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Gillani for further consolidating ties with Malaysia

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Abdullah set to represent Pakistan

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Foreign minister also dies

Iran's President Raisi dies in helicopter crash

Supreme Leader Khamenei confirms Mohammad Mokhber as interim president, declares five days of public mourning



PM visits Iranian embassy to condole

Great loss for Muslim Ummah: President Zardari condoles death of Iran's Ebrahim Raisi

ANSAR BHATTI

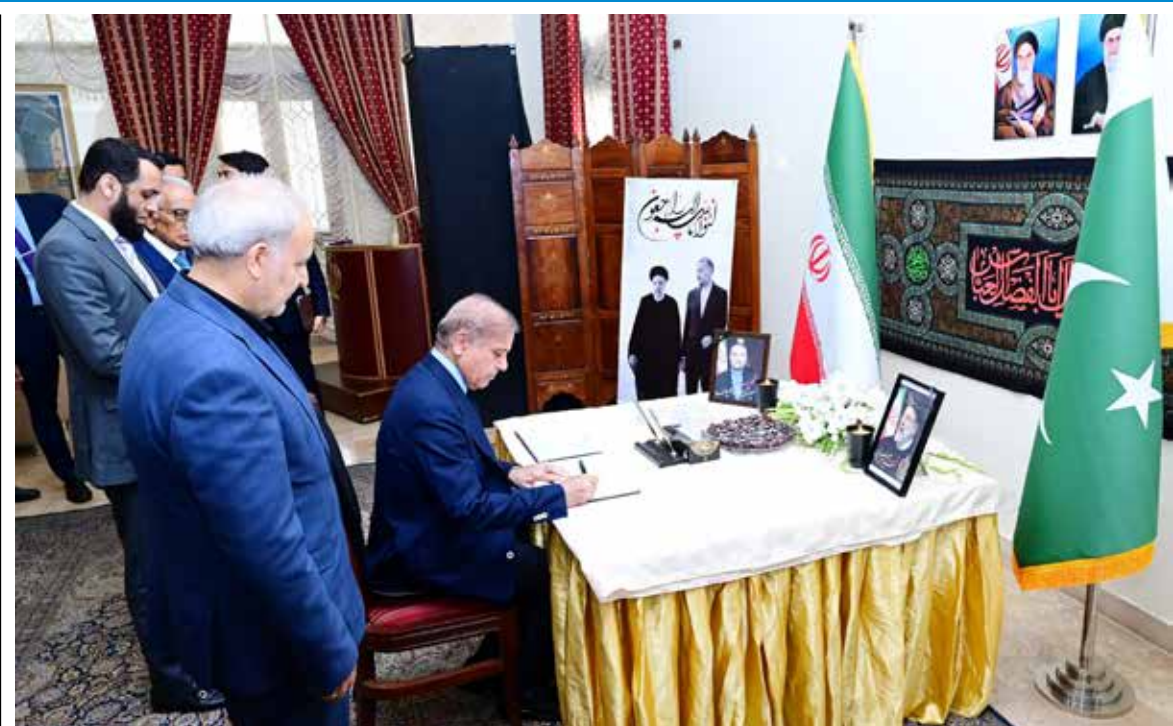
NEWS DESK

TEHRAN: Iranian President Ebrahim Raisi, seen as a potential successor to Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, died after his helicopter crashed in poor weather in mountains near the Azerbaijan border, officials and state media said on Monday. A helicopter carrying Iranian President Ebrahim Raisi made a "tough landing" on Sunday during a visit to the country's northwest, the national TV reported. The incident occurred as a result of dense fog in the region, which is making conditions difficult for rescue teams, the TV said. The helicopter crashed close to a copper mine called Sungun. It's located in between Jolfa and Varzaqan in the East Azerbaijan province of Iran and it's roughly between 70km (43 miles) to 100km (62 miles) away from the city of Tabriz, one of the largest cities in Iran and also the city that the president of Iran and foreign minister were headed toward. Since Sunday afternoon, 40 separate rescue teams have been dispatched to the forested and mountainous area. Harsh weather has made the region accessible only by ground teams, as aerial approaches are unfeasible.

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ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif visited the Embassy of the Islamic Republic of Iran in Islamabad this afternoon, to convey his deepest condolences to the Government and people of Iran on the tragic demise of President Dr. Ebrahim Raisi, Foreign Minister Amir Hossain Abdollahian, and other senior Iranian officials who died in a helicopter crash yesterday. While speaking to the Ambassador of Iran, Mr. Reza Amiri Moghaddam, the Prime Minister paid rich tributes to the late Iranian President. He fondly recalled his interactions with President Raisi, who he said was a great leader, a visionary and a scholar. He recalled his productive interactions with the late Iranian President in 2022 and 2023. The Prime Minister reaffirmed that Pakistan would remain committed to further strengthening of the brotherly ties between the two countries as he and the late President had jointly agreed upon during the latter's recent successful visit to Pakistan. The Prime Minister also signed the condolence

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ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif signing the condolence book at the Iranian embassy on the tragic demise of President Dr. Ebrahim Raisi, FM Amir Hossain Abdollahian. - DNA

Iranian embassy raises flag at half-mast

Embassy opens condolence book

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Iranian embassy in Pakistan on Monday raised the flag at half-mast in honor and commemoration of the martyrdom of President Seyed Ebrahim Raisi, Foreign Minister Hossein Amir-Abdollahian and other accompanying delegations.

Related picture on Back Page

The ambassadors of Oman, Iraq, Palestine and Syria have visited the Iranian embassy for their condolences on the martyrdom of the Iranian president and his colleagues and marked

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Dar takes up students' issue with Kyrgyz FM

DNA

ASTANA: Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister, Senator Mohammad Ishaq Dar, met with his Kyrgyz counterpart, Foreign Minister Jeenbek Kulubaev, in Astana today. The meeting focused on the recent developments in Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan and the welfare of Pakistani nationals there. Recalling their telephone conversation of yesterday on the same subject, Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Dar underlined that Pakistan's main concern was the security and well-being of

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Fidan meets PM

Pak-Turkiye target \$5b bilateral trade, call Gaza ceasefire

Turkish FM calls on COAS, lauds Pakistan Army's role in regional peace, stability

MAHNOOR ANSAR

ISLAMABAD, Pakistan and Turkiye on Monday, vowing to strengthen bilateral and regional cooperation in multiple spheres, agreed to take the annual bilateral trade from existing \$1 billion to \$5 billion. In a joint press stakeout following their "extensive" delegation-level talks, Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Ishaq Dar and Turkish Foreign Minister Hakan Fidan told the media that they had reviewed bilateral cooperation including trade, investment, connectivity and defense. In his remarks, Deputy Prime Minister Ishaq Dar said the bilateral cooperation in all areas, was improving and measures were being taken to take the trade volume to \$5 billion. Terming Pakistan and Turkiye "two countries and one nation," Dar said the strategic and comprehensive bilateral relations were manifested by elaborate institutional

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Bishkek unrest: Over 300 more Pakistanis reach country

Federal Minister for Kashmir Affairs and Gilgit-Baltistan Amir Muqam greets students upon arrival

DNA

ISLAMABAD: More than 300 more Pakistanis returned from Bishkek, landing in Islamabad and Lahore on separate flights on Monday, as the return of students stranded in Kyrgyzstan continues following the events of violence in the Kyrgyz capital last week. Islamabad International Airport manager Aftab Gillani welcomed 179 returnees on their homecoming in

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Briefs

UN Chief deplors mob attacks

Says, we are against all xenophobic or anti-immigrant attacks

FOREIGN DESK

NEW YORK: United Nations Secretary-General Antonio Guterres Sunday voiced his disapproval of the weekend mob attacks against foreign students, including Pakistanis, in Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan, in which several students were injured. "We are against all xenophobic or anti-immigrant attacks," said Farhan Aziz Haq, UN Deputy spokesperson, when APP correspondent asked for the UN chief's reaction to the developments in that Central Asian Country. Meanwhile, Pakistan is in the process of evacuating its dismayed students from Bishkek.

Imran Khan acquitted in two cases

Qureshi, Sheikh, Asad, Mazari and Zartaj also among those acquitted

COURT REPORTER

ISLAMABAD: A district and sessions court Monday acquitted Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) founder Imran Khan and other leaders of his party in two long march vandalism cases. Other leaders of the party who were acquitted included Zartaj Gul, Ali Nawaz Awan, Faisal Javed, Shah Mahmood Qureshi, Qasim Suri, Raja Khurram Nawaz, Shireen Mazari, Saifullah Niazi, Asad Umar and Awami Muslim League chief Sheikh Rashid Ahmad. The cases against Khan and other politicians were registered in the Kohsar and Karachi Company police stations for violation of Section 144.

Summons interior, defence secys Will spy agencies run this country or law? asks IHC

'Not your mandate', law minister tells IHC after stern remarks in missing poet case

KHAYAM ABBASI

ISLAMABAD: Irked at authorities' failure to recover missing Kashmiri poet and journalist Ahmed Farhad Shah, Islamabad High Court's Justice Mohsin Akhtar Kayani on Monday questioned whether spy agencies would run the country or the law. The poet was allegedly abducted from his house last week. On May 15, his wife moved the IHC seeking his recovery. She also requested the court to identify, investigate and prosecute those responsible for his disappearance. At the outset of today's hearing, a representative of the Ministry of Defence apprised the court: "Hostage [Shah] is not with the Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI)." The official further said that the ISI was refuting the allegation about its involvement in the enforced disappearance of the poet. At this, the judge remarked: "Now the matter has gone beyond the jurisdiction of the ISI and the Military Intelligence (MI). They are telling about their failure."

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Achakzai wants military to work within its limits

If those who are ruining the country are not stopped, Pakistan will not survive, says senior politician

ADIL SHAHEEN

ISLAMABAD: Tehreek Tahafuz Aien-e-Pakistan President Mahmood Khan Achakzai on Monday urged institutions, including the military, to respect constitutional boundaries, similar to global practices. "When we talk about the Constitution, some institutions think we are against them," Achakzai said during a ceremony in Islamabad. "We only want our military to work within its constitutional

Continued on Page 06

Finance minister urges Italian investors to invest in Pakistan

The minister highlighted the significant improvements in Pakistan's economic landscape. He discussed the government's achievements, in decreasing the current account deficit, globalization of currency

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Ambassador of Italy to Pakistan Marilina Armellini called on



Minister for Finance Muhammad Aurangzeb at the Finance Division today to discuss the cooperation and longstanding relations between Pakistan and Italy. The minister highlighted the significant

improvements in Pakistan's economic landscape. He discussed the government's achievements, in decreasing the current account deficit, globalization of currency, the stock market reaching an all-time high, and the successful completion of the nine-month Stand-By Arrangement (SBA) with the International Monetary Fund (IMF). He further mentioned that the ministry is currently in engagement with the IMF mission for a new program on a longer term basis. He also outlined the government's strategic initiatives aimed at broadening the tax base by targeting previously untaxed and under-taxed segments. Additionally, he reiterated the government's commitment to privatize various State-Owned Enterprises (SOEs), starting with

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'Economic revival top priority of PML-N govt'

Pakistan had now been on the path to development due to the best economic policies, asserting that private sector also had to play its role for development of the economy: Rana Tanveer

DNA

LAHORE: Federal Minister of Industries and Production Rana Tanveer Hussain said on Monday that economic revival was the mission and top priority of the Muslim League (Nawaz) government. Addressing the inaugural ceremony of a special economic zone (SEZ) at Rachana Industrial Park, Sheikhupura, he added that Pakistan had now been on the path to development due to the best economic policies, asserting that private sector also had to play its role for development of the economy. Chaos and politics of altercation had always harmed the country. The PML-N government does not believe in the politics of anarchy and hatred but in the practical measures and not in mere hollow slogans. "We have strengthened the country economically. We have founded the CPEC that is a game changer project to improve the economic condition of the country," he maintained. The federal minister said, "I am happy to inaugurate the Special Economic Zone in Rachana Industrial Park." He hoped that Rachana Industrial Park and other special economic zones would prove to be important milestones for economic development. The SEZs have transformed economies around

the world and led nations to prosperity. "Our success lies in the positive impact on economic growth and sustainability, and the society," he remarked. Rana Tanveer Hussain said that all possible resources were being utilized to increase exports of agriculture and industrial sectors. Increased industrial production leads to more foreign exchange income of a country. The development of a country is hinged on industrial development, he said and vowed to develop this vital sector by taking measures to attract foreign investments and increase export capacity. He said that the completion of Rachana Industrial Park showed the unwavering commitment of the PML-N government, Rachana Industrial Park was very important in the context of the China Pakistan Economic Corridor and it was located near to M-2 on Lahore Sheikhupura Road and at the starting point of M-5, so it would be an important gateway to enhance trade and cooperation between Pakistan and China and fulfill the government's vision for a greener future. He said that the PIDC would ensure that industrial development was compatible with environmental sustainability. The federal minister said that revitalization of the economy was the mission and top priority of the PML-N. "Our government is firm-

ly committed to ensure sustainable development. Under the leadership of Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif, large-scale economic reforms are going on in the country. Thanks to the best economic policies, the country is on the path of economic development." Rana Tanveer Hussain said that the private sector was responsible for development of the economy as the sustainable economic development could be achieved only through close cooperation between the government and private sector. Agriculture sector was the main pillar of Pakistan's economy, he said and added that industries were taking measures to improve agricultural production by providing machinery, fertilizers and processing facilities. There was a special focus on agriculture to ensure food security and there was also determination to increase per acre yield of food grains across the country, while a road map had been chalked out to increase agricultural production, he said and added that an integrated strategy had been created for development of industry and agriculture, which would increase exports. The authority had been formed, "Working under an integrated strategy to supply urea and DAP fertilizers to farmers" issued instructions to the industry for uninterrupted supply of fertilizers to farmers, he said.



