



Islamabad POST

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Netanyahu would make Hitler jealous with his 'genocidal methods'

Detailed News On Page-08

People's hopes in Sindh tied to PPP: CM Murad

Detailed News On Page-08



Djokovic suffers shock exit at Rome Open

Detailed News On Page-06



AJK govt accepts all demands

There should be no tolerance' for violent protests: PM

"Despite best efforts of detractors, the matter will hopefully be settled soon," says PM Shehbaz

DNA

ISLAMABAD/MUZAFFARABAD: The situation in Azad Kashmir seemed to have calmed down as negotiations between the representatives of Awami Action Committee (AAC) and government remained successful. The government accepted all the demands of the protesters including the provision of subsidised wheat flour. The AJK government has agreed to provide the electricity as per hydropower generation cost while there will also be a subsidy on the wheat flour. The privileges of ministers and officers would also be minimised, it was agreed in the negotiations. Earlier, the Rangers were deployed on Kohala Road to control the situation as the protest of AAC against inflation entered the third day. The internet service was also partially suspended to stop protesters from reaching the capital. Expressing deep concerns over the violent clashes between the Azad Jammu and Kashmir police and the protesters, Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif said that there should be "absolutely no tolerance for taking the law in one's own hands". Taking to X, the premier said: "While debate, discussion and peaceful protests are the beauties of democracy, there should be absolutely no tolerance for taking the law in one's own hands and damaging government properties." The premier made the remarks after the AJK government called in the Rangers as the protests and demonstrations against high electricity bills and taxes entered the third day. The protest was organised by the Jammu Kashmir Joint Awami Action Committee (JAAC). "Unfortunately, in situations of chaos and dissent there are always some who rush in to score political points," PM Shehbaz added. The premier further said that he had spoken to AJK Prime Minister Chaudhry Anwarul Haq and also directed all PML-N office bearers in AJK to talk to the leaders of the action committee.

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PTI demands AJK PM's resignation, fresh elections

FAISAL SHEIKH

ISLAMABAD: Former prime minister Azad Jammu and Kashmir (AJK) Sardar Abdul Qayyum Niazi demanded that the Prime Minister AJK should resign instantly and fresh elections should be announced forthwith so as new public mandate government took the powers to take prompt decisions to rein in the fast worsening situation in the region, as 40,000 people were on the roads at present protesting for accepting their legitimate demands. Addressing a press conference along with PTI Central Information Secretary Raof Hasan and senior PTI leader Hamid Pothi, he said that the puppet regime was imposed through regime change conspiracy did not work, rather it compounded the public miseries manifolds during the past one years. PTI senior leader said that AJK Prime Minister was a dummy and puppet premier, who was imposed on the people of Kashmir by ousting well-performing PTI government in the region. Abdul Qayyum stated that the people of the region now remembered PTI government which always prioritized providing relief to the masses, as people were provided subsidised flour during Ramadan.

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ISLAMABAD: A delegation of members of the Azad Jammu and Kashmir Legislative Assembly, belonging to Pakistan People's Party Parliamentarians, called on President Asif Ali Zardari, at Aiwan-e-Sadr. - DNA

JI wants govt to resolve Balochistan power issues

The human toll is significant and expected to rise, OIC wrote on X, citing local reports

FOREIGN DESK

ANKARA: The Organisation of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) launched a "flash assistance appeal" Saturday for victims of flash floods that have struck northern Afghanistan. "The OIC appeals, as a matter of urgency, to all its Member States and other countries across the world as well as relief organisations to promptly channel life-saving assistance to help Afghan people impacted by the on-going floods," it said. Heavy seasonal rainfall Friday triggered severe flooding

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Comes down hard on govt Talking to Imran must for country's progress: Arif Alvi

Basra said relations between the PTI and the establishment could improve if Imran was released from Adiala Jail

KHAYAM ABBASI

ISLAMABAD: Lamenting that there was a complete stalemate between the PTI and the establishment, former president and PTI stalwart Arif Alvi said on Sunday that it was necessary to talk to former prime minister and ex-PTI chairman Imran Khan so that the country could be put on the path to progress. Addressing a press conference in Lahore with party's Secretary Information Shaukat Basra sitting alongside him, Alvi said the solution to strained relations between the two sides lay in negotiations. He said that Imran was giving sacrifices for democracy in the country. "He has even sacrificed his ego," he said. The former president said he thought there was

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Siddiqui appointed MQM-P chairman as major changes made

MQM-P abolishes post of convener and revives chairman, general secretary slots

NAZIR SIYAL

KARACHI: Khalid Maqbool Siddiqui has been elected as the chairman of MuttahidaQaumi Movement-Pakistan (MQM-P) as major changes were made in the party's organisational structure,

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Briefs

JI wants govt Balochistan power issues

Hafiz Naeem addresses participants of a sit-in organised by Zamindar Action Committee

STAFF REPORT

QUETTA: Jamaat-e-Islami chief Hafiz Naeemur Rehman demanded on Sunday that the government immediately address the electricity crisis in Balochistan. Speaking to participants of a sit-in organised by the Zamindar Action Committee, Naeem urged the chief minister to resolve the issues facing farmers in the province. The JI chief pointed out that while there were thousands of tube wells in Balochistan, nearly 34 districts lacked access to a water system. He questioned how the land could be prepared for crops if these tube wells only ran for three hours a day.

Punjab to start solar project for farmers

1200 waterways will be lined with Rs 10 billion, says CM Maryam

DNA

LAHORE: Punjab Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz announced plans to start a solar tube-well project for farmers in the province. In a meeting with the Provincial Minister for Irrigation Kazim Pirzada, they discussed the affairs of the Irrigation Department, focusing on ensuring timely water supply to farmers. Progress was reviewed on updating the irrigation system and strengthening waterways (khal) across the province. CM Maryam stated that initially, 1200 waterways will be lined with Rs 10 billion, followed by an additional 7,000 throughout the province in the second phase.

Needs structural reforms

Privatisation key for achieving economic stability

Finance Minister says no differences with Ishaq Dar on the issue of privatisation

ABID RAZA

LAHORE: As Pakistan gears up for its upcoming bailout talks with the International Monetary Fund (IMF), Finance Minister Muhammad Aurangzeb Sunday underscored the significance of privatisation terming it as necessary to achieve economic stability. You have to move towards privatisation if you want economic stability in the country, Aurangzeb said while speaking at the Pre-Budget Conference 2024-25 in Lahore. His remarks come as Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif-led government has made a push for privatisation of several state-owned enterprises (SOEs) in a bid to address the burden on the exchequer and tackle the prevailing financial crunch driven by various dire economic circumstances.

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IMF mission chief to arrive in Pak next week

"Aim [of talks] is to lay foundation of resilient economic growth that will benefit all Pakistanis," says Perez

ADIL SHAHEEN

ISLAMABAD: The International Monetary Fund's (IMF) Sunday has confirmed that it will be holding talks with Pakistani officials to discuss the "next phase of engagement" in the coming week. "A mission team led

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Rs1m for each hockey player

SPORTS DESK

LAHORE: After demonstrating outstanding performance in the Azlan Shah Hockey Tournament, the national hockey team has arrived in Lahore with a silver medal. At Allama Iqbal Airport, Chairman of the Prime Minister's Youth Program Rana Mashhood, Hockey Olympian Khawaja Junaid, HEC Director Sports Javid Memon, former captain Akhtar Rasool, Shabaz Senior, and a large number of hockey family members were present to welcome the players. On this occasion,

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Israel forces launch attack on the Jabalia refugee camp

Israeli drones targeted ambulances near the clinic run by the UNRWA in Jabalia, according to the spokesperson for civil defense directorate

NEWS DESK

Gaza: Israeli military tanks have started to go deeper into the Jabalia refugee camp in northern Gaza as part of a ground offensive months after claiming Hamas had been "dismantled" in the area. Israeli forces are "carpet-bombing" the eastern areas of Jabalia refugee camp in the northern Gaza Strip, killing and wounding several Palestinians, Al-Jazeera reported citing local sources on Sunday. Israeli military tanks have advanced further into the Jabalia refugee camp, crossing Salah al-Din Street amidst ongoing battles with Hamas fighters, reports added. Media quoted eyewitnesses as saying that the tanks are surrounding evacuation centers and residential buildings in the densely populated area, leading to mass evacuations and displacement towards the western part of Gaza City. Also, Israeli drones targeted ambulances near the clinic run by the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees (UNRWA) in Jabalia, according to Mahmood Basal, the spokesperson for the civil defense directorate in Gaza. Basal stated that emergency crews in Rafah, al-Zaytoonin, al-Sabra, and Jabalia have been inundated with distress calls,

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UNSC seeks inquiry into mass graves in Gaza

AGENCIES

NEW YORK: The UN Security Council has called for an immediate and independent investigation into mass graves allegedly containing hundreds of bodies near hospitals in Gaza. In a statement, members of the council expressed their "deep concern over reports of the discovery of mass graves, in and around the Nasser and Al-Shifa medical facilities in Gaza, where several hundred bodies, including women, children and older persons, were buried." The members stressed the need for "accountability" for any violations of international law. They called on investigators to be given "unimpeded access to all locations of mass graves in Gaza to conduct immediate, independent, thorough, comprehensive, transparent and impartial investigations." Hospitals in the Gaza

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Anti-tetanus injection goes short in Lahore

LAHORE: In Lahore, a shortage of anti-tetanus injections has emerged, posing challenges for individuals injured in accidents. Pharmacies across the city are experiencing a scarcity of these injections, leaving many with limited access to crucial medical treatment.

PIAF asks govt to engage with industry

LAHORE: The Pakistan Industrial & Traders Associations Front (PIAF) has proposed a collaborative approach between the government and the business community, stressing the government to engage with industry stakeholders to formulate successful economic strategies.

PIA set to resume direct flights to Paris next month

As soon as the permission was granted, the PIA would resume services to Paris next month, adding that the PIA had expedited repair work on its 777 aircraft fleet to ensure compliance with safety standards and operational readiness for European and UK routes

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan International Airlines (PIA) is gearing up to resume direct flights to the United Kingdom from August 14, marking a significant development after four years.

PIA spokesman hoped that the airlines would receive phase-wise permission from the International Aviation Safety Assessment (IASA) this month. In a recent meeting with the Council of Economics and Energy Journalists, the spokesperson shed light on the airline's plans for expanding its operations.

ed repair work on its 777 aircraft fleet to ensure compliance with safety standards and operational readiness for European and UK routes. Spokesman Abdullah Hafeez said currently, PIA boasts seven 777 aircraft in operation, with plans to introduce two more planes into service within the next two months.

Meanwhile, a meeting of the European Union Aviation Safety Agency's review board regarding the lifting of the ban on European flights of Pakistani airlines, including PIA, will be held on May 14.

The Civil Aviation Authority has also successfully passed the International Civil Aviation Organization's (ICAO) Universal Aviation Security Audit. While the CAA has also achieved success in the assessment of key areas of the authority by the European Union Aviation Safety Agency.

Punjab CM approves vision, hearing aid project

DNA

LAHORE: Punjab Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz has greenlit a project aimed at providing spectacles and hearing aids to 700,000 students across the province. Under this initiative, students in both public and private schools throughout the province will undergo screening to assess their eyesight and hearing abilities.

Saudi Arabia is ready to invest in Pakistan

NAZIR SIYAL

Karachi (May 11, 2024) Saudi Arabia is ready to invest in the refinery sector of Pakistan. Federal Minister for Petroleum Mr. Musadiq Malik while giving a briefing to the delegation of Council of Economics and Energy Journalists (CEEJ) said that for the first time Saudi Arabia has agreed to invest in an integrated refinery with a buyback guarantee.

Anjum Wahab, Treasurer Ashraf Khan, Secretary Information Masood Ahmad Siddiqui and other members of CEEJ were present. Musadiq Malik said that there will be a tripartite investment in a refinery with Saudi Arabia, Chinese and Pakistani investment, the refinery will be set up with a "buy back" option to sell surplus products in the global market.

said that the new integrated refinery involves an investment of more than \$10 billion, the Chinese company will be the engineering, procurement and construction contractor and the operation and maintenance. Musadiq Malik also said that the integrated refinery produces chemical and diesel products.

Mobile phone prices in Pakistan see massive drop

DNA

LAHORE: Mobile phone markets across the country including Lahore and Faisalabad are witnessing a dramatic decline in prices, sending shockwaves through the city's tech-savvy populace. Reports indicated that mobile phone prices have plummeted by a staggering 20 to 40 percent, reshaping the landscape of consumer electronics in the provincial capital.

