senators who oppose aid to Ukraine voted against the legislation, stating that Congress was "rushing to further bankrupt the waging of a war that has zero chance of a positive outcome." The US while announcing the aid package of \$ 26.4 billion to Israel has effectively endorsed the Israel's annihilation of entire population of Gaza which was equated by Mr. Josep Borrell, EU foreign policy chief with the destruction caused by allied forces to the German cities in world war-II. He added that an assessment by the World Bank and the United Nations put the cost of rebuilding Gaza's infrastructure at \$90 billion (\$4 billion). The allocation of massive aid and its propensity to purchase additional destructive, lethal, and precise weapons systems, has emboldened Israel to escalate the covert and overt war theater into Southern Lebanon against Hezbollah, a Shiite movement exercising influence in Yemen, Syria, and Iraq. In Yemen, against Houthi rebels in Yemen, in Syria against the Zaynabiyoun Brigade and the Pateimiyoun Division. In Iraq against the Popular Mobilization Forces (PMF), including groups like Asah Ahl al Haq, the Badr Organization, and Harakat Hezbollah al Nujaba. In Lebanon and Saudi Arabia against militant groups such as the Al Ashar Brigades and Hezbollah al Hejaz, respectively. This aid has equipped Israel militarily and has given it a go ahead to spread the flames of war in the entire middle east and other countries connected to and linked with the middle east. The massive aid and support provided by the US, UK, and the European Union to Ukraine is likely to escalate the war theater across China. Unlike in the Middle East, where US and allied forces face adversaries with limited capabilities, the conflict between Russia and Ukraine poses a significant challenge. Russia's response to recent US commitments, such as the US's increase in defense spending by \$75 billion and the European Union's allocation of 2.5% of GDP to bolster defense, is expected to be robust. Moreover, the formation of a united front by the UK and Germany against Russia and China and the European Union's decision to cease Russian Assets in Europe to compensate Ukraine against war damages initially to the extent of Euro 30,000 million are adding to the geopolitical tensions. A notable development is the joint training exercise named "Cobra 23" response, which involves over 20,000 soldiers from 13 countries, including the UK, US, Denmark, France, Germany, Italy, Spain, the Netherlands, Belgium, and Canada, conducted across northern Norway, Sweden, and Finland. While ostensibly aimed at supporting Ukraine, there are covert intentions to weaken Russia economically and militarily. However, such maneuvers are anticipated to come at a considerable cost to Europe as a whole. The congressmen and Senator who opposed the bill have strong conviction that if USA and Europe had not pumped

in money to Ukraine the conflict would have minimal damage, and be resolved at the earlier stage. They believe that pumping in money and weapons had only exacerbated the conflict and was counterproductive for Ukraine, its people and Europe as a whole. They suggested that instead of facilitating a resolution, this support has only fueled the conflict, leading to further destruction and loss of life and has contributed to instability in the region and strained diplomatic relations. They argued that external intervention in conflicts only prolongs suffering and hindered the prospect of peaceful resolution adding complexities of the conflict and the potential for unintended consequences resulting from external involvement. The approval of \$8 billion in aid to Taiwan is viewed as a bold move, potentially provoking China and challenging it to engage in a direct conflict with the US and its allies. This aid is explicitly intended to serve as a deterrent against China's growing influence, with commitments in submarine infrastructure aimed at bolstering Taiwan's defenses against its powerful neighbor. Critics argue that the US's decision to arm Taiwan is a deliberate attempt to intimidate China, which advocates for a "One China" policy and seeks to peacefully integrate Taiwan into mainland China to benefit from its economic prosperity and growth. However, supplying Taiwan with significant military hardware is perceived by some as counterproductive, as it risks escalating tensions and increasing the likelihood of a conflict similar to the situation in Ukraine. Such a scenario could potentially ignite a broader conflict in the Indo-Pacific and Asia-Pacific regions, leading to a dangerous standoff. In essence, the aid package for Taiwan is viewed as a strategic maneuver to maintain its influence in the region and check China's expansionist ambitions, but it also carries the risk of exacerbating tensions and destabilizing the region. The approval of military aid by the US serves a singular purpose - to maintain the strength of its defense industry, safeguard American jobs, and ensure prosperity, safety, and security within the nation. This objective is often achieved through the proliferation of conflicts in various regions, where the demand for US-made lethal weapons and ammunition, despite their high price tags, creates lucrative markets worldwide. Former Press Secretary to the President