ISLAMABAD: Chief of the Naval Staff Admiral Naveed Ashraf during call-on with Chief of Royal Malaysian Navy Admiral Tan Sri Abdul Rahman Bin Ayob at Naval Headquarters.

10-day theatre festival to start from May 27 at Alhambra

LAHORE: The Lahore Arts Council Alhambra has finalized arrangements for its highly anticipated 10-day Theatre Festival to be held from May 27 to June 6 at the Alhambra Arts Center, The Mall. This annual feature showcases the finest talents of Pakistan's theatre community and represents a pinnacle of artistic expression. The theatre festival boasts an impressive lineup featuring a diverse range of dramas, including "Ankhiyaan" by Azad Theatre, "Huwa Kuch Yun" by Noratan Theatre, "Rahay Koi Nagma Ghar Salam" by Salam Production, "Mani" by Gift Film and Theatre, "Teesri Dastak" by Ajoka Theatre, "Railway Station" by Chota Mota Theatre, "Kaho Mujh Se Mohabbat Hai" by Natak Production, "Goongi Juro 2.0" by Creators Production, "Teri Jaan Ki Qasam" by Dolphin Production, and "Ankhiyaan Waliyo" by Maas Foundation. In addition to fostering theater's growth, Alhambra actively shapes future artists through a dedicated summer camp focused on fine arts. This immersive programme offers drawing, painting, pottery, theater, calligraphy, sculpture, and more training. The cultural hub will captivate audiences with a mesmerizing Qawwali night on June 2, featuring the renowned talents of Najmuddin and Saifuddin.—APP

Chinese textile company secures 100 acres of land

DNA

LAHORE: Challenge Fashion (Pvt) Ltd, a Chinese textile company, has acquired 100 acres of land in Lahore, Pakistan's emerging economic hub, in an aim to develop a Special Economic Zone (SEZ) for a textile park. The company plans to commence the construction of an export-based garment factory after completing a 3-kilometer access road from the main highway to the proposed site of a textile park. "The factory infrastructure is expected to be built within 12 months," stated an official from Challenge Fashion in an interview with Gwadar Pro. The garment factory is expected to help Pakistan earn 500 million US dollars in foreign exchange and create 30,000 jobs each year. Challenge Fashion (Pvt) Ltd plans to invest 150 million US dollars over the next 35 years. If everything progresses as planned, it is expected

to attract an additional investment of 100 million US dollars in supporting industries. The official mentioned that acquiring high-quality fabrics is a significant challenge. Currently, more than 80% of the surface accessories are imported, which substantially hinders the company's pace of expanding its industrial scale. "The company plans to develop the park into the most innovative and sustainable textile industry base in South Asia, showcasing China's park design concept and construction standards to Pakistani counterparts. This will promote the most efficient and environmentally friendly automated fabric production equipment and garment production systems, and spread modern production management science," the official added. The official also stated that the establishment of a supply chain cluster would help improve Pakistan's labor structure and management. "We hope to demonstrate

China's industrial park standards to our Pakistani counterparts by creating a Chinese-regulated industrial park project," the official said. "We aim to enable Chinese enterprises interested in an overseas layout to see Pakistan's investment potential and also provide project landing sites for SMEs so that they can fully benefit from the preferential investment policies provided by the Pakistani government," the official asserted. The official further explained that "the tariff-free treatment of textiles exported to the EU, combined with China's Free Trade Agreement, can guarantee the price competitiveness of Pakistani products. Pakistani fabrics exported to Africa or Jordan can enter North America without tariffs, and the route is much shorter than from East Asia."

Conference on Bee pollination, conservation

MULTAN: 4th International Conference on Bee Pollination and Conservation was organized by the Institute of Plant Protection at Muhammad Nawaz Sharif University of Agriculture, (MNSUA). Six keynote speakers from the USA, Brazil, Argentina and Australia, along with more than 30 researchers from over eight countries and 250 participants, attended the conference. Dean of the Faculty of Agriculture, Dr. Shafiqat Saeed, mentioned that keeping bees in South Punjab was a challenge due to problems caused by excessive pesticide use in cotton crops and heat. This problem has been mitigated by changing the design of beehives. Additionally, bees can be protected by using environmentally friendly insecticides. He emphasized that, apart from social bees, solitary bees also play an important role in pollination. The conference also included a photo salon competition and a live poster-making competition. Speaking at the opening ceremony, Director of the Institute of Plant Protection, Dr. Muhammad Ashfaq, stated that the purpose of the conference was to promote modern research on beneficial bees worldwide. This conference has been organized for the past four years in connection with World Bee Day, indicating that the institute is serious about bee conservation efforts.—APP

CTD arrests two operatives of illegal arms supplier group

KARACHI: In a significant crackdown on illegal arms trafficking, the Sindh Counter Terrorism Department (CTD) Investigation Wing successfully arrested two operatives involved in the supply of illegal weapons during two separate operations on Sunday night. According to a CTD spokesman on Monday, the Investigation Wing received intelligence regarding the delivery of weapons ordered online from Darra Adam Khel, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KPK) to Karachi. Acting on this information, two teams were deployed to apprehend the suspects and seize the illegal arms. In the first operation, the CTD team targeted the Mubina Town area, lead-

ing to the arrest of Syed Bilal, son of Syed Parvez. From Bilal's possession, the authorities recovered four 9mm pistols. During interrogation, Bilal disclosed that he had ordered these weapons online from Usama Khan, the owner of Khan Arms Company in Darra Adam Khel. The second operation took place in Samanabad, District Central, where the CTD team arrested Hamza Ali Khan, son of Wali Khan. The police recovered two 9mm pistols and ammunition from Hamza. He confessed that he had purchased these pistols from Ali Badshah, who owns Lucky Arms Company in Darra Adam Khel and conducts online arms sales. Hamza revealed that he had

come to Karachi to sell the pistols, earning a commission of Rs 10,000 per pistol. The spokesman noted that in recent years, there has been an alarming trend of criminals, hobbyists, and students from colleges and universities ordering weapons online from KPK. These weapons are then transported to Karachi and other cities using buses and private transport. Authorities have warned citizens that ordering these arms online is illegal and the supplied weapons are obtained through illicit means. The CTD has registered cases against the arrested individuals and has initiated further investigations into the illegal arms network.—APP

KPK museums join Chinese public welfare organizations for educational event

SWAT: In celebration of the International Museum Day, the Directorate of Archaeology and Museums of the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KPK) Government in Pakistan collaborated with Chinese public welfare organizations, Gandhara Guardians and the China-Pakistan Youth Exchange Community, to host an educational event centered on museums. Children were invited to the Peshawar Museum and the Swat Museum to engage in interactive displays that highlight the cultural heritage of Gandhara, an ancient civilization in Pakistan's history. The initiative aimed to foster a deeper understanding and appreciation of local cultural relics among the youth, attracting about 100 children from the local community, Gwadar Pro reported on Monday. A key feature of the event was the "Gandhara Heavenly King Tug-of-War Competition," a traditional game inspired by relief sculptures found at Gandhara archaeological sites. These sculptures, which date from the 1st century BCE to the 3rd century CE, depict locals engaging in competitive sports such as tug-of-war during festivals. Participants emulated ancient Gandhara youths by taking up the ropes and recreating a scene from the reliefs known as "youths carrying floral garlands." These reliefs symbolize festive scenes in a utopian world, and the tug-of-war ropes today connect the young participants, fostering a bond of friendship that complements the spirit of the International Museum Day. The Gandhara Guardians team works to promote awareness and conservation of cultural relics throughout Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province. They actively engage local communities, particularly youth, in learning about and preserving their cultural heritage. As part of the festivities, the China-Pakistan Youth Exchange Team gifted each child a new pair of shoes, a gesture that was warmly received by the participants and their families.—DNA

Muslim Council of elders promotes coexistence

ISLAMABAD: The Muslim Council of Elders is hosting the second edition of the Azadi Fellowship Programme in Islamabad aiming to promote tolerance, peaceful coexistence, and engaging young individuals from diverse backgrounds in combating hate speech and extremism through dialogue and workshops. From May 17 to 25, the program showcases distinguished speakers and tackles issues prevalent in multicultural societies, with a focus on conflict resolution and empowering youth for global peace efforts. The Council cultivates mutual respect and comprehension through endeavours.—APP

Impact of unemployment

Tanveer Hussain



CURRENTLY, our country is suffering from many economic and social issues. Among them trade deficit, foreign debt, political instability, street crime, non-provision of justice etc. are worth mentioning. In my opinion, the biggest problem among them is increasing unemployment. You can say that unemployment is the mother of misfortune for this country. An unemployed person can easily indulge in illegal activities due to his domestic problems. Most of the accused involved in street crime are well educated youths who have chosen the wrong direction due to their financial circumstances. Unemployment is a major cause of health and education problems.

Due to economic problems, parents cannot provide their children with good education and good food and adequate health facilities. Aggressive religious and political parties often use the unemployed youth for their interests. So one of the main causes of political instability is unemployment, which adversely affects the country's economy. Currently, the number of unemployed youth in the country is in crores which is increasing day by day. A large number of people are daily wage earners. Day-to-day strikes, rallies and religious gatherings on the streets are adding to their problems. If the government is serious about eliminating these problems from the country, then it has to solve the unemployment problem first. The majority of the unemployed are people who have degrees but are not skilled in any job. If you want to get your car, AC or TV fixed, it's hard to find a capable technician whose work you're satisfied with. During the construction of the house, you will find a number of masons, electricians, plumbers and welders whose work will be below standard. Every street has doctors, dentists, lab technicians and tutors who don't know much about their profession. Students in colleges and universities get degrees, but they have very little ability to work in their field. This shortage cre-

ates a huge barrier to employment. To solve this problem, it is very important to establish free training centers for workers all over the country. A comprehensive program should be made in coordination with the four provincial governments which is free from any kind of political interference. This will create ample opportunities for decent employment. Apart from this, efforts for employment abroad are also indispensable. Far East countries are on the path of rapid industrial development. Many Arab countries are also focusing on industry by reducing their dependence on oil. They need a large number of engineers. If talented and capable people are selected from all over the country and sent abroad, it will not only solve their economic problems, but they will also prove to be an excellent introduction of Pakistan abroad. Their performance will open employment avenues for more Pakistanis. Some people are found to be involved in nefarious activities like document forgery and drug trade abroad. They need to be closely monitored. Due to these people, difficulties are being created for those Pakistanis who are leaving the country in search of employment. In this regard, people are in dire need of quality education and training. School teachers and religious scholars should also play a role in moral training of people.

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- May 06/Bulgaria Armed Forces Day
- May 06/UAE Armed Forces Day
- May 07/Kazakhstan Armed Forces Day
- May 08/Czech Republic National Day
- May 09/European Union National Day
- May 17/Norway Constitution Day
- May 21/Hungary Armed Forces Day
- May 22/Yemen Republic
- Re-unification Day(National Day)
- May 24/Eritrea National Day
- May 25/Lebanon Liberation and Resistance Day
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ISLAMABAD: Chairman Senate, Syed Yousuf Raza Gilani in a meeting with Turkish Foreign Minister Hakan Fidan at Parliament House. —APP

Digital Media Authority

Information minister rules out unilateral legislation

“All journalist organizations and press clubs will be taken into confidence on the matter”, Attaullah Tarar said while talking to a delegation of National Press Club(NPC) Islamabad

DNA

ISLAMABAD : Minister for Information and Broadcasting Attaullah Tarar said on Monday that the government had no intention of unilateral legislation regarding the establishment of Digital Media Authority in the country.