Two FIRs filed for issuing bogus cheques

Cases have been registered against Zulfiqar Ali Babar at both Shahzad Town Police Station in Islamabad and Sadiqabad Police Station in Rawalpindi

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Two First Information Reports (FIRs) 1402/24 & 565/24 have been lodged against Zulfiqar Ali Babar, son of Chaudhry Qutbuddin, for allegedly issuing bogus cheques. The complainant, Muhammad Ghafoor, son of Mehboob Khan, accused Babar of borrowing money and providing two fraudulent cheques, totaling Rs. 5 lakh and Rs. 943,000 respectively.

a substantial sum from Muhammad Ghafoor and in return issued two cheques that were intended to be cashed on demand. Upon depositing the cheques, it was discovered that they were invalid, leading to the initiation of legal action.

Strengthening cooperation with China needed to enhance Mushroom export

FAISALABAD: Pakistan enjoys rich potential for mushroom exports through enhanced cooperation with China, and tapping new markets. This was stated by Dr. Muhammad Muzammil Jahangir said, Nutritional value, health benefits and economic viability of mushrooms, particularly button and oyster varieties, are key factors to driving export growth of mushrooms.

duction methods and international cooperation, Pakistani mushrooms are poised for further gains in the international market." Dr. Muhammad Muzammil Jahangir said, Nutritional value, health benefits and economic viability of mushrooms, particularly button and oyster varieties, are key factors to driving export growth of mushrooms.

this, Pakistan's actual export volume in the mushroom industry was still relatively low compared to established exporters such as China, Netherlands and Poland. He added, "Pakistani exporters face competition in terms of pricing, quality and market access."

Karachi Board announces schedule

KARACHI: The Karachi Board of Higher Secondary Education has unveiled the much-anticipated timetable for the annual first and second-year examinations. As per the announcement by Interboard Karachi, the inaugural phase of the Intermediate Part I and Part II examinations for the year 2024 is slated to commence from Tuesday, May 28th, 2024.



CHINIOT: A farmer busy in filling bags with chaff (husk from wheat) after threshing wheat crop in his field. —APP

Court Notice

اعلانت تہا بے باہر مال صاحب سول راجی ٹیج راولپنڈی جوی دلا پائے

Film on Aafia Siddiqui launched in KPC

KARACHI: A film on Dr Aafia Siddiqui was launched in the new boardroom of Karachi Press Club (KPC) here Saturday. The documentary titled '#Aafia_Siddiqui' "The true story, made by Friends of Aafia was formally launched by Friends of Aafia. Noted neurophysician of the country Dr Fowzia Siddiqui and Hena Zuberi, Editor in Chief of Muslim matters, org and Director Justice for All, and others shed light on various aspects of the life of Dr Aafia Siddiqui from her birth, to education to marriage to her kidnapping in Karachi and present status in a notorious US jail. Dr Fowzia Siddiqui said that

her sister Aafia was a gifted child, a bright scholar and a loving and caring person. She got a Phd degree in neurosciences from Brandies University of the US and besides she was also a Hafiza. She said revolutionizing the education system in Pakistan was the dream of Aafia Siddiqui. Clive Stafford Smith, human rights lawyer, currently representing Dr Aafia, said a lot of people became the victims of the "war on terror". He said a vast majority of the American people have no idea who Dr Aafia is and they also don't care. He said that Aafia has suffered a lot in the US prison and braved

all sorts of torture. El-Hajj Mauri Saalakhon founding president and director of operations at The Aafia Foundation, Inc said after 9/11 the US targeted the human rights and liberties of people, especially the Muslims. He said Dr Aafia Siddiqui also fell prey to this victimization and in 2003 she was kidnapped along with her children in Karachi and disappeared on mere suspicion that her husband had ordered online to buy night vision goggles. Umme Muhammad, President Musawemem Campaign, said for the last fifteen years she has been linked to the case of Dr Aafia Siddiqui but disappoint-

ingly nothing more could be achieved. She said Aafia was targeted only because she was a Muslim lady. Hena Zuberi recalled that at the time of her study Aafia would wear a hijab. She said Aafia was a wonderful and kindhearted person. Yvonne Ridley was amongst the first investigative journalists who told the world that Dr Aafia was jailed in Afghanistan. Talking about the grey lady prisoner of Bigram jail, she said at that time the US administration would dehumanize the prisoners and the same was done to Aafia. She was wounded by the US soldiers and in injured condition she was brought to the US and tried

by a court in a highly biased manner and jailed for 86 years, which means the rest of her life. Zeina El-Debis, leader of Friends of Aafia Siddiqui and founder of Shade of Mercy Foundation talked about their efforts to get Dr Aafia Siddiqui repatriated on humanitarian grounds. She said this documentary is also a part of these efforts. Dr Aafia has been languishing in the most notorious FMC Carswell prison and she has become an international icon of human rights. She is termed as the most wronged woman and still awaits justice. —APP

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National Days and Armed Forces Days

May

- May 03/Poland National Day
- May 06/Bulgaria Armed Forces Day
- May 06/UAE Armed Forces Day
- May 07/Kazakhstan Armed Forces Day
- May 08/Czech Republic National Day
- May 09/European Union National Day
- May 17/Norway Constitution Day
- May 21/Hungary Armed Forces Day
- May 22/Yemen Republic
- Re-unification Day(National Day)
- May 24/Eritrea National Day
- May 25/Lebanon Liberation and Resistance Day
- May 25/Argentina National Day
- May 25/Jordan Independence Day
- May 28 /Azerbaijan Republic Day
- May 28/Ethiopia National Day
- May 31/Brunei Armed Forces Day

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Water Tank

Islamabad.....0321-5744480

ICCI President for solution of Bara Kohu traders' problems

FAISAL SHEIKH

ISLAMABAD: Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry President Ahsan Zafar Bakhtawari has said that the traders of Bara Kohu are facing multiple problems and Capital Development Authority and National Highways Authority must play a proactive role in the solution of these problems. He said that absence of street lights, clean drinking water, police security, link roads, carpeting are the key problems facing the community adding that abolishment of encroachments, construction of parking lots are also require urgent attention. He also urged CDA chairman to visit the Bara Kohu market for a first hand account of the problems being faced by the traders and then taking necessary steps for their resolution. Ahsan Zafar Bakhtawari said this while addressing a large delegation of traders of Bara Kohu, Simly Dam and adjacent areas which called on him here at the Chamber of House led by Raja Zahid Dhaniyal President Markazi Anjuman-e-Tajraan Bara Kohu. He assured the delegation that the ICCI would fully cooperate with their Association in its efforts for the betterment of Bara Kohu traders stressing that CDA must also construct much needed washrooms nearby the markets and ensure the cleanliness of the market places on daily basis. On this occasion, Ahsan Zafar Bakhtawari apprised the delegating that he has directed his team to expedite the process of instal-



lation of the water filtration plant in the area which is being provided from his own pocket. He also mentioned the performance of Mediation Council Office working in ICCI premises for the solution of rent matters adding that NADRA facilitation Centre will also be made functional in just few days. Markazi

Anjuman-e-Tajraan, Bara Kohu, President Raja Zahid Dhaniyal, in his remarks highlighted the services of ICCI President Ahsan Zafar Bakhtawari for traders community by mentioning at length the serious issues, the traders are confronting. Group leader Blue Area Yousuf Rajput, President Blue Area Raja

Hassan Akhtar, President Jinnah Super Assad Aziz, General Secretary Jinnah Super Abdur Rehman Siddiqui, Shah Anwar, Patron in Chief Simly Dam TWA Nisar Abbasi, ICCI Convener Rural Area Development Naveed Abbasi, General Secretary Simly Dam TWA Etahsham Abbasi in their address commended the

role of Executive Member Rizwan Chheena in their connectivity with ICCI. They also underlined the need for more and more ICCI membership for the solution of traders problems. Those present on the occasion include, Ch. Khalid, Ch. Irfan, Zulqarnain Abbasi, Ch. Waseem, Ch. Nasir and other.

CTP providing 24/7 licensing facilities to citizens

RAWALPINDI: The Chief Traffic Office (CTO) of Rawalpindi, Taimur Khan, said on Sunday that the City Traffic Police (CTP) were providing licensing facilities to the citizens 24/7 at the Traffic Headquarters Race Course. The CTO informed us that Rule 9-3, Punjab Motor Vehicle Rules, 1969, had been amended to facilitate citizens. Due to the amendment, the process of obtaining a driving license would be easier as the time taken from six weeks had been reduced to 15 days, said Taimur Khan. He informed them that, following the orders of Additional Inspector General (IG) Traffic, Mirza Faran Baig, CTP Rawalpindi, the citizens who failed the driving and sign test would be able to retake the test after 15 days at the traffic headquarters race course. Earlier, there was a waiting period of 6 weeks for failing the driving test, the CTO said, adding that now that the process would be easier to get a license, the six-week period had been reduced to 15 days so that the citizens could get the driving license easily. The CTO said that citizens should get their driving licenses without delay. "It is not allowed to drive without a driving license on the road," he added. "A fine amounting to Rs 2000 is imposed for driving without a license, he informed. The CTO urged the parents not to allow the children below 18 years of age to drive.—APP

CCP issues notices to 12 beauty product firms

MEHTAB PIRZADA

ISLAMABAD : The Competition Commission of Pakistan (CCP) has taken cognizance of deceptive marketing by the beauty products' manufacturers and issued notices to 12 companies regarding their false and misleading claims. CCP's preliminary probe revealed that these Undertakings were prima facie engaged in "greenwashing", advertising their products as "Natural, Organic, Sustainable, Pure, and Chemical Free" without having any scientific evidence to support their claims. Such unsubstantiated marketing claims not only mislead the consumers but also pose potential health risks

to unwary users. The notices issued by CCP may set a significant precedent for responsible marketing practices that prioritize environmental integrity and consumer trust. The undertakings in this business strategically omit the material information about the chemical/synthetic ingredients in their products from labels and marketing communications or use misleading terminology, imagery or labelling practices to hide the presence of inorganic components or chemical additives. Hence, the consumers are significantly attracted by their environment friendly assertions like "100% Organic, 100% Natural, 100% Pure, 100% Satisfaction guaranteed, Pakistan's No.1 Skin-

care Brand, Pakistan's Best Organic and Natural Brand, Pakistan's No.1 Online Organic Brand" and claims of the same kind. The Competition Act, 2010 prohibits deceptive marketing practices under Section 10 of the Act. The Commission is further mandated to ensure fair market competition for consumer protection. The CCP, therefore, calls for the accuracy, integrity, reliability and truthfulness of all marketing communications to honestly help the consumers in their purchase decisions. Marketing claims must be substantiated with valid scientific evidence to prevent the distribution of false or misleading information to consumers. The companies must compete on the basis

of safety, innovation, value for money, quality and effectiveness of their products. The Commission is fully committed to enforce the law and any company found guilty of deceptive marketing practices will face strict enforcement actions including penalties. In collaboration with the consumers, producers, retailers and relevant stakeholders, the CCP aims to ensure fair competition to protect the rights of consumers in the beauty products market. Furthermore, the CCP urges consumers to remain vigilant and promptly report to the Commission any instances of deceptive advertising, false claims or health hazards faced.

