



# Islamabad POST

Wednesday, May 15, 2024

Pakistan's Credible Daily Newspaper

Price Rs. 30

**Gaza ceasefire talks stalled due to Rafah offensive: Qatari PM**

Detailed News On Page-08

**Dar calls for elevating Pak-China relations**

Detailed News On Page-08

**Kirsten to join team before England tour**

Detailed News On Page-06



## J. Sattar writes letter to IHC CJ

# 'I was threatened to back off in audio leaks case'

Earlier this month IHC's Justice Babar Sattar hinted at issuing contempt of court notice to DG IB

COURT REPORTER /DNA

ISLAMABAD: Justice Babar Sattar has formally informed Islamabad High Court (IHC) Chief Justice Aamer Farooq about the "meddling" by the security establishment in judicial affairs, revealed well-placed sources on Tuesday. In a "letter" to IHC CJ Farooq, Justice Sattar said that he was delivered messages on behalf of top officials in the security establishment asking him to "back-off" from extensive scrutiny of the existence and mode of surveillance in the audio leak case. Justice Sattar reported the "incident of meddling" in line with the IHC's recommendations to deter meddling. In compliance with the Supreme Court's April 3 order, the IHC judges, in a unanimous stance, proposed a "contempt proceeding" against any meddling in judicial affairs. It was also decided that the judges would inform the inspection judge about the alleged meddling and the inspection judge would bring the matter to the knowledge of the chief justice of the high court concerned. "A judge who will not report the alleged meddling within seven days should be considered guilty of misconduct." Giving details, Justice Sattar informed the IHC CJ that he did not pay any

Continued on Page 06

## Govt disputes 'IHC judge's letter'

Attorney General says no official of spy agencies tried to influence judges

COURT REPORTER

ISLAMABAD: The federal government on Tuesday disputed the contents of a leaked letter, purportedly penned by Islamabad High Court's (IHC) Justice Babar Sattar, alleging that security agencies used "intimidatory tactics" in a case pertaining to audio leaks being heard by the high court. Addressing a press conference in Islamabad on the matter, Attorney General of Pakistan (AGP) Mansoor Awan, without naming Justice Sattar, said the contents of the letter from an IHC judge to IHC Chief Justice Aamer Farooq had surfaced, saying that it was an "internal communication" of the court. "The contents of that letter are being reported in such a way and the impression is being given as if there is interference in the IHC and that a message was sent to that judge regarding a specific case, or he understood it this way, or it was sent from such an individual which it should have not." The AGP said he felt it necessary to provide an explanation on the matter, saying that the judge himself said in the leaked snippet that he did not feel intimidated with the message, "however he understood it", to be an act of interference in the principles of justice. "His (the judge) reference in the letter was to the social media campaign [against him]. But because this is a matter that is now out in the media, I, as the AGP, felt it necessary to explain the matter

Continued on Page 06



ISLAMABAD: Leader of Jamiat Ulema-e-Islam Moulana Abdul Ghaffoor Haideri calls on Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif. - DNA

## IHC stops govt from blocking SIMs

IHC CJ Aamer Farooq issues stay order till May 27 against govt move to block SIMs

MEHTAB PIRZADA

ISLAMABAD: The Islamabad High Court (IHC) on Tuesday stopped the government from blocking the SIMs of non-filers. IHC Chief Justice Aamer Farooq issued a stay order till May 27 as the court took up the petition today filed by a mobile phone company challenging the government's decision to block sims of non-filers. The development came days after the Federal Board of Revenue (FBR) and telecom operators agreed on blocking of

Continued on Page 06

## Pakistan beat Ireland in series decider

Babar and Rizwan dominated the Ireland bowling attack as both scored half-centuries

SPORTS DESK

DUBLIN: Babar Azam and Mohammad Rizwan's swashbuckling half-centuries after Shaheen Shah Afridi's splendid bowling figures of 3/14 powered Pakistan to a resounding victory over Ireland in a three-match series' decider on Tuesday. Set to chase 179, Pakistan comfortably knocked the winning runs for the loss of four wickets and 18 balls to spare, courtesy of a match-winning second-wicket partnership

Continued on Page 06

## NAB amendment case SC allows Imran to appear via video-link on May 16

Five-member bench led by CJP Isa hears federal govt's intra-court appeal on verdict against NAB amendments

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

ISLAMABAD: The Supreme Court of Pakistan Tuesday ordered the governments in Centre and Punjab to arrange video-link facility for incarcerated Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) founder Imran Khan to allow him to present his arguments in the National Accountability Bureau (NAB) amendment case. "The PTI founder can present his arguments in the upcoming hearing via video link if he wishes to do so [...] arrangements should be made for presentation of arguments via video link," Chief Justice of Pakistan (CJP) Qazi Faez Isa said. The CJP's remarks during the hearing of the federal government's intra-court appeal filed against the apex court's 2023 verdict that annulled some of the

Continued on Page 06

## We won't accept arrogant behaviour of anyone: Asad

Omar Ayub said Asif used indecent language and unethical words while talking about his grandfather and his family

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) leader Asad Qaiser said on Tuesday his party would not accept rude and arrogant behaviour of anyone. The National Assembly session started with Speaker Ayaz Sadiq in chair.

Continued on Page 06

## Pakistanis own property worth \$11bn in Dubai

Report based on data that provides detailed overview of hundreds of thousands of properties in Dubai

MONITORING DESK

ISLAMABAD: A global collaborative investigative journalism project has revealed the ownership of properties of the global elite in Dubai. The list includes political figures, globally sanctioned individuals, alleged money launderers and criminals. Pakistanis have also been identified on the list and their combined value has been estimated at around \$11 billion. The project - 'Dubai Unlocked' - is based on data that provides a detailed overview of hundreds of thousands of properties in Dubai and information about their ownership or usage, largely from 2020 and 2022. Properties purchased in the name of companies and those that are in commercial

areas are not part of this analysis. The data was obtained by the Centre for Advanced Defence Studies (C4ADS), a non-profit organisation based in Washington, DC. It was then shared with Norwegian financial outlet E24 and the Organised Crime and Corruption Reporting Project (OCCRP), which coordinated a six-month investigative project with reporters from 74 media outlets in 58 countries, uncovering scores of convicted criminals, fugitives, and political figures who have recently owned at least one piece of real estate in Dubai. The News and Dawn were partners from Pakistan. Among the Pakistanis listed in the Property Leaks are President Asif Ali Zardari's three children,

Continued on Page 07

## Briefs

### IHC reserves verdict on Imran's bail plea

A two-member bench, comprising IHC CJ Aamer Farooq, Justice Tariq Mehmood Jahangiri, reserved the verdict

FAISAL SHEIKH

ISLAMABAD: The Islamabad High Court Tuesday reserved its verdict on Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) founder Imran Khan's bail petition in the £190 million National Crime Agency (NCA) settlement reference. A two-member bench, comprising IHC CJ Aamer Farooq, Justice Tariq Mehmood Jahangiri, reserved the verdict after the completion of arguments. Aamjad Parvez, the National Accountability Bureau's special prosecutor, when presenting his arguments said that the money should have come to the Government of Pakistan.

### Ji to hold Gaza march on May 19

Says party's future course of action to be announced on May 19

NAZIR SIYAL

KARACHI: Jamaat-e-Islami chief Hafiz Naeem Rehman stated on Tuesday that everyone who has violated the constitution, be it a political party or an institution, should ask for forgiveness. During a press conference here, Naeem said that if every department or individual kept violating the constitution, how the country would run. Asked about the rigging in 2024 general elections, the Ji chief said that Anwaarul Haq Kakar should be asked about the election candidates who won on the basis of Form 47.

### State-owned entities disposal

## PM unveils broader privatisation plan

The premier said that the government's job is not to do business but to ensure a business and investment friendly environment

MEHTAB PIRZADA

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan will privatise all state-owned enterprises, with the exception of strategic entities, Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif announced on Tuesday, broadening its initial plans to take only loss-making state firms private. The announcement came after PM Shehbaz headed a meeting on the privatisation process of loss-making state enterprises, according to a statement from his office.

PICTURE ON PAGE 7

According to state-run Radio Pakistan, the premier said that the government's job is not to do business but to ensure a business and investment friendly environment. Additionally, he directed all federal ministries to take necessary action in this regard and cooperate with the Privatisation Commission, with the meeting being informed that

Continued on Page 06

### PM's timely decision on AJK averted a tragedy: Tarar

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister of Information and Broadcasting Attaullah Tarar said on Tuesday that Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif's decision to resolve the ongoing crisis in Azad Jammu and Kashmir had averted a tragedy. Addressing a press conference along with Federal Minister of Kashmir Affairs and Gilgit Balochistan Engineer Amir Muqam at the Parliament House, he said that the conspiracy of the inimical forces was foiled who faced humiliation due to the

Continued on Page 06

## Australia pledges support for Pak economic development

The Australian High Commissioner briefed the Finance Minister on the engagements of the Australian Government with Agriculture Universities in Pakistan



ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Finance & Revenue Senator Muhammad Aurangzeb was called on by Australian High Commissioner to Pakistan H.E. Mr. Neil Hawkins in Islamabad. - DNA

ANSAR M BHATTI

ISLAMABAD: Australian High Commissioner to Pakistan H.E. Mr. Neil Hawkins, called on Minister for Finance & Revenue Senator Muhammad Aurangzeb, at the Finance Division today, to discuss bilateral matters and to strengthen the longstanding relations between Pakistan and Australia. The Finance Minister welcomed

the Australian High Commissioner and underscored the long-standing mutual relations between Australia and Pakistan. Mr. Neil Hawkins extended his felicitations to Senator Muhammad Aurangzeb on his appointment as the Finance Minister. The Minister highlighted that Pakistan greatly values the relation with Australian Government and emphasized on the need to work

Continued on Page 06

MAY 2024

Pakistan's Premier News & Diplomatic Affairs Magazine

Find us on:  
www.centrelines.com.pk  
www.dnanews.com.pk  
www.islamabadpost.com.pk

@PostIslamabad/ @Editordnanews

A sister concern of

Islamabad POST

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

Business community is ready to help the govt: Atif Ikram

The country's economy can be improved only through investment

DNA

ISLAMABAD: President Federation of Pakistan Chamber of Commerce and Industry Atif Ikram Sheikh has said that Business Community is ready to help the government in taking domestic exports to 100 billion dollars. The solution to energy problems in Pakistan is necessary now and must be a business-friendly environment because Without a business-friendly environment, it will not be possible to take exports to 100 billion dollars by 2030. We demand that incentives should be given to the export industry in the



budget of the new financial year. Federation President Atif Ikram Sheikh said that the Saudi business delegation's visit to Pakistan has been very positive. Investors from other countries, including Saudi Arabia, should be invited. In the joint coordination committee meeting with China, the discussion on economic zones should be taken forward. If industries are set up in economic zones, employment opportunities will be created in the country. The government's initiatives to attract foreign investment in Pakistan are commendable. The country's economy can be improved only through investment.



ISLAMABAD: British High Commissioner Jane Marriott in meeting with Chairman PPP Bilawal Bhutto Zardari.— DNA

British HC meets Bilawal Bhutto

DNA

ISLAMABAD: British High Commissioner calls on Chairman Bilawal at Zardari House, Islamabad Islamabad, 14 May 2024: Chairman Pakistan Peoples Party, Bilawal Bhutto Zardari and British High Commissioner Jane Marriott met at the Zardari House, Islamabad today. Chairman Bilawal and British High Commissioner Jane Marriott held talks on the promotion of bilateral and socio-economic relations.