All journalist organizations and press clubs will be taken into confidence on the matter”, Attaullah Tarar said while talking to a delegation of National Press

Club(NPC) Islamabad which met him here. The minister assured the NPC delegation that health insurance scheme for journalists would be started soon. Attaullah Tarar said that necessary steps would be taken for the construction of the permanent building of the NPC and the improvement of the existing building. The minister assured that provision of annual grant for NPC will be ensured. The government was well aware of the problems of the administration of the National Press Club



regarding the improvement of the National Press Club, he remarked. The Government intended to ensure continuous grant provision to NPC, he said adding he will meet the finance minister and discuss the issue of annual grant allocation for the press club in the financial budget. President Azhar Jatoi said that the government should solve the problems of the press club on priority basis. He said that journalists were facing many challenges in the present era. Acting Secretary NPC Aun Shirazi said Media

Town Phase II was very important for the journalistic community of Rawalpindi and Islamabad. Shirazi said making government advertisements subject to timely payment workers salary will be a major step. Principal Information Officer Mobasher Hassan was also present in the meeting. Besides, President NPC Azhar Jatoi, Acting Secretary Aun Shirazi, Secretary Finance Waqar Abbasi also attended the meeting. Members of the governing body of NPC were also present in the meeting.

CUI Tech Summit 2024 concludes

DNA

ISLAMABAD :The CUI Tech Summit 2024 organized by COMSATS University Islamabad (CUI) in collaboration with Metrix Pakistan, concluded today after three days of comprehensive educational and technological activities. This summit was the first of its kind at CUI, featuring seven modules in disciplines such as computer science, engineering, applied sciences, geospatial AI, and media. A total of 31 competitions took place, showcasing a broad spectrum of academic and practical skills. President CUI Tech Summit 2024, Shahzad Khan Zafar inaugurated the summit, emphasizing the importance of technological and academic advancement in today's world. The summit began on May 17 with a Qawwali night featuring Babar Ali Qawal, adding a cultural dimension to the academic proceedings. The summit attracted participants from 10 universities

from across the country, making it a significant gathering of academic minds. Institutions such as the National University of Sciences and Technology (NUST), FAST University Islamabad, Air University. While other institutions sent their brightest students to compete and collaborate. This diversity of participation enriched the event, fostering a spirit of academic exchange and collaboration. Over the next two days, participants engaged in a variety of competitions designed to test and showcase their technical skills and innovative solutions. These events provided a platform for students and professionals to demonstrate their knowledge and creativity in their respective fields. The diverse range of modules included areas such as artificial intelligence, software development, engineering projects, applied scientific research, and media innovation. A significant educational component of the summit was the prize pool of PKR 700,000, which was

distributed among winners in various categories. This cash prize served as a tangible recognition of the participants' hard work and achievements, motivating them to pursue further excellence in their studies and careers. The final day featured a grand dinner that not only celebrated the participants' accomplishments but also emphasized the successful collaboration between CUI and Metrix Pakistan. This collaboration was instrumental in providing a holistic learning experience, blending academic rigor with practical applications. Founder and CEO of Metrix Pakistan, Hassan Nisar remarked on the educational impact of the event: “The CUI Tech Summit is a commendable initiative that showcases the innovative capabilities of our youth. At Metrix Pakistan, we support all efforts that empower young minds”. This summit demonstrates what can be achieved when academia and industry collaborate. “We are dedicated to fostering an ecosystem

that promotes technological advancement, and our partnership with CUI is a prime example of this commitment. We believe in nurturing talent and providing platforms that encourage innovation and development.” Metrix Pakistan's involvement was essential to the educational success of the summit, illustrating the importance of industry-academic partnerships in driving technological progress and empowering the next generation of innovators. Their support helped create an environment conducive to learning and professional growth. The successful conclusion of the CUI Tech Summit 2024 sets a high standard for future educational events, demonstrating the potential for integrating cultural heritage with technological progress. This event has paved the way for continued academic and infrastructural excellence at CUI, highlighting the vital role of education in advancing technological frontiers.

Rice valued \$3.282 bln exported, exports grew 80.13% in 10 months

ISLAMABAD: Rice exports from the country during the first 10 months of the current financial year grew by 80.13 per cent as compared to the exports of the corresponding period of last year. During the period from July-April, 2023-24, over 5.097 million metric tons of rice worth \$3.282 billion were exported as compared to the exports of 3.270 million metric tons valued at \$1.822 billion of the same period of last year, according to the data of the Pakistan Bureau of Statistics. The exports of Basmati Rice grew by 34.01 per cent as 612,086 metric tons of Basmati Rice worth \$699.208 million were exported as compared to the exports of 486,998 metric tons valued at \$521.751 million of the same period last year, it added. Meanwhile, over 4.474 million metric tons of rice of other varieties worth \$2.583 billion were also exported in last 10 months as against the exports of 2.783 million metric tons valued at \$1.300 billion of the same period of last year, the data revealed. The exports of other rice witnessed about 98.64 percent growth during the period under review as compared to the exports of the corresponding period of the last year. In the last 10 months, the exports of the food group witnessed about 45.61 percent growth as food commodities valued at \$6.228 billion were exported as against the exports of \$4.277 billion in the same period of the last year, it added. On the other hand, the imports of food goods into the country during the period under review went down by 12.18 percent as it was recorded at \$6.817 billion as compared to the imports of \$7.762 billion in the same period of last year. On month on month basis, the imports of food commodities grew by 22.82 percent as food commodities costing \$27.026 million were imported in April 2024 as compared to the imports of \$429.114 million of the same month of the previous year.—DNA

Inflation creates a gulf between government, people

The government should take strict action against various mafias, which will boost the morale of the people, and they will support the government with new enthusiasm

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Chairman of National Business Group Pakistan, President Pakistan Businessmen and Intellectuals Forum, and All Karachi Industrial Alliance, and former provincial minister Mian Zahid Hussain, on Monday said that the policy of continuous increases in the price of electricity is creating distance between the government and the people. Instead of giving relief to the people who are worried about inflation, the government continues to overburden them, which is seriously undermining their confidence, he said. Mian Zahid Hussain said that after Gilgit-Baltistan and Azad

Kashmir, protests against the policies of the government may start in other parts of the country. Speaking to the business community, the veteran business leader said that neither the public had entered into contracts with the IPPs nor were they responsible for the incompetence and corruption in the power sector. He said that it is not the job of the masses to collect electricity bills, which the government cannot recover and continuously put its burden on the masses. Instead of reducing losses, bill-paying consumers are made to pay for authorities' incompetence, which is increasing public frustration. Mian Zahid Hussain said that inflation

has broken the backs of the people, and those who were considered middle class until a few years ago have now become miserable. Those who have not had to sell their jewellery and assets consider themselves fortunate. The business leader stated that the middle class and the poor have grown weary of taking loans, and now they no longer have this option. We should support our political leadership in their efforts to address the worst economic crisis in the country's history. The government should take strict action against various mafias, which will boost the morale of the people, and they will support the government with new enthusiasm.

Naqvi grieved over Iran President death

ISLAMABAD: Federal Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi has expressed his deepest condolences over the sad demise of Iranian President Ebrahim Raisi, Foreign Minister, and other officials in a helicopter crash. The Interior Minister said, “I am deeply saddened by the sudden death of President Ebrahim Raisi. I extend my heartfelt sympathies to the Iranian government and people, who are grieving the loss of their beloved leader. We share their grief and stand with them in this hour of sorrow.” While praising the late President's efforts to strengthen Pakistan-Iran relations he said that President Raisi was a great friend of Pakistan. He also recalled his recent meeting with President Raisi during his visit to Pakistan and said that the meeting was still fresh in his memory. He stated that the services of President Raisi towards strengthening the bilateral relations will always be remembered.—APP

Awareness walk held under “Suthra Punjab” programme

MURREE: On the directions of Secretary Local Govt & Community Development (LG&CD) Department Punjab, Shakeel Ahmad, an awareness walk was organized by Municipal Corporation Murree under the “Suthra Punjab” Programme on Monday. According to the Focal Person Media LG&CD Department, Dr M Abdullah Tabassum, the walk was started from Corporation Office and culminated at Mal Road. The awareness walk was headed by Focal Person Media LG&CD Department, Dr M Abdullah Tabassum, and was attended by Capt (r) Sehyar Sherazi, ADCR/Administrator MC Murree, officials of Education department, Revenue staff, MC staff and others. Addressing the participants, Abdullah Tabassum highlighted the “Suthra Punjab” program, initiated by Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz, as a landmark endeavor. This programme aimed at to extend integrated sanitation efforts to villages, marking a significant step forward in promoting cleanliness throughout the region. On the occasion, Dr. Muhammad Abdullah Tabassum, emphasized the crucial role both local government employees and citizens play in keeping cities clean. He stressed that without everyone's cooperation, maintaining cleanliness was impossible. He urged the residents to keep their surroundings clean and dispose of garbage properly. Participants also carried out banners advocating for cleanliness, essence, the drive for cleaner cities in Punjab was not just a government initiative; it is a collective responsibility that requires the active participation of every citizen.—APP

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Briefs

POL
import bill
decreases by
1.53 percent

ISLAMABAD: The imports of the overall petroleum group decreased by 1.53 percent during the first ten months of the current fiscal year (2023-24) as compared to the corresponding period of the last year, the Pakistan Bureau of Statistics (PBS) reported. The total imports of the petroleum group during July-April (2023-24) stood at \$13,761.071 million, as against the imports of \$13,974.609 million during the same period of last year, according to PBS data. Among petroleum commodities, the import of petroleum products declined by 14.09 percent, from \$6,149.116 million last year to \$5,283.001 million during the time period under review. However, the imports of petroleum crude increased by 10.40 percent, from \$4,137.725 million to \$4,567.954; natural gas liquefied by 4.56 percent, from \$3,110.837 to \$3,252.812 whereas the imports of petroleum gas liquefied went up by 13.96 percent and reached to \$657.132 million as compared to \$576.619 last year. The imports of all other petroleum group products decreased by 45 percent and went down to \$0.172 million from \$0.312 million. Meanwhile, on a year-on-year basis, the petroleum group imports witnessed an increase of 88.09 percent during the month of April 2024 as compared to the same months of last year. The petroleum imports during April 2024 were recorded as \$1,676.755 million against the imports of \$891.468 million during April 2023. On a month-on-month basis, the petroleum imports into the country also increased by 11.34 percent during April 2024, as compared to the imports of \$1,506.004 million in March 2024, said the data.—APP

‘Safety of students in Kyrgyzstan Govt’s top priority’

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for States and Frontier Regions, Kashmir Affairs and Gilgit Baltistan Engineer Amir Muqam received the students who arrived early in the morning by a special plane from Kyrgyzstan at Islamabad Airport. Engr Amir Muqam inquired about the students’ well-being. He assured full cooperation to those who want to return home from Kyrgyzstan. He said Pakistani students in Kyrgyzstan are children of the nation and their safety is our first priority. Engr Amir Muqam emphasized that, on special instructions from Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif, the Government of Pakistan will provide all necessary assistance to students wishing to return from Kyrgyzstan. Engr Amir Muqam inquired about the tragic incident in Bishkek and the challenges faced by the students. He expressed gratitude that the students have returned home safely, thanking Allah Almighty.—APP



ISLAMABAD: The ambassadors of Palestine, Oman, Iraq, and Syria visited the Embassy of Islamic republic of Iran to sign the Book of Condolences. The ambassadors expressed heartfelt condolences on the sad demise of the President of Iran. — DNA

Heat waves pose a serious risk to eyesight: experts

Drinking plenty of water can save eyes from dryness

DNA

ISLAMABAD: As the temperatures rise and heat waves become more frequent, Al-Shifa Trust Eye Hospital, known for its expert eye care services, has issued a warning to the public regarding the risks posed by heat waves to eyesight, emphasizing the importance of protecting their eyes during these challenging times.

The National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA) and the National Emergency Operation Centre (NEOC) have forecasted that Pakistan will face three heat wave spells in May and June, it said. The third spell is anticipated to be particularly



intense, lasting anywhere from 3 to 5 days. These prolonged periods of extreme heat can lead to various eye-related issues, making proactive eye care essential, said Dr. Wajid Ali Khan, Chief of Medical Services at Al-Shifa Trust Eye Hospital. Talking to media men, he said that these heat waves will bring with them many problems, including adverse effects on the eyes of the public. He said that one of the most common eye problems during the summer is eye dryness, especially in environments with low humidity. Air conditioners and the use of contact lenses can both exacerbate this condition. Symptoms often include eye redness, a feeling of heaviness, a gritty feeling in the eyes, or even sen-

sitivity to light, he added. Furthermore, individuals who spend extended periods outdoors without adequate sun protection may be at risk of developing pterygium. Protecting one’s eyes from the sun’s harmful rays is crucial to averting this eye condition. He said that eye infections become more common, especially when the eyes come into contact with water. There are a large number of pathogens in water, such as that are major causes of eye emergencies. This infection can result in permanent visual impairment or blindness. Those who use contact lenses are especially vulnerable and should, under no circumstances, bathe wearing these lenses.