The writer is Former Press Minister to the Embassy of Pakistan to France Former MD, SRRC

Iranian attack on Israel: Escalating to de escalate

Nasir Abbas Shirazi



The Middle East has been a hot spot because of unending conflicts because of foreign interference and the interests of great powers. The rules of engagement in this region and anywhere else were simple; you do not mess with Americans. However, after the assassination of Iran's IRGS's commander Major General Qasem Soleimani by Americans, Iran completely changed the rules of engagement

Escalating to de-escalate is a strategy to take some appropriate action to avoid further action to end the conflict at least for the time being. It contains elements of capability, commitment, political will to act, and capacity to inflict unbearable loss to the adversary. The goal of this escalation is not to defeat the enemy but to compel him to a situation where the enemy avoids further escalation. The Middle East has been a hot spot because of unending conflicts because of foreign interference and the interests of great powers. The rules of engagement in this region and anywhere else were simple; you do not mess with Americans. However, after the assassination of Iran's IRGS's commander Major General Qasem Soleimani by Americans, Iran completely changed the rules of engagement. Iran responded militarily and targeted the main US military base of Ain-ul-Asad in Iraq. With this direct hit at American bases for the assassination of its General, Iran established four new rules and principles of engagement. First, Iran would respond militarily if attacked militarily. Second, Iran will respond directly as a state if attacked by any state. Third, Iran will not use any of its like-minded armed groups if attacked directly but will retaliate with state apparatus. Fourth, Iran's military demonstrated by attacking the Ain Al Asad base which was used to assassinate its general that a response would be aimed at the location used to attack Iran or its interests. The Iranian response resulted in the world fearing a U.S. retaliation to the direct attack at her base would start a spiral of incidents with a capacity to transform conflict into a full-scale regional war. Contrary to this, calm and restraint were witnessed even during the reign of hawkish President Trump. This time, the then-set rules by Iran were again being tested when Israel, violating international law, struck the Iranian embassy in

Syria - Iran, re-establishing those four rules of engagement, retaliated directly within Israel from Iranian territory. Despite the hype created by Israel, America, and its Western allies - France, Germany, and Britain - Iran crossed the threshold with Israel by creating an effective level of deterrence. Iran launched a well-coordinated, comprehensive attack with 100 precision-guided ballistic, cruise, and ballistic missiles. The level of escalation was so calculated that it only hit the military installations throughout Israeli-occupied territories including Tel Aviv, Golan Heights, Nevatim air base, areas close to Dimona nuclear facility, Eilat point, and other strategically important locations. It demonstrated a clear message that any attack on Iranian soil will not go unanswered. Iran with this retaliation again showed its capacity, capability, and will to retaliate and inflict serious damage. It was a loud and clear message that if Israel retaliates and attacks continue, the response would be harsher, destructive, accurate, and painful. Israel used to play with the psychological pressure of its military might, its invincibility, powerful allies, and state-of-the-art missile defense system - all shattered with Iranian retaliation and this loss of prestige is irreparable. Following the retaliation, the U.S. distanced itself by Iran was that it would retaliate as part of any Israeli counterattack. The U.S. policymakers and analysts know how bad participating in Israel's counterattack could go. The US has military bases all over the Middle East and the U.S. naval fleet present in the Red Sea, Gulf, and other territorial waters - they all could come under direct Iranian attacks as Iran had proved this after Soleimani's assassination. One of the rules of engagement established by Iran was that it would retaliate in place of origin of attacks on Iran so the US is unable to use any of its bases in the regional countries for a coordinated attack on Iran with Israel for those states would be the immedi-

The Writer is a senior lawyer, seasoned political analyst, and the president of Centre for Pakistan and Gulf Studies.