Azerbaijan envoy for increasing import, exports

Upon his arrival the former governor Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Ghulam Ali and group leader Malik Maher Elahi welcomed the delegation and discussed bilateral trade

PESHAWAR: Ambassador of Azerbaijan to Pakistan Khazar Farhadov along with his spouse on Tuesday visited Peshawar Chamber of Small Traders and Small Industry (PCST&I) and inaugurated the new building of the chamber. Upon his arrival the former governor Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Ghulam Ali and group leader Malik Maher Elahi welcomed the delegation and discussed bilateral trade. Speaking on the occasion

the ambassador said that very soon informative visits would be arranged for business communities of the two countries, adding that this was the best time to increase and promote import and export between the two-country. He said that a business expo would be arranged in Azerbaijan in November this year where the Pakistani businessmen could explore the potential of investment and trade. Khazar Farhadov said that

Azerbaijan had made visa acquisition very easy for Pakistanis because the government and people of Azerbaijan give special love and respect to the people of Pakistan. On the occasion, the former KP governor Ghulam Ali expressed gratitude to the business community of Azerbaijan for their love and support and said that indeed the exchange of business delegation between the two countries will strengthen the bilateral ties.—APP

KP Govt to secure masses' rights

MULTAN: Governor Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP) Faisal Karim Kundi Tuesday reaffirmed his commitment to safeguarding the rights of the masses through collaborative efforts with the KP government. The Governor extended an open invitation to all political parties, stating that the doors of the Governor House KP were accessible to workers from across the political spectrum. In "Meet the Press" programme at local press, Governor KP said "I assure the people of KP that I will spare no effort to ensure their rights are protected," reiterated Governor Kundi, underlining his intention to prevent the masses from enduring hardships stemming from political discord with the KP govt. Responding issue of law and order in KP, Governor Kundi highlighted the resource constraints faced by the KP police, pointing out disparities in salaries compared to their counterparts in other provinces. He expressed determination to secure maximum support from the federal govt to address problems. In response to queries regarding political difference with CM KP, Governor Kundi emphasized his primary focus on forging coordination and collaboration with the provincial govt for the welfare of KP's masses. He extended a goodwill gesture to the Chief Minister of KP, inviting him to the Governor's office to prioritize the uplift the province, and setting aside political differences. Acknowledging his political mentors, Shaheed Benazir Bhutto and Asif Ali Zardari, Governor Kundi expressed his respect for politicians and showed readiness to engage in dialogue with CM KP for the betterment of KP.—APP

Court Notice

سول سچ راولپنڈی
دعوی استغراقی بابت دراست نامہ
شہزادہ محمد رفیع صاحب، نیا مکان نمبر 450-2-F
محمد سچ، بھاد، جناح سڑک، راولپنڈی
کیت، تحصیل ضلع راولپنڈی، بنام عوام الناس
اشہار اناس بنام عوام الناس ہرگاہ مقدمہ عنوان بالاس
عوام الناس کی قیام عام طریقہ سے ممکن نہ ہے
لہذا عوام الناس کو بذریعہ اخبار اشہار پڑھنے کی
جاتا کہ کوئی مقرر اعتراض ہو تو وہ
مورخہ 21.05.2024 کو اساتلہ کال کیا
بذریعہ مختار حاضر عدالت آئے بصورت دیگر
نکٹہ کارروائی میں لائی جائے گی اور کوئی مقرر
قابل قبول نہ ہوگا۔
بجگم عدالت ہر عدالت

Court Notice

بجگم عدالت ہر عدالت
دعوات جناب چوہدری طارق علی صاحب
فیصلی کورٹ راولپنڈی
ماتوق ذن آتش حسین حسین
باح مقبول اشہار بنام مصباح مقبول
ل الرمن زینت حسین حسین ساکن تریلا کلا
ل رحیمال روڈ، جرائی راولپنڈی ہرگاہ مقتا
بالا میں عدالت علیہا کی قیام عام طریقہ
ن نہ ہے لہذا آپ کو بذریعہ اخبار اشہار
ج کیا جاتا کہ آپ مورخہ 05.2024
صاتلہ کال کیا بذریعہ مختار حاضر عدالت آ
رت دیگر نکٹہ کارروائی میں لائی جائے
ور کوئی مقرر قابل قبول نہ ہوگا۔
بجگم عدالت ہر عدالت

Reforms urged in cigarettes manufacturing sector

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Researchers have stated that reforms in cigarettes manufacturing sector having minimum contribution of the economy of the country is need of the hour. They supported International Monetary Fund's (IMF) emphasizing on the need to limit tax incentives to cases where their economic benefits, such as employment generation and value addition to the economy, outweigh the costs to the budget. This was a meaningful proposal as Pakistan seeks a new bailout package ranging from \$6 to \$8 billion under the Extended Fund Facility (EFF). Capital Calling, an Islamabad-based think tank, has pointed out that cigarette manufacturing was one of the messiest sectors where tax reforms

are needed at the earliest. Speaking at discussion by a group of researchers, Dr Hassan Shehzad, from International Islamic University Islamabad (IIU), commented that cigarette manufacturing industry's contribution to employment generation or value addition to the economy was negligible. On the other hand, it accounts for "over 163,600 people each year in Pakistan. Almost 31,000 of these deaths are due to exposure to second-hand smoke. Tobacco causes about 16.0% of all male deaths and 4.9% of female deaths. Overall, 10.9% of all deaths are caused by tobacco." Dr Muhammad Zaman, head of Zaman Research Centre (ZRC), Quaid-i-Azam University (QAU), said that there was evidence that consumption of tobacco declines when its price increases as it

Petrol pumps warned

DNA

DERA ISMAIL KHAN, Assistant Commissioner Muhammad Faseeh Ishaq Abbasi Tuesday visited petrol pumps at Multan Road and checked gauge and rates of the fuel. According to the district administration, inspections were being carried out in line with directives of the provincial government to extend relief to citizens by ensuring commodities at officially prescribed rates. The owners of the filling stations were directed to ensure availability of all required documents of their business besides implementing the prices of petroleum products which have been notified by the Oil and Gas Regulatory Authority (OGRA). He warned management of those pumps against tampering with scale for provision of fuel and overcharging. The AC said that legal action would be taken against those found involved in malpractices.—APP

Lawmakers call of setting aside political differences

ISLAMABAD: The lawmakers in the National Assembly on Tuesday called of setting aside political differences and taking steps towards welfare, development, and progress of the country. Speaking in the National Assembly, Pakistan Peoples Party's Sharmila Farooqi said that Asif Ali Zardari was the only civilian who had been elected president twice. She urged political parties to bury politics of hate and confrontation, focusing instead on the welfare of the masses and the uplift of the nation. She said that it was the responsibility of elected representatives to demonstrate unity and address the issues affecting the people. Ali Muhammad Khan, leader of the Sunni Ittehad Council, said his party not against the dialogue. He said, that political parties must prioritize decisions that promote the country's development. He called for political leadership to set aside differences and focus on resolving the public's issues promptly. Farooqi Sattar from the Muttahida Qaumi Movement-Pakistan questioned governance in Sindh province, urging the provincial government to take measures to improve law and order in Karachi. He requested the prime minister's attention towards development initiatives and the establishment of a modern transport system. The lawmaker advocated for the implementation of universal education programs and the improvement of the healthcare system in the province, urging political parties to unite in their efforts for the country's welfare. Pakistan Peoples Party Leader, Abdul Qadir Patel praised President Asif Ali Zardari's recent address to the joint sitting of parliament, describing it as a beacon of light capable of resolving the country's challenges. He expressed disappointment at opposition claims that the address was merely "copy and paste," asserting that it comprehensively covered critical issues such as relations with neighboring countries, the Kashmir and Palestine disputes, continuity of democracy, unemployment, inflation, reconciliation, rule of law, and the supremacy of Parliament. Qadir Patel highlighted President Zardari's resilience, noting his 14 years of imprisonment without conviction and his dignified approach toward the opposition without resorting to indecent language. He recalled Asif Ali Zardari's slogan of "Pakistan Khapay" after the tragic death of Shaheed Benazir Bhutto to counter anti-state elements. Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz Legislator Hanif Abbasi held Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) responsible for the riots that occurred on May 9 last year, calling for strict action against the perpetrators.—DNA

Biased media representation fuels anti-Muslim sentiments

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Anti-Muslim prejudice in the West is largely fueled by biased media portrayal and stereotypical representation, reinforcing negative perceptions. Additionally, political institutions exploit and amplify these prejudices for their own gain, further deepening discriminatory attitudes. This was observed by Dr Abdul Samad, assistant director of the Muslim Philanthropy Initiative at Indiana University Lilly Family School of Philanthropy, who delivered a lecture on 'US Muslims, Their Philanthropic Contributions, and Impact of Islamophobia' at the Institute of Policy Studies (IPS). The session was



joined by Khalid Rahman, chairman IPS, and moderated by Abdullah Adnan, research fellow IPS. Despite comprising only 1.1% of the total population in the US, American Muslims make significant philanthropic contributions. He noted that Muslims in the US face socio-economic challenges but still donate

and Islamophobia. Drawing from insights shared by scholar and author Khaled Beydoun, he elaborated on the various dimensions through which Islamophobia is manifested, spanning institutional, community, and private spheres. At the institutional level, Dr Samad highlighted the impact of anti-Muslim legislation and policies, which perpetuate systemic discrimination against American Muslims. He also pointed out the biased media portrayals and anti-Muslim rhetoric from political figures as the major contributing factors to a hostile climate for Muslims in the country. Furthermore, he shed light on the challenges faced by Muslims at the community level, including the alarming rise of anti-Muslim hate groups.

Court Notice

بجگم عدالت ہر عدالت
دعوات جناب محمد عمران اکرم صاحب
سول سچ راولپنڈی
دعوی استغراقی بابت دراست نامہ
شہزادہ محمد رفیع صاحب، نیا مکان نمبر 450-2-F
محمد سچ، بھاد، جناح سڑک، راولپنڈی
کیت، تحصیل ضلع راولپنڈی، بنام عوام الناس
اشہار اناس بنام عوام الناس ہرگاہ مقدمہ عنوان بالاس
عوام الناس کی قیام عام طریقہ سے ممکن نہ ہے
لہذا عوام الناس کو بذریعہ اخبار اشہار پڑھنے کی
جاتا کہ کوئی مقرر اعتراض ہو تو وہ
مورخہ 17.05.2024 بوقت 8 بجے صبح حاضر
عدالت آویں ورنہ کارروائی میں لائی جائے گی اور کوئی مقرر
قابل قبول نہ ہوگا۔
بجگم عدالت ہر عدالت

Court Notice

بجگم عدالت ہر عدالت
دعوات جناب محمد عمران اکرم صاحب
سول سچ راولپنڈی
دعوی استغراقی بابت دراست نامہ
محمد اشفاق ولد محمد امیر ساکن مکان نمبر
G-225 محلہ لالہ زار، تلہ راولپنڈی بنام
عوام الناس اشہار بنام عوام الناس ہرگاہ مقدمہ
عنوان بالاس عوام الناس کی قیام عام طریقہ سے
ممكن نہ ہے لہذا عوام الناس کو بذریعہ اخبار اشہار
پڑھنے کی جاتا کہ کوئی مقرر اعتراض ہو تو وہ
مورخہ 15.05.2024 کو اساتلہ کال کیا
بذریعہ مختار حاضر عدالت آئے بصورت دیگر
نکٹہ کارروائی میں لائی جائے گی اور کوئی مقرر
قابل قبول نہ ہوگا۔
بجگم عدالت ہر عدالت

Advertisement for freeline MOVERS. Includes logo, tagline 'The Smooth Moving Connection', services list (Packing, Shipping, Freight Forwarding, etc.), contact info, and branch offices.

National Days and Armed Forces Days

- May 03/Poland National Day
May 06/Bulgaria Armed Forces Day
May 06/UEA 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 Forced 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

Hotels & Restaurants



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



Turkish Airlines.....8494949



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



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



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



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

- Water Tank
Islamabad.....0321-5744480

New library in Islamabad to be constructed

DNA
ISLAMABAD: Chairman Capital Development Authority (CDA) and Chief Commissioner Islamabad Muhammad Ali Randhawa Tuesday said that the new library will be constructed in the federal capital as per the international standards, with provision for e-library as well. Muhammad Ali said this while chairing a meeting of the Islamabad Development Working Party which was attended by representatives from various government departments. The meeting was attended by officials from the Ministry of Interior, Planning Commission, Pakistan Environmental Protection Agency (Pak-EPA), CDA, Islamabad Police, Local Government, Rural Development, and other organizations. During the meeting, a total of 24 development projects were presented, comprising 17 projects from the Local Government, four from Islamabad Police, two from the Agriculture Department, and one from the Libraries Department. Ali directed that all the projects should be shifted to Geographic Information System (GIS). Furthermore, the CDA chief instructed that committees consisting of residents should be formed in the areas where the development projects are required. Muhammad Ali directed that a thorough environmental assessment should be conducted for all projects, and a component of planting up to two percent of trees should be included in each project.



ISLAMABAD: Youngsters stage a protest demonstration against the Israeli brutalities at D-Chowk in the Federal Capital.—Online

ICCI-RWU to collaborate for industry-academia linkages

SAIFULLAH ANSAR

ISLAMABAD: Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry has always worked for the industry and academia linkages and would continue to do so in future as well for the betterment of the youth and for the economic well-being of the country.