IT, digitalization a must for progress: Wani

ISLAMABAD: Ministry of Federal Education and Professional Training Secretary, Mohyuddin Ahmad Wani on Monday highlighted the crucial role of Information Technology (IT) and digitalization in achieving progress and development in the current era. Speaking at the National Launching Workshop for “Internet Dost and Internet Zabardast,” organized by the National Rural Support Programme (NRSP) with support from Google.org, Wani underscored that accurate data collection regarding out-of-school children, educational facilities, and health services was unattainable without relying on IT. The secretary said that the ministry had decided to establish state-of-the-art IT labs in schools in the federal capital to equip youth with the latest skills and increase their employment opportunities. He said that schools in the federal capital had been upgraded, providing students with the best facilities.—APP

Another flight carrying Pak students reached Islamabad

ISLAMABAD: On the special instructions of Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif, Federal Minister for Kashmir Affairs and Gilgit-Baltistan Engineer Amir Muqam has welcomed the Pakistani students at Islamabad Airport who are coming from Bishkek after violent attacks on Pakistani students. Talking to the media the minister said that the Prime Minister immediately took steps to protect Pakistani students after this incident, he himself was monitoring the situation. Amir Muqam inquired about the students’ well-being. Whoever wants to return to the country, the government of Pakistan will provide all kinds of assistance to them. The minister revealed that Inshallah more flights will bring the students back home. The protection of life and property of Pakistanis will be ensured in every case.—APP

Sale of smuggled oil has dramatically increased

ISLAMABAD: The Pakistan Petroleum Dealers Association (PPDA) on Monday stated that the sale of smuggled Iranian oil has increased to an alarming level due to the administration’s connivance in the province of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. It added that an action against protesting dealers will result in a strike at filling stations across the country, paralyzing the entire system. PPDA Central Executive Committee member Hasan Shah, while addressing an emergency meeting of petroleum dealers, said that PPDA district presidents across the country are waiting for our call to start a strike. He stated that a strike against the expanding illegal filling points, which pose a serious security hazard, began in the Peshawar Division yesterday. After the strike, the administration is trying to threaten the petroleum dealers with raids, arrests, and fines instead of closing down the illegal filling points, which we strongly condemn. He warned that if the members or leaders of the PPDA Peshawar Division, including Najibullah Khan and Gul Nawaz Afridi, were arrested, a nationwide strike would be started immediately. If the provincial government does not resolve the problems, the country’s entire system will become crippled by the closure of petrol pumps nationwide. According to Hassan Shah, a large mafia is smuggling substandard Iranian oil, which is being sold publicly across the country, with Peshawar being the most prominent. Small shops and stalls across the country are selling this substandard and adulterated fuel without adhering to any quality or safety standards, leading to frequent fire incidents that claim precious lives and property, he observed. On this occasion, Khawaja Atif Ahmed, Humayun Khan, Nadeem Aziz Jan, and Nauman Butt said that this illegal business cannot go on without the connivance of the district administration, police, and other relevant institutions. Government officials are playing with the country’s future and people’s lives for their personal interests, and there is no one to stop them, they added. Smuggled oil is costing the government billions of rupees in revenue, destroying the businesses of refineries, oil marketing companies, and dealers, and eliminating the possibility of new investment in this important sector, they observed.—DNA

Bilawal greets PPP candidate

ISLAMABAD/MULTAN: Chairman Pakistan People’s Party (PPP) Bilawal Bhutto Zardari has extended his heartfelt congratulations to PPP candidate Syed Ali Qasim Gilani on his historic victory in the NA-148 by-election. According to a press release issued by the Media Cell Bilawal House, Chairman PPP, in his message, attributed this success to the relentless efforts of the Jiyalas of Multan and the steadfast support of the people for the PPP. “I hope Ali Qasim Gilani will become the voice of the people of Multan in the House,” he added. Bilawal Bhutto Zardari also extended his congratulations to Chairman of the Senate, Yousaf Raza Gilani, as well as to all members of the Gilani family and the people of Multan, acknowledging their significant role in this achievement.—DNA

Navigating the Queer Movement in Pakistan

DURRE MAKNOON

In Pakistan, a traditionally conservative society, there has been a remarkable surge in the visibility and activism of the queer movement in recent years. Research indicates a growing acceptance and recognition of LGBTQ+ identities, particularly among younger generations, challenging traditional taboos and fostering spaces for LGBTQ+ visibility and activism. Digital platforms and social media have emerged as powerful tools for LGBTQ+ activism and community-building in Pakistan. Online forums, blogs, and social networking sites provide avenues for individuals to connect, share experiences, and organize events, contributing to the visibility and mobilization of the queer movement. Although specific statistical data on LGBTQ+ gatherings and events in Pakistan is limited due to the clandestine nature of such activities, broader research sheds light on the challenges and opportunities facing the LGBTQ+ community in the country. Historically, single-gender schools have been

prevalent in Pakistan, aiming to provide a focused learning environment. However, this educational model perpetuates gender segregation and reinforces traditional gender roles, limiting opportunities for social interaction and understanding. According to recent surveys, there is growing recognition of the drawbacks of single-gender schools. Many educators and parents advocate for co-educational settings, emphasizing the importance of fostering inclusive environments that reflect real-world diversity and promote gender equality. Ahmed, a young LGBTQ+ activist, shares his experience navigating a traditional single-gender school environment. “Growing up in an all-boys school, I struggled to express my identity and faced bullying and discrimination. Education should empower us to embrace diversity, not reinforce stereotypes.”

While legal recognition and protection of LGBTQ+ rights remain limited in Pakistan. According to, Section 377: Pakistan’s Penal Code criminalizes “carnal intercourse against the order of nature,” which is often interpreted to criminalize same-sex relationship and Recent court rulings

and advocacy efforts have raised awareness and sparked dialogue on issues such as discrimination, violence, and access to healthcare faced by LGBTQ+ individuals. On the other hand while Pakistan officially recognizes a third gender category on official documents, providing some legal recognition for transgender individuals due to some Legal Loopholes, some individuals may falsely claim transgender identities as a legal workaround to engage in same-sex relationships without facing legal consequences. These cases highlight the legal and societal challenges faced by LGBTQ+ individuals in contexts where their identities are not recognized or protected. There have been instances of LGBTQ+ individuals organizing underground parties and events in major cities like Karachi and Lahore, despite the prevailing societal taboos and legal restrictions they’re held discreetly but you can find updates on them on LGBTQ+ advocacy organizations and support groups in Pakistan, such as Queer Pakistan and Naz Male Health Alliance, which may publish articles or updates about community events and gatherings. Moreover Interna-

tional human rights organizations like Human Rights Watch and Amnesty International often report on LGBTQ+ rights issues globally, including instances of discrimination, persecution, and activism in Pakistan. there have been instances of LGBTQ+ individuals organizing underground parties and events in major cities like Karachi and Lahore, despite the prevailing societal taboos and legal restrictions. For many families, the top priority nowadays is protecting their kids from influences that might be at conflict with our moral, religious and cultural norms. Building a solid foundation of faith and values in the family is important to protect our children from the LGBTQ+ movement. Parents should emphasize the value of moral principles and traditional values in their open and age-appropriate conversations about their beliefs. Children can be guided in the development of a solid, value-based worldview by keeping an eye on their media intake and educational content, as well as by being encouraged to participate in community and religious activities that uphold family values. The writer is a 21-year-old student of television broadcasting and digital media 5 semester at Bahria University Islamabad.

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Biden's letter to Hertzl

In his letter to the head of the Zionist entity on the 76th occasion of Nakba (which they call "Independence Day"), Biden said, "My commitment to the security of Israel is solid and it is necessary that we work together," adding, "The commitment of the United States to the security of Israel is unshaken." This statement renders all of Biden's alleged efforts in the course of working for peace in the region and creating a better future for all its people meaningless. After all, the absolute commitment of the United States to the security of "Israel", flooding it with money and armaments to perpetrate genocide, and using the VETO in the Security Council to prevent anyone from taking it to task is the most important factor that enabled this entity to perpetrate horrendous genocide against the Palestinian people that has no parallel in modern history. But what Biden doesn't know is that he and his entire system will not be able in the near future to guarantee the security of "Israel", because he and the Zionist entity will not be able to kill the growing consciousness among American and Western young men and women toward the rights of the Palestinian people in their homeland and of the gross injustices committed against these people during the last eight decades. These young students of men and women in American and Western universities who are taking noble stands in support of helpless Palestinians are going to be the rulers in the future when Biden and his like-minded people will no longer be there, and when the innocent blood of all these martyrs of children, women, journalists, scientists, doctors, and others will come to fruition in restoring the just and inalienable rights of the Palestinians, which were undermined by tyrants, occupiers, and terrorists, as well as their supporters for decades.

There is no doubt that Biden and his aides, who are not even embarrassed to say, "We found no evidence of Israel committing genocide" and who give shameful, illogical, and contradictory statements... there is no doubt that they are basing their hopes on conspiratorial partners who are prepared to cooperate with them to inflict more injustice on these great Palestinian people and to complement other unlawful accords that they historically seek in their desperate attempts to silence those people who truly belong to their homeland and who are prepared to pay sacrifices to keep their rights on it. From this perspective, we can understand the statement of Josep Borrell, the high representative of the European Union for Foreign Affairs, when he said that the United States is showing fatigue in its Middle East diplomacy in seeking a solution. The principal cause for this fatigue is that American diplomacy seeks to abrogate Palestinian rights in their homeland and is bent on calling that a solution. That is why all Western media promoted the Israeli maxim of "eliminating Hamas", while the true intention or plan was to wage a war of genocide against all Palestinians. That is also why the Zionists refused every version submitted by mediators because they are bent on this genocide against all Palestinian people and all their resistance to occupation. The genocide was perpetrated against all Palestinian people and all their institutions, schools, universities, hospitals, mosques, churches, bakeries, and anything that helps to make life possible.



Life returns to Yarmouk camp

MUCH of Yarmouk camp looks like Gaza, a wasteland to which it is hard to imagine life returning. But 8,000 families (more than 30,000 people) have returned in recent years (just 50 families never left) and there is slow reconstruction, including six primary schools. During the Dirty War on Syria, the US and Israeli terrorist proxies Jabhat al Nusra and ISIS invaded Yarmouk camp, a historic refuge for displaced Palestinians in Syria. This "camp" is actually a southern suburb of Damascus and, at its peak, it housed more than 150,000 people. With the terrorist occupation, the Syrian Arab Army imposed a perimeter to prevent the armed gangs from entering Damascus. Palestinian militia, led by the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine - General Command (PFLP-GC) remained in the camp and engaged the armed groups. Aid sent in was sniped at as a humanitarian disaster loomed. US propaganda falsely blamed the Syrian government. Nusra and ISIS killed anyone even remotely associated with the Syrian government, as Washington and "Israel" wished. They never lifted a finger against the Israelis. Eventually, in 2018, with the camp virtually emptied of civilians, the Syrian Army drove ISIS out of Yarmouk and down south to death or to their safe havens in Jordan and "Israel". More than 1,000 civilians and 700 Palestinian fighters (400 of them PFLP-GC) were killed. The occupation, which included extensive damage to facilities, including the cemetery, was intended to divide the Palestinian population and erase their history. But the Palestinian factions have come together, as in Palestine, and the community is rebuilding, with basic support from the Syrian state. The pattern is the same that has taken place in the eastern Ghouta area: the roads are bulldozed clear, water tanks are installed, and the first stage of electricity is installed. Rubble is being used to create building materials, and all of the construction is done by local residents. In a tour arranged by Abu Atef from the PJ, I visited the destroyed areas and a building materials center inside the former sports center. One sports building has been rebuilt and one soccer field, which still lacks its artificial grass. There is a swimming pool for women. Elsewhere, in the less damaged buildings, many have returned to their houses and small businesses. The more impressive buildings are the schools (three set up by UNRWA), the Syrian Red Crescent, and some other government facilities. The main mosques and hospitals were mostly destroyed and there is little sign of rebuilding as yet. Yet many families, for example those who fled to Jarmana and other parts of Damascus, have returned and are determined to rebuild their lives and culture in this historic refuge.

Why is the US Responsible for Raisi's death?

Qamar Bashir



The helicopter was equipped with outdated Emergency Locator Transmitters (ELTs), which often failed to activate during crashes and had high false alarm rates, complicating the location of downed aircraft. Radar tracking was limited by range and terrain, creating blind spots in mountainous or remote areas. Manual position reporting by pilots was prone to human error and communication blackouts, lacking the precision needed for pinpointing crash locations.

While Flight Data Recorders (FDRs) and Cockpit Voice Recorders (CVRs) are valuable for post-crash investigation...