Briefs NZ FM to commence bilateral visit to Türkiye

WELLINGTON : New Zealand's Foreign Minister Winston Peters will commence a bilateral visit to Türkiye on Friday. He is currently in Türkiye for the Anzac Day Commemoration Ceremonies...

US campuses see hundreds arrested in Gaza protests

Police crack down on demonstrations at UT Austin and USC as students at Harvard and Brown set up encampments in protest against Israel's war on Gaza

NEWS DESK

WASHINGTON : Police in the United States have arrested dozens of protesters at the University of Texas at Austin (UT Austin) and the University of Southern California (USC) as student-led demonstrations against Israel's war on Gaza intensified across the country...



heavy-handed action from many universities amid accusations of anti-Semitism. The biggest rally on Wednesday took place at UT Austin where hundreds of students staged a walkout and marched to the campus main lawn...

Egyptian President rejects displacement of Palestinians

CAIRO: Egyptian President Abdel-Fattah al-Sisi renewed his country's rejection of the forced displacement of Palestinians saying Cairo is seeking to reach a cease-fire in the Gaza Strip...

100 inmates escape after rain damages Nigerian prison

ABUJA : More than 100 prisoners have escaped from a jail near Nigeria's capital after heavy rain damaged part of the facility where they were housed...

'Mortal' Europe needs to scale up defence: Macron

Macron called on Europe to adopt a "credible" defence strategy that is less dependent on the US

WEB DESK

PARIS : French President Emmanuel Macron on Thursday urged Europe to wake up to the fact that it is not sufficient to be armed in the face of global threats such as Russian aggression...

its trade policy. "Our Europe, today, is mortal and it can die," he said. "I can die and this depends only on our choices," he noted. "We need to build this strategic concept of a credible European defence for ourselves..."

SA extends troop deployment in DR Congo, Mozambique

JOHANNESBURG : South Africa has extended the deployment of its troops in the conflict-ridden Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) and northern Mozambique...

SA extends troop deployment in DR Congo, Mozambique. JOHANNESBURG : South Africa has extended the deployment of its troops in the conflict-ridden Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) and northern Mozambique...

Rwanda asylum legislation formally becomes law

NEW DELHI: Britain's King Charles has granted his approval to Rwanda's asylum legislation which is crucial for Prime Minister Rishi Sunak's strategy to send asylum seekers to Rwanda...

Fourth arrest in UK migrant deaths

LONDON: UK police said Thursday that they had arrested another man after three migrants, including a child, died this week trying to cross the Channel from France...

Ready to cooperate with 'non-imperial Russia: Poland

WARSAW : Poland would cooperate with Russia only when it starts to respect its neighbors' right to exist, the Polish foreign minister said on Thursday...

WARSAW : Poland would cooperate with Russia only when it starts to respect its neighbors' right to exist, the Polish foreign minister said on Thursday. "Poland is ready to cooperate with a non-imperial Russia that respects the rights of other nations to self-determination..."

Tokyo shares open lower as yen tumbles

TOKYO : Tokyo stocks opened lower on Thursday after the yen tumbled to a post-war level against the dollar ahead of a two-day Bank of Japan policy meeting...

TOKYO : Tokyo stocks opened lower on Thursday after the yen tumbled to a post-war level against the dollar ahead of a two-day Bank of Japan policy meeting. The benchmark Nikkei 225 index fell 0.95 percent, or 367.01 points, to 38,093.07 in early trade...

50% Austrians living in poverty

GENEVE: The number of Austrians in absolute poverty has risen by more than 50% - from 201,000 in 2022 to 326,000 last year, the country's statistical office announced on Thursday...

Turkie helps Iraq to bolster border security

The neighbors are discussing a possible security cooperation deal that would greatly limit the movements of PKK terrorists in the region

FOREIGN DESK

ANKARA : Türkiye is prepared to provide Iraq with technical assistance for securing its borders to security cooperation and the PKK terrorist group around the region, according to a Defense Ministry official on Thursday...

Turkish official told reporters. The official said that a delegation from Iraq visited Türkiye to examine the border security systems that Türkiye offered to provide, adding that the discussions for security cooperation and joint military training were still underway...