This has been stated by President Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry Ahsan Zafar Bakhtawari while addressing as chief guest at the closing ceremony of 1st RWU- IDEA FEST-24, an in-

ter-Universities competition held at Rawalpindi Women University on Tuesday. He emphasized that entrepreneurs can play a vital role in the development by taking moderate amount of risk that entrepreneurship has its importance in corporate sector as well as social sector. No doubt, entrepreneurship is profit generating but yet responsible to give back to the society, and develop civic sense and character building characteristics. He lauded the initiative of Vice Chancellor and expressed the hope that it will go a long way in preparing useful en-

trepreneurs for the country who will not only be able to turn up successful businesspersons to earn their own livelihood honorably but would also help the country for strengthening of its economy. He added that ICCI would be happy to share the award-winning ideas with the business community for giving them practical shape for the promotion of export oriented products. Dr. Anila Kamal, Vice Chancellor Women University, in her keynote address, encapsulating the essence of the RWU-1: IDEA FEST-2024 by emphasizing the pivotal role edu-

cation plays in reshaping societal norms, said that the University is focusing on the skill development of the students to enable them to become job providers instead of job seekers after the completion of their education. She said that the basic cause of this competition was to motivate the students for establishment of their business and become successful entrepreneurs. She expressed her gratitude to the ICCI for extending every help to the University for the Promotion of entrepreneurship. Former President ICCI

and Secretary General United Business Group Zafar Bakhtawari said that women empowerment is much needed for the development of the country, therefore they should come forward and demonstrate their skills and emerge as successful businesspersons. President ICCI along with Dr. Anila Kamal and Zafar Bakhtawari also distributed cash prizes, awards and shields among the winners. On this occasion ICCI executives Ch. Maqsood Tabish, Ch. Mohammad Ali, Malik Nadeem and Zia Ch. were also present.

Telecom regulator's council meeting on policy starts

FAISAL SHEIKH

ISLAMABAD: 1st Meeting of the South Asian Telecommunication Regulators' Council (SATRC) on Policy Regulation and Services commenced from today at a local hotel in Islamabad. Organized by the Asia-Pacific Telecommunity (APT) and hosted by the Pakistan Telecommunication Authority (PTA), this three-day international meeting convenes regulatory experts and policymakers from Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, Iran, India, Maldives, Nepal, Pakistan and Sri Lanka. The meeting started with an inaugural event widely attended by industry and government stakeholders. Mr. Masanori Kondo, Secretary General of the Asia-Pacific Telecommunity (APT) in his welcome address urged the delegates to actively engage in insightful discus-

sions and commended PTA for organizing the workshop. Dr. Khawar Siddique Khokar Member Compliance & Enforcement PTA who is also the chair of the SATRC Working Group on Policy, Regulation, and Services (PRS) in his address, outlined the meeting's primary objective: fostering the exchange of insights, experiences, and best practices to address challenges, explore opportunities, and finalize initial steps on work items. Chairman PTA, Maj. General (R) Hafeez Ur Rehman in his inaugural note, underscored the importance of regional collaboration in addressing common ICT challenges through dialogue and knowledge sharing, he highlighted the importance of learning from each other's experiences to effectively introduce new technologies and services while safeguarding consumer rights and nurturing industry growth. Ms. Shaza

Fatima, Minister of State for IT & Telecom who was the chief guest at the inaugural ceremony outlined Pakistan's visionary initiative of digitally empowered country with the aim of providing access to every citizen across Pakistan. She emphasized Pakistan's vast potential as a nation of 250 million, predominantly youth and how their useful participation can boost growth. She stressed on onboarding the 50% of total population which is female and reiterated the Prime Minister's and the ministry of IT & Telecom's commitment to gender inclusion. She lauded Chairman PTA's leadership in bridging the digital gender gap, acknowledging significant strides in this area. The STARC meeting serves as a vital platform for comprehending the dynamic ICT landscape, initiating re-

search analysis, and setting agendas for the next two years. Over the next two days, the meeting will feature 10 sessions, each dedicated to crucial contemporary topics and trends in regional telecommunication sector. The workshop's first day features four sessions. The initial session highlights insights from APT's GA-16 and MC-47, focusing on SATRC and beyond. The second session address the regulatory challenges of new technologies and smart solutions for broadband. The third session explores maximizing the Universal Service Obligation Fund for digital inclusion. Lastly, the workshop will discuss enhancing ICT E-Waste Management Regulations for Sustainable Development, emphasizing the need for effective regulations and strategies to ensure a greener future.

Statement of the Embassy of Iran on Nakba Day

DNA

ISLAMABAD: May 14th is the day of the Nakba and the establishment of the apartheid and occupying Zionist regime supported by the colonial conspiracy. It reminds of the beginning of a dark period of genocide, massacre, displacement, occupation and desecration of the holy land of Al-Quds by the Zionist regime. It is the beginning of 76 years of occupation of Palestinian land

and the blatant violation of human rights and the right to self-determination. The Zionist regime, disregarding all human values and norms and contrary to the values of human rights, humanitarian principles, international laws and regulations and the United Nations Charter, committed the most heinous type of international crimes ever throughout the history of mankind, including War crimes, genocide and crimes against humanity. The Embassy of the Islamic Republic of Iran in Islam-

abad, while condemning the brutal massacre of more than thirty-five thousand innocent people, including defenseless and innocent children, men and women, wounding of seventy-five thousand people, the displacement of hundreds of thousands of people in the occupied Palestinian territories and the destruction of buildings and infrastructures by the Zionist regime, emphasizes that the international criminal conviction of the perpetrators of these crimes should be held.

China to provide unwavering support for Pakistan's reform agenda: Ambassador Zaidong

DNA

ISLAMABAD: China will provide unwavering support for Pakistan's reform agenda, said Chinese Ambassador to Pakistan Jiang Zaidong. In an article, Ambassador Zaidong noted Pakistan's ongoing reforms and the orderly formation of a new government, signaling renewed focus on national development. He expressed China's readiness to work with Pakistan to implement important consensus reached between their leadership. It aimed at promoting integration of CPEC's "Five Corridors" and Pakistan's "5Es" framework, fostering a closer China-Pakistan community and opening a future of peace, development, and win-win cooperation. Chinese envoy explores future of Pakistan-China strategic collaboration Ambassador Jiang Zaidong unveils vision for 'new quality productive forces' and CPEC Phase Ambassador Jiang Zaidong elucidated on the concept of "new quality productive forces" and its implications for the transformative collaboration between China and Pakistan. According to Ambassador Zaidong, this concept, intro-

duced by Chinese President Xi Jinping in September 2023, underscores the fusion of innovation, technology, and industry to drive sustainable development and prosperity. At its core, the vision recognises innovation as the catalyst for progress in the 21st century. President Xi Jinping's advocacy for integrating scientific and technological resources stresses leveraging advancements in these fields to enhance productivity and spur the emergence of new industries and economic sectors. Ambassador Zaidong stated, "New quality productive forces are characterised by innovation; the key lies in high quality, the essence is advanced productivity." This approach aligns with China's pursuit of high-quality development, evident in its resilient economy, which surpassed 126 trillion yuan (\$17.51 trillion) in GDP in 2023, with a growth rate of 5.2%, ranking among the world's major economies. Looking forward to 2024, coinciding with the 75th anniversary of the founding of the People's Republic of China, Ambassador Zaidong 8n his article outlined China's strategic focus. With a target GDP growth rate of around 5%,

the emphasis remains on modernising the industrial sector and advancing new quality productive forces. China's role as a global economic powerhouse and agent of positive change is underscored by Ambassador Zaidong. The envisioned advancements not only bolster China's economy but also offer opportunities for international cooperation and mutual prosperity, with Pakistan recognised as "our iron-clad friend." For Pakistan, this partnership holds profound implications. Ambassador Jiang underscored the country's strategic importance, demographic dividend, and abundant natural resources, highlighting its potential for development. Aligning Pakistan's "5Es" framework with China's vision can unlock its full potential and chart a path toward self-reliance and sustainable growth. Central to China-Pakistan collaboration is the successful implementation of CPEC Phase One, yielding dividends in renewable energy, information technology, and biotechnology. As CPEC enters Phase Two, both nations are committed to elevating the corridor, leveraging Pakistan's advantages for self-reliance and sustainable growth.

DINO VALLEY 10 Minutes Drive From The Monal
Image of children playing in a go-kart arena. Contact info: 051 8770065 / 66 / 67, 0300 8881811 / 0300 5221018 / 0345 5555335. UAN: 051 111 777 778. Social media handles: @dinovalleypk, #dinovalley.pk

## Briefs

## 213 employees of Kashmir Council transferred to AJK regime

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Kashmir Affairs and Gilgit-Baltistan Amir Maqam Tuesday said that the timely decision of Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif has saved from the major incident and bloodshed in Azad Jammu and Kashmir (AJK). The minister also hailed the role of President Asif Ali Zardari in resolving the issue of Kashmiris. Addressing a press conference, he said that as per the demands of the Kashmiris 36 vehicles and 213 employees of the Kashmir council have been transferred to the Kashmir government and all pending issues of the government of Azad Jammu Kashmir would be resolved on a priority basis. Amir Maqam said that the Kashmir Council fund of Rs 7.6 billion had been transferred to the Kashmir government and Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif approved the Rs 23 billion for the subsidiary on flour and electricity signed a proper agreement and issued the notification of new rates of flour and power tariff. Some elements were very actively highlighting and propagating on the recent protest but all characters badly failed in their nefarious acts. The minister said that the demand of Kashmiris about the charges on water resources of the valley would be addressed within 30 days. He said that a financial assistance package would be provided to the families of all martyrs. —APP

## PHA to sell 15 shops

ISLAMABAD: The Pakistan Housing Authority (PHA) Foundation will sell 15 shops through a public auction located at its Residencia project I-16/3 on May 22. According to sources in the PHA, the auction would commence at the Islamabad Hotel Melody while interested parties can obtain brochures at the cost of Rs 3,000 non-refundable. Similarly, the bidders will have to submit Rs 200,000 refundable for participating in the offer, adding the amount will be refunded to the unsuccessful bidders, while it would be adjusted against the payable amount for the successful bidders. The PHA employees including its contractor would not be able to participate in the bidding. PHA Foundation is a subordinate public company of the Ministry of Housing and Works mandated to provide low-cost housing units to low- and middle-income groups including the general public and federal government employees. —APP

## Food dept removes DFC

DNA

PESHAWAR: The government of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa removed District Food Controller Malakand and placed him closed to Directorate of Food while suspended Assistant Food Controller (AFC) Dargai, district Malakand over alleged corruption in wheat procurement. A notification of the food department issued here on Tuesday said that both the officials have been directed to report to the Directorate of Food, adding that the action was taken in the light of monitoring reports and on public complaints. The provincial Food Minister Zahir Shah Toru said that all possible steps were being taken to ensure transparency in the wheat procurement process, adding that Secret monitoring committees had been formed to monitor the procurement process. He said that CCTV cameras have also been installed at all wheat procurement centers to monitor the procurement process and warned that strict action would be taken against corrupt elements. He said that the government was committed to wipe out corruption from the province and urged citizens and media to point out the corruption and corrupt elements.

## PRCS chief Shahid discusses humanitarian collaboration

Ambassador Bilal Ahmed commended the exemplary services rendered by the Red Crescent and expressed appreciation for Chairman Sardar Shahid Ahmed Laghari's leadership in advancing humanitarian initiatives. He also affirmed the commitment to extend all possible cooperation

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Chairman Pakistan Red Crescent Society (PRCS), Sardar Shahid Ahmed Laghari held discussions with His Excellency Mr. Bilal Ahmed, the Permanent Representative of Pakistan to the United Nations in Geneva, focusing on humanitarian collaboration and cooperation. The meeting, which took place at the Embassy of Pakistan in Geneva, addressed various topics including the services provided by the Red Crescent, fostering relationships with humanitarian organizations in Geneva, and strategies to enhance humanitarian efforts aimed at alleviating the suffering of vulnerable communities in Pakistan. During the meeting, Sardar Shahid Ahmed Laghari provided an overview to His Excellency Mr. Bilal Ahmed regarding the Red Crescent's assistance to flood victims and its active participation in the preparatory meetings for the upcoming 34th International Conference of the Red Cross Red Crescent Movement in Geneva. Chairman Laghari stressed the significance of strengthening ties with international humanitarian organizations in Geneva to ensure continued support for ongoing recovery programs benefiting families affected by floods in Pakistan, despite facing resource



ing recovery programs benefiting families affected by floods in Pakistan, despite facing resource

constraints.

Ambassador Bilal Ahmed commended the exemplary services rendered by the Red Crescent and expressed appreciation for Chairman Sardar Shahid Ahmed Laghari's leadership in advancing humanitarian initiatives. He also affirmed the commitment to extend all possible cooperation. On this occasion, Chairman PRCS Sardar Shahid Ahmed Laghari also shared his impressions in the new visitor book at the embassy. It's worth noting that Chairman PRCS Sardar Shahid Ahmed Laghari represented the National Society exceptionally well at the preparatory meetings and sessions held by the International Federation of Red Cross Red Crescent Societies (IFRC) in Geneva for the upcoming 34th International Conference of the Red Cross Red Crescent (RCRC) Movement, themed "Navigate Uncertainty - Strengthen Humanity". Ambassador Bilal Ahmed, the Permanent Representative of Pakistan to the United Nations, also took part in these preparatory meetings. The meetings covered a range of topics, including International Humanitarian Law (IHL), Climate Change, Anticipatory Actions in emergencies, and Disaster Risk Reduction.