How US Congress aids and abets acts of genocide

Alex Lo

Michael McCaul, chairman of the House Foreign Affairs Committee, said the Biden administration had turned their backs on Israel by even hinting that there were limits to the US support. Seriously. "This administration has sowed the seeds of doubt on this nation's commitment to its allies," he said. "Red lines are meant for our enemies. Red lines are not meant for our allies and our friends."

But supporting their president, most Democrats such as Chuck Schumer have vowed to kill the bill in the Senate

AFTER an arduous search and rescue operation involving 42 ground teams, reconnaissance drones, and Turkish high-tech drones, the charred wreckage of the helicopter was finally located early today in blizzard conditions in an area called Tawal, near the Azerbaijan border. All passengers and crew, including President Ebrahim Raisi, Foreign Minister Hossein Amirabdollahian (60), the governor of Iran's East Azerbaijan province, officials, and bodyguards, were killed in the crash. May Allah bless their souls and grant them the highest place in Jannah. This indeed is one of the biggest tragedies to strike the Iranian nation in recent history. This tragedy perhaps had not occurred had there been no sanctions imposed by the USA and the West. The Iranian air fleet, especially those flying machines having any sort of military and defense connotation were obsolete and needed upgradation or replacement which was not possible due to sanctions. It was therefore that the helicopter carrying the Iranian President Ebrahim Raisi was 45 years old. It has earlier been used for commercial flights and later was earmarked for the presidential errands. Due to the sanction imposed on Iran since 1979, the sale of new helicopters, and provision of spare parts or upgrading of the helicopter could not be made, resultantly the helicopter was equipped with old age tracking and communication devices faced significant limitations. The helicopter was equipped with outdated Emergency Locator Transmitters (ELTs), which often failed to activate during crashes and had high false alarm rates, complicating the location of downed aircraft. Radar tracking was limited by range and terrain, creating blind spots in mountainous or remote areas. Manual position reporting by pilots was prone to human error and communication blackouts, lacking the precision needed for pinpointing crash locations. While Flight Data Recorders (FDRs) and Cockpit Voice Recorders (CVRs) are valuable for post-crash investigation, they did not aid in the immediate location of the aircraft.

Sanctions prevented the replacement or upgrading of the helicopter with modern tracking devices. Advanced GPS, ADS-B, and satellite communication technologies, like the Kannad Integra and

Artex 345 ELTs, which use integrated GPS and dual-frequency transmitters for precise location tracking, were not available. Devices such as the Garmin GDL 52, offering comprehensive tracking and SOS functionalities, could have ensured effective rescue operations even in remote areas. Additionally, due to sanctions, the weather forecast system was outdated and failed to provide accurate weather conditions. An accurate forecast might have led to postponing the flight until safer conditions prevailed. This is not the only tragedy faced by Iranian nations due to the sanctions which had made air travel extremely dangerous and perilous, and have so far resulted in the loss of 2000 precious lives due to the accidents which could have been avoided if the flying objects were upgraded, refurbished or replaced with new ones. Iranian media very professionally kept on changing the semantic of the incident from hard landing to accident and from accident to crash. The key differences lie in the severity of impact, extent of damage, likelihood of injuries, and the recoverability of the aircraft, with hard landings being less severe than crashes, which typically involve complete destruction and severe consequences, thus has prepared the Iranian people for the worst case scenario.

There have also been conspiracy theories circulating not only in the social media but as well as traditional media saying that somehow Israel was involved in this crash and killing of President Raisi (Late) to avenge the Iranian attack on Israel with drones, rockets and cruise missiles a few days ago. If this theory holds ground now or at any time in future the entire region will be plunged into total chaos. Iran would likely react with outrage, accusing Israel of an act of war, which could lead to military mobilization and retaliatory threats. The Iranian proxies in the middle east like Hamas, Hezbollah, Iraq Brigade, Houthis and in Syria who will do whatever in their power to avenge the death of second most important leaders who was known as ultra hardliner, highly religious and pro revolutionary was most likely the heir apparent of the religious head of Iran Ayatollah Khomeini who is 83 and facing health situations. The regional implications would be significant,

with potential destabilization across the Middle East. Globally, the United States, as a key ally of Israel, would be drawn into the conflict, facing pressure to support Israel while trying to prevent a full-scale war. US-Iran relations would likely deteriorate further, impacting diplomatic efforts and nuclear deal negotiations. Internationally, powers like Russia, China, and the European Union would call for restraint and engage in intense diplomatic efforts to de-escalate the situation. The global oil markets would likely see a spike in prices due to fears of supply disruptions, affecting economies worldwide. Long-term effects could include accelerated nuclear proliferation in the Middle East and shifts in geopolitical alliances as countries reassess their security and foreign policy strategies. This is highly unfortunate that Iran had lost its cherished leader as the Middle East remains unsettled by the Israel-Hamas war, during which Raisi under Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei launched an unprecedented drone-and-missile attack on Israel, pursued Iran's uranium enrichment dream to weapons-grade levels and supplied bomb-carrying drones to Russia for its war in Ukraine and armed militia groups across the region has heightened tension with the West.

The entire Iranian nation is in a state of shock and mourning, both within Iran and among its proxies around the world. An official mourning period has been declared, with public displays of grief and statements of condolences pouring in from Iran's allies and proxies.

This tragic event could lead to a period of significant uncertainty and potential power struggles within Iran, impacting both its domestic politics and foreign relations. The loss of such key figures may affect Iran's regional strategies and stability, with potential repercussions for its foreign policy and relations with neighboring countries. The international community will closely watch how Iran navigates this crisis, as the implications could extend far beyond its borders, affecting the broader geopolitical landscape.

*Former Press Secretary to the President
Former Press Minister to the
Embassy of Pakistan to France
Former MD, SRBC*

WHEN it comes to America's unconditional support for Israel, there is little difference between Democrats and Republicans, between the executive and legislative branches, and between state and federal governments, and between those in opposition and those in power. It's quite extraordinary to see such unity among the US political elites who might otherwise be bitterly divided on everything else. Still, the White House has been more concerned about appearances and public relations, while the US Congress is falling over itself to prove its undying loyalty to Israel. Practically the entire world - minus a few diehard and equally complicit Western allies such as the United Kingdom and Germany - is demanding an end to the acts of genocide in Gaza and murderous repression in the West Bank. However, the US House of Representatives last week passed a bill that would rebuke President Joe Biden for delaying an arms shipment to Israel and compel his administration to deliver those weapons as soon as possible. Weapons, after all, are needed to bomb Rafah, the last refuge of a million Palestinians.

Michael McCaul, chairman of the House Foreign Affairs Committee, said the Biden administration had turned their backs on Israel by even hinting that there were limits to the US support. Seriously. "This administration has sowed the seeds of doubt on this nation's commitment to its allies," he said. "Red lines are meant for our enemies. Red lines are not meant for our allies and our friends." But supporting their president, most Democrats such as Chuck Schumer have vowed to kill the bill in the Senate. Why? This is the man who said it was his mission in life to support Israel. Someone like Schumer may actually be genuine in their commitment to Israel, but many US politicians are far more opportunistic. They know where the real butter - the money and power - lies within America's power elites spanning Washington, Wall Street, Silicon Valley, the defence industry and Hollywood. The White House and some Democrats at least realise they need to perform a public relations show for the world, knowing how much the brutal war in Gaza is isolating America and Israel in global opinion. Of course, a temporary halt to arms supplies doesn't make much difference when the Pentagon has already

opened its weapon storage to Israel. That is, incidentally, one reason why Ukraine is running out of weapons. But most Republicans in Congress need to run a different kind of PR. They are appealing to a very different domestic audience. That's why there are now several totally impractical and downright outlandish bills making their way through the legislative process. In most countries, that would be considered the institutional corruption of the legislature.

A House Republican bill has been introduced to send any person charged and convicted for illegal activity on a college campus to Gaza for at least six months. Another bill just passed by the House of Representatives aims to target critics of Israel by cancelling the non-profit and tax-exempt status for independent reporting outlets and aid providers or any non-profit deemed to be supporting terrorism. In a majority of US states, it is already illegal to organise boycotts against Israel or companies that have business ties with it, but perfectly legal to boycott any other countries, including US companies. These include: Texas, Ohio, Illinois, Indiana, Florida, Arizona, Georgia, Iowa, Pennsylvania, Michigan, Arkansas, Minnesota, Nevada, South Carolina, Tennessee, Alabama, Rhode Island, New Jersey, Oklahoma, Kansas, North Carolina, Utah, Missouri, Idaho, West Virginia, Colorado, Mississippi and New Hampshire. More state legislatures are expected to join them. In the United States, the mainstream media industry is the mirror image of the political elite. For years, it has deliberately hidden the apartheid nature of the Israeli state and now - clear as day - its acts of genocide against the Palestinians. It has been sacking journalists left, right and centre for daring to show independence in criticising Israel and the US. The nationwide campus protests against the war and the US support for it have been portrayed by the mainstream media as antisemitism and one driven by ignorant TikTok-obsessed youngsters. The International Court of Justice has ruled Israel has a genocide case to answer and the International Criminal Court is reportedly preparing arrest warrants for top Israeli and Hamas leaders for war crimes. The UN

Special Rapporteur on the occupied Palestinian territories has concluded Israel has met the threshold of the Genocide Convention. Last week, the University Network for Human Rights sent to the United Nations a 105-page report that it called "the most thorough legal analysis" yet to find "Israel is committing genocide" against Palestinians in the Gaza Strip. The network's partners include the International Human Rights Clinic at Boston University School of Law, the International Human Rights Clinic at Cornell Law School, the Centre for Human Rights at the University of Pretoria, and the Lowenstein Human Rights Project at Yale Law School. It says the collective analysis draws from "a diverse range of credible sources" and the Palestinian territory's history.

Perhaps the US Congress will now have to go after those prestigious law schools for being antisemitic and pro-terrorist. Interestingly, the study is barely covered in the mainstream Anglo-American media, despite its high academic prestige, and legal expertise and credibility. Speaking of universities, it's extraordinary how willing the media barons and biggest corporations conspire to throw the nation's idealistic youth under the bus, as are, with a few exceptions, university administrations around the US who are calling in riot police to beat up their own students. The head of Sonoma State University in California who agreed with protest students not to invest university resources in Israeli businesses was promptly suspended the next day. Across the US, many student protesters now face expulsion. But in a truly Orwellian act of brainwashing, to avoid expulsion at New York University, "some [protest] students would be required to complete a 49-page set of readings and tasks known as the Ethos Integrity Series, geared at helping participants 'make gains' in 'moral reasoning' and 'ethical decision making'", according to The New York Times. The school calls it a "restorative practice". You really have to wonder how a supposedly weaker country manages to achieve such full-spectrum social and political dominance over the world's most powerful nation. The danger of this fateful relationship is not only to stability in the Middle East, but the rest of the world.

Briefs

Iran's
President
Raisi dies...

FROM PAGE 01

The mountainous terrain and natural obstacles rendered communication with the president's entourage nearly impossible. An Iranian television reporter said that as it got darker and colder, the crews approaching the site were avoiding travel by car, due to the roads in the area not being paved, and rain making the ground muddy. Iranian Foreign Minister Hossein Amir Abdollahian, governor of East Azarbaijan Province Malek Rahmati, and Friday prayer leader of Tabriz Ayatollah Mohammad Ali Ale-Hashem were also aboard the copter. The Leader of the Islamic Revolution, Ayatollah Seyyed Ali Khamenei, expressed concern about the missing helicopter in a meeting with families of IRGC personnel.

PM visits
Iranian
embassy...

FROM PAGE 01

book at the Iranian Embassy on this solemn occasion. The Prime Minister was accompanied by Minister for Information and Broadcasting Mr. Ata Tarar, SAPM Tariq Fatemi and the Foreign Secretary. Earlier, President Asif Ali Zardari on Monday expressed profound shock and sorrow over the tragic death of Iran's President Ebrahim Raisi in a helicopter crash, calling it a great loss not only for Iran but for the entire Muslim Ummah. "Today, Pakistan mourns the loss of a great friend. Just last month, we had the honor of hosting him in Pakistan. During our discussions, I found him very keen on strengthening our bilateral relations."

Finance
minister
urges...

FROM PAGE 01

Pakistan International Airlines (PIA) also followed by major airports. He noted that the government's policy reflects a shift from aid to investment in Pakistan's economic strategy. The minister also shed light on Pakistan's potential in the IT and agriculture sectors, inviting Italian investors to explore these investment areas. Ambassador Armellini acknowledged the promising economic indicators and appreciated the upward trend in Pakistan's economy. She emphasized the potential for enhanced cooperation between Italy and Pakistan, particularly in the textile, machinery, agriculture, and dairy sectors.

Pak-Turkiye
target \$5b...