RTO teams encouraging traders to register for 'Tajir Dost' Scheme

RAWALPINDI :Teams from the Regional Tax Office (RTO) Rawalpindi are visiting various city and cantonment areas and encouraging the local retailers to register for the 'Tajir Dost' Scheme. The scheme, a flagship initiative of the Federal Board of Revenue (FBR), aims to facilitate retailers and traders in fulfilling their tax obligations while fostering a culture of tax compliance and economic transparency. Under the leadership of Ms. Tehimina Aamer, Chief Commissioner of RTO Rawalpindi, vigilant teams were constituted and deployed to raise awareness about the 'Tajir Dost' Scheme and register new cases under its purview. Under the supervision of Ali Muhammad, Additional Commissioner Cantt Zone, and Muhammad Hayat Khan, Additional Commissioner City Zone, these teams embarked on a proactive outreach campaign, visiting key areas including Bahria Town, Saddar, Commercial Market, Raja Bazar, and Murree Road. Numerous traders and retailers voluntarily enrolled on the scheme during the outreach efforts, underscoring their commitment to contributing to Pakistan's economic growth and development. The proactive participation reflects a positive stride towards a more transparent and accountable business environment. The RTO teams would continue to visit local markets and commercial areas to raise awareness about the scheme and encourage more businesses to register.—DNA

AIOU to close admissions on May 15

ISLAMABAD: Allama Iqbal Open University Semester Spring 2024 admissions (phase 2) to be closed in two days. According to the AIOU, the students can take admission in Associate Degree (BA/BCom), BBA, BS (ODL) programs, teachers training programs (1.5, 2.5 and 4 Years B.Ed.), postgraduate diploma programs, and certificate courses till May 15. Admission forms and prospectuses for these programs are available on the university website. Vice Chancellor, AIOU, Prof. Dr. Nasir Mahmood, hopes that those who want to pursue their education will avail the opportunity to register themselves by the given deadline.—APP

WASA accelerates preparations for Monsoon

RAWALPINDI: Water and Sanitation Authority (WASA) Rawalpindi on the directives of the Secretary Housing and Urban Development has accelerated preparations for Monsoon. According to a WASA spokesman, the Secretary had directed the third party to review monsoon preparations and drainage machinery. He informed that the Superintendent Engineer, Public Health Engineering Department Gujranwala Division, Qaiser Rashid visited WASA Rawalpindi along with the team here the other day and reviewed WASA's heavy machinery. The team declared the machines and arrangements used for the drainage satisfactory. Managing Director (MD) WASA, Muhammad Salim Ashraf and Director Sewerage and Drainage were also present on the occasion. SE Public Health Engineering Department also reviewed the cleaning of sewage lines with modern winching machines on Asghar Mall Road. The Superintendent Engineer said that the condition of machinery used in Monsoon was checked and found satisfactory. A summary of the funds for the proper cleaning of Nullah Lai had been sent to the Punjab government, which is expected to be approved soon. MD WASA informed. Funds amounting to Rs 60 million had been sanctioned for the major drains of the city and the tendering process was started. Muhammad Saleem Ashraf said adding that all the arrangements would be completed before Monsoon. He urged the citizens not to throw garbage and solid waste in drains and sewer lines.—APP


Over 14,000 AMI meters installed in Rawalpindi

DNA

ISLAMABAD: The Islamabad Electric Supply Company (IESCO) has successfully deployed over 14,000 cutting-edge Advance Metering Infrastructure (AMI) meters of all tariffs so far in Rawalpindi, marking a significant progress in its ambitious up-gradation and digitization plan that would be completed by June 2026. The company, under the plan, would install over 900,000 AMI meters, initially in Rawalpindi City Circle, Rawalpindi Cantonment Circle and Taxila (Division), Chief Engineer Operation IESCO Muhammad Aslam Khan told APP here Sunday while sharing latest data available upto April 14. He said that the three-year duration project would be completed in June 2026, adding a contractor has already been hired and around 700-750 AMI meters were being installed on daily basis. However, he said that after hiring of second contractor, around 2,000 AMI meters would be installed daily

to carry forward the project on fast-track basis. The project was being executed with the financial assistant of Asian Development Bank (ADB), costing \$ 89 million, he said adding it was part of the second power distribution enhancement investment programme under bank's financing. The contract for the project was signed on September, 3, 2022 while contract effectiveness date was January 2023, he added. Khan said that main data centre and back data centre have already been set up at the IESCO's head office and Gujjar Khan respectively. He went on to say that switching over to the AMI system would bring about a permanent elimination of power pilferage with systematic control of transmission through round-the-clock monitoring of the electricity meters. This technology would help reduce power sector losses, enhance the quality of billing and recoveries, control power load-shedding and also address the consumers' complaints of wrong or over-billing, the Chief Engineer told this agency. Shedding light on sig-

nificance of the project, Aslam Khan said the AMI system would end human interventions in meter reading, enhance customer support, better measurements, more accurate billing, a degree of control of consumption and help improve IESCO's ability to reduce non-technical losses. He said automated 100 per cent accurate and timely meter readings would reduce costs incurred on meter readings significantly. In case of any power theft, tripping, power failure, or defective meters, automated intimation would be received in the data centre with instructions to the concerned SDO for rectification in a short time. The consumers will be able to control their electricity bills by monitoring their electricity consumption daily through a mobile application, he remarked. Aslam Khan said round-the-clock monitoring of load on meters and transformers from the data centre would also ensure a significant cut in the burning rate of transformers, meters, and the operational costs of the organization.



پاکستان ریلوے کرائیو اور بیڈ ایس او بیڈ ایفائینس

INVITATION TO BID THROUGH EPADS

No.Sig-Proj/LON-SDR/240-B

Pakistan Railways acting through the Project Director /Re-Signaling (LON-SDR) intends to invite sealed bids on single stage-one envelope procedure vide Rule 36(a) of PPRAs rules-2004, from well reputed Bidder's having experience in the relevant filed & registered with sales tax department & income tax department (active taxpayer list). The detail of tender, earnest money and opening date is as under:

S. No	Tender/Bid Number	Brief description	Bid Submission date & time	Bid opening date & time	Bid Security Required
01	Sig-Proj/LON-SDR/240-B	Procurement of new and repair of miscellaneous items civil work	27-05-2024 11:00 hrs	27-05-2024 11:30 hrs	As per Tender documents

- The Employer invites electronics bids (technical & financial proposal) through E-Pak acquisition and Disposal system (EPADS) links (www.eprocure.gov.pk) from eligible firms / bidders on the basis of single stage Single envelop bidding procedure as per PPRAs rules. No bid other than EPADS will be accepted.
- Bidding documents, containing detailed terms and conditions, can be downloaded from <https://e-procure.gov.pk> free of cost. F-240563597
- The bid is prepared in accordance with the instructions in the bidding documents, must be submitted on EPADS as per schedule mentioned in the table above.
- Late bids will be rejected. Bids submitted without signed bid form by authorized nominee of the bidder will also be rejected.
- Bidders will also upload the complete scanned copy of their bid in EPADS.
- The authority reserves the right to reject all bids or proposals at any time prior to the acceptance of a bid or proposal.
- The bidders are requested to give their best and final prices as no negotiations shall be allowed. The rates quoted must remain valid for a period of ninety (90) days after opening of tender and till signing of agreement.
- Copies of registration with income tax department and sales tax department should be enclosed with bid. Non submission of this documents is liable to declare non responsive.
- The bidder must be registered with PEC-6 or above category.
- An original earnest money (CDR) or bid security from scheduled bank in the name of FA & CAO Pakistan Railways Headquarter Office Lahore, will be submitted before closing date & time of the tender physically in tender box in the office of the PD/RSP (LON-SDR) P.R.H. Qrs office Lahore and soft copy of CDR or bank guarantee should be uploaded on EPADS link. Photocopies of the same shall not be accepted and shall result in cancellation.
- The successful bidder shall deposit 05% of the contract value in the shape of CDR or Bank guarantee at the time of signing of the contract.
- For further details, if required please contact office of the PD/RSP (LON-SDR) Pakistan Railways Headquarters office, Lahore.
- This reserves the right to accept or reject any or all bids without assigning any reason thereof.

-sd-

Project Director/ Signals (LON-SDR)
Pakistan Railways-Lahore.

PIDL 3555

Briefs

Excise launches operation against token tax defaulters

RAWALPINDI: Excise Rawalpindi has launched an operation against token tax defaulters and unregistered vehicles and impounded a large number of loader rickshaws which were without registration. According to Director Excise Rawalpindi Imran Aslam, on the instructions of Director General, Excise Punjab Faisal Farid, special operation was launched against token tax defaulters and unregistered vehicles in Rawalpindi division as well as in the whole province. In this regard, Excise Rawalpindi conducted a general hold-up in various areas to check token tax defaulters and unregistered vehicles. He said that indiscriminate action against the defaulters would continue without any discrimination. Giving details regarding the general hold-up, Motor Vehicle Registration Authority, Excise Rawalpindi Sohail Shahzad said that special teams formed for general hold-up were given the instructions to take action against the vehicles without registration. The teams were directed that vehicles, especially loader rickshaws, should be checked, Sohail Shehzad said adding that during the operation, 104 unregistered vehicles including loader rickshaws, cars and motorcycles were impounded in various police stations and excise offices, while a total of Rs 4.1 million was collected from the owners of more than 200 defaulted vehicles. —APP

Ministry of Defence must evaluate strategic impacts

ISLAMABAD: The Pakistan Petroleum Dealers Association (PPDA) said on Sunday that oil price liberalisation will lead to the full monopoly of a foreign company on lifeline energy resources. It is not in the national interest to frame policies that will lead to full control of an influential foreign oil corporation over Pakistan's fragile oil market, it added. Talking to the petroleum dealers, Hassan Shah, a member of the PPDA executive committee, said that in the event of deregulation, Saudi Aramco will gradually have a full monopoly on the oil market in Pakistan. Pakistani oil refineries do not have the financial strength to compete with Saudi Aramco, and they will have no other option but to shut down, he added. He underlined that wiping out any chance of competition and leaving the country at the mercy of a single entity is not in the national interest. Hassan Shah said that because of wrong decisions, consumers will ultimately end up paying higher prices, instead of enjoying any perks of the free market. On the macroeconomic end, the move would cause unheard-of inflation and exchange rate erosion, causing irreversible damage to the faltering economy as well. Hassan Shah stated that no one should have unrestricted power to control fuel prices, which would lead to an economic catastrophe. —APP

SZIA's international day spectacle: embracing diversity

The International Day Function 2024 at SZIA was a resounding success, reaffirming the school's commitment to nurturing global citizens who embrace diversity, respect cultural differences, and work together to create a more inclusive world

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Sheikh Zayed International Academy (SZIA) celebrated a remarkable display of diversity and inclusivity at its annual International Day Function. The event, themed "Embracing Global Unity," brought together ambassadors, diplomats of various countries, students, parents, faculty, and esteemed guests to celebrate the rich tapestry of cultures represented within the SZIA community. With the theme "Unity in Diversity," this year's function underscored the school's commitment to fostering global citizenship and mutual understanding among its students, faculty, and wider community. In a show of diplomatic solidarity, representatives from 20 embassies graced the event, further enriching the cultural exchange and fostering intercultural dialogue. Ambassadors and diplomats engaged with attendees, sharing insights into their countries' traditions and fostering greater understanding and appreciation for cultural diversity. Adding to the festivities, prominent UAE-based entities, including Emirates and Etihad Airways, also hosted stalls, showcasing the hospitality and innovation synonymous with the Emirates. Attendees had the chance to learn more about these leading aviation compa-



nies and their contributions to global connectivity and tourism. As a highlight of the evening, SZIA announced a lucky draw with lucrative prizes, including return tickets to Dubai courtesy of Emirates and Etihad Airways. The anticipation was palpable as attendees eagerly awaited the announcement of the winners, with excitement reaching a crescendo as lucky recipients were awarded these coveted prizes. The evening commenced with a captivating 'Welcome Performance' by Primary Years Programme (PYP) students, showcasing the harmonious integration of various international

cultures within the SZIA community. This was followed by a heartfelt tribute to the devoted mothers whose unwavering support ensures the success and participation of their children in school activities. Preschool performers charmed the audience with greetings in multiple languages, serving as a testament to SZIA's dedication to nurturing multiculturalism from an early age. The event further honored the invaluable contributions of the school's administrative and support staff, whose behind-the-scenes efforts are integral to the smooth functioning of SZIA's operations. A highlight of the

evening was the mesmerizing Palestinian Dabka dance, choreographed and presented by Middle Years Programme (MYP) and Diploma Programme (DP) students, under the guidance of esteemed alumna Malaak Rahman. The International Day Function also featured spectacular displays of gymnastics, karate, and the visually stunning Butterfly Flutter Dance, where the stage was illuminated by the radiant costumes of MYP and DP performers. H.E Aisha Juma Saeed Al Naqbi, Head of Visa Centre at the UAE Embassy, an esteemed Chief Guest, delivered an inspiring address, emphasizing the sig-

nificance of embracing diversity and fostering a sense of unity in the global community. Mrs. Wafaa Abdul Gaffer, Principal of SZIA, expressed her gratitude for the diverse community that defines SZIA, stating, "As we come together to celebrate International Day, we are reminded of the beauty and strength that lies in our diversity. At SZIA, we strive to create an inclusive environment where every student feels valued and empowered to embrace their unique cultural identity." The event concluded with a heartfelt acknowledgment of the dedication and hard work of

SZIA's teachers, particularly those newly hired, who have already made a significant impact on the school's culture. As the evening drew to a close, attendees were invited to join the SZIA Oval Green for the International Cultural Parade, a vibrant celebration of the world's cultures brought to life by the school's students. The International Day Function 2024 at SZIA was a resounding success, reaffirming the school's commitment to nurturing global citizens who embrace diversity, respect cultural differences, and work together to create a more inclusive world.