## PM has restored int'l institutions' confidence

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Former President of the Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry (ICCI), Dr. Shahid Rasheed Butt, said on Tuesday that Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif has successfully regained the confidence of the lenders and other international institutions. He said that under PM's guidance, Finance Minister Muhammad Aurangzeb would successfully negotiate a new contract with the International Monetary Fund, which would positively impact the economy. He observed that the Finance Minister's resolve to sell state-owned

firms is commendable, as it will help save trillions of wasted rupees to keep these companies artificially alive. Shahid Rasheed Butt said in a statement issued here today that the country was saved from bankruptcy by the Prime Minister's efforts, and now the confidence of the international institutions has been restored. The country also prioritizes investment because it is the only way to overcome its problems. Shahid Rasheed Butt said that the previous governments only relied on tall claims. Still, the present administration is also seriously improving the economy, the results of which are coming to light. He

noted that inflation is coming down, and people are optimistic about better conditions while the business community is on the upswing. He said that the Finance Minister is sure that the country cannot bear the burden of failed state-owned companies and that it is better to sell them to avoid the annual loss of trillions of rupees. He said that some elements always oppose privatization for their politics' sake without considering its economic implications. They are now trying to become obstacles in the process of selling SOEs. The finance minister should stick to his position and sell all the loss-making government companies without caring about anyone because it is a matter of national security. There is no such thing as strategic state-owned companies, according to the Finance Minister, who feels that the economy of Pakistan can no longer take the load of state-owned enterprises. He believes that transferring all state-owned enterprises, regardless of their classifications to the private sector is a very positive stance. He said that the International Monetary Fund and influential circles do not accept any other economic concept about state-owned firms; therefore, privatization of these enterprises is necessary as soon as feasible.

Met dept predicts heat wave  
Tourists and travelers should be aware of the weather conditions before traveling, farmers should also take relevant precautions as more monsoon rains are expected this year

ISLAMABAD: Director General of the Department of Meteorology Mehr Sahibzada Khan Tuesday said that the maximum temperature is expected to soar above normal levels and everyone must take proactive measures to safeguard themselves from the adverse effects of the impending heat waves in the coming weeks. "People should exercise necessary caution given the possibility of a heat wave", he said while talking to the PTV news channel. Pakistan Meteorological Department (PMD) has predicted mainly hot and dry weather for most parts of the country during the next 24 hours, he added. He urged people to stay indoors as far as possible during the excessive heat, stay in cool places, and wear protected clothes while walking out to avoid heat waves. He also advised people to drink enough amounts of liquid to get hydrated. Replying to a question, he said the Met department has already issued a new advisory warning of increasing heat and the possibility of rain in various regions. DG advised that the livestock owners should also protect their cattle during extreme heat. It also asked farmers to adjust their routines in line with the weather conditions. He said that Meteorologists predict that this year's monsoon rainfall might be unprecedented, adding, that Balochistan and Sindh will come under its effects. He said that with climate change and the return of wet years over the last few years, rivers have also begun to record excess flows and rising levels which is a positive impact of rains. "Tourists and travelers should be aware of the weather conditions before traveling," he said, adding, farmers should also take relevant precautions as more monsoon rains are expected this year". —APP

## CPO visits different police stations

DNA

RAWALPINDI: City Police Officer (CPO) Rawalpindi, Syed Khalid Hamdani here on Monday night made surprise visits to different Police Stations including Waris Khan, New Town, and Sadiqabad. The CPO reviewed the buildings, front desk, records, and lock-ups to ensure the provision of all possible resources to police stations. Syed Khalid Hamdani also inspected the facilities being provided to the public and directed that merit and justice must be provided to the people. He directed the police officers to make their best efforts at the police station level to address the complaints of the citizens. He said, tight security arrangements should be made for the security of the people. Strict action in accordance with the law should be taken against criminal gangs and law-breakers, he said.



ISLAMABAD: Ambassador of Japan Mr. Mitsuhiro WADA called on Speaker National Assembly Sardar Ayaz Sadiq at Parliament House. —DNA

## FBR should be granted full autonomy to improve economy

He said that foreign investors' confidence increased due to government policies. The rupee's value has stabilized, inflation is decreasing, and the country's economy is expected to improve further in the coming days

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Dr. Murtaza Mughal, President of Pakistan Economy Watch (PEW), said on Tuesday that Pakistan's economic autonomy is contingent upon the Federal Board of Revenue's autonomy. He stated that FBR should have autonomy in order to boost the nation's limping economy. In a statement issued today, Dr. Murtaza Mughal stated that one of the most important institutions, like FBR, should be liberated from the control of members of the political elite. He said that as long as FBR remains the slave of politicians, Pakistan will have to accept dictates, continue borrowing, and never achieve economic

freedom. He added that if FBR becomes independent, the country will have economic freedom and not have to take dictation from any other country or institution. According to Dr. Murtaza Mughal, every patriot wants to see a significant increase in the tax net. Still, certain influential sections reaping the benefits of tax concessions and exemptions do not want it. International institutions have tried hard to improve the FBR, but those who benefit from the weakness of FBR have frustrated all such efforts. To improve the economy, it is necessary to widen the scope of the tax net and remove the loopholes in the tax system. Currently, some significant sectors are either tax-exempt or have

paid very little in taxes, but this process cannot continue because continuous borrowing is not an option. He pointed out that despite investing billions of rupees in the track and track system, the mafia's unique relationships with influential figures prevented the expected tax increase. Dr. Mughal said that FBR, which is the tax system's foundation, must be reorganized with a primary focus on personnel quality and overstaffing. Many officers perform audits and evaluations that frequently end up in appellate forums because they are overburdened by revenue targets. Tax administrators shouldn't be in charge of policy matters, and automation should take precedence over manual procedures.

It is imperative that taxpayers' perceptions of the FBR be improved to promote compliance, he observed. A single tax collection agency for all taxes in Pakistan could improve efficiency and effectiveness in tax administration. The emphasis should be shifted to tax base expansion as there are still not enough taxpayers who are actively filing returns. Many register with lower incomes below the taxable levels in order to avoid paying higher rates, which should be streamlined. He said that foreign investors' confidence increased due to government policies. The rupee's value has stabilized, inflation is decreasing, and the country's economy is expected to improve further in the coming days.

**MOST EXPERIENCED MANUFACTURERS & EXPORTERS OF MARTIAL ARTS UNIFORMS IN PAKISTAN**

**WHERE EACH STITCH IS WATCHED**

JUDO  
KARATE  
KUNG-FU  
JU-JITSU  
TAEKWONDO  
UNIFORMS AND COLOURED BELTS

ASHRAF INDUSTRIES (PVT) LTD  
127 C, Industrial Estate  
Sector-5/340, Pakistan  
Phone: +92-51-3258000 / 3255788  
E-mail: info@ashraf.net.pk

**Ashraf**

Pakistan's First And Only Diplomatic Daily

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

Member APNS / ABC Certified

Vol: 05 Issue: 167

Email: [dailyisbpost@gmail.com](mailto:dailyisbpost@gmail.com)

Phone: 051-2266165 / 051-2261960

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



## Global community and shared future

THE entire process of the so-called mediation and negotiation to stop the Israeli genocide of Palestinians in Gaza has proven one thing: that the Zionist Israeli government is determined to annihilate the Palestinian people and exterminate all of them. It is also determined to build its "state" on their skulls and bones amid the absence of a real international community or any trace of international law and human rights law, coupled with the full military, financial, and political support of the US government for this genocide. In its war of genocide against Palestinians, the Zionist entity has defiled and desecrated all human and moral rules in the most horrendous way. Yet, with the exception of the noble actions of university students who tried to preserve the honor of their countries as well as the lives of Palestinians, one can say that most of the world's reaction to the magnitude of people's tragedy is shameful indeed. This is the first time we watch the deeply vicious violation of the sanctity of human life, culture, and religion unfold live before our eyes. To rape a woman in front of her family members and to kill them when they object is the nastiest crime any person can perpetrate, yet no arrest warrant is issued for those who gave the orders or for those who perpetrate the act. This dubious and treacherous position by countries around the world is sharply contrasted by the voting of 143 countries in favor of granting Palestine the status of a state in the General Assembly. The same draft resolution was vetoed by the US in the Security Council a few weeks ago. The lesson derived from that and from many other similar examples is that the US government, this gigantic military power, truly stands in the way of achieving justice, not only for Palestinians but for many other people in different countries in the world. It is the US that incites conflicts and wars and totally undermines any authority that may challenge its hegemony and domination over international will and the legitimate aspirations of peoples. Perhaps that is why the visit of Chinese President Xi Jinping to three European countries has received such attention, prompting a torrent of analysis articles, disinformation, and commentary in Western media. The visit in itself was a strong, timely, and wise statement amid the current world and regional chaos, a statement, not only in favor of the Chinese people, as he visited Belgrade on the 25th anniversary of the bombing of the Chinese embassy in Serbia, but in favor of all of the people in the world who are looking for an alternative order in a global community which at the moment stands orderless. Western media blamed Serbia, Hungary, and China for not condemning what they called a Russian invasion of Ukraine, and tried to accuse China of driving a wedge between European countries. The West also has the nerve to talk about "human rights abuses in China." President Xi was speaking as a statesman who cares about every human soul in the world, one who is building roads, belts, and economic corridors for any country who shares his vision and global concerns.

## To nuke or to level Gaza?

AMERICA'S ruling elite is getting unhinged. One after another, it is referencing the country's past atrocities and war crimes to justify Israel's genocidal war in Gaza. The latest? Influential US Republican Senator Lindsey Graham argued on Sunday, on live television, that Israel must be able to do whatever is deemed necessary in Gaza because the United States also dropped two atomic bombs on Japan and bombed Germany to smithereens towards the end of World War II. Speaking on NBC News' Meet the Press, he said: "So when we were faced with destruction as a nation after Pearl Harbour, fighting the Germans and the Japanese, we decided to end the war by bombing Hiroshima and Nagasaki with nuclear weapons. That was the right decision. "Give Israel the bombs they need to end the war they can't afford to lose ... Why is it OK for America to drop two nuclear bombs on Hiroshima and Nagasaki to end their existential threat war? Why was it OK for us to do that? I thought it was OK. "To Israel, do whatever you have to do to survive as a Jewish state. Whatever you have to do!" Graham is unhappy that the Joe Biden administration has temporarily halted a shipment of weapons to Israel in an attempt to pressure Benjamin Netanyahu and his government to avoid a full-scale assault on Rafah, the last refuge of more than a million Palestinians. However, that's a drop in the ocean compared to all the weapons the US has already shipped to Israel. In any case, the American demand has now been ignored with an ongoing invasion of the enclave. The former chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, Mark Milley, made a similar argument to Graham's last week, which essentially amounted to: If we Americans have done it to our enemies, Israel ought to be able to do the same. In November, when asked on the Israeli station Radio KolBeRama whether using nuclear weapons was an option, his reply was: "That's one way." He continued: "There is no such thing as uninvolved civilians in Gaza ... The northern [Gaza] Strip has no right to exist". He said, according to the Times of Israel, that people who wave Palestinian flags "shouldn't continue living on the face of the earth". But he added: "They can go to Ireland or deserts ... the monsters in Gaza should find a solution by themselves." The Times of Israel, a pro-government news site, published another report in January this year, according to which "Eliyahu repeated his call for Israel to nuke Gaza, boasting that they 'know my position, even in The Hague they know my position'." In October, member of parliament Revital "Tally" Gotliv also tweeted in Hebrew: "Jericho Missile! Jericho Missile! Strategic alert. Before considering the introduction of forces. Doomsday weapon! This is my opinion. May God preserve all our strength." "Jericho" refers to a family of ballistic missiles, some of which can carry nuclear warheads. Newsweek, MSN and the Hindustan Times reported on Gotliv's tweet at the time. But given the proximity of Gaza to Israel proper, the nuclear radiation fallout would make nuking it impractical. Some of Eliyahu's remarks were, in fact, included in the section, "Expressions of Genocidal Intent against the Palestinian People by Israeli State Officials and Others" in South Africa's legal brief brought against Israel before the International Court of Justice on charges of genocide.