FROM PAGE 01

mechanisms and high-level exchanges and visits at the level of political leadership. He said both sides also discussed the Pakistan-Turkiye High-Level Strategic Cooperation Council (HLSCC) scheduled to take place in Islamabad in the near future to carry out a comprehensive review of cooperation including a holistic review of the strategic economic framework. The deputy prime minister said that Pakistan and Turkiye had a history of defense cooperation and that both countries always supported each other on core issues, also during national calamities and disasters.

Bishkek
unrest...

FROM PAGE 01

the federal capital and presented flower bouquets to them. Mob attacks erupted in Bishkek, targeting a number of Pakistani and other foreign students last Friday, which resulted in injuries of various Pakistanis. As per Foreign Minister Ishaq Dar about 11,000 students were in Bishkek while 6,000 others were in different cities. The situation in the Kyrgyz capital, according to the students stuck there became out of control as they feared for their lives and demanded immediate evacuation, but the government downplayed the unrest in the Central Asian state.

Chairman Monal hosts
Pakistan hockey team

The dinner reception was also attended by Tariq Bugti, President of the Pakistan Hockey Federation, and Olympian Rana Mujahid, Secretary of the Pakistan Hockey Federation, Manager of the team Olympian Zeeshan Ashraf, and Assistant Coach Olympian M Usman, Dr Waqas physio and Nadeem Lodhi video analyst



DNA

ISLAMABAD: Luqman Ali Afzal, Chairman and Founder of the Monal Group, hosted the Pakistani hockey team at the Monal Tree House. The dinner reception was also attended by Tariq Bugti, President of the Pakistan Hockey Federation, and Olympian Rana Mujahid, Secretary of the Pakistan Hockey Federation, Manager of the team Olympian Zeeshan Ashraf, and Assistant Coach Olympian M Usman, Dr waqas physio and Nadeem Lodhi video analyst. CEO of Monal, Hassaan Tahir Butt, welcomed the team and provided them with a tour of the various sections of Monal. The event was coordinated by President Rising Starts Hockey Club Mahmood Ahmed, Secretary Sohail Akram Janjua and Editor Daily Islamabad POST

Ansar Mahmood Bhatti. Chairman Luqman Ali Afzal expressed that Monal has always been a strong supporter of sports and other events as part of its Corporate Social Responsibility initiatives. He commended the Pakistani hockey team for their outstanding performance in the Azlan Shah Hockey Tournament held in Malaysia, where the team remained unbeaten throughout the competition. Although Pakistan lost to Japan in the final match on penalty shootouts, their overall performance was highly praised. The announcement of the Pakistani hockey team's presence elicited an enthusiastic response from the guests. The youth and children, in particular, flocked to the players, eagerly taking selfies with them. This excitement was heightened by the fact that Pakistan had reached the final of the Azlan Shah Hockey Cup for the first time in 13 years.

PBBF suspended KBBA
officials over misconduct

OUR CORRESPONDENT

ISLAMABAD: In a decisive move to uphold integrity and discipline within its ranks, the Pakistan Basketball Federation (PBBF) General Council suspended the Ghulam Muhammad Khan, President of the Karachi Basketball Association (KBBA) and other officials on grounds of regulatory violations and misconduct. These decisions were taken during the general council meeting of Pakistan Basketball Federation, presided by PBBF President Brig. (R) Iftikhar Mansoor here at local hotel Islamabad attended by all stakeholders. Ghulam Muhammad Khan, who was also attended the meeting accepted his mistakes, tendered an apology, and recommended Senior Vice President Muhammad Yaqoob as his interim successor. Amidst this central decision, the PBBF council also ratified the establishment of a Scrutiny Committee. This body is tasked with assessing the clubs in Karachi, aiming to pave the way for transparent elections within the next 90 days for KBBA, followed by elections for the Sindh Basketball Association. Further disciplinary actions were imposed on two KBBA officials Zafar Iqbal and Zain Ul Abideen, who faced a three-year ban and a fine for se-

vere misconduct and inappropriate behavior during the Divisional Basketball Championship Grade B in Quetta. Usman Paracha from Khanewal was banned for falsely representing PBBF and misconduct, with his case being referred to the Multan Division Basketball Association for further proceedings. Three players from MEPCO, a subsidiary of WAPDA, were banned and fined for illegitimately representing themselves as part of the Multan Division Basketball Association during the All-Punjab SONA Basketball Tournament in Rahim Yar Khan. Similarly, a player from LESCO was fined for use of abusive language and misconduct during the recent WAPDA Inter Unit Basketball Tournament. Additional fines were levied on one player from LESCO, Rawalpindi, POF, Rangers for multiple violations of the PBBF's transfer policy. These five players are directed to submit affidavits affirming their commitment to not repeating such violations, with the stern warning that further infractions could lead to lifetime bans. Their current bans are conditional, to be lifted upon the payment of their respective fines. PBBF also finalized the Calander of Activities and the implementation of Developmental programs for Players, coaches, Referees and statisticians in view of the upcoming South Asian Games in Pakistan.

McKeeal Abdullah set
to represent Pakistan

NAZIR SIYAL

KARACHI: The Pakistan football team will have the services of 18-year-old striker McKeeal Abdullah during next month's FIFA World Cup 2026 Asian Qualifiers. Abdullah plays for Mansfield Town, which is a team that competes in EFL League Two, the fourth level of the English football league system. However, the club will feature in EFL League One in the 2024-25 season after securing promotion. Abdullah is considered one of the brightest young talents in the Asian circuit of English football. Earlier, Blackburn Rovers U21 goalkeeper Adam Khan also received a maiden call-up to the Pakistan national team. Meanwhile, star winger Otis Khan and left-back Mohammad Fazaal are also returning to the Pakistan team for the upcoming matches against Saudi Arabia and Tajikistan. However, captain and star defender Easah Suliman will not be available for the next two games as he's going for Hajj, an annual Islamic pilgrimage. Pakistan will play matches against Saudi Arabia and Tajikistan on June 6 and 11, respectively, in the second round of the qualifiers. The match against Saudi Arabia will be held at Jinnah Stadium in Islamabad, whereas the fixture against Tajikistan will take place at the Dushanbe Central Stadium. Pakistan are at the bottom of Group G as they have lost all their four matches they have played so far. Pakistan began their journey with a 4-0 defeat at the hands of Saudi Arabia in Al-Ahsa in November followed by a 6-1 loss at the hands of Tajikistan at Islamabad in the same month. Jordan then defeated Pakistan 3-0 in Islamabad in a game held in Ramadan with the Shaheens also losing the reverse fixture 7-0 at the Amman International Stadium. The local players are currently training in Islamabad under the watchful eye of head coach Stephen Constantine. The Pakistan Football Federation (PFF) had called up 21 players for the camp.

Will spy
agencies
run this...

FROM PAGE 01

Justice Kayani directed the defence secretary to submit its report to the high court in writing. The judge ordered the defence and interior secretaries to appear before the court today. The judge further said that he would also summon Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif and the cabinet members in the case later. "This matter is not so simple and easy. An example has to be set in this case." The judge further stated: "They [spy agencies] are sending messages [to the family] but on the other hand they were saying that the person is not in their custody." The law enforcement agencies have failed to recover the abducted person, he added. "Does the sector commander live on the moon? What's his stature? He's an 18th-grade officer, who should stay within his [constitutional] limits. Do not follow them, the country can run without them." The court directed the investigation officer to record the sector commander's statement and submit it to the court on Tuesday. Justice Kiyani further said that he would dismiss the petition if the missing poet was a terrorist or nominated in any case.

Achakzai
wants
military...

FROM PAGE 01

limits, like armies worldwide." Expressing concern over the country's deteriorating condition, he said that if those who are ruining the country are not stopped, Pakistan will not survive. "This nation was not created to hurl abuses at our own people's mothers and sisters," he said. "Every blessing mentioned in Surah Rahman is present in Pakistan, yet we are starving because we do not adhere to our Constitution." Achakzai emphasised the need for the military to operate within its constitutional limits. "Some institutions think we are criticising them when we talk about the Constitution. We believe the country cannot function without intelligence agencies, and we want our military to be among the best in the world, but they must stay within their boundaries," he stated.

Dar takes
up students'
issue...

FROM PAGE 01

its nationals especially the students who were primarily affected by the developments of Friday. He shared the feelings of insecurity and fear among Pakistani students and requested Foreign Minister Kulubaev to ensure their safety and security. He also requested for holding to account those responsible for the attacks on Pakistani students. Foreign Minister Kulubaev shared that Kyrgyz government had taken swift action to restore law and order and the perpetrators of the mob riots would be punished under the Kyrgyz law. He assured the Deputy Prime Minister about the safety and security of Pakistani nationals and full facilitation for safe repatriation of students who wish to return to Pakistan. The Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Dar commended the role of the Kyrgyz government, health department and law enforcement agencies and thanked Foreign Minister Kulubaev for ensuring the much needed health and security assistance being provided to the Pakistani students.

Iranian
embassy
raises flag
at half-mast

FROM PAGE 01

pen on the condolence book. Earlier, Iranian Ambassador Reza Amiri Moghadam announced with profound sorrow and grief that Iranian President Seyyed Ebrahim Raisi and Foreign Minister Hossein Amir-Abdollahian have tragically embraced Shahadat. The devastating incident occurred during a mission to inaugurate a developmental project with a neighboring country when their helicopter crashed.

All set for first
ever Australian
volleyball team
visit to Pakistan

Chairman of PVF, Chaudhry Muhammad Yaqoob, the AVF had expressed its desire to play a series of three matches with Pakistan, after which all arrangements for the preparations of the event have been finalized

BY OUR CORRESPONDENT

ISLAMABAD: Australian volleyball team will arrive in Pakistan on May 26 to play a three-matches volleyball series for the first time in the country's history. According to the Chairman of Pakistan Volleyball Federation (PVF), Chaudhry Muhammad Yaqoob, the Australian Volleyball Federation (AVF) had expressed its desire to play a series of three matches with Pakistan, after which all arrangements for the preparations of the event have been finalized. He said that the Australian team will arrive in Pakistan for the first time in the country's history on May 26 and will play matches against the national volleyball team on May 28, 29, 30 in Islamabad. Chaudhry Yaqoob said that the national team won the title of Central Asian Volleyball League as green shirts were unbeatable and hoping that Pakistan will perform brilliantly even against a strong team like Australia.

Pakistan hockey team's
preparations in jeopardy

Pakistan team has been booked to travel to Amsterdam on May 20

SPORTS DESK

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan's preparations for the Nations Challenge Hockey Cup starting in the city of Gniezno (Poland) on May 31 could be affected due to delay in issuance of Dutch visas. Pakistan team has been booked to travel to Amsterdam on May 20 but due to an unwarranted delay in the issuance of visas by the Dutch Embassy in Islamabad, the touring squad may not be in a position to travel today (Monday) to start training camp as scheduled. "Yes, we have not been able to obtain Holland visas so far. Though, the embassy has promised to hasten up formalities, chances of getting the travelling documents ready by Monday look remote. In that case, we would not be in a position to start the training as per schedule (May 22) in Amsterdam," a source within the touring squad, when contacted, said. The source claimed that efforts were

on to secure visas in time before the team's departure on Monday. When it comes to touring European countries, the embassies in Pakistan have always been non-cooperative in the issuance of timely visas to leading Pakistan athletes, knowing well that the majority of hockey players usually play European leagues and there are tough measures in place for players and officials. At all cost, the team members will be back in time after completing Nations Challenge Cup in Poland following the training camp in Holland. The worst part is that the spineless Pakistan Sports Board (PSB) has absolutely no relations with embassies (despite offering its facilities many times to these embassies) to help the team out at this juncture. Recently a lesser-known Dutch Hockey Club travelled to Pakistan for a series of matches. The hockey authorities and PSB extended all possible help to the tourists to make their trip comfortable and trouble-free. How-

ever, so far uncertainty prevails over Pakistan's team's timely departure for important camp training in Holland that also includes one-off Test against the host country's national team. Oltmans is already in Holland making final arrangements for the camp training. It was the team's head coach who proposed a ten-day training to build up momentum for the Nations Challenge Cup starting on May 31. In a recent talk with The News, Oltmans said that the cup is very important for Pakistan hockey prospective. "Winning the Nations Cup is all the more important from Pakistan's perspective as the title will take the team into the FIH Pro League next season. I have proposed a ten-day training camp in Holland ahead of the Nations Cup to acclimatize well for the event." Oltmans also shared the outcome of his talks with Dutch Hockey, revealing that the team has agreed to play against Pakistan in a one-off Test during a training session in Holland.

Briefs

ANF recovers
43 kg drugs
in nine
operations

RAWALPINDI: Anti-Narcotics Force (ANF) while conducting nine operations across the country managed to recover 43 kg drugs and arrested 11 accused, said an ANF Headquarters spokesman here on Monday.