China State construction engineering corporation to construct a residential project

ISLAMABAD: China State Construction Engineering Corporation Limited (CSCEC) signed a landmark contract with EMAAR Pakistan to construct a high-end Park Edge residential project in Karachi. So far, CSCEC has delivered several landmark projects in Pakistan including the passenger terminal building of Islamabad International Airport, Centaurus mixed-use development in Islamabad, Arfa Kareem IT Tower in Lahore, PKM motorway

and JF-17 technical buildings in Kamra. The collaboration with EMAAR Pakistan to construct a high-end Park in Karachi aims to elevate local residential quality and provide modern living facilities to the residents. Located at the heart of Pakistan's largest city, Karachi, the Park Edge project is a cutting-edge residential development that will set new standards in smart building, Gwadar Pro reported on Saturday. With a total floor area of

208,700 square meters, the complex will be developed by EMAAR Pakistan, a subsidiary of Dubai-based EMAAR Properties, and constructed by CSCEC, a leading Chinese construction giant. The project will feature twin towers of 43-storeys with a height of 152 metres. These high-end residential towers will incorporate smart building systems to provide comfort, safety and convenience for residents. The business district in a

skirt building, meanwhile, houses ancillary commercial facilities and fitness amenities. The Park Edge project is expected to be a major addition to the Karachi skyline, providing residents with brand new living spaces and world-class amenities. The CSCEC's projects in Pakistan help to boost the local economy by creating job opportunities and attracting vast investments throughout the country in the property sector. —APP

PRA accelerates operation against tax defaulters

RAWALPINDI: Punjab Revenue Authority (PRA) Rawalpindi Commissionerate has accelerated its ongoing campaign against the tax defaulters. According to a PRA spokesman, the authority had sealed a manpower recruitment agent office for non-payment of tax amounting to over Rs 3.3 million. The authority was taking action in accordance with the law the defaulters. He informed that the action against the tax defaulters would continue without any discrimination. Manpower recruitment agent located in the commercial market was the tax defaulter of more than Rs 3.3 million and PRA took action in accordance with the law, he said. PRA Rawalpindi office had issued recovery notices to the manpower recruitment agent and tried to collect the tax. —APP

China's increasing demand for Pak cotton textiles

ISLAMABAD: China is increasing demand for Pakistan cotton textiles, China Economic Net (CEN) reported on Sunday. Pakistan's cotton yarn exports to China have surpassed the \$166.37 million mark, an increase of 65.85%, in the first quarter of 2024. General Administration of Customs of the People's Republic of China's data showed that in the first quarter of 2024, the imports of "uncombed single cotton yarn containing 85% or above" (commodity code 52051200) from Pakistan crossed \$ 99.12 million. It is compared with \$72.70 million in the same period, whereas the imports of "cotton yarn" (commodity code 52051100) crossed \$65.78 million, up from \$26.28 million in the same period last year. Sajjad Mazahir, General Manager of China Operations Keywin Trading Ltd, told China Economic Net (CEN) that China's increasing demand for Pakistan cotton textiles is because China's industry balance itself with both exports and local downstream orders. A few years back, Pakistan's textile products were in demand only for exports but now it has taken a good market share in China's domestic market, too. Currently, Pakistan's supplies include cotton, cotton yarns, and Griegie fabric. They were preferred by many customers due to their competitive prices and quality. Yet, there is much to do for Pakistan to diversify its textile exports. "The textile industry in Pakistan is facing challenges from high cost of power and slow demand globally, and the Chinese market gives Pakistani exporters ample opportunities", he added. He further said that for diversification, Pakistan has to provide finished products to the local Chinese market, and a lot of effort is required to leverage the advantages of Pakistan-China FTA. —DNA

Pakistan boosting e-commerce ties with China

DNA

SHANGHAI: Pakistan officially launched its merchandise pavilion on the popular Chinese social media platform Douyin at the Global Hub in Shanghai Waigaoqiao Free Trade Zone, marking a milestone in boosting e-commerce ties with China. This event, supported by the Shanghai Municipal Commission of Commerce and the Pakistani Embassy in China, comes as a fruit of Pakistan and China's commitment to strengthening their economic ties. In November 2022, the two countries signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) on e-commerce cooperation, officially entering into Silk Road e-commerce partnership. According to Gwadar



Pro, the MoU aims to foster cooperation in areas such as e-commerce policy, trade facilitation and cross-border e-commerce. Pakistan Merchandise Pavilion on Douyin will feature a wide range of Pakistani products including traditional handicrafts, textiles, jewelry and

other specialties. Chinese consumers will have direct access to authentic Pakistani products, enhancing their shopping experience and fostering a deeper understanding of Pakistan's rich culture and trade traditions. Addressing the launching ceremony, Depu-

ty Consul General of Pakistan in Shanghai Muhammad Atif highlighted the importance of this online showcase. The opening of this official online pavilion showcases Pakistan's distinctive commodities and colorful culture to Chinese customers," he said.

BPM for proactive steps to stabilize economy

DNA

ISLAMABAD: The Federation of Pakistan Chambers of Commerce and Industry's Businessmen Panel (BMP) has stated that political uncertainty has rattled the Pakistan economy, asking the government to take proactive measures to encounter external and domestic challenges, besides stabilizing the economy. In a statement issued here today, the BMP Chairman and FPCCI former president Mian Anjum Nisar observed that months after the elections that were expected to presage easing of all political uncertainty paving the way for economic stability that all stakeholders and associated media pundits insisted would be a key factor in turning the economy around are having to deal with a major wheat scam that has Punjab farmers pro-

testing on the streets, the acceptance by the State Bank of Pakistan that there were mistakes in the Urdu text on currency notes only after it was pointed out by the ombudsman and one conflict arising from the Punjab police heavy-handedness against the lawyers protest. The wheat scam, in a nutshell, can be traced back to the decision by the caretaker finance minister, no doubt supported by the caretaker prime minister who kept portfolio of National Food Security and Research, to allow the private sector to import wheat at a time when the projected target for the coming season was enough to meet the country's consumption needs. The decision to import wheat, farmers lament, has disabled the Punjab government from procuring wheat and compelled them to sell at prices way below their costs. Disturbingly, the caretaker finance minister has re-

portedly refused to appear before the inquiry committee and the caretaker prime minister is defending his government's decision by insisting that he operated on information available at the time and that by allowing the private sector to import his government was not doling out cash for the purchase. These three instances are independent of any involvement of the opposition and reflect mismanagement at best, outright incompetence at worst. This in the face of ever-rising electricity rates as pledged to the International Monetary Fund in an attempt to attain full cost recovery (instead of improving the management of the sector as is required). It is, therefore, imperative that the government deals with scams by making heads roll, and those who refuse to appear before an inquiry committee as reportedly the caretaker

finance minister refused, must face very serious consequences. Mian Anjum Nisar said that the government should be committed to transforming the economy of the country, as the process of transforming the economy is already underway in the country, acknowledging that structural reforms in every sector takes time. He mentioned that the government will have to take joint action to combat currency smuggling and narrow the difference in dollar rates between official and open markets. It is the fact that the government has undertaken various initiatives for the betterment of the country. The trade deficit narrowed by 3.6 per cent to \$1.3 billion, demonstrating positive progress and expressed optimism that the government's efforts would lead to an expansion in export potential and the export market.

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US criminal complicity in Palestine

WHEN you not only defend but actively enable genocide and the mass murder of children, all norms and standards in human decency go out the window. That's what's happening to the ruling and media elites in the United States and allied Western powers such as Germany as they are now fully complicit in Israel's genocidal war in Gaza and murderous repression in the West Bank. The US has dug such a big hole for itself it's turning into a moral abyss. Not only has it supplied essential weapons, intelligence and funding without which Israel could not continue its merciless assault on the very existence of the Palestinian people, it is pretending that doing so is both just and necessary. That's why you have increasingly ludicrous statements and actions from its elites, who are offering live-TV lessons on how genocides became possible in the modern world. Former chairman of the US Joint Chiefs Mark Milley was last week admitting major atrocities the American military had committed at a Washington forum for lawmakers and military contractors. But if you think it was a rare moment of moral self-reflection, you would be disappointed. "We shouldn't forget that we [the] United States killed a lot of innocent people in Mosul, in Raqqa, that we the United States killed 12,000 innocent French civilians. And here we are on the 80th anniversary of Normandy, on the prep fires for Normandy. We destroyed 69 Japanese cities, not including Hiroshima and Nagasaki. We slaughtered people in massive numbers, innocent people who had nothing to do with their government, men, women and children." A mea culpa from a career soldier? Not quite. What he meant was that Americans have done the same, so "we" (the Americans) are in no position to criticise Israel, except to let it finish the job. Speaking at the same forum, Palantir's billionaire CEO Alex Karp ranted against student protesters demanding an end to the Gaza war. Palantir is a CIA-funded surveillance and data-mining tech company with close ties to the US-Israeli defence/intelligence industrial complex. "We kind of just think these things that are happening, across college campuses especially, are like a sideshow – no, they are the show," Karp said. "Because if we lose the intellectual debate, you will not be able to deploy any army in the West, ever." In a truly Orwellian statement of "war is peace", he added: "The peace activists are actually the war activists, and we're the peace activists." Milley, the four-star general, nodded in agreement. But how so? In a Fox News interview, Karp elaborated on the religious and cultural dangers of the student protests. Seriously! He said: "This new religion, which has nothing to do with Judaism, Christianity or Islam ... It's a full-on regression from below our Constitution, from below the Western tradition. "From below the classics, below the three withstanding great religions into something pagan, discriminatory, irrational, not bound by any of the norms that we have." It's interesting that his PhD thesis, written in German, was about the connection "between jargon, aggression and culture". Meanwhile, a movement is brewing in the US Congress to ask the White House to defund the United Nations.

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S. Korea's diplomatic course correction

FOREIGN Minister of the Republic of Korea (ROK) Cho Tae-yul will visit China from May 13 to 14, Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesperson Lin Jian announced on Friday. According to Yonhap News Agency, in addition to discussions on the development direction of bilateral relations, supply chain cooperation, Korean Peninsula nuclear issue and other topics, the two sides will also discuss and coordinate on the specifics of the upcoming trilateral summit between China, Japan, and South Korea. South Korean officials have previously stated that the ninth China-Japan-South Korea leaders' meeting is tentatively scheduled to be held in Seoul from May 26 to 27, with preparations being actively coordinated among the three parties. This has been viewed positively in South Korea, with some public opinion suggesting that the South Korean government is making efforts to find balance in its foreign policy. Since the current administration of South Korea took office, it has promoted "value-based" diplomacy, strengthening the US-South Korea alliance, improving relations with Japan, and adopting a tough stance toward North Korea with the backing of the US and Japan. In terms of relations with China, this government has shown shortsightedness, aligning itself with certain regional "mini-groups" and following the US and Japan in involving itself in questions related to Taiwan and the South China Sea. As pointed out by South Korean media, despite engaging in unconditional allied diplomacy with Western countries including the US, the treatment it received in return has not been ideal, which has led to introspection within South Korea. As communications between China and the US and other Western countries are restored, there are increasing calls for the South Korean government to balance its diplomacy. It is to be commended that since last year, when South Korea took on the role of the rotating chair for trilateral cooperation among China, Japan and South Korea, it has shown a strong willingness to restart high-level dialogues. The trilateral foreign ministers' meeting, which was held for the first time in over four years on November 26 last year in Busan, South Korea, reaffirmed the consensus on cooperation and agreed to create conditions and prepare for the leaders' meeting. This meeting marked a significant step toward getting trilateral cooperation back on track. Since then, the three parties have continued to coordinate on the timing of the leaders' meeting, with South Korea continuing to fulfill its responsibilities as chair this year and maintaining communication with China and Japan. This year marks the 25th anniversary of the initiation of China-Japan-South Korea cooperation mechanism, a significant milestone. Launched amid the Asian financial crisis in 1999, trilateral cooperation has continued to advance through ups and downs, achieving substantial results. Today, it has developed into the most institutionalized, wide-ranging, and substantive multilateral cooperation framework in Northeast Asia, consisting of the leaders' meeting at its core, 21 ministerial meetings, and over 70 dialogue mechanisms, covering more than 30 areas including trade, logistics, culture, education, environment, technology and health.

Save my army, for God's sake..

Qamar Bashir



"He was visibly troubled and saddened by the severe backlash following the DG-ISPR's press conference, especially on social media, which prompted him to advise the army spokesperson that, lacking the skill set, he should refrain from giving sermons on political, business and commerce, law and legal matters, election results, traditional and new media, and quoting selected and isolated facts and figures to suit a narrative while rejecting those that don't. He added that the DG-ISPR has opened up a whole set of Pandora's box and ensnared the army in unnecessary controversy, pitting the army against the PTI, which is the most popular party...