# The historical nexus between Pakistan, Saudi Arabia and UAE

Dr. Muhammad Akram Zaheer



The ties between the Middle East and South Asia have a rich and complex history, spanning centuries of commercial, religious and cultural interactions. These connections have endured through various historical epochs but recent times have seen significant developments, particularly since the establishment of modern Middle Eastern states after the collapse of the Ottoman Empire and the partition of India and Pakistan. Saudi Arabia emerged as a crucial supporter of Pak shortly after its inception in 1947

THE rapidity with which the newly appointed Pakistani Prime Minister, Shehbaz Sharif, embarked on his inaugural official visit to Saudi Arabia underscored the significance of the relationship between the two nations. However, what truly captured global attention was the outcome of this visit, marked by a joint declaration that not only reaffirmed Saudi Arabia's commitment to invest \$5 billion in Pakistan but also urged for the resolution of longstanding disputes between Pakistan and India, notably the contentious issue of Jammu and Kashmir. This diplomatic move by Saudi Arabia aligns with a broader trend of Gulf nations actively engaging in efforts to facilitate peace between India and Pakistan. The United Arab Emirates, in particular, had previously brokered a crucial ceasefire between the two South Asian neighbors in 2021, effectively diffusing escalating tensions and averting potentially catastrophic cross-border conflicts that had flared up since 2019. The motivations driving Saudi Arabia and the UAE to step into the role of mediators in the India-Pakistan conflict are multifaceted and rooted in both regional geopolitics and historical dynamics. Understanding the complexities behind their intervention necessitates a nuanced appreciation of the evolving landscape in both the Middle East and South Asia. Firstly, the Gulf States have strategic interests in fostering stability in South Asia, given its proximity to the energy-rich region they inhabit. Instability or conflict in the Indian subcontinent could have ripple effects on global energy markets, which the Gulf economies heavily rely on. Additionally, Saudi Arabia and the UAE seek to position themselves as key players in regional diplomacy, enhancing their geopolitical stature and influence on the world stage. Furthermore, both countries have historical ties with Pakistan, shaped by shared religious affiliations and longstanding economic partnerships. However, they also

maintain significant relations with India, the world's largest democracy and a crucial trading partner. By advocating for peace between Islamabad and New Delhi, Saudi Arabia and the UAE aim to navigate a delicate balancing act, maintaining cordial relations with both countries while promoting regional stability. Moreover, the involvement of Gulf States in mediating the India-Pakistan conflict reflects a broader trend of increased diplomatic activism in the region. As traditional power dynamics undergo shifts and new geopolitical fault lines emerge, Saudi Arabia and the UAE are seeking to assert themselves as key arbiters of peace and stability, not only within the Middle East but also in neighboring regions. The ties between the Middle East and South Asia have a rich and complex history, spanning centuries of commercial, religious and cultural interactions. These connections have endured through various historical epochs but recent times have seen significant developments, particularly since the establishment of modern Middle Eastern states after the collapse of the Ottoman Empire and the partition of India and Pakistan. Saudi Arabia emerged as a crucial supporter of Pakistan shortly after its inception in 1947. Despite being resource-constrained, Pakistan with its substantial Sunni-majority Muslim population, found a reliable ally in Saudi Arabia. Over the years, Saudi Arabia, along with the UAE, has provided Pakistan with essential financial assistance in the form of loans, grants and concessional oil. Pakistan reciprocates by sending a significant portion of its workforce, numbering 12.4 million overseas workers, predominantly to these Gulf States. These workers, constituting over 77% of nearly 830,000 who ventured abroad for employment in 2022, contribute substantially to Pakistan's economy through remittances. The relationship between Pakistan and Saudi Arabia extends beyond economics to encompass strategic and security dimensions. Pakistan

played a pivotal role in training "holy warriors" alongside Saudi Arabia and the US to combat the Soviet Union's presence in Afghanistan following its occupation in 1979. Furthermore, during the Iran-Iraq war in the 1980s, Pakistan stationed tens of thousands of troops in Saudi Arabia. Military collaboration, including training and arms exports, has been a consistent feature of Pakistan's engagement with Saudi Arabia and the UAE. Additionally, Pakistan, along with Saudi Arabia and the UAE, supported the rise of the Taliban in Afghanistan during the early 1990s, perceiving it as a buffer against India. This stance contrasted with India and Iran's backing of the multi-ethnic Northern Alliance, reflecting broader regional power dynamics. Despite its close ties with Saudi Arabia and the UAE, Pakistan also seeks to maintain relations with Iran, mindful of its significant Shi'a minority. Iran was the first country to recognize Pakistan's independence and both nations enjoyed closer security cooperation during the reign of the shah, particularly through their involvement in the Baghdad Pact. However, the 1979 Iranian revolution altered the geopolitical landscape, fracturing alliances and forcing Pakistan to navigate a divided Middle East marked by the rivalry between Iran and Saudi Arabia. Pakistan found itself embroiled in a sectarian proxy war, exacerbated by the rise of Sunni militant groups nurtured by Saudi and American support for the Afghan jihad. Consequently, sectarian tensions have become entrenched within Pakistan, posing challenges to its internal stability. The relationship between Pakistan and the Middle East, particularly Saudi Arabia and the UAE, is multifaceted, encompassing economic, strategic, and security dimensions. However, Pakistan's engagement with the region is also influenced by its efforts to balance relations with Iran and navigate the complexities of sectarianism, reflecting the intricate geopolitical landscape of the Middle East and South Asia.

## Pakistan's economy: A facade of revival!

Air Commodore Khalid Iqbal (R)

The ADB projects that GDP might increase by 1.9% in 2024 and 2.8% in 2025. "Pakistan's economy is showing signs of a gradual recovery supported by higher crop output and improvement in manufacturing," stated Yong Ye, the Country Director of ADB for Pakistan. According to the IMF assessment, Pakistan's GDP growth rate could jack up to 3.5% and inflation could come down to 12.7% in the next fiscal year. Pakistan's budget deficit will be around 7.3% of GDP, which is alarming

THE World Bank (WB), International Monetary Fund (IMF), and Asian Development Bank (ADB) released back-to-back studies on Pakistan's economy during the last month. There are glimmers of hope that the economy has somewhat recovered. In terms of immediate impact on the domestic market, the core inflation has dipped to 15.6% and commodity prices increase have fallen from 38% to 17.3%; these are the two years' lowest figures. However, all three reports point to the necessity of bitter pills over the next two to three years. The ADB projects that GDP might increase by 1.9% in 2024 and 2.8% in 2025. "Pakistan's economy is showing signs of a gradual recovery supported by higher crop output and improvement in manufacturing," stated Yong Ye, the Country Director of ADB for Pakistan. According to the IMF assessment, Pakistan's GDP growth rate could jack up to 3.5% and inflation could come down to 12.7% in the next fiscal year. Pakistan's budget deficit will be around 7.3% of GDP, which is alarming. According to the IMF Managing Director Kristalina Georgieva, there are "very important issues" in Pakistan that need to be resolved, "including the tax base, the way the wealthier segment of society contributed to the economy, the direction of public spending, and fostering greater transparency". The WB report entitled "Pakistan Development Update: Fiscal Impact of Federal State-Owned Enterprises" states that only 1.8% growth in the country's GDP is anticipated in the current fiscal year. The report draws attention to the significant costs associated with loss-making state-owned companies (SOEs) and the urgency of crucial reforms, such as privatisation. During this economic squeeze, leading international financial institutions and several friendly countries have generously extended a helping hand to facilitate an early recovery. The US State Department Spokes-

person Matthew Miller said, "Pakistan has made progress to stabilise its economy, and we support its efforts to manage its daunting debt burden." Our foreign exchange reserves are getting close to US \$10 billion. The 24th long-term IMF bailout of US\$8 billion is being negotiated. The credit ratings have begun to improve. Money has started flowing in from here and there, to assist the continuation of some of the massive projects essential for strengthening the economy in the long-term. The WB has approved a US\$1 billion facility for the Dasu dam and a US\$ 3 million grant for structural competitiveness changes. This journey to even this modest level of stability was difficult given the high inflation, fluctuation in oil and gas prices in the international market, diminishing foreign exchange reserves, and an imminent sovereign default. Though one could have a sigh of relief, there is no room for complacency. Put together, one could say that though some of the economic indicators may have stopped from further slipping into the negative side of projections, their gains on the positive side of the graph are fragile and they could be easily reversed. We should remain mindful that the economy is barely afloat, and the cushion even for routine shocks, like floods or poor crops, is rather thin. Even if there is a single such shock, an additional 10 million people could slide down below the poverty threshold. For prudent handling of our fragile economy in the prevalent global and regional geopolitical environment, a bold course correction may be overdue. We need to ponder over the ways to break out of this addictive vicious cycle. Indeed it is time for self-reflection. There is a need for fresh perspectives to address longstanding issues. For decades, we have disregarded the well-established fundamentals of the prudent management of the economy. We represent a classic case study of a nation addicted to living beyond its means. Accord-

ing to Prime Minister Mr Shehbaz Sharif, our debt trap has become a 'death trap'. There is a need to go back to the drawing board to work out a consensus-based long-term (20-30 years) national vision for the management of the economy, specifying monitoring and course correction benchmarks on five yearly basis. An all-out effort is required to enhance investor confidence, cut down energy and labour costs, and curtail the import of luxury items. The export sector needs invigoration by ensuring ease of business, competitiveness, production and quality enhancement, and aggressive marketing. Seeking another IMF programme is akin to admitting failure at the policy level, however, at this point and time, it may be unavoidable. Piling up another US\$ 8 billion loan from the IMF over the next 6-8 years is not a moment of joy, it is a compulsion like taking a medicine with serious side effects, where there could be a possibility that the solution could be worse than the problem we seek to cure. It is refreshing that the government has begun to take various steps to re-rail the economy. Twenty four loss-making SOEs have been shortlisted for fast-track privatisation. Digitisation of the Federal Board of Revenue (FBR) is being vigorously pursued, and its completion is likely to contribute significantly towards the expansion of the tax net. Investor confidence is being enhanced through various incentives. The UAE, Saudi Arabia, and China have also committed to project-based investment. We are indeed on the right track, and if we continue with due perseverance, the cherished goal of a fairly stable national economy may be achieved in 3-5 years.

— Air Commodore Khalid Iqbal (Retd) is Director at the Centre for Aerospace and Security Studies (CASS), Lahore Pakistan. He may be reached at [info@casslhr.com](mailto:info@casslhr.com)

## Briefs

## 'I was threatened to back...

FROM PAGE 01  
attention to the "threatening tactic", said the sources. "I paid no heed to such intimidatory tactics and did not find that such messages created a risk of substantial detriment to the administering of justice." The judge further told the CJ that the court had issued notices to intelligence and probe agencies, concerned ministries, regulatory bodies, FIA, PTA, Pemra and others. Justice Sattar was among the six judges who had written a letter to the SJC seeking its guidance on "interference" of the intelligence agencies in the courts' affairs in March. Speaking about the IHC judge's alleged letter, Attorney General for Pakistan (AGP) Mansoor Usman Awan has said that an "impression is being given as if the relationship between the court and the executive is deteriorating", the top law officer said in a video statement today.

## Govt disputes...

FROM PAGE 01  
because a perception is being created that there is some breakdown in relations between the judiciary and the executive because of which the issue is moving forward." The AGP said there were some "sensitive matters" of the state where it was necessary to have communication between different institutions. He added that it was the AGP's office or the provincial advocate generals who forwarded such communication. "I should make it clear regarding this case that a request was made that the briefing regarding our capability on surveillance and other matters about national security, internal and external, be made in-camera so it (the capabilities of security agencies) does not go into the public domain." He said that for a country such as Pakistan that has hostile neighbours, it was necessary to ensure that such information was not made public.

## Australia pledges...

FROM PAGE 01  
together to further enhance and strengthen bilateral relations between the two countries especially in the areas of economic cooperation and trade. During the course of discussion, the Finance Minister apprised the Australian High Commissioner of the various initiatives being undertaken by the Government under the leadership of the Prime Minister. While underscoring the need for digitalization, it was highlighted that the services of McKinsey & Company have been engaged for digitalization of the tax system. The Finance Minister further spoke of the resolve of government to privatize various State-Owned Enterprises (SOEs), and also apprised the High Commissioner on the likely investments from Saudi Arabia and Qatar and the need to focus on the second phase of China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC).

## PM unveils broader...

FROM PAGE 01  
"privatisation of power distribution companies has been included in privatisation programme 2024-2029". "It was informed that loss-making state-owned enterprises to be privatised on priority basis and that a pre-qualified panel of experts is being appointed in Privatisation Commission to speed up privatisation process," according to Radio Pakistan. It came a day after an International Monetary Fund (IMF) mission opened talks in Islamabad for a new long-term Extended Fund Facility (EFF) following Pakistan's completion of a \$3 billion standby arrangement last month. Previously, Pakistan had only loss-making state-owned enterprises on its chopping block. Privatisation has long been on the IMF's list of recommendations for Pakistan, which is struggling with a high fiscal shortfall.