He informed that 121 Ice-filled capsules and 13 heroin-filled capsules were recovered from a Doha-bound passenger arrested Peshawar Airport. In two operations at a courier office in Rawalpindi, 470 intoxicated tablets were recovered from two parcels booked for England. 20 kg Ketamine was recovered from three suspects held in Sohrah Goth Karachi. 16.8 kg hashish was recovered from an accused rounded up near Sial Mor Road Sargodha.

2.4 kg hashish and 108 grams Ice were recovered from two suspects nabbed near M-1 Islamabad. In two operations conducted near M-3 and M-4 Faisalabad, 3 kg Ice was recovered from three suspects. In ninth operation, 500 grams Ice was recovered from a drug smuggler arrested in Quetta. Cases under the Anti-Narcotics Act have been registered against the arrested accused and further investigations are under process.—APP

Railway
Police
reunites 37
children with
their parents

ISLAMABAD: The Pakistan Railway Police have reported reuniting 37 children, both boys and girls, with their parents after finding them wandering at various railway stations or traveling on trains across the country over the past two weeks. The Rawalpindi division reunited nine children, while the Lahore and Peshawar divisions each reunited six children, official sources in the Railway Police told APP. They said the Multan and Sukkur divisions found three children, while the Karachi and Quetta divisions reunited seven and three children, respectively. Additionally, the police returned lost luggage and goods to 60 passengers. To a question, they said the department collected Rs 74.8 million from ticketless passengers during a four-month crackdown, assisted by railway police and train staff. Approximately 58,446 passengers were caught traveling without tickets, and the collected fines were deposited in the department's official bank account, they added. They emphasized that crackdowns on ticketless travel are a daily occurrence, and violators are charged for the full journey plus a penalty. Those unable to pay are handed over to the railway police.—APP

IESCO
detects
11,292 slow,
202 tempered
meters

ISLAMABAD: Islamabad Electric Supply Company (IESCO) has caught 11,292 slow meters, 202 tempered meters and 1,959 such meters using direct power supply in various circles of the company during the ongoing anti power pilferage drive. Sharing the details, IESCO chief Dr Muhammad Amjad Khan said that the police have arrested 1,348 electricity thieves and fines of over Rs 593 million has also been imposed on them. He said IESCO achieved tremendous results during the ongoing anti power theft campaign which was started in light of the government and Ministry of Power Division directives. He said the company was dealing electricity thieves and facilitators with iron hands. Non-stop and indiscriminate operations against them were going on in all operation circles of the company. He further said that IESCO has the full support of the Federal Government and the Ministry of Energy Power Division in the ongoing crackdown against electricity thieves. He said that IESCO's recovery has improved further owing to a successful crack down and the company's line losses have also been decreased significantly.—APP

Paki-Qatar trade ties to benefit
people of both countries

SAIFULLAH ANSAR

ISLAMABAD: Ambassador of Qatar His Excellency Ali Mubarak Ali Essa Al-Khater has said that his country accords immense importance to its brotherly relations with Pakistan and the incumbent leadership of his country is keen to further enhance ties with Pakistan. He said that both Pakistan and Qatar should take advantage of each other's experiences in the field of business and economy for the mutual benefit of the people of two the countries. He said this while talking to a delegation of Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry headed by its President Ahsan Zafar Bakhtawari here on Monday. The Ambassador emphasized that ICCI should come up with its ideas relating to promotion of business between the two countries which will be shared with Qatar Chamber of Commerce and Industry for their quick materialization. He added that Pakistan enjoys all the necessary potential for fast track growth, its people are most caring, smart, hospital and hardworking and the only required component is proper guidance and direction to encapsulate their energies. On his part Ahsan Zafar Bakhtawari, President Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry said that Pakistan is proud of its fraternal bilateral relationship with Qatar having the potential to grow even stronger



ISLAMABAD: Ahsan Zafar Bakhtawari, President Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry presenting Chamber's shield to Ambassador of Qatar H.E. Ali Mubarak Ali Essa Al-Khater. ICCI Group leader Khalid Iqbal Malik, Secretary General United Business Group Zafar Bakhtawari and ICCI executive member Fasiullah Khan are also present.—DNA

and meaningful, particularly in the areas of economy, trade and investment. He expressed the hope that Ambassador Al-Khater's tenure would further fortify the bonds of friendship and collaboration between the two countries.

ICCI President added that commencement of direct flights of Qatar Airways from Islamabad to Malaysia and Indonesia will go a long way in promoting the connectivity for the betterment of all the stakeholders. Group leader

ICCI Khalid Iqbal Malik said that it is the proper time to pool Pakistan-Qatar collaborative efforts for the development of b2b ties. Secretary General United Business Group Zafar Bakhtawari said that Qatar is a great country and that

FIFA World Cup Qatar has further enhanced its global stature. He also praised the role Qatar has been playing for the solution of Palestine issue. ICCI executive member Fasiullah Khan was also included in the delegation.

Japan says Saudi crown prince visit
postponed over King Salman's health

TOKYO Japan's top government spokesman said Monday a planned visit this week by Saudi Arabia's Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman has been postponed "due to the health condition of King Salman". The announcement came hours after the Royal Court in Riyadh said Prince Mohammed's 88-year-old father had a lung infection and was undergoing treatment involving antibiotics. Prince Mohammed had been due to meet Prime Minister Fumio Kishida and the Japanese emperor on his trip from Monday, which would have been his first to Japan since 2019. But Saudi Arabia's government informed Tokyo late on Sunday that, due to King Salman's health, the visit had been postponed, Yoshimasa Hayashi told reporters. "The visit of His Royal Highness Crown Prince Mohammed to Japan will be re-coordinated between the two countries," Hayashi said. Saudi sources told AFP on Monday that members of the delegation would still travel to Japan for some talks. King Salman has been on the throne since 2015, though his 38-year-old son was named crown prince in 2017 and acts as day-to-day ruler. Saudi Arabia, the world's biggest crude exporter, has for years sought to quell speculation over King Salman's health, which is rarely discussed. But the Royal Court disclosed in April that he had been admitted to King Faisal Specialist Hospital for "routine examinations". He left the hospital later the same day. Before that, his most recent hospitalisation had been in May 2022, when he went in for a colonoscopy and stayed for just over a week. The court had said earlier on Sunday the king was suffering from "high temperature" and joint pain and would undergo medical tests. Japan's Kishida visited Saudi Arabia last July and the focus of his talks with Prince Mohammed was on energy, particularly around green energy and decarbonisation. This time "energy security and clean energy" as well as "soft power exchanges", economic diversification and foreign affairs were on the agenda, the foreign ministry had said. Analysts had said Prince Mohammed, known by his initials MBS, would also be on the lookout for more opportunities in gaming as he seeks to improve Saudi Arabia's image. The reputed "Call of Duty" fan has launched a multi-billion-dollar push into the gaming sector, from eSports to game development, as part of his Vision 2030 transformation strategy for the oil-rich kingdom. Saudi Arabia's sovereign wealth fund holds a stake of around eight percent in Nintendo, and the country is planning a theme park based on Japan's "Dragon Ball" manga franchise in a new "entertainment city" outside Riyadh.

Türkiye, Russia say
Iran's Raisi was an
'outstanding' leader

MOSCOW :Russian President Vladimir Putin on Monday hailed Iranian President Ebrahim Raisi as an "outstanding politician" and said his death in a helicopter crash was an "irreplaceable loss." "Raisi was an outstanding politician whose entire life was dedicated to serving his homeland," Putin said in a letter to supreme leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, published on the Kremlin's website. "As a true friend of Russia, he made an invaluable personal contribution to the development of good-neighbourly relations between our countries, and made great efforts to take them to the level of a strategic partnership," he added. The Kremlin leader said he was sending condolences to Khamenei and the Iranian people "in the face of such a grave and irreplaceable loss." Raisi was declared dead on Monday after rescue teams found his crashed helicopter in a fog-shrouded western mountain region.

Turkey says "deeply saddened" by Iran president's death Turkey on Monday said it was "deeply saddened" by the death of Iranian President Ebrahim Raisi in a helicopter crash. Turkey "shares the pain of the friendly and brotherly Iranian people," Foreign Minister Hakan Fidan said. "I pray for God's mercy for my dear colleague and brother," President Recep Tayyip Erdogan said on X, the former Twitter, expressing his "sincere condolences to the friendly and fraternal people and government in particular to the religious head of the Islamic Republic of Iran, Ali Khamenei". The state Anadolu news agency on Monday said a Turkish-made Akinci drone helped localise the debris of the helicopter in a fog-shrouded mountain region of western Iran.

Vietnam votes in new
National Assembly head

HANOI: Vietnam's rubber stamp National Assembly voted in its new chairman on Monday, after the previous head stepped down after getting swept up in a corruption crackdown. Tran Thanh Man, 61, is now one of the Southeast Asian country's four most powerful leaders. "It is a huge honour... I will devote myself to serving the people," he told the assembly after the vote. Thousands of people - including top officials and senior business leaders - have been caught up in Vietnam's "blazing furnace" anti-graft campaign, led by Communist Party General Secretary Nguyen Phu Trong. Man, previously the assembly's deputy chairman, succeeds Vuong Dinh Hue, who stepped down last month because of "violations and shortcomings", according to the party. He has not yet served a full term in the politburo, after

joining in 2021, which is unusual for a top leader in Vietnam. According to Nguyen Khac Giang, visiting fellow at ISEAS-Yusof Ishak Institute in Singapore, that will mean he has "less authority to really assert his influence over the National Assembly". By comparison, his predecessor "was a very strong chairman... He confronted the government, he initiated many ideas and he forced the government to be accountable in some cases." Giang told AFP. The National Assembly elects its chair by secret ballot, before deputies vote whether to pass that result. Man carried all of the 475 votes. The Communist Party on Saturday nominated public security minister To Lam to be the country's new president after his predecessor also resigned. Vo Van Thuong stepped down in March after just one year in the job, and Lam will likely be

PMEX striving
to automate

ISLAMABAD: The Chief of business of Pakistan Mercantile Exchange (PMEX) Zaki Ur Rehman on Monday said that PMEX is striving to automate and digitize the commodity market and also working on future markets to promote innovation and competitiveness in the country's economy. PMEX is proud to announce the successful completion of our recent event, marking a significant milestone in our ongoing efforts to enhance the financial markets in Pakistan, Chief of Business of Pakistan Mercantile Exchange (PMEX), Zaki Ur Rehman told APP here. "As the Chief Business Officer of PMEX, I am delighted with the exceptional turnout and positive feedback we have received from all participants and investors", he said. "Our latest event underscored PMEX's commitment to innovation, transparency, and growth within the financial sector." Zaki said the success of this event is a testament.—APP

Minister Salik satisfied
with arrangements
for Pakistani Hujjaj

MAKKAH AL-MUKARRAMA: Minister for Religious Affairs and Interfaith Harmony, Chaudhry Salik, on Monday voiced his contentment over the efficient operations in place for Pakistani pilgrims in Saudi Arabia that promised a journey of spiritual enrichment and ease during the Hajj. "After visiting various facilities, including the Pakistan Hajj Medical Mission (PHMM), Hujjaj residential buildings, catering companies' kitchens providing three meals a day and transport arrangements, I felt relieved to see that all operational preparedness and ongoing services are up to the mark," he said while talking to media during his visit to the PHMM. The Pakistan Hajj Mission team and the Ministry of Religious Affairs, he said, drawing on past experiences were well aware of the challenges faced and took timely measures, resulting in meticulous preparations for the Pakistani Hujjaj. He praised the entire team for working with full devotion to serve the guests of Allah Almighty, extending all possible assistance to them round the clock. "I am proud of it. By the grace of Allah Almighty, the overall Hajj operation will be much better than last year's." Answering a question, Minister Salik said he has visited the Rehlat Manafea Company, a service provider, to review arrangements for Pakistani Hujjaj during the five Hajj days in Mashair from 8-12 Zilhaj. He commended the company for completing all arrangements for transport, accommodation and catering services in Mina, Arafat, and Muzdalifa during the Hajj days. The minister stressed the need for further collaboration with the company to extend maximum facilitation to the guests of Allah Almighty at the holy land. Accordingly, the CEO has been invited to visit Pakistan in August to explore increased cooperation and collaboration in future Hajj-related plans. "We are striving to improve Hajj arrangements with each passing year," he said, praising the team, including Pakistan Hajj Mission, Head of Medical Mission, Director Madina, Director Makkah, and Director Mouavneen. Earlier, the minister took round of different sections of the PHMM including male and female wards, pharmacy, medicines storage facility, OPD, surgical ward, dental clinic, expressing satisfaction over the preparedness of the medical mission to tackle any medical-related situation during the Hajj operation. Present on the occasion were Secretary Ministry of Religious Affairs Dr Syed Ata-ur-Rehman, Director General (Hajj), Jeddah/Head of Pakistan Hajj Mission, Abdul Wahab Soomro, Director Makkah Faheem Afridi, Head of Medical Mission Brigadier Jamil Ahmed Lakhair, and Director Mouavneen Asghar Yusufzai.—DNA