FOR God's sake, save my army. For God's sake, don't destroy the institution of the army. These institutions are ours; they belong to our nation. The army's businesses are ours, as they are built with public money on our public land, and we own them and do not deny them. The army belongs to me, to my people. The army has rendered innumerable sacrifices to save and protect our country from external and internal security threats. Therefore, more than any other person, the army itself should protect and safeguard the reputation of this important and vital institution. This requires the army and its spokesperson to indulge only in professional discipline and to refrain from getting involved where they neither had the training nor the skillset. "Dr. Arif Alvi, the former President and close associate and companion of Imran Khan, struck a conciliatory tone after his meeting with the founder of PTI in jail on 9th May. This was perhaps his first and very important press conference after retiring as the President, where he articulately communicated PTI's narrative in response to derogatory and inflammatory statements made by the Army leadership and the leaders of the coalition governments in the center and provinces against PTI, terming it a gang of disruptive and anarchist elements." The former supreme commander of Pakistan's armed forces delivered this sound advice to the army leadership. He imparted his wisdom like an elder, showcasing his deep love, respect, and attachment to the army as an institution. As someone who spent over ten months as his media advisor, I can attest to his unwavering passion and affection for the army. "He was visibly troubled and saddened by the severe backlash following the DG-ISPR's press conference, especially on social media, which prompted him to advise the army spokesperson that, lacking the skill set, he should refrain from giving sermons on political, business and commerce, law and legal matters, election results, traditional and new media, and quoting selected and isolated facts and figures to suit a narrative while rejecting those that don't. He added that the DG-ISPR has opened up a

whole set of Pandora's box and ensnared the army in unnecessary controversy, pitting the army against the PTI, which is the most popular party in the country, especially among the young population. Although they believe in democracy, they can be led astray if their party and leader are portrayed in a negative light." He rightly argued that just as the army took strict action and imposed exemplary punishment on army personnel who violated discipline and conduct during the May 9th incident, and rightly did not extend the same punishment to the rank and file of the army, the same principle should have been applied to alleged civilian elements found involved in the incident based on incontrovertible evidence. However, instead, the punishment was unfairly extended to the entire leadership and the party itself. The party was dismantled, its leaders were coerced into leaving, and pressured to join a newly created party. Election symbols were denied, leaving voters confused during the voting on February 8th. Despite winning the majority of seats in the center and Punjab, the party's mandate was stolen, artificially reducing it to a minority party. This was an insult to all patriotic Pakistanis who had cast their votes in favor of the party. He stated that the DG-ISPR was denying a glaring truth, substantiated by numerous videos and documentary evidence showing the army interfering in polling stations and pressuring election staff to change results. During his address, he also articulated the solution to the political impasse by suggesting that the only way forward for all stakeholders is dialogue. He said the army leadership should respect and trust the 80% of the people of Pakistan who voted in favor of PTI and also give due regard to those who have been elected, including the founder of PTI who, despite being incarcerated, remains the most popular leader in the country and the world with over a 70% approval rating. He advised the army, being in a position of strength, to magnanimity and a large heart and should have offered to bury the hatchet. On the contrary Imran Khan who has been humiliated, insulted and put behind bars does not harbor any ill feeling against anyone and has shown great patience, forbearance and magnanimous

attitude by offering an olive branch to seek solution of the current impasse through dialogues. However, he refused to enter into any negotiation with the incumbent government which according to him was illegitimate, formed on false pretexts, lies, and deceit, consisting of stooges who lack the mandate or power to make consequential decisions. Therefore, it is imperative that the people's mandate, reflected in Form 45, is fully restored. This will provide a strong foundation based on truth and solid support for improving the economy, financial stability, and prosperity for the people of Pakistan." He also dared the media to stand with truth and justice. Interestingly, when all this turmoil unfolded, the timing seemed ill-timed. The government was settling down, inflation was under control to a large extent, the IMF was giving positive signals, the stock exchange was performing extremely well, and promises for investment were pouring in. On the political front, the ice between the top political parties had started melting. However, the press conference by the DG-ISPR reset the entire political scenario, leading the country into another period of turmoil, agitation, confrontation, and political tension. However, not everything is lost. The silver lining of this latest episode around the 9th May has brought the former president, Dr. Arif Alvi, who remained silent since his retirement, returned into active politics. The PTI desperately needed a mature, seasoned, experienced, and passionate leader to curb internal strife within the party, and with more than five years of unique and privileged experience as the president aptly represent the Party and articulate the party's narrative on sensitive matters with responsibility, delicacy, and professionalism. With his presence at the helm of PTI's affairs and his experience as the president and the supreme commander of the armed forces, he will hopefully be able to bring the warring parties to the negotiation table and provide much-needed relief to the 250 million people of Pakistan
– Former Press Secretary to the President
Former Press Minister to the Embassy of Pakistan to France
Former MD, SRBC

Calling out UK for its brazen protection of pro-occupation forces

Hannan Hussain

The British government is also wrong to give the benefit of the doubt to a genocidal regime by claiming that international humanitarian law was about to come under threat. Britain's stance on Gaza should be condemned for deluding the public because "Israel" has been breaking international law from the outset and for decades. It is evident in a process of systemic Israeli annihilation, mass slaughter and glaring war crimes that London's own diplomacy justifies in practice

THE protests are spreading. From Oxford University to Edinburgh, students in considerable numbers are pushing academic institutions in the United Kingdom to end ties to the Israeli occupation. As the genocide reaches devastating highs in Gaza, many faculty and staff members are on-board to push for divestment demands and are calling out the Israeli systemic campaign of mass slaughter and starvation. But that same sense of aversion to Israeli genocide and war crimes appears absent among UK policymakers, who quietly cheerlead Israeli belligerence. According to damning new revelations, the Conservative Party of the UK has consistently catered to the pro-genocide occupation by protecting Israeli politicians, spy agents, and other officials from glaring war crimes. These developments reveal the extent of London's complicity in the Israeli-led genocide, and illustrate the use of "special" immunity to protect war criminals that have Palestinian blood on their hands. Consider Israeli war criminal General Herzi Halevi, among the chief architects of a planned Israeli onslaught on Rafah. Rather than joining international momentum to support prosecution of Halevi and his allies, the UK granted the war criminal a visiting permit without fear of arrest. These are glaring examples of Britain deluding the public on legal rights, and twisting its own laws to enable support and protections for a genocidal regime. London is thus unqualified to offer rhetoric against Israeli offensives when it consciously sustains its partisan support for the same occupation. Andrew Mitchell, the UK's deputy foreign minister, put on a false show of morality this week, claiming that an Israeli ground invasion of Rafah would 'break international humanitarian law.' Lets be clear: the UK doesn't care about international law or the astounding scale of Pal-

estianian suffering and mayhem. Mitchell even refused to spell out any meaningful consequences for the occupation in the event of a full-scale invasion, exposing the cosmetic nature of British rhetoric on Gaza. The British government is also wrong to give the benefit of the doubt to a genocidal regime by claiming that international humanitarian law was about to come under threat. Britain's stance on Gaza should be condemned for deluding the public because "Israel" has been breaking international law from the outset and for decades. It is evident in a process of systemic Israeli annihilation, mass slaughter and glaring war crimes that London's own diplomacy justifies in practice. At a time when the International Criminal Court (ICC) has occupation premier Benjamin Netanyahu and his allies fearing arrests and isolation, Britain appears determined to obstruct justice and do "Israel's" pro-genocide bidding. After all, it is a country that Amnesty International has declared a "deliberately destabilising" force for human rights on the world stage, and proves that point by allowing Israeli war criminals to visit without fearing arrest. Make no mistake: Britain is seriously unqualified to speak to any semblance of democratic values because its pro-occupation tilt signals violation of British commitments to universal jurisdiction laws. That includes the Rome Statute which holds that the most serious crimes are tried regardless of where they occurred. Palestinian rights groups are absolutely correct to turn the heat on London and hold it accountable for its own breaches of international law in Gaza. This includes the West Bank-based Al-Haq, which is taking Britain to court over arms exports funding the genocide. As UK's diplomatic "immunity" becomes the latest weapon to shield Israeli war criminals, it is in the interests of Britain-based

activists and their international counterparts to form a legal challenge of their own. This is imperative to hold the government accountable for sponsoring pro-genocidal forces under the garb of diplomacy. London's denial would carry zero weight because its support for Israeli war criminals is rooted in history. Look back to 2011 when Labour chief Keir Starmer blocked arrest warrant prospects for occupation foreign minister and suspected war criminal Tzipi Livni. A government so deeply in cahoots with a decades-old Israeli military occupation cannot be trusted to drive accountability from within. London's contribution to more Palestinian bloodshed thus demands that the government is tried with the full force of the law. There is also a common thread that binds escalating anti-genocide protests across Britain: the truly urgent situation for besieged Palestinians in Gaza. The Israeli occupation continues to launch airstrikes in Rafah and pursues a systemic campaign of civilian massacres that is now centered around the southernmost Gaza city. And yet, Britain played a principal role in aiding "Israel's" genocide capacities on the intelligence front ahead of time. That includes 50 British espionage missions that were conducted since the start of December with the principal goal of aiding the occupation. With these realities in mind, how can Britain even stand up to the international community and tout the occupation's so-called "truce" proposal as generous? There are striking double standards in the way UK plays up public rhetoric on peace and prosperity over Gaza, while profiting from its bloodshed. Its broader occupation support through information-gathering, espionage, diplomatic immunity, and weapon supplies firmly establish complicity in the ongoing genocide. The Declassified UK revelations are only the tip of the iceberg.

Briefs

There should be no...

FROM PAGE 01

"I urge all parties to resort to peaceful course of action for resolution of their demands. Despite best efforts of detractors, the matter will hopefully be settled soon." It is pertinent to mention here that at least a police officer was killed and over 70 sustained injuries during the clashes between the police and the protesters in Mirpur. Meanwhile, the central leadership of the JAAC has distanced itself from the violent incidents that occurred during the protests. One of the JAAC members, Sajid Jagwal, said their movement is peaceful. He said that they have been sitting for two days and no incident has happened. Another member, Tauseef Mansoor, said that the committee has nothing to do with the two to three incidents that have happened during the protests. Anjum Tajran President Sahabzada Waqas said that the protest was not against the state or any institution. "This army is ours and this country is ours. We are neither against the army nor against Pakistan or any other institution," said the president.

PTI demands AJK PM's...

FROM PAGE 01

Former AJK PM said the new imposed model in AJK did not work because it lacked public support; therefore we needed a strong and public mandated government. He said that only Imran Khan could put the country out of the prevailing myriad challenges and could fight the case of Palestine and Kashmir affectively and emphatically at all fora globally; hence he should be released instantly. Qayyum Niazi lamented that the negative impacts of the regime change conspiracy were cropping up after a year, which was evident from the massive public protests across the region against the puppet regime's anti-poor policies.

Israel forces launch...

FROM PAGE 01

confirming that these areas were subjected to overnight bombardment. This footage shows bombing surroundings of UN shelters in #Jabalia tonight Israeli airstrikes attacked the camp with over 100 bombs&quadcopters fired at civilians No safe place in #Gaza&Humanitarian zones are big lies&tricks . Imad Abu Zayda, an emergency doctor in Jabalia, warned of the critical conditions prevailing there due to the recent Israeli aggression in the area.

UNSC seeks inquiry...

FROM PAGE 01

Strip have been repeatedly targeted since the beginning of the Israeli military operation in the Palestinian territory following the October 7 attack on southern Israel by Gaza-based Hamas militants. The World Health Organization said in April that Al-Shifa, in Gaza City, had been reduced to an "empty shell," with many bodies found in the area. The Israeli army has said around 200 Palestinians were killed during its military operations there. Bodies have reportedly been found buried in two graves in the hospital's courtyard.

Rs1m for each...

FROM PAGE 01

Rana Mashhood announced a prize of ten lakh rupees for each player on behalf of the Prime Minister. According to Rana Mashhood, on May 15, the Prime Minister's patron-in-chief for hockey will meet the national team at the Prime Minister's House. In a thrilling final showdown, Japan secured victory over Pakistan in the Sultan Azlan Shah Cup final, triumphing 4-1 in a penalty shootout. The closely contested final culminated in a penalty shootout after both teams ended full time with a deadlock at two goals each.