ISLAMABAD: CM Punjab Maryam Nawaz along with Provincial Minister Malik Faisal Ayub and Pakistan hockey team members who recently won silver title in Azlan Shah Cup Hockey Tournament. – DNA

## Pakistan-Jordan strengthen ties through parliamentary diplomacy

While highlighting vast opportunities of trade and invest in Pakistan, the Speaker said that enhancing trade and economic cooperation between both nations would further strengthen these ties

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Honourable Speaker National Assembly Sardar Ayaz Sadiq has said that Pakistan and Jordan enjoy cordial ties based upon historical, cultural and religious commonalities. He also said that enhancing parliament to parliament contacts would further strength these ties. Both countries enjoy unanimity of views on regional and international issues including Palestine issue. He expressed these views during his meeting with Ambassador of Jordan to Pakistan Islamabad Dr. Maen Khreasat at Parliament House who called on him in Parliament House Islamabad. While highlighting vast opportunities of trade and invest in Pakistan, the Speak-



er said that enhancing trade and economic cooperation between both nations would further strengthen these

ties. He added, "Exchanging Parliamentarians ties between both nations are pivotal for extending cooperation in diverse socio-economic fields. He further reiterated his commitment to strengthen parliamentary diplomacy. Further, he condemned the killings of innocent Palestinians and demanded urgent cease fire in Gaza Palestine. Ambassador of Jordan to Pakistan Dr. Maen Khreasat extended felicitations to Sardar Ayaz Sadiq for his successful election as Speaker National Assembly of Pakistan. He also said that both Jordan and Pakistan enjoy cordial relations based upon centuries old shared traditions and values. He also said that Jordan always supported Palestinian cause and condemned the brutality of Israelites on innocent Palestinians.

## Kirsten to join Pakistan team before England tour

AFZAL JAVED

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan cricket team's white-ball head coach Gary Kirsten is set to join the team in Leeds on May 19 ahead of the Green Shirts' four-match T20I series against England which will begin on May 22. Kirsten, who won the 2011 World Cup with India, was appointed on a two-year deal and he will be in charge of the side for the upcoming T20 World Cup 2024, next year's ICC Champions Trophy 2025 in Pakistan, ACC T20 Asia Cup 2025 and the ICC Men's T20 World Cup 2026 in India and Sri Lanka. The series against England would be Pakistan's last outing before the commencement of the upcoming T20 World Cup 2024 which will be played in the United States and West Indies from June 1. "Gary Kirsten will join the national men's side in Leeds on 19 May to commence his two-year tenure as the white-ball head coach," confirmed the PCB in a press release



on Monday. Along with Kirsten, the PCB has also appointed Simon Helmot and David Reid as fielding and mental performance coaches respectively. Reid will join the team on May 20 and will remain with them till the end of the T20 World Cup 2024. On the other hand, Helmot will join the side on May 31 just before the mega event begins. Meanwhile, Aftab Khan, who is currently serving the side as the fielding coach, will take on the responsibilities of High-Performance Coach for the World Cup following

**Tour of Ireland**  
May 14: Third T20I at Clontarf  
**Tour of England**  
May 22: First T20I at Leeds  
May 25: Second T20I at Birmingham  
May 28: Third T20I at Cardiff  
May 30: Fourth T20I at The Oval  
**T20 World Cup 2024**  
June 6: Pakistan vs USA, Dallas  
June 9: Pakistan vs India, New York  
June 11: Pakistan vs Canada, New York  
June 16: Pakistan vs Ireland, Lauderhill

## ICC security head meets PCB officials

Naseer was accompanied by other PCB officials and Musker reviewed the existing security arrangements in Lahore, both parties also held constructive talks to discuss further improvements that could be made

LAHORE: The International Cricket Council (ICC) Head of Security Dave Musker met with the Chief Operating Officer of PCB, Salman Naseer, to discuss plans for the ICC Champions Trophy 2025. The two met at the National Cricket Academy (NCA) in Lahore to discuss security arrangements and protocol to make sure the tournament is conducted in a smooth way. Naseer was accompanied by other PCB officials and Musker reviewed the existing security arrangements in Lahore, both parties also held constructive talks to discuss further improvements that could be made. Earlier this month, ICC pitch consultant Andy Atkinson arrived at the National Stadium in Karachi. He shared his input with local ground staff over the preparation of pitches for the mega event. Meanwhile, last month, a three-member ICC team also inspected the three venues – Karachi, Lahore and Rawalpindi. The event is planned in February 2025, and the PCB already shared the draft schedule with ICC with matches at these three venues. The eight-team tournament is anticipated to span over two weeks, although the exact dates have not yet been confirmed. This event will mark the return of the ICC Champions Trophy after an eight-year hiatus, with its last occurrence in 2017, when Pakistan emerged victorious by defeating India in the final. The teams confirmed for the 2025 ICC Champions Trophy include Pakistan (hosts), India, South Africa, Australia, New Zealand, Afghanistan, England, and Bangladesh. – DNA

## PM's timely decision on AJK...

FROM PAGE 01  
Prime Minister's timely actions. Terming Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf as "Tehreek-e-Intishar", he said its dreams of creation of chaos and anarchy had also been shattered. "Along with the enemy, the 'Tehreek-e-Intishar' also thought that in some way or the other, chaos would spread and there would be anarchy" as its leadership wanted to benefit from the sad situation. Tarar said that the Prime Minister took all the coalition parties and stake holders on board and heard their views. "Yesterday's meeting was attended by all the political leadership including the Prime Minister of Azad Jammu and Kashmir", he remarked. The minister said the political leadership and federal ministers resolved the issues through mutual understanding.

## SC allows Imran to...

FROM PAGE 01  
NAB amendments. Khan said he wanted to present his own arguments in the case. The five-member SC larger bench, headed by CJP Isa, includes Justice Amin-ud-Din Khan, Justice Jamal Khan Mandokhail, Justice Athar Minallah and Justice Hasan Azhar Rizvi. Today's hearing comes as a three-member bench of the SC, in September 2023, had approved former prime minister Khan's petition challenging amendments made to the country's accountability laws during the tenure of the previous Pakistan Democratic Movement (PDM)-led government.

## We won't accept...

FROM PAGE 01  
Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf leader Asad Qaiser, in his address, said the way Khawaja Asif spoke to the speaker yesterday (Monday) was condemnable. He said Khawaja Asif was an elderly person 80 years of age. Being a senior parliamentarian he should realise this and show tolerance, said Qaiser. Speaking about erstwhile FATA, Qaiser said all parties in parliament had unanimously given tax exemption to FATA and this facility was meant to bring them on a par with other areas of the country.

## IHC stops govt from...

FROM PAGE 01  
SIMs of non-filers as part of the government's bid to curb tax evasion to improve revenue generation amid dire economic indicators. The FBR had announced that telecom companies have agreed to commence the manual blocking process of SIMs in small batches until their systems are fully equipped to automate it. The tax collection body said that the first batch comprising 5,000 non-filers has been communicated to the telecom operators and that more batches would be sent to telecom operators on a daily basis. Meanwhile, the operators had also commenced sending messages to non-filers regarding the blocking of their SIMs for intimidation purposes.

## Pakistan beat Ireland in series...

FROM PAGE 01  
between Babar Azam and Mohammad Rizwan. The touring side, however, had a contrasting start to their pursuit as young opener Saim Ayub failed to make a mark and perished in the third over after scoring 14 off 11 deliveries. Following the early blow, Babar joined wicketkeeper batter Rizwan in the middle and turned the tide in Pakistan's favour. Babar and Rizwan dominated the Ireland bowling attack as both scored half-centuries and put together a marathon 139-run partnership for the second wicket. Their match-winning stand came to an end in the 15th over when Mohammad Rizwan was bowled by Mark Adair. Rizwan remained a notable contributor to Pakistan's total with a brisk 56 off 38 deliveries, peppered with four fours and three sixes.

## Pakistan Women's Cricket Team arrives in London

High Commissioner Dr. Muhammad Faisal expressed his pride in the national women's cricket team, saying that they are a source of inspiration for the country

DNA

LONDON: The Pakistan Women's Cricket Team on Sunday arrived in London for their upcoming T20 and ODI series against England. The team was warmly received by Pakistan's High Commissioner to the UK, Dr. Muhammad Faisal, at London Heathrow Airport. Led by captain Nida Dar, the 17-member team, during their tour, will play three T20 and three One-Day International matches with England. Speaking on the occasion, High Commissioner Dr. Muhammad Faisal expressed his pride in the national women's cricket team, saying that they are a source of inspiration for the country. "We are proud of our young women flying the Pakistani flag high at international arena," Dr Faisal said. He also extended his best wishes to the team for their excellent performance during the tour.



## Briefs

**Pakistanis own property worth \$1bn in Dubai**

FROM PAGE 01

Hussain Nawaz Sharif, Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi's wife, Sharjeel Memon and family members, Senator Faisal Vawda, Farah Gogi, Sher Afzal Marwat, four MNAs and half a dozen MPAs from the Sindh and Balochistan assemblies. The Pakistani list also features the late Gen Pervez Musharraf, former prime minister Shaukat Aziz and more than a dozen retired generals as well as a police chief, an ambassador and a scientist - all of whom owned properties either directly or through their spouses and children.

In 2014, President Asif Ali Zardari had received foreign property as a gift. By the time he declared it in 2018, he had gifted it to someone. In 2014, a business tycoon co-accused with Zardari in the fake accounts case, Abdul Ghani Majid, declared in his wealth statement that he had granted a gift of Rs329m but neither mentioned its type nor the recipient. The JIT however recovered a memo about the purchase in March 2014 of a penthouse in Dubai. The Property Leaks data has now unveiled that Ghani had gifted this property to Zardari who gifted it to his daughter. Chief Financial Officer of Omni Group Aslam Masood along with his wife is also shown as a listed owner of several properties in the data.

Sohrab Dinshaw is also a property owner in Dubai. A villa he purchased in 2015 carried a purchase price of AED 1271888 (Rs 96m). All of the individuals mentioned were sent questions (except Aslam Masood who is deceased). None responded. The Altaf Khanani network which was sanctioned by the US for involvement in money laundering has also surfaced on the list.

His son, daughter, brother, and nephew are listed owners of several properties in Dubai. Three of them are facing sanctions. Another notable character is Hamid Mukhtar Shah, a Rawalpindi-based physician who was sanctioned by the US for his involvement in the kidnapping, detention of, and removal of kidneys from Pakistani labourers. He is listed as the owner of scores of properties. The Property Leaks have also revealed that Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi's wife owns a property in Dubai which he didn't declare in the nomination papers he submitted in March this year for the Senate election. Per the Property Leaks data, Naqvi's wife owns a five-bedroom villa in the Arabian Ranches. She received a rental income of AED600,000 (Rs45m) from this villa, which was purchased in August 2017 for AED4,347,888 (Rs329m) according to the record. The villa remained in her ownership till April 2023 when it was sold for AED4,550,000 (Rs344m) as per the record.

Since the data available and other organisations was updated till 2022, Naqvi's wife's name appeared once in it - related to the above-mentioned information. She however continues to be the owner of a property in Dubai, if Dubai's land record is taken as a guide. Responding to questions received from the media partner of this investigative project, she clarified that she had purchased another property in Dubai in January this year when Naqvi was still interim chief minister of Punjab. Two months later, he was a candidate for the Senate seat in March and chose not to declare this property. To a question regarding this, she said: "We will declare it in the current year's tax declarations and for the ECP". According to the data leak assessed by economists and reporters, the number of residential properties owned by foreigners in Dubai put Indians first, at 35,000 properties and 29,700 owners. The total value of these properties is estimated at \$17 billion that same year. Owners with Pakistani nationality come second among foreigners at 17,000 owners of 23,000 residential properties followed by UK citizens and Saudi nationals. Among the Pakistani owners, the average value per owner is estimated at \$0.41 million



ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif chairs a review meeting on the matters related to Ministry of Privatisation and Privatisation Commission.—DNA

## CPEC Phase 2 to make Pak center of trade: Ahsan

CPEC has created more than 200,000 jobs. It has connected many parts of the country, has improved logistics efficiency in Pakistan, and has helped Pakistan achieve energy efficiency. Now, we are looking forward to the second phase of CPEC

DNA

BEIJING: Federal Minister of Planning, Development, and Special Initiatives, Prof Ahsan Iqbal hoped that there would be more regional cooperation under the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) in Phase 2 which would make Pakistan the center of trade, commerce, and business in the region. We hope that in phase two, we will have more regional cooperation under CPEC,

and that will make Pakistan the center of trade, commerce, and business in the region that will connect almost three billion people in this region, he said in an interview with China Global Television Network (CGTN) during his recent visit to China. About the specific impact of CPEC on Pakistan and its people, he said that it has brought transformational changes in Pakistan. CPEC has created more than 200,000 jobs. It has connected many parts of the country, has

improved logistics efficiency in Pakistan, and has helped Pakistan achieve energy efficiency. Now, we are looking forward to the second phase of CPEC. He said that the government will undertake under second phase of CPEC projects that will spur growth in Pakistan's economy, which will involve infrastructure projects. Under livelihood projects, we will expand our cooperation and industrial domain, also, the agriculture sector that will enable people to improve

their livelihoods will create jobs. Third innovation corridor means that we intend to now expand our cooperation in digital technology domains like artificial intelligence, automation, robotics, big data, and biotechnology, he added. Terming green energy is very important, he said, We are now starting new renewable energy projects. We are starting new hydro projects and making a transition from imported fuel, which used to be oil-based or coal-based. In response to

a question about the safety of Chinese nationals and enhanced measures taken by the government to guarantee security for ongoing and upcoming projects under the CPEC, he said, I want to assure Chinese people that the government of Pakistan values them as very precious and important guests and will leave no possible human effort to give them added security. Some external enemies want to stall the progress goals that we have set up for phase two, he added.