Islamabad: Zoe Ware, Political Counsellor at the British High Commission called on the Federal Minister for Privatisation, Investment and Communications, Abdul Aleem Khan

Islamabad: Zoe Ware, Political Counsellor at the British High Commission called on the Federal Minister for Privatisation, Investment and Communications, Abdul Aleem Khan. The meeting was held at the Federal Secretariat Building...

UK camps see hundreds arrested in Gaza protests

Police crack down on demonstrations at UT Austin and USC as students at Harvard and Brown set up encampments in protest against Israel's war on Gaza

Briefs

SC reinstates Balochistan Assembly speaker

COURT REPORTER

ISLAMABAD: The Supreme Court on Thursday annulled the decision of Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) and reinstated Balochistan Assembly Speaker...

Imran 'not ready' for deal: Marwat

ADIL SHAHEEN

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) leader Sher Afzal Marwat said on Thursday that party founder Imran Khan was "not ready" for the deal...

Sherry warns opp. against 'harming' country

FAISAL SHEIKH

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) senior leader Sherry Rehman warned on Thursday against harming the country...



ISLAMABAD: Chairman REIT Zahid Latif Khan and Ijaz Nisar presenting 100 CEOs book to Federal Minister for Planning Ahsan Iqbal and State Minister Shaza Fatima Khawaj at function held at the Islamabad Serena Hotel. - DNA

Gillani advocates for stopping ongoing genocide in Gaza

US Ambassador Blome acknowledged Pakistan's counter-terrorism efforts and reiterated US support in combating terrorism, recognizing the significant impact of terrorism on the country

KHAYAM ABBASI

ISLAMABAD: Chairman Senate Syed Yousef Raza Gillani welcomed US Ambassador to Pakistan Donald Blome to the Parliament House on Wednesday for a constructive dialogue aimed at strengthening bilateral relations...

Israel intensifies strikes ahead of feared Rafah invasion

NEWS DESK

GAZA STRIP: Palestinian Territories: Palestinians on Thursday mourned over people killed in Israeli bombardment of Rafah, the southern Gaza city where Israel says it is advancing plans for a ground invasion...

Antony Blinken calls for US, China to manage differences

FOREIGN DESK

SHANGHAI: US Secretary of State Antony Blinken called on Thursday to the United States and China to manage their differences "responsibly" as he went on a charm offensive ahead of expected tough talks...

US embassy funds awareness campaign on GBV in Balochistan

DNA

QUETTA: In a collaborative effort to combat the pervasive issue of gender-based violence (GBV), Balochistan Police has been implementing a pioneering awareness and advocacy campaign...

direct engagement, of speaking to each other, laying out our differences, which are real, seeking to work through them. Blinken said. "We have an obligation for our people - indeed an obligation to the world - to manage the relationship between our two countries responsibly."

dustry in Pakistan and called for enhanced cooperation in the digital sector. Both discussed the importance of parliamentary contacts. Chairman Senate appreciated the fact that a strong Parliamentary Caucus exists in the US Congress for promotion of bilateral ties...

Army Commanders pay tribute to martyred customs officials

STAFF REPORT

ABBOTTABAD: In due recognition of this selfless sacrifice in fight against illegal spectrum and as an expression of solidarity, Senior Army Commanders visited the martyrs' families at their home towns to express condolences, pay tribute and pledge unflinching support on behalf of COAS...

Pak seeks to strengthen coop with APM Terminals

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Finance and Revenue Senator Muhammad Aurangzeb held a meeting with Mr. Keith Swendsen, CEO of APM Terminals accompanied by Ambassador ILE, Jalob Linnell, along with representative from APM Terminals, at Finance Division today. The meeting was attended by Secretary Maritime Affairs, representatives from APM, and senior officers from FBR and Finance Division.

Advertisement for General Practice Healthcare Centre. Includes a grid of medical services like General Physician, Dental, and Physiotherapy. Below the grid is a photo of the clinic interior and a testimonial: 'Keeping you Healthy! Welcome to Islamabad's best private medical centre where your complete wellbeing is our top priority...'.