ISLAMABAD: A fruit seller arranges mangoes at his stall outside Fodd and Vegetable Market of Sector 1-11 in the Federal Capital. — Online

Djokovic suffers shock third-round exit at Rome Open

With his win, Tabilo advanced to the fourth round at a Masters 1000 event for the second time after he reached that stage in Indian Wells in 2023

SPORTS DESK

ROME: Alejandro Tabilo secured a major Sunday upset at the Internazionali BNL d'Italia, where he defeated six-time champion Novak Djokovic 6-2, 6-3 with a powerful third-round performance. The 29th-seeded Chilean struck the ball cleanly off both wings throughout his maiden Lexus ATP Head2Head clash with Djokovic, who gave an uncharacteristically low-energy performance at the Foro Italico. Tabilo broke the Serbian's serve four times and did not face a break point en route to a 68-minute victory in his first match against a No. 1 in the PIF ATP Rankings. "It's incredible," said Tabilo. "I came on court just looking

around, just trying to soak it all in and trying to process everything. I'm just trying to wake up right now." With his win, Tabilo advanced to the fourth round at a Masters 1000 event for the second time after he reached that stage in Indian Wells in 2023. The Chilean's next opponent in Rome will be 16th seed Karen Khachanov, who earlier defeated Francisco Cerundolo 6-2, 6-4. Sunday's win is another milestone in an excellent 2024 so far for Tabilo, who arrived in Rome at a career-high No. 32 in the PIF ATP Rankings. The 26-year-old lifted his maiden ATP Tour trophy in the opening week of the season in Auckland, and he is now 17-9 for the season after also reaching a championship match on home soil in February in Santiago.



"I was just trying to keep my nerves in, trying to keep swinging," he said about it and take it point by point. It's crazy, I can't believe what just happened." Tabilo has also impressed

in recent weeks on European clay. He reached the semi-finals in last month in Bucharest and last week prevailed from a stacked field to clinch the title at an ATP Challenger Tour 175 event in Aix-en-Provence. Djokovic was immediately under pressure on serve against Tabilo, who appeared eager to dictate play with his big lefty forehand. The top seed did not help himself with some wayward serving, and a pair of double faults gifted Tabilo the first game. Tabilo continued to go for his shots and made scant few errors from the baseline and he seized control of the match. He hammered a forehand down-the-line to secure a double break at 3-0 and did not look back as he clinched the opening set. Any Djokovic comeback

attempt was immediately undermined in the opening game of the second set, when the 98-time tour-level champion again contributed two double faults, this time back-to-back from 30/30, to help Tabilo break. That proved to be the only window the Chilean needed, as he continued to stay solid on serve before claiming victory with a final break of serve, sealed with another Djokovic double fault. "I think everybody who has been involved in the process [of my career], and my family, can't believe it right now," said Tabilo. "They basically sent me in [to the match] with, 'You've done a great job, it's unbelievable that you've got this far'. So I don't think anybody can believe it. I'm still trying to process everything, so it's a crazy feeling."

Updated hockey rankings after Japan beat Pak

The final was decided on a penalty shootout after the game ended 2-2 in normal time

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan men's hockey team fell further in the recently updated FIH rankings after losing to Japan in the Sultan Azlan Shah Cup final on Saturday. Pakistan lost to Japan 4-1 on a penalty shootout after the match in normal time ended 2-2 as the Japanese goalkeeper made two excellent saves in the shootout which ended the Green Shirts' hopes of lifting the title. Pakistan were ranked 15th before the final while Japan were 16th. After Japan's victory in the final, they improved their rank by one rank while the Men in Green fell one rank further and are now 16th with 1829 points. Meanwhile, the Netherlands remained on top with 3161 points while Belgium and Australia are second and third with 2948 and 2906 points respectively. Remember, the final had to be decided on a shootout after both teams scored two goals apiece at the end of full time. Japan took the lead in the shootout courtesy of Ryoma Ooka while his teammates continued the momentum, scoring the other three. Meanwhile, Pakistan missed the first two whereas Ammad Butt netted the ball in the third stroke. — DNA

Virat Kohli creates IPL history

NEW DELHI: Royal Challengers Bengaluru's (RCB) star batter Virat Kohli has created IPL history as he becomes the first player to participate in 250 matches for a single team. The 35-year-old is playing against Delhi Capitals tonight which marks his 250th game for RCB. Second on the list is MS Dhoni, who has played 233 games for Chennai Super Kings (CSK). Rohit Sharma is third on the list with 211 appearances for Mumbai Indians. In the ongoing IPL 2024 season for RCB, Kohli has delivered remarkable performances, accumulating 634 runs in 12 IPL matches at a strike rate of 153.51 and an average exceeding 70. He currently holds the Orange Cap in IPL 2024 (awarded to the highest run-scorer in an IPL season). — Agencies

Holstein Kiel promoted to Bundesliga for first time

BERLIN: Holstein Kiel reached the Bundesliga for the first time in their history following a 1-1 draw with Fortuna Dueseldorf on Saturday, capping a remarkable rise from the German fourth division over the last decade. Kiel went into the game needing only a point against promotion rivals Fortuna to secure a historic promotion and they took the lead inside two minutes through striker Benedikt Pichler. Dueseldorf's Christos Tzolis restored parity from the penalty spot in the 70th minute following an on-field video review, setting the stage for a tense finale. But Kiel survived a Dueseldorf onslaught, which secures Marcel Rapp's side at least second place in the final standings and a debut season in the Bundesliga next season. "When I looked at the field and I saw all the people

on it, I thought I was in a dream." Kiel midfielder Philipp Sander told Sky Sports Germany after Kiel fans invaded the pitch at full-time. "We've kept a very low profile over the last few weeks and I think everyone has had a few dreams, but didn't quite want to believe it yet because we all thought, if you open your mouth too early, it might go wrong. Now we've just done

it and it is unbelievable!" Kiel's journey completes a wild decade that has seen them rise from Regionalliga North, the fourth tier of German football, to the Bundesliga in just 11 seasons. Holstein Kiel had twice come close to promotion to the Bundesliga in recent years, finishing third in 2017/18 and again in 2020/21, but both times lost out in the play-off. — Agencies



Norwich, Leeds level after tight play-off first leg

Crysenicio Summerville was unusually quiet for Leeds but he had a snap-shot turned round the post by Angus Gunn after latching on to Shane Duffy's poor headed clearance

WEB DESK

LONDON: Norwich and Leeds fought out a tense, cagey, goalless draw in the first leg of their Championship play-off semi-final. Neither side fashioned many scoring chances at Carrow Road and the place in the Wembley final on 26 May will be decided in the second leg at Elland Road on Thursday. Both teams limped into the play-offs, with Norwich winning just two of their final seven league games to scrape into sixth while Leeds managed just two wins in eight to blow their chances of going up automatically. That poor form was reflected in a cautious approach by both sides with the Canaries' Gabriel Sara and Leeds' Sam Byram fluffing the two best chances in a game of few scoring opportunities. Leeds' poor form forced manager Daniel Farke into an unexpected change with Archie Gray replacing striker Joel Piroe, meaning a forward role for Georginio Rutter, while Jonathan Rowe boosted Norwich with his first start since January following injury problems. With a glut of attacking

talent on display, neither side seriously tested the opposition goalkeeper, with a safety-first approach evident. In a nervous opening, Dimitris Giannoulis almost blindsided Sam Byram as the Leeds defender tried to head back to keeper Illam Meslier, and at the other end Rutter air-kicked



a good chance. Josh Sargent headed a fine Jack Stacey cross wide under pressure from Joe Rodon, and at the other end Junior Firpo had the ball in the net only for Rutter to have been spotted in an offside position earlier in the move. Crysenicio Summerville was unusually

quiet for Leeds but he had a snap-shot turned round the post by Angus Gunn after latching on to Shane Duffy's poor headed clearance. Both sides lost major attacking threats as Rowe was taken off after an hour, Sargent was replaced after picking up an ankle injury and the ineffective Summerville was also substituted. Sara fired wide after the Canaries fashioned a rare clear-cut chance, and full-back Byram took a wild swipe which totally missed the ball when he was also presented with a good shooting chance. "It's a result I can totally live with. My team worked really hard, started on the front foot and were brave to get the crowd behind us. "I know how good this result can be in the play-offs, so it's game on. Both teams neutralised each other, especially offensively, and I was fine with how focussed and concentrated the players were. "The cards are still on the table and we'll play for it. Nobody expected this semi-final to be decided after the first leg. "I haven't spoken with him [Josh Sargent] or the medical department but he wasn't able to carry on. He has problems with his ankle but he's a tough guy and I don't think it's a big issue for Thursday."

Privatisation key for achieving...

FROM PAGE 01

Stressing that the private sector has been brought on board with the government, the finance czar underscored improved economic indicators including the reduced current account deficit (CAD) of less than \$1 billion and a decrease in inflation coupled with all-time high stock exchange levels. Revealing that around Rs8 to 10 trillion cash is currently in circulation in Pakistan, the finance minister underscored the need to work on issues pertaining to tax and gross domestic product (GDP) and called on businessmen to come into the tax net by themselves if they have done so already. Reassuring that the government will provide all kinds of facilities, the minister reiterated that the authorities will not back down from their stance on the issue of broadening of tax net.

IMF mission chief to...

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by Nathan Porter, IMF's Mission Chief to Pakistan, will meet with [Pakistani] authorities next week to discuss the next phase of engagement," IMF's Resident Representative for Pakistan Esther Perez Ruiz said in a statement. As per the IMF official, the objective of the talks is to "lay the foundation for better governance and stronger, more inclusive, and resilient economic growth that will benefit all Pakistanis". Her remarks come after an IMF support team reached Pakistan to hold talks regarding the South Asian nation's request for a fresh bailout package under the Extended Fund Facility (EFF) on Friday.

Talking to Imran...

FROM PAGE 01

pressure on the judiciary. "I will continue to defend the Pakistan Army," he vowed. He said there needed to be freedom of media in the country. "There is no gansaying the fact that these are the people who have control over the social media," Alvi said. The former president further said that what was happening in Gaza these days was evident from the pictures coming from the occupied area. "There was a hope that people would raise their voice against atrocities by the Israeli forces against the people of Gaza."

Siddiqui appointed...

FROM PAGE 01

according to a statement issued by a party's spokesperson on Sunday. The MQM-P has abolished the post of convenor and revived structure consisting of chairman, vice chairman and secretary general posts. In a statement, the spokesperson said the central committee appointed Siddiqui as the chairman of the MQM-P. The development during a central committee meeting chaired by Siddiqui held at Pakistan House in Karachi. The meeting was attended by top party leaders including Mustafa Kamal, Farooq Sattar, Nasreen Jalil, Anis Qaimkhani, Faisal Sabzwari, Aminul Haque, Rizwan Babar and others, the spokesperson added.

JI wants govt to...

FROM PAGE 01

affecting hundreds of families and causing extensive damage to infrastructure, property and farmland. The human toll is significant and expected to rise, OIC wrote on X, citing local reports. The devastating flash floods come months after deadly earthquakes rocked several provinces across Afghanistan. With increasing numbers of vulnerable families and children in desperate need of support, the OIC stressed the importance of prompt action in the coming days and weeks to help victims survive and recover from the disaster.

Briefs

IPC Minister praises Pak hockey team

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Inter Provincial Coordination (IPC) and Planning, Ahsan Iqbal, has commended the Pakistan hockey team for their outstanding performance in the Sultan Azlan Shah Cup final against Japan. The Pakistani team made the nation proud by showcasing their skills and reaching the final of the tournament after 13 years, which is a great achievement. Ahsan in a statement issued here, praised the Pakistani players for their top notch display in the final, despite limited resources.

He emphasized, "There is immense talent in the country, and the team's performance in the tournament was a testament to that." The minister assured, "Government is focusing on the revival of sports in the country and hopes that the hockey team would regain its lost glory in future."