## EU to sign off on asylum overhaul

BRUSSELS, BELGIUM: A month ahead of EU elections expected to see a surge by far-right parties, the 27-nation bloc will on Tuesday give the final green light to a landmark overhaul of its migration and asylum policies after nearly a decade of wrangling. Now, as the mammoth legislative package crosses the finishing line, some countries are already pushing to go further in efforts to toughen up EU policies and send more arrivals to third countries for processing. The migration and asylum pact resulted from years of arduous negotiations spurred by a massive inflow of irregular migrants in 2015, many from war-torn Syria and Afghanistan. Drawing criticism from both migrant rights charities and some nationalist governments, it both hardens the European Union's border procedures and forces all its member states to share responsibility for arrivals. EU ministers meeting in Brussels are set to give their last formal approval to the reforms after the European Parliament voted them through last month. Proponents of the pact had pushed hard to force it over the finish line ahead of the EU-wide elections in June that could have seen it buried if a more right-wing parliament is chosen. The measures are due to come into force in 2026, after the European Commission first sets out how it would be implemented. New border centres would hold irregular migrants while their asylum requests are vetted. And deportations of those deemed inadmissible would be accelerated. The pact also requires EU countries to take in thousands of asylum-seekers from "frontline" states such as Italy and Greece, or - if they refuse - to provide money or other resources to the under-pressure nations. Hungary's populist Prime Minister Viktor Orban has decried that new system, which only required a weighted majority of EU countries to pass. For very different reasons, migrant charities have also slammed the pact, with rights group Amnesty International arguing it will "lead to greater human suffering". At the same time as it signs off on the sweeping reforms, the EU is also stepping up its use of deals with countries of transit and origin aimed at curbing the number of arrivals. In recent months, that has seen agreements inked with Tunisia, Mauritania and Egypt. Italy has also struck its own accord with Albania to send migrants rescued in Italian waters to the country while their asylum requests are treated. Furthermore, a group of countries spearheaded by Denmark and the Czech Republic are preparing to send a letter pushing for the transfer of migrants picked up at sea to countries outside the EU.—DNA

## Indonesia flood death toll rises to 50 with 27 missing

TANAH DATAR, Indonesia, May 14 (AFP/APP):Rescuers recovered more bodies on Tuesday after flash floods and cold lava flow on Indonesia's Sumatra island over the weekend killed at least 50 people and left another 27 missing, the country's disaster agency said. Hours of heavy rain caused large volcanic rocks to roll down one of Indonesia's most active volcanoes into two of the worst-hit districts on Sumatra island Saturday evening while flooding inundated roads, homes and mosques. "Based on reports, Suharyanto (BNBP chief) said victims who died due to the disaster was recorded to 50 people," agency spokesman Abdul Muhari said in a statement, raising the death toll by six. He said 27 people were still missing and 37 had been injured, while 3,396 people had been evacuated from the affected areas. Suharyanto, who goes by one name, said in the statement that the death toll could rise further and called for heavy equipment to be deployed to help the search effort. "The data will continue to develop. To help find (victims) who are still missing, the heavy equipment must come in as quickly as possible," he said.—APP

## Number of Palestinians leaving Rafah due to Israeli assaults

UNITED NATIONS: Nearly 360,000 people have fled Rafah in the last week amid continuing deadly Israeli bombardment that has crippled humanitarian aid deliveries and is believed to have killed another UN aid worker, the UN agency for Palestinian refugees, UNRWA, said Monday. "Nearly 360,000 people have fled Rafah since the first evacuation order a week ago," the UN agency said in a post on X, referencing leafletting by the Israeli military ordering those in eastern Rafah to leave their shelters. In another alert, UNRWA warned of ongoing "restricted humanitarian access" to and across the Gaza Strip that was now "a matter of life or death" for Gazans already suffering "relentless bombardments and food insecurity". The development comes one week since Israel moved ahead with its military offensive in Rafah, seizing control of the Gaza side of the Rafah border crossing and Kerem Shalom crossing. "We immediately and urgently need safe passage for humanitarian aid and workers," the UN agency insisted, amid fresh reports of more clashes and shelling in Jabalia refugee camp in the north of the enclave. "Bombardments and other evacuation orders have created more displacement and fear for thousands of families" in the north, UNRWA said. "There's nowhere to go. There's NO safety without a ceasefire." The UN agency also reported on Monday that another staff member had been killed in Gaza, bringing the total number of staff killed in the war to 189. The individual - a 53-year-old senior projects officer - was believed to have died in an Israeli strike in the central town of Deir Al Balah, after leaving Rafah. "He leaves behind a wife and four children," the agency said. In a related development, the UN again highlighted its \$2.8 billion appeal to support more than three million people in Gaza and the West Bank over the next eight months. "For months, women and children have been killed at a rate that exceeds any war in this century. And those who've escaped death and injury now risk losing their lives because of a lack of food, safe water, medicine and healthcare," said Joyce Msuya, Assistant-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs and Deputy Emergency Relief Coordinator. Speaking in Kuwait, Ms. Msuya described how every day, "scores of women give birth in horrifying conditions, often without anesthesia or medical aid, as bombs explode around them". "Mothers watch their babies die in their arms because they don't have enough milk to keep them alive. And children are dying because they don't have enough food or water." After more than seven months of war, at least 35,000 people have been killed, according to the Gaza health authorities. Another 70,000 more are wounded or missing, with many more trapped under the rubble. Continuing funding is needed urgently to help those who depend on humanitarian aid to survive, the OCHA senior official said, insisting that even in the absence of a ceasefire, "there is still much we can do given the right conditions". She noted: "We are in daily access negotiations with the parties. We are coordinating the humanitarian response...We have pulled people out of the rubble and repatriated the bodies of aid workers, including those working for World Central Kitchen and Médecins Sans Frontiers who were killed serving those in need." The OCHA official's comments came as the aid coordination office reported new demolitions of Palestinian buildings in Al'Arrub Camp in the West Bank governorate of Hebron. Latest data from the OCHA online portal indicates that 435 structures have been damaged or destroyed across the West Bank so far this year, displacing 824 people. Meanwhile, the World Health Organization said the incursion into Rafah has jeopardized the provision of health services, access to healthcare, and the delivery of life-saving supplies.—Agencies

(Rs11.40m). The combined value of the properties of Pakistanis has been estimated at around \$11 billion (Rs30tr) whereas the total value of properties of 204 nationalities is \$386 billion (Rs1073.70tr).

The Property Leaks data includes the controlling party of each property, as well as other identifying information such as his or her date of birth, passport number, and nationality. In some cases, the data captured renters instead of owners as mostly it came from official government documents as well as publicly owned utility companies.

The project's reporters have only revealed the names of owners in cases that serve the public interest. This includes property owners who have been convicted or accused of crimes, are facing sanctions, or are public officials or their associates, including those accused of corruption or who have kept their properties hidden from the public.

Journalists used the data as a starting point to explore the landscape of foreign property ownership in Dubai. They spent months verifying the identities of the people who appeared in the leaked data, as well as confirming their ownership status, using official records, open-source research, and other leaked datasets. Reporters have only included people in the project if their identities could be independently confirmed through other sources.

Dubai's official land registry was also used to ascertain whether individuals appearing in the data remain property owners. In some cases, reporters could not determine current ownership status, usually because a property had been recently sold. In those cases, extra efforts were made to confirm that the person did own property in Dubai, including combing through real-estate transactions and rental databases.

## IRSA releases 217,000 cusecs water

ISLAMABAD: Indus River System Authority (IRSA) on Tuesday released 217,000 cusecs water from various rim stations with inflow of 239,700 cusecs. According to the data released by IRSA, water level in River Indus at Tarbela Dam was 1470.00 feet and was 72.00 feet higher than its dead level of 1,398 feet. Water inflow and outflow in the dam was recorded as 61,200 cusecs and 60,000 cusecs respectively. The water level in River Jhelum at Mangla Dam was 1173.30 feet, which was 123.30 feet higher than its dead level of 1,050 feet. The inflow and outflow of water was recorded 63,900 cusecs and 42,000 cusecs respectively. The release of water at Kalabagh, Taunsa, Guddu and Sukkur was recorded as 130,200, 68,100, 43,800 and 13,500 cusecs respectively. Similarly, from River Kabul, a total of 80,400 cusecs of water released at Nowshera and 19,700 cusecs released from River Chenab at Marala.—APP

## 'Genetic testing' awareness for public can fight medical complications

ISLAMABAD: Health expert Tuesday stressed for part of genetic testing facilities and media drives for public awareness to combat rare diseases as largely neglected genetic diseases are responsible for 70 per cent deaths of infants in Pakistan. "The genetic diseases are, in most cases, serious, chronic, debilitating and life-threatening, often requiring long and specialized treatments," Dr Riffat Ahmad Assistant Prof Jamia Karachi said while talking to a Private news channel. She explained that Pakistan was a highly inbred community with cousin marriages and same caste marriages, adding, it is imperative that awareness on genetic diseases is raised at every level. She also underscored the importance of research and awareness in reducing the incidence of genetic disorders in Pakistan. Prof Dr Riffat also shed light on the complications of hemophilia, an inherited genetic disorder that inhibits the body's ability to form blood clots effectively.—APP

## May 9 is Victory Day in Republic of Belarus

DNA

MINSK: A solemn event in honor of Victory Day was held in Victory Square in the hero-city of Minsk, the capital of Belarus, under the leadership of President of Belarus Alexander Lukashenko. Victory Day is a holiday that commemorates the Soviet Union victory over Nazi Germany in 1945. It was first inaugurated in the 15 republics of the Soviet Union following the signing of the German Instrument of Surrender late in the evening on 8 May 1945 (9 May Moscow Time). The Soviet government announced the victory early on 9 May after the signing ceremony in Berlin. Less than eighty years ago the bloody tornado of the most terrible war in history was stopped by sacrificial deeds of Soviet people. This fact is forever secured in ruins of the Reichstag and the instrument of unconditional capitulation of fascist Germany. The German war machine fell apart after encountering the unprecedented heroism and valor of our fathers, grandfathers, and great grandfathers. The Great Victory was forged on the frontlines and on the home front for four long years. Both elderly people and kids rose up to fight the



enemy. By spending millions of lives of its sons and daughters in exchange for freedom, our great Motherland - the Soviet Union - saved humanity from enslavement and some nations from full extinction back then. Today we take pride in our forefathers and veterans, who won the war. We praise their heroic deeds.

The Great Victory is the central and key moment in the history of revival and establishment of the Belarusian nation. Today its lessons allow taking a glimpse of the future if one remembers and knows the past. While the zest for life and the creative energy of the generation of victors, who restored the country from ruins, set an example of how we should live and work. Belarus needs peace. Tomorrow. In a year. Always. It is important for us to endure and stay out of conflicts. Time has chosen us. We have been chosen to preserve the independence of our land and everything created by many generations before us. Everything we jointly take pride in and admire. With this in mind we develop the economy, reinforce defense, and raise young citizens as patriots. We keep peace and wellbeing in the native land as the ancestors willed it. The Great Victory they secured inspires us with the belief

that Belarusians are capable of overcoming everything and persevering. Honor and glory to the victorious warriors! Honor and glory to our dear veterans! Eternal remembrance to those who fell on battlefields and perished in fascist prisons and concentration camps. Alexander Lukashenko drew attention to the fact that for Belarusians 2024 is marked by a glorious anniversary - the 80th anniversary of the liberation of the republic from the Nazi invaders. This special date is a good occasion to remind the whole world about resilience in the face of common threats, readiness and ability to defend every inch of the native land, to preserve and defend the heritage of the nation's feat, the President noted. President of Belarus Alexander Lukashenko wished strong health, long years, and prosperity to our esteemed veterans and happiness, peace, and wellbeing to every Belarusian family.

Briefs

IED blast kills five in South Waziristan

PESHAWAR: At least five people from the same family including women were killed when an improvised explosive device (IED) blast occurred inside a house in South Waziristan on Tuesday morning. According to police the incident took place in TangiBadinzai area of Laddha tehsil in South Waziristan where the blast of an IED killed five family members. The initial reports said two women were among those killed in the blast. The family had shifted to the house some days back. Police said the house was rented out to an Afghan national, adding that frequent visits of suspected people to the house were witnessed by the locals. Police asserted that the blast was most probably a result of accidental flareup of the explosives stored inside the house. Those killed in the blast were identified as Banot Khan, his wife, daughter, son Shahzeb and another unidentified child. Police have started a thorough investigation into the incident. - APP

US Ambassador calls on law minister

DNA

ISLAMABAD: US Ambassador Donald Blome met today with the Minister of Law and Justice and Human Rights AzamNazeerTara to discuss a broad range of issues important to the bilateral relationship, including judicial independence, upholding human rights, and strengthening the rule of law. Ambassador Blome expressed U.S. support for Pakistan's democracy and continued economic, political, and social development.

J. Kayani suspects state institutions leaked judges' data

COURT REPORTER

ISLAMABAD: As the Islamabad High Court (IHC) initiated contempt proceedings on a smear social media campaign against senior judges, Justice Mohsin Akhtar Kayani remarked on Tuesday either the "state institutions might have leaked confidential data or their system was hacked". An IHC larger bench - led by Justice Kayani and comprising Justice Tariq MehmoodJahangiri and Justice SardarEjazIshaq Khan - commenced contempt of court proceedings on smear social media campaign against Justice Babar Sattar. The high court had formed two separate benches on the issue on May 8 after Justice Sattar and Justice Kayani wrote to IHC Chief Justice Aamer Farooq, seeking contempt proceedings against those involved in leaking personal details and running malicious campaign on social media. Addressing the state counsel, Justice Kayani remarked that they were going to initiate a contempt of court proceeding in the case.

KP governor invites CM for dinner

DNA

MULTAN: Willing to bury the hatchet following a verbal spat with the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa chief minister, Governor Faisal Karim Kundi stated on Tuesday he held everyone in high esteem and he would like to invite KP Chief Minister Ali Amin Gandapur for dinner. While interacting with reporters on Tuesday, Kundi said that being a public governor, he was willing to personally visit the leader of every political group in larger public interest. The governor called on all political parties to sit together to deal with the situation in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, emphasising that verbal duel might wait, but the delivery of public service should be prioritised.

# Ishaq Dar calls for elevating Pakistan-China relations

## Senator Dar reaffirmed Pakistan's firm support to China on its core issues while Minister Liu expressed China's support for Pakistan's sovereignty, territorial integrity and high-quality socioeconomic development

FOREIGN DESK

BEIJING: Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Mohammad Ishaq Dar held a luncheon meeting with Chairman of China International Development Cooperation Agency (CIDCA) Luo Zhaohui in Beijing. The two sides discussed CIDCA's various projects for the socioeconomic development of Pakistan, especially Gwadar. They also discussed the development of the New Gwadar International Airport, which is expected to be completed and inaugurated this year. Deputy Prime Minister appreciated CIDCA's pivotal role in China's support for development projects in developing countries including Pakistan. Chairman CIDCA expressed commitment to early implementation of CIDCA projects, which would give boost to the mutual vision of upgraded version of CPEC. Meanwhile, Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Senator Mohammad Ishaq Dar today met with Minister of the International Department of the Communist Party of China (IDPC), Liu Jianchao in



BEIJING: Meeting of Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister with Minister of the International Department of the Communist Party of China (IDPC). - DNA

Beijing. They discussed the longstanding cooperation and exchanges between the political parties of Pakistan and the Communist Party of China. Senator Dar reaffirmed Pakistan's firm support to China on its core issues while Minister Liu expressed Chi-

na's support for Pakistan's sovereignty, territorial integrity and high-quality socioeconomic development.

The two leaders also reaffirmed the importance of the All-Weather Strategic Cooperative Partnership between Pakistan and China and to further reinforce mutually beneficial collaboration. They also expressed joint determination to accelerate progress on all CPEC projects including ML-I upgradation, Gwadar Port and KKH realignment.

The Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister expressed condolences and shock over Chinese casualties in the heinous Shangla attack. He reiterated Pakistan's firm resolve to counter terrorism in all its forms and manifestations and to bring perpetrators of the Shangla attack to justice. He underlined the measures taken by Pakistan to ensure enhanced security of Chinese projects, personnel and institutions in Pakistan.

The Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister formally invited Liu Jianchao to visit Pakistan to co-chair the next meeting of CPEC Joint Consultative Mechanism of Political Parties this year.

# Gaza ceasefire talks stalled due to Rafah offensive: Qatar

NEWS DESK

DOHA: Qatari Prime Minister Sheikh Mohammed bin Abdulrahman Al Thani says indirect negotiations between the Palestinian resistance group Hamas and Israel over a ceasefire in Gaza and the exchange of captives have hit a snag due to the regime's aggression in the southern border city of Rafah. "Especially in the past few weeks, we have seen some momentum building but unfortunately, things didn't move in the right direction and right now we are in a status of almost a stalemate. Of course, what happened with Rafah sent us backward," Sheikh Mohammed said at an economic forum in Doha on Tuesday. He noted that his Persian Gulf country would keep working to resolve the stalemate. "We make it very clear for everyone: our job is limited to our mediation," Sheikh Mohammed said. "That's what we will do, that what we will continue to do." He pointed out that the fundamental difference between the two parties was over the release of captives and ending the seven-month Gaza conflict. "There is one party that wants to end the war and then talk about the hostages and there is another party who wants the hostages and wants to continue the war. As long as there is not any commonality between those two things it won't get us to a result," the Qatari prime minister said. Negotiations over a potential ceasefire in the Gaza war

come amid signs that Israel is preparing for a full-scale assault on Rafah in southern Gaza, where more than a million displaced Palestinians have taken refuge. Israel believes thousands of Hamas fighters are inside the city, along with potentially dozens of captives. Such an incursion would put hundreds of thousands of lives at risk and be a huge blow to the aid operations of the entire territory, the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs said on Friday. Israel launched its atrocious onslaught against the Gaza Strip, targeting hospitals, residences, and houses of worship since Palestinian resistance movements launched a surprise attack, dubbed Operation al-Aqsa Storm, against the usurping regime on October 7. At least 35,173 Palestinians have been killed, most of them women and children, and another 79,061 individuals have sustained injuries. More than 1.7 million people have been internally displaced during the war as well. Meanwhile, the Palestine Red Crescent Society has warned of the deteriorating humanitarian conditions in the Gaza Strip as a result of the Israeli ongoing closure of the crossings, after taking control of the Rafah crossing and closing it completely. The Society said, in a statement on Tuesday, that the continued closure of the crossings, especially the key Rafah crossing which is the main passage for humanitarian aid delivery in the Strip, portends an imminent humanitarian and health catastrophe.

# Pakistan rejects anti-Pakistan rhetoric of Indian leadership

KHAYAM ABBASI

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan on Tuesday urged the Indian politicians to cease dragging Pakistan into their domestic politics for electoral gains and to handle sensitive strategic matters with the utmost caution. "We call upon the international community to take note of Indian leadership's belligerent rhetoric, which poses a grave threat to regional peace and stability," Spokesperson Ministry of Foreign Affairs Mumtaz Zahra Baloch, said in a press statement, in response to media queries regarding a series of Pakistan-related remarks made recently by the Indian Prime Minister, External Affairs Minister and other cabinet members. The spokesperson said that they were witnessing an alarming surge in anti-Pakistan rhetoric from various Indian leaders amidst the ongoing Lok Sabha election campaign. "We outrightly reject these irresponsible statements, which cover a wide array of topics including the Jammu and Kashmir dispute, counter-terrorism efforts, state of bilateral relations, and nuclear capabilities," it was added.

# Chababar deal US warns India of 'sanctions'

WASHINGTON: United States State Department has warned India with "potential risk of sanctions" after it inked a 10-year deal with Iran, taking over operations at the Chabahar port. In a press briefing in Washington on Monday, State Department Spokesperson Vedant Patel said: "... any entity, anyone considering business deals with Iran, they need to be aware of the potential risk that they are opening themselves up to and the potential risk of sanctions." He reiterated that the US's sanctions on Iran remain in place and Washington will "continue to enforce them". Patel maintained that the risk of sanctions also applies on Indian firms. - Agencies

# Japanese singer presents a mesmerizing performance



MEHTAB PIRZADA

ISLAMABAD: A special event featuring a performance by young Japanese musician Kenta Shoji was held at the residence of H.E. Mr. WADA Mitsuhiro, Ambassador of Japan to Pakistan on Tuesday, attended by a number of guests and music lovers. As the event started, Mr. KENTA first mesmerised the audience with his mastery over playing the piano which was followed by captivating songs that he sang in Japanese,

English and Urdu language. The singer from Kyoto, Japan, took the audience by surprise when he sang popular Pakistani hits by Vital Sign "DiDiL Pakistan" and "Aitebar" and received a great applause from each one the attendees. Mr. Kenta started playing the piano at the age of 20. He has produced a wide range of vocal/piano songs covering his favourite genres of music such as Soul, R&B, Rock, Pop and Jazz. In 2022, he launched his album "Skip". The following year he started travelling around the world performing his music on the streets and at various live music events.

# Italian Defence SG calls on secy defence

DNA

RAWALPINDI: Italian Secretary General of Defence and National Armaments Director, Lieutenant General Luciano PORTOLANO called on Secretary Ministry of Defence Production, Lieutenant General (R) Muhammad ChiraghHaider here on Tuesday. On the occasion, the secretary highlighted that Pakistan attached great importance to its relations with Italy, a news release said. He appreciated the Italian Defence Industrial potential and its ability to address needs of the Pakistani defence forces. Lieutenant General (R) Muhammad ChiraghHaider also emphasized that Pakistan had a lot of potential in the fields of energy and defence production with the possibility of joint ventures which needs to be explored. Both the sides stressed on the need to have a regular exchange of high-level visits between both countries.

# Putin to pay state visit to China

MOSCOW: At the invitation of Chinese President Xi Jinping, Russian President Vladimir Putin will pay a state visit to China from May 16 to 17, the Chinese Foreign Ministry announced on Tuesday, with analysts from the two countries saying that the visit will have strategic significance for not only the two major powers, but also the world amid turbulence and profound changes. This is Putin's first state visit after he was sworn in as Russian president for a new term, Wang Wenbin, a foreign ministry spokesperson, told a regular press briefing. As this year marks the 75th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between China and Russia, during the visit, Xi and Putin will exchange views on bilateral relations, cooperation in various fields, and international and regional issues of common concern, Wang said. He added that China will release relevant information on this visit in a timely manner. Chinese experts said that Putin's decision to choose China as the destination of his first state visit after his reelection is not a surprise, and this shows that Moscow attaches great importance to further developing its strategic partnership with China. - Agencies

# Georgian parliament approves divisive 'foreign agents' bill

TBILISI: The Georgian parliament on Tuesday approved in the third and final reading a divisive bill that sparked weeks of mass protests, with critics seeing it as a threat to democratic freedoms and the country's aspirations to join the European Union. The bill requires media and nongovernmental organizations and other nonprofits to register as "pursuing the interests of a foreign power" if they receive more than 20% of their funding from abroad. The government says the bill is necessary to stem what it deems as harmful foreign influence over the country's politics and to prevent unspecified foreign actors from trying to destabilize it. The opposition has denounced the bill as "the Russian law," because Moscow uses similar legislation to crack down on independent news media, nonprofits and activists critical of the Kremlin. Mass protests against the law in recent weeks have swept the South Caucasus nation of 3.7 million. European Council President Charles Michel on Tuesday spoke of Georgia in Copenhagen, at a conference on democracy, and said that "if they want to join the EU, they have to respect the fundamental principles of the rule of law and the democratic principles." The bill is nearly identical to one that the governing Georgian Dream party was pressured to withdraw last year after street protests. Renewed demonstrations have rocked Georgia for weeks, with demonstrators scuffling with police, who used tear gas and water cannons to disperse the crowds. Georgian President Salome Zourabichvili, who is increasingly at odds with the governing party, has vowed to veto the law, but Georgian Dream has a majority sufficient to override a presidential veto. As the lawmakers began debating the bill on Tuesday, a large crowd of demonstrators gathered in front of the parliament to protest once again, with a heavy presence of riot police at the site. Over the weekend, thousands poured into the streets of the Georgian capital Tbilisi, and many stayed in front of the parliament until Monday morning. - Agencies

MURREE SPARKLETTS  
Bottled Drinking Water

WATER TASTES BEST IN GLASS!!

CARBONATED WATER ALSO AVAILABLE IN GLASS BOTTLE

330ml 750ml

For Sales & Supply Contact:

Adeel Butt 03334131756  
Kaiser Waheed 03325808422  
Riaz Muhammad 0335 5111043