Ahsan expressed his optimism that the Pakistani hockey team would perform better in future international tournaments. He acknowledged that the team's performance in the Sultan Azlan Shah Cup final was a positive sign for the future of hockey in Pakistan. It may be mentioned that Japan emerged as the champion of the 30th Sultan Azlan Shah Cup, defeating Pakistan in a thrilling penalty shootout. The match ended in a 2-2 draw at the scheduled time, but Japan won the game on penalty shootouts by 4-1. Pakistan's team, which had won the bronze medal in the previous event, put up a stellar performance and won a silver medal in the extravaganza.—APP

Cattle markets amid Eid ul Adha urged

RAWALPINDI: Chairman, District Coordination Committee (DCC) Qamar ul Islam Raja has directed the authorities concerned to prepare a plan for setting up cattle markets conducive to Eid ul Adha. According to a district administration spokesman, the Chairman while chairing the second DCC meeting held here instructed the district administration officers to finalize a plan to facilitate the citizens in the sale, and purchase of the sacrificial animals in connection with Eid ul Adha. The meeting also reviewed the performance of the Health Department, Education Department, Punjab Revenue Authority, Building Department, Police and other departments. Qamar ul Islam Raja said that the prevention of dengue needs to be done on an urgent basis and in the first phase, high-risk Union Councils should be targeted. The first floor, and second floor of Holy Family Hospital would be handed over to the hospital administration by May 15, the Chairman said adding, 80 per cent of the work on the pathology lab in the basement had also been completed. The basement of Holy Family Hospital would be handed over to the hospital administration by May 22, he informed. 27 Schemes of the Building Department were being completed, Qamar ul Islam Raja said adding, that work was swiftly being completed on 24 schemes. Revamping of Kotli Sattian and Kahota THQ was in progress, the Chairman said and issued inquiry orders regarding the irregularities in the promotions of some teachers. He said that sales tax was being collected by the provinces themselves. So far, the sales tax was being collected on 75 services including marriage halls, hotels, construction companies, consultants and other private sector, he added. He directed that awareness should be ensured through social, electronic and print media to create awareness among the people regarding the collection of the sales tax. He instructed the authorities that the district administration and police should play a key role in ensuring the implementation of 'One Dish' orders of the Punjab government. Indiscriminate action should be taken against the land grabbers, illegal societies and drugs, he directed the authorities.—APP



ISLAMABAD: PM's Coordinator on Climate Change & Environmental Coordination Romina Khurshid Alam talking to media along with Azeri Minister & President COP29 Mukhtar Babayev at F9 Par.—DNA

Pak-Uzbekistan commodity market leaders for joint plan

Pakistan and Uzbekistan have a lot of potential in commodity exchange which includes major sectors in the country's Gross Domestic Products (GDP), including agriculture and textiles, food and oil sector, grain, sugar and energy sector

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan and Uzbekistan Commodity Exchange leaders have agreed to adopt a joint future plan of action, regarding new capital market challenges through cooperation. Pakistan and Uzbekistan have a lot of potential in commodity exchange which includes major sectors in the country's Gross Domestic Products (GDP), including agriculture and textiles, food and oil sector, grain, sugar and energy sector. Pakistan Mercantile Exchange, Manager Business Development Habib Mamsa led the delegation to participate in the Tashkent International Investment Forum and visited Uzbekistan Commodity Exchange. The

delegation was welcomed by Deputy Chairman of Uzbekistan Commodity Exchange Nabikhon Samatov. The commodity exchange leaders, during the interaction, emphasised the joint action plan and initiative of the two commodity exchanges by adopting a joint future planning and action plan to face the challenges of the future market. Meanwhile, Deputy Chairman of Uzbekistan Commodity Exchange (USEX) Nabikhon Samatov said that Uzbekistan Commodity Exchange currently has 500,000 and 30,000 foreign clients at the national level and it has been 30 years since UCE was established. The deputy chairman said that trans-

actions worth \$14 billion are taking place in the Uzbekistan Commodity Exchange annually and 10,000 transactions are being made daily. He said that 55 per cent private sector and 45 per cent government are doing business in UCEX. Nabikhon Samatov said that energy, oil, cement, cotton, sugar, grain and livestock are the major sectors to invest here. He said that Uzbekistan is currently developing in the market economy and at this time Pakistan Mercantile Exchange and Uzbekistan Commodity Exchange want to benefit from each others experiences. Senior business leader said that the capital markets of Pakistan and Uzbekistan have a lot of compatibility and

many sectors are compatible on both sides, with which both sides want to move ahead with cooperation by adopting a common plan. He said, "in the modern capital market, we can benefit from the experiences of Pakistan for which bilateral coordination is very important". The deputy chairman said that not only the two governments but also the private sector should pave the way for mutual cooperation. Similarly, both institutions should increase collaboration on the spot market and future market. Deputy Chairman of Uzbekistan Commodity Exchange Nabikhon Samatov said that both sides want to work together on new trends like market innovation and meta-trading.

He said that the series of mutual discussions on this agenda should continue in near future. On this occasion, Habib Mamsa, Manager Business Development of Pakistan Mercantile Exchange, urged to set a strategy for the Spot Market and Future Market by adopting a joint plan with Pakistan Mercantile Exchange, Uzbekistan Commodity Exchange, and in this regard, the dialogue process should continue in the leadership of both sides. Habib said that PMS is in the phase of evolution, and we currently have 60000 clients. He said that our market has increased by 20%, the volume of which is Rs2 billion and there are enough opportunities for mutual

cooperation on both sides which need to be worked on. On this occasion, the leadership of both sides emphasized online Zoom and face-to-face discussions between the leaders of both markets for the promotion of mutual cooperation and joint action plans in the future. On this occasion, Senior Manager Product, PMEX Irfan Kasana and Advisor to Chairman UCEX, Hikmatullah highlighted the different aspects of the stock market of the two countries and shed light on the various avenues of cooperation on both sides. They said that bilateral dialogue should continue by adopting a common strategy for the promotion of capital markets on both sides.

Pak calls for UN-led cyber capacity building mechanism

UNITED NATIONS: Pakistan has underscored the need for a permanent cyber capacity building mechanism under the UN, particularly in bridging the gap between the developing and developed countries, in an effort to promote trust and cooperation among states. "International cooperation in the area of capacity building on an equal footing is a key measure for a safe, secure, stable and peaceful ICT (Information and Communications Technologies) environment," Ambassador Munir Akram told the Global Roundtable on ICT Security Capacity Building. "We support the idea of a permanent capacity building mechanism under the UN, as well as a dedicated funding mechanism to support capacity building projects in developing countries," the Pakistani envoy added. The session was presided over by Singapore's UN Ambassador Burhan Gafour, who heads the Open-ended Working Group on Security of and in the use of ICTs. Cyber security capacity building is aimed at equipping individuals and organizations with the knowledge, skills and tools they need to protect themselves and their digital assets. "We are particularly concerned at the frequency of cyber attacks on critical infrastructure," Ambassador Akram said, pointing out that Pakistan has been a particularly long-standing victim of its other threat - disinformation. Noting ICT technologies' vast positive potential, the Pakistani envoy said also highlighted their negative side - expansion of the domains of conflict, saying, "Cyber warfare has emerged as a new domain of warfare." As such, Ambassador Akram said, "It is urgent to address key emerging trends of malicious activities in cyberspace both by states and non-state actors."—DNA

'US treating pro-Palestinian student protesters unfairly'

UNITED NATIONS: A human rights expert has warned that the recent increase in student protest attacks across campuses in the United States reflected an "erosion of intellectual freedom and democratic principles within educational settings." "I am deeply troubled by the violent crackdown on peaceful demonstrators, arrests, detentions, police violence, surveillance and disciplinary measures and sanctions against members of the educational community exercising their right to peaceful assembly and freedom of expression," UN Special Rapporteur on the right to education, Farida Shaheed, a Pakistani sociologist, said in a statement at the end of an official visit to the US.—APP

Hunza-The sleeping beauty

SULTAN SHOAB

GILGIT-BALISTAN: Tucked away in the majestic Karakoram mountain range, Hunza Valley has been a coveted destination for nature lovers, travelers and traders for centuries presenting mesmerizing views, cleaner environment and rich habitat. Lying along Hunza River and bordering Ishkoman to Northwest, Shigar to Southeast, Afghanistan's Wakhan Corridor to North and Xinjiang region of China to Northeast, the Hunza Valley floor is situated at an elevation of 2,438 meters (7,999 feet). This breathtaking valley in Gilgit Baltistan has a rich history dating back to the Silk Road era and been a melting pot of cultures, with influences from ancient civilizations like the Greeks, Persians and Chinese for over 2000 years. The most enchanted view it presents is seen through the upper atmosphere - say from

the windows of a place or a chopper - feeling a beautiful woman enjoying sound sleep that names it as 'a sleeping beauty.' Once a princely state and remaining so till 1974, Hunza is home to many ancient forts, palaces and mosques that are testament to its glorious past. Visitors can explore these historical landmarks and learn about the valley's unique culture and traditions. "It is a paradise on earth. I have lived here all my life and I still cannot get enough of its beauty," narrated Husan Ali, a local resident. "The lakes, mountains, scenery - everything is just breathtaking. I am so grateful to have been born and raised in this beautiful valley." Being proud of his abode known for its stunning natural beauty and unique culture, Husan remarked, "the scenery is so captivating that it will leave you speechless. If you are a nature lover, a tourist or someone who loves beauty, this valley will stir your emotions and feel-

ings." Endowed with towering mountains, crystal-clear rivers and lush green fields, the beautiful Hunza valley is also a treasure trove of rich habitat, singing brooks, sky high mountains and precious wildlife. Hunza Valley is also home to some most beautiful lakes like Attabad and Borith Lakes - just a couple of treasures of this stunning valley. These lakes offer a serene and peaceful experience, with crystal-clear water reflecting the surrounding mountains. Visitors can take a boat ride, go fishing or simply sit back and enjoy the mesmerizing views. Attabad Lake is specifically a popular attraction for tourists. Formed in January 2010, due to a landslide in Attabad village in Hunza Valley, this 21 kilometer long lake offers activities like boating, jet-skiing, fishing, and other recreational activities. It is frozen in winter and has a teal blue color in summer.

IGP Dr. Usman has achieved big task by modernizing the Punjab Police

MUMTAZ AHMED BHATTI



The Punjab Police Department, like any law enforcement agency, holds a crucial role in maintaining public safety and upholding the rule of law. Under the leadership of Inspector General (IG) Dr. Usman Anwar, the department has embarked on a journey of transformation aimed at improving its operations, fostering community relations, and ensuring the welfare of its officers and the citizens they serve. One of the most nota-

ble changes initiated by IG Punjab Dr. Usman Anwar established the establishment of Special Initiative Police Stations (SIPS). These police stations exemplify a new era of modern policing, emphasizing a clean environment and citizen-friendly practices. Dr. Usman Anwar highlighted the integration of digitalized facilities for efficient and responsive policing. Dr. Usman Anwar, the IGP Punjab, the introduction of a token system and dedicated staff at front desks ensures citizens receive guidance and prompt access to the relevant officers. Police service center facilities within the police stations enhance accessibility and convenience for the public. The welfare of police officers, both active and retired, has been a priority for IG Punjab Dr. Usman Anwar's leadership. The addition of a retirement tab within the Human Resource Management and Information System (HRMIS) app provides a streamlined online platform for retired police officers to address their concerns.

This innovative approach not only facilitates problem-solving but also demonstrates the department's commitment to its officers' well-being even after their service. IG Punjab Dr. Usman Anwar has shown his appreciation



for long-serving constables by organizing ceremonies such as the "Golden Bread Ceremony." This tradition of distributing bread to constables with over 40 years of service symbolizes a tribute to

their dedication and sacrifice. Such gestures foster a sense of belonging and acknowledgment among officers, boosting morale and motivation within the force. Another remarkable initiative spearheaded by IG Punjab Dr. Usman Anwar is the continuation of providing plots to the heirs of police martyrs. The distribution of ownership papers for these plots to the families of martyrs in the Rawalpindi region showcases the department's commitment to honoring those who have made the ultimate sacrifice for public safety. The Punjab Police Endowment Fund's support for building houses on these plots further underscores the department's dedication to ensuring the well-being of these families. Recognizing the significance of a healthy police force in maintaining peace and preventing crime, IG Punjab Dr. Usman Anwar has forged an agreement with the Health Department. The transfer of the Police Welfare Hospital Qila Gujjar Singh to King Edward Medical University demonstrates a stra-

tegic move toward ensuring comprehensive medical care for Punjab Police employees. A healthy police force not only contributes to the well-being of its officers but also enhances its effectiveness in serving the community. Under IG Punjab Dr. Usman Anwar's leadership, a culture of recognizing and rewarding excellence has been cultivated within the department. Bravery, courage, and a strong sense of duty exhibited by officers and personnel are celebrated through organized ceremonies. Cash prizes and certificates of appreciation are awarded to those who demonstrate exceptional performance, reinforcing the idea that dedication and commitment to duty do not go unnoticed. IG Punjab Dr. Usman Anwar's commitment to promoting inter-faith harmony, national unity, and peace is evident through the establishment of the first Measqa Center by the Multan Police. This center serves as a platform for fostering understanding and unity among diverse communities, contributing

to social cohesion and reducing tensions. Punjab Police's digital initiatives, including the Punjab Police Pakistan App, underscore IG Punjab Dr. Usman Anwar's commitment to leveraging technology for the convenience of the public. The app's features, such as "Mera Pyara" for reporting and recovering missing children, demonstrate the department's dedication to using modern tools to enhance its responsiveness and effectiveness. The leadership of IG Punjab Dr. Usman Anwar has ushered in a new era of transformation within the Punjab Police Department. The introduction of modernized facilities, recognition of officers' efforts, welfare initiatives for both serving and retired officers, and the embrace of digital technology collectively highlight the department's commitment to improving its service to the public. These positive changes serve as a testament to the visionary leadership and dedicated efforts of IG Punjab Dr. Usman Anwar and his mission to create a more effective, accountable, and community-oriented police force.

Concern about Russia dominates as Lithuanians vote

VILNIUS: Lithuania votes Sunday in a presidential election dominated by security concerns with the main candidates all agreed the NATO and EU member should boost defence spending to counter the perceived threat from neighbouring Russia. The Baltic state of 2.8 million people fears it could be next in Russia's crosshairs if Moscow wins its war against Ukraine, which began with an invasion in 2022. While the top three contenders agree on defence, they have diverging views on social issues and on Lithuania's relations with China, which have been strained for years over Taiwan. "Lithuania's understanding of the Russian threat is unanimous and unquestionable, so the main candidates are following suit," Eastern Europe Studies Centre director Linas Kojala told AFP. Polls close at 1700 GMT and the result is expected later on Sunday - although a run-off on May 26 will probably be needed as no candidate is expected to win an overall majority. Opinion polls give the incumbent, 59-year-old former banker Gitanas Nausėda, a comfortable lead over the other seven candidates, who include Prime Minister Ingrida Simonyte and prominent lawyer Ignas Vegele. The Lithuanian president steers defence and foreign policy, attending EU and NATO summits, but must consult with the government and parliament on appointing the most senior officials. Lithuania, a former Soviet republic, is a top donor to Ukraine and a big defence spender, with a military budget currently equal to 2.75 per cent of GDP.—APP

Nepal court orders limit on Everest climbing permits

KATHMANDU: Nepal's Supreme Court has ordered the government to limit the number of mountaineering permits issued for Everest and other peaks, a lawyer confirmed Friday, just as expeditions prepare for the spring climbing season. The Himalayan republic is home to eight of the world's 10 highest peaks and welcomes hundreds of adventurers each spring, when temperatures are warm and winds are typically calm. The verdict was issued in late April but a summary was only published this week. Lawyer Deepak Bikram Mishra, who had filed a petition urging permits to be curtailed, told AFP that the court had responded to public concerns about Nepal's mountains and its environment. "It has ordered a limit to the number of climbers... and also given measures for waste management and preservation of the mountain's environment," Mishra said. The verdict's summary said that the mountains' capacity "must be respected" and an appropriate maximum number of permits should be determined. The full text of the verdict has not been published and the summary does not mention any specific limit to the number of permits issued.—APP

Briefs

Canada arrest 4th Indian for murder of Sikh leader

Amandeep Singh charged with first-degree murder and conspiracy to commit murder in Nijjar's killing

TORONTO: A fourth person has been arrested and charged with the murder of Sikh separatist leader Hardeep Singh Nijjar last year, Canadian police said on Saturday, in a case that strained diplomatic relations with India.

Canadian police earlier this month arrested and charged three Indian men in the city of Edmonton in Alberta and said they were probing whether the men had ties to the Indian government. The Integrated Homicide Investigation Team (IHIT) announced Saturday that Amandeep Singh, 22, has been charged with first-degree murder and conspiracy to commit murder in Nijjar's killing. Singh, an Indian national who resided in Brampton, Surrey and Abbotsford, was already in custody for unrelated firearms charges out of Peel, Ontario, IHIT said. Nijjar, 45, was shot dead in June outside a Sikh temple in Surrey, a Vancouver suburb with a large Sikh population. A few months later, Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau cited what he said was evidence of potential Indian government involvement, prompting a diplomatic crisis with New Delhi. — Agencies

Harry, Meghan visit Lagos school in Nigeria

LONDON: The Duke and Duchess of Sussex visited a secondary school in Lagos on the last full day of their Nigeria tour. Prince Harry heard about the work of a charity which organises basketball camps for children in Africa, and played a game with students. The trip marks 10 years of the Invictus Games, which Nigeria joined for the first time last year.

Later on Sunday, the couple were welcomed to State Governor House in Nigeria's most populous city. They listened to a speech by the state governor, Babajide Sanwo-Olu, and signed a visitors register. At the school, the couple were welcomed with a dance routine by four students.

The Duchess wore a white blouse with an aso-oke attire, a traditional hand-woven cloth from south-western Nigeria, wrapped around her waist. She was gifted the cloth at a reception hosted by the military on Saturday. The duke joined the kids in dribbling basketballs, even shooting one in the hoop, before they all posed for a photo. "The power of sport can change lives," Harry said. — Agencies

4 suspected terrorists killed in Lahore

LAHORE: Four suspected terrorists involved in targeting police officers were killed in an apparent police encounter in Karol Jungle area on Sunday. According to a spokesperson for the Counter Terrorism Department (CTD), a suspect, Faizan Butt, was taken to the Karol Jungle during an investigation for the recovery of some weapons. Upon identification of Faizan, two pistols and a hand grenade were seized from the jungle. During the operation, five of Faizan's accomplices attacked the police party. A trade of fire broke out as the police team retaliated, killing four terrorists. These terrorists were wanted in cases involving targeted killing of police officers. On May 2, a bike-borne duo gunned down a police officer identified as Ghulam Rasool in Lahore's Taxali area.

French Gastronomy at Monal

Exquisite French delicacies provide a real feast to guests

In the serene ambiance of Monal's Tree House, amidst delectable French delicacies and warm camaraderie, bonds were forged and memories created, fostering enduring ties between nations

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Luqman Ali Afzal, the CEO and Founder of the Monal Group, graciously hosted a sumptuous dinner to inaugurate a three-day celebration of French cuisine at the enchanting Monals Tree House. This culinary extravaganza, held in collaboration with the esteemed French Embassy, was a testament to the rich cultural exchange between Pakistan and France. The distinguished presence of His Excellency, French Ambassador Nicolas Gale, alongside his esteemed family, lent an air of elegance to the evening. Their attendance was complemented by the esteemed presence of Ambassadors from Poland, Japan, Palestine, Italy, the European Union, and Jordan, symbolizing the unity and camaraderie among nations. Adding to the diplomatic charm of the occasion, the Chief of Protocol from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs graced the event with his presence, further highlighting the significance of this cultural rendezvous. In the serene ambiance of Monal's Tree House, amidst delectable French delicacies and warm camaraderie, bonds were forged and memories created, fostering enduring ties between nations.



ISLAMABAD: Ambassadors of France, Poland, Japan, Palestine, Italy, European Union and other diplomats posing for a picture on the occasion of a dinner hosted by CEO Monal Luqman Ali Afzal. — DNA

Russia blames Ukraine as Belgorod apartments collapse

MOSCOW: Russia is blaming a Ukrainian strike after an entire section of an apartment block collapsed following an explosion in Belgorod. CCTV from the scene shows a large blast near the base of the 10-floor structure and then the building falling in. At least 19 people have been injured and there are reports of fatalities and people being trapped in the rubble. The Russian city is near the border with Kharkiv in Ukraine, where Moscow's troops launched an offensive on Friday. The Belgorod region has often been targeted by Ukrainian forces since the start of Russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine in 2022, but there has been no word from Kyiv on the latest incident. Previously Ukrainian officials have said cross-border strikes, including those on Belgorod, do not target civilians. But the regional governor of Belgorod, Vyacheslav Gladkov, accused Ukraine of bombarding the region, describing the cause of the explosion as a Ukrainian shell. Pictures from the scene show rescuers removing debris by hand in a search for survivors. — Agencies

Netanyahu would make Hitler jealous with his 'genocidal methods': Erdogan

'Who is responsible for the most brutal and systematic mass killings in Gaza after Oct. 7?'

Resistance best way to terminate occupation

DAMASCUS: The secretary general of the Palestinian Islamic Jihad resistance movement has described resistance as the best option to terminate the Israeli regime's decades-long occupation, stressing that the struggle will continue until final victory is achieved. Addressing representatives of Palestinian factions in Syria during a meeting in the capital Damascus on Sunday, Ziyad al-Nakhalah reaffirmed the resistance front's long-standing and unwavering commitment to continue fighting until full liberation of occupied lands. "We will remain under occupation if we do not fight the enemy," he emphasized. Nakhalah further noted that the ongoing battle in Gaza represents an unprecedented challenge for both the Palestinian nation and their resistance groups. "Gaza is a litmus test for all walks of our nation, who are suffering from occupation and forced displacement. Our countrymen and women are exhibiting an unprecedented level of resilience in Gaza, and the Zionist enemy is also facing the extent of steadfastness it has never experienced before," the Islamic Jihad chief stated. He went on to describe the ongoing struggle as an opportunity for all to fight off the usurping Zionist entity, underscoring that resistance against the enemy remains the only way to liberation from occupation. — Agencies

EU ambassador visits Nasser Bagh art gallery

During her visit, Dr Riina Koinka was briefed on the rich history of the British-era garden. Originally named Bandstand Garden, it was later rechristened Municipal Garden on the construction of Victoria Jubilee Hall

BUREAU REPORT

LAHORE: European Union Ambassador to Pakistan Dr Riina Koinka visited an art gallery inaugurated at the Nasser Bagh by the Parks and Horticulture Authority (PHA), where she viewed an ongoing exhibition. Dr Riina Koinka, who was in Lahore, received an invitation to visit The Barracks, situated within a historically significant but deteriorated bunker previously occupied by the Department of Civil Defence. "The Garden" exhibition by Imran Qureshi, a renowned artist, seeks to delve into the historical significance of the landmark by converting its underground bunkers into an engaging environment. Employing a multidisciplinary approach, it investigates the interplay between ecology, aesthetics, and conflict. During her visit, Dr Riina Koinka was briefed on the rich history of the British-era garden. Originally named Bandstand Garden, it was later rechristened Municipal Garden on the construction of Victoria Jubilee Hall (later Town Hall). The park also earned the moniker Gol Bagh due to its circular layout. Following the partition of the Indian subcontinent in 1947, the garden was renamed Nasser Bagh in

tribute to Gamal Abdel Nasser, the longstanding president of Egypt. The diplomat was further informed that the gallery aims to become a dynamic hub for art enthusiasts and connoisseurs alike. Additionally, Riina Koinka was briefed on various initiatives taken by the department. These include organising sporting events, establishing a pioneering Bonsai museum and yoga center at Racecourse Park, and revitalising the Butterfly House at the Botanical Garden. Separately, the PHA has also announced plans to establish a public sculpture garden at the Nasser Bagh. The sculpture park will comprise an outdoor garden featuring sculptures and other artworks crafted from durable materials within landscaped surroundings. Expected to be operational by early next month, the proposed facility will operate in conjunction with The Barracks. Initially, the department has commissioned renowned artists such as Imran Qureshi, Risham Hosain Syed, Talat Dabir, Shahid Sajjad, Rasheed Araeen, Rashid Rana, Tahir Mahmood, and Meherunnisa Asad for the project. The concept of a sculpture garden, the piece de resistance of the park, has been in development for many years. The Barracks now aims to expand artistic endeavors within the Nasir Bagh precinct, the PHA spokesperson said.

People's hopes in Sindh tied to PPP: CM Sindh

Sindh CM unveils ambitious uplift agenda in line with PPP manifesto

NAZIR SIYAL

HYDERABAD: Sindh Chief Minister Murad Ali Shah, during a press conference on Sunday, highlighted a number of development projects being undertaken by his government across the province, in line with PPP Chairman Bilawal Bhutto's promise of fulfilling commitments made during his election campaign. The chief minister - after chairing a meeting of elected representatives of four districts of Hyderabad division, including Hyderabad, Matiari, Tando Allahyar, and Tando Muhammad Khan - stated that on the directives of the party chairman, a consultative meeting was being conducted to execute uplift schemes based on the proposals of elected representatives. CM Murad Shah said that the people of Sindh had pinned hopes on the PPP. The CM highlighted that the provincial government was working for the complete rehabilitation of those affected by the devastating 2022 floods, stating that 2.1 million houses were being constructed for which funds had already been arranged. The CM said that steps were being taken for the provision of free electricity to the marginalised segments of society, adding that an announcement in this regard would be made soon. Murad said that during the next five years, his government's focus would be on providing primary healthcare facilities across the province. He said that the government was also supporting private sector hospitals. The CM said that his government was also focussing on the subject of education, adding that the education minister has assured that no school would be closed down due to a lack of teachers.

S. Punjab to have special economic zone: Gilani

DNA

MULTAN: Senate Chairman Yousuf Raza Gillani has stated that a special economic zone will be established in South Punjab. While speaking at a dinner hosted in his honour at the MCCI the former prime minister said that a 165-acre piece of land had been earmarked for a special economic zone in Jalalpur Pirwala tehsil of Multan district. Gilani stressed the need to incentivise agriculture and industry in order to provide maximum jobs to the unemployed poor, noting that both agriculture and textile sectors played an important role in generation of employment opportunities on a large scale. Gilani remarked that it was very much essential to offer jobs to unemployed persons, recalling that he had been jailed for nine years for offering jobs to unemployed persons.

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