Trump biopic hits
Cannes Film Festival

CANNES, FRANCE: A Donald Trump biopic and the latest dark creation by David Cronenberg premiere in Cannes on Monday as the world-famous film festival reaches its midway point. "Emilia Perez", a musical about a narco boss having a sex change, is the audacious frontrunner so far, after 11 of the 22 entries for the top prize Palme d'Or have been seen. The festival - considered the film industry's foremost get-together - concludes with its award ceremony on Saturday, with "Barbie" director Greta Gerwig heading the jury. But two more buzzy entries arrive on Monday. "The Apprentice" is a biopic of Trump's formative years from Iranian-born director Ali Abbasi - bound to stir up controversy in an election year for the United States. It stars Sebastian Stan, best-known for playing the Winter Soldier in Marvel films, though he also won best actor at this year's Berlin Film Festival and widespread acclaim for his part as rocker Tommy Lee in series "Pam and Tommy". Later, Cronenberg - director of many body-horror classics like "The Fly", "Crash" and "Videodrome" - returns to the Cote d'Azur festival with "The Shrouds". Billed as his most personal film yet, it tells the story of a widowed businessman (Vincent Cassell) who invents a machine to monitor the dead in their graves. It was partly inspired by the death in 2017 of Cronenberg's wife of 43 years. "I don't really think of art as therapy," the Canadian director told Variety. "Grief is forever, as far as I'm concerned. It doesn't go away. You can have some distance from it, but I didn't experience any catharsis making the movie." Among entries to score well with critics during the first week was "Bird", a gritty but sweet and fantastical tale about a young girl in working-class England from director Andrea Arnold. "Kinds of Kindness", the latest bizarre team-up between Emma Stone and Yorgos Lanthimos, featured some ultra-dark comedy moments, including a thumb-and-cauliflower dinner. "Megalopolis", the decades-in-the-making epic from Francis Ford Coppola, has perhaps been the most divisive entry, with some reviewers finding it a profound end-of-life work of philosophy, and others a barely comprehensible mess. But the one to beat so far is "Emilia Perez", which has won a lot of acclaim for stars Zoe Saldana, Selena Gomez and trans actor Karla Sofia Gascon in the title role, as well as its risk-taking French director, Jacques Audiard, who already has a Palme d'Or under his belt.—Agencies

Gwadar
women
garment
factory goes
full steam
ahead

FAISAL SHEIKH

ISLAMABAD: The Gwadar Women Garment Factory, also known as the Gwadar Women's Development Employment Center, has increased its efforts to obtain orders from public and private enterprises after four years of operation at Gwadar Port. The factory was established in collaboration with the Chinese Consulate in Karachi and the China Overseas Port Holding Company. It is ready to fulfil and deliver the orders of tailor-made uniforms of employees of national and multinational companies. Talking to Gwadar Pro, Ms. Zaitoon Abdullah, the factory's supervisor, stated that the factory's female workers have developed the necessary skills to meet production standards. She noted that the factory has been producing uniforms for workers of Chinese companies at Gwadar Port for the past four years. She further mentioned that the factory is focusing on embroidery to increase revenue and described the Gwadar Garment Factory as a successful case of enhancing women's empowerment in the region. Zaitoon commented on the career opportunities at the factory, noting that tailoring offers a viable career path for creative women in Gwadar who are skilled in fabric work. She emphasized that the women employed at the factory are poised for a promising career in Pakistan's garment industry. The factory was initiated as part of China's Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) to impact gender equality and women's empowerment in the beneficiary countries. "This factory aligns with China's commitments to advancing women's mainstreaming and empowerment under the BRI framework as stipulated by international law," stated a Chinese official at Gwadar Port.—APP

Judo
competition
talent hunt
kicks off

ISLAMABAD: The Comsats University Islamabad organized the Prime Minister Provincial League Talent Hunt Judo Competition for men here at the Rodham Hall of the Pakistan Sports Complex on Monday. It saw participants from Muzaffarabad, Mirpur, Gilgit, Skardu, and Islamabad featuring in the extravaganza. The event's opening ceremony took place and was graced by Prof. Dr. Sajjad Ahmed Madni, Registrar Comsats University, as chief guest. In his address, Prof. Dr. Madni commended the participants for their enthusiasm and skill. He also lauded the management of the HEC Sports Division and the Ministry of Youth Affairs for their remarkable initiative in launching this Talent Hunt program, which offers athletes a valuable platform to showcase their abilities at the national level. "The Talent Hunt program is a significant step towards nurturing and promoting sports talent across Pakistan," he said. "It provides our young athletes with the opportunity to demonstrate their skills and compete at higher levels, fostering a culture of sportsmanship and excellence," he added. Muhammad Mushtaq, Manager Sports at Comsats University Islamabad, provided a comprehensive briefing to the participants about the initiative. He highlighted the objectives of the Talent Hunt program and emphasized its role in discovering and honing the skills of young judo athletes from diverse regions. The Talent Hunt Judo Competition promises to be a thrilling event, bringing together promising athletes from various provinces, allowing them to compete and gain exposure on a significant platform. This initiative reflects Prime Minister's commitment to promoting sports and supporting youth development across Pakistan. The Higher Education Commission (HEC) and COMSATS University Islamabad also offers a diverse range of programs and actively supports sports and extracurricular activities.—Agencies

Briefs

Abbasi likens govt to 'hybrid regime'

ADIL SHAHEEN

ISLAMABAD: Former prime minister Shahid Khaqan Abbasi likened the current government of Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif to that of incarcerated PTI founder Imran Khan and criticised the National Accountability Bureau (NAB), claiming it only contributed to the country's economic woes. "The current government came to power through the same means as Imran Khan did. NAB has only caused destruction to the country's economy," Abbasi said, speaking to the media after appearing before an accountability court. Abbasi expressed sorrow over a recent tragic incident and offered prayers for the slain Iranian president, Ebrahim Raisi. He also questioned the basis of the charges against him, noting that NAB officials admitted there were no financial benefits involved. "The court asked today, what is the crime? Even NAB officials cannot specify which powers were abused. Unfortunately, people have been running in circles for years without any evidence," he added. Abbasi argued that those who filed the cases, including the former NAB chairman, should be held accountable. "The court should make a decision to prevent false cases in the future. The case in Islamabad has also been withdrawn. Until there is a significant administrative change in this country, there is no hope for improvement," he said.

Govt to appoint intel officials in DISCOs

FAISAL SHEIKH

ISLAMABAD: In a bid to tighten the noose around corrupt officials, the federal government has decided to appoint officials from the Federal Investigation Agency (FIA) and intelligence agencies in the power distribution companies (DISCOs). Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif has directed the Power Division to appoint a deputy director-level officer from the FIA to the electric supply companies on a permanent basis. The FIA official will prepare cases against the corrupt officers as the authorities are all set to remove the directors appointed on a political basis in the companies. While the additional director general will coordinate and monitor at the headquarters level. The decision came more than a month after PM Shehbaz said the country could not afford electricity theft at a large scale amid the precarious and appalling economic situation, stressing to immediately make the strategy for the upgradation of transmission lines and reduction in line losses on a sustainable basis. He had said this when he was briefed about the massive electricity theft across the country that made the whole power sector unviable and unsustainable.

PTI to resist attempt to restrict media freedom

FAISAL SHEIKH

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) came down hard on the Punjab government for its attempt to deprive citizens of their constitutional right of freedom to expression and press under the guise of new defamation law in the province, vowing that the party would strongly resist any such move at every level. PTI Spokesperson strongly condemned the organized state invasion against the basic constitutional rights of the citizens and added that PTI would not accept any unconstitutional legislative or administrative measures in any part of the country and would strongly resist any such move.

Acting President for further consolidating ties with Malaysia

The Acting President expressed satisfaction over the regular conduct of bilateral naval exercises and training collaboration between Pakistan and Malaysia

KHAYAM ABBASI

ISLAMABAD: Acting President Syed Yousuf Raza Gillani has called for further consolidating bilateral ties with Malaysia for the mutual interest of the two brotherly countries. He added that Pakistan and Malaysia enjoyed cordial cooperation at all international fora, which needed to be further strengthened for the benefit of the two sides. The Acting President expressed these views while talking to the Chief of the Royal Malaysian Navy, Admiral Tan Sri Abdul Rahman bin Ayob, who along with his delegation, called on him, at Aiwan-e-Sadr, today. Chief of the Naval Staff, Admiral Naveed Ashraf, also attended the meeting. During the meeting, the Acting President urged the need to further explore avenues of cooperation in maritime sectors for the mutual benefit of the two brotherly countries. He expressed the hope that training and exchange programmes between the two navies would further cement naval cooperation between Pakistan and Malaysia. The Acting President expressed satisfaction over the regular conduct of bilateral naval exercises and training collaboration between Pakistan and Malaysia. He appreciated the



ISLAMABAD: Acting President Syed Yousuf Raza Gillani conferring the award of Nishan-e-Imtiaz (Military) upon the Chief of the Royal Malaysian Navy, Admiral Tan Sri Abdul Rahman bin Ayob, during a special investiture ceremony, at Aiwan-e-Sadr. - DNA

Royal Malaysian Navy for regular participation in AMAN exercises and emphasised the need for continuity of the same in future. He stated that Pakistan was looking forward to the continued support of Malaysia for Pakistan's bid to become the Full Dialogue Partner of ASEAN. Earlier, the Acting President conferred the award of Nishan-e-Imtiaz (Military) upon the Chief of the Royal Malaysian Navy, Admiral Tan Sri Abdul Rahman bin Ayob, during a special investiture ceremony, held at Aiwan-e-Sadr, today. Admiral Tan Sri Abdul Rahman bin Ayob is a close friend of Pakistan and has played a prominent role in promoting cooperation between the Royal Malaysian Navy and the Pakistan Navy. The award was conferred upon him in recognition of his professional achievements and endeavours for strengthening the friendship and cooperation between the Royal Malaysian Navy and the Pakistan Navy. The Acting President congratulated the Malaysian Naval Chief on receiving the award of Nishan-e-Imtiaz (Military) and appreciated his contributions towards increasing naval cooperation between the two countries. Admiral Tan Sri Abdul Rahman bin Ayob thanked the Acting President for conferring upon him the award of Nishan-e-Imtiaz (Military).

CJCS, Australian chief discuss defence cooperation

Both the sides reiterated resolve to further strengthen and enhance security and defence cooperation

STAFF REPORT

RAWALPINDI: Chief of Defence Forces Australia General Angus J. Campbell called on Chairman Joint Chiefs of Staff Committee General Sahir Shamshad Mirza in Rawalpindi on Monday. During the meeting, the two senior military leaders engaged in comprehensive discussions on defence and security cooperation, regional dynamics, and global security challenges, said ISPR in a statement. Both the sides reiterated resolve to further strengthen and enhance security and defence cooperation between the two countries. The Australian dignitaries appreciated the professional standards of Pakistan Armed Forces, their achievements in fight against terrorism and continued efforts for regional peace and stability. Earlier upon arrival, General Angus J. Campbell was presented Guard of Honour by a smartly turned-out tri-services contingent. General Angus J. Campbell is on official visit to Pakistan for 13th Round of Pakistan-Australia, Defence and Security Talks and 10th Round of 1.5 Track Security Dialogue.

ICC prosecutor seeks arrest warrant for Netanyahu, Gallant

Karim Khan said in a Monday statement that he has reasonable grounds to believe Netanyahu and Gallant "bear criminal responsibility" for "war crimes and crimes against humanity"

NEWS DESK

NEW YORK: The chief prosecutor at the International Criminal Court (ICC) has applied for arrest warrant against Israeli prime minister Benjamin Netanyahu over the regime's war crimes and systematic attacks against Palestinians in the Gaza Strip. An arrest warrant has also been sought for Israel's minister of military affairs Yoav Gallant against the backdrop of the military's seven months of bloody campaign in the besieged Palestinian territory. Karim Khan said in a Monday statement that he has reasonable grounds to believe Netanyahu and Gallant "bear criminal responsibility" for "war crimes and crimes against humanity." He outlined a list of crimes, including "starvation of civilians" and "intentionally directing attacks against a civilian population." "We submit that the crimes against humanity charged were committed as part of a widespread and systematic attack against the Palestinian civilian population pursuant to State policy." These crimes, in our

assessment, continue to this day, Khan added. A panel of judges in the court will now consider the application for the arrest warrants. #ICC Prosecutor @KarimKhanQC announces applications for arrest warrants in relation to Benjamin Netanyahu and Yoav Gallant in the context of the situation in the State of #Palestine. This course of action at the ICC, based in The Hague, marks the first such move against the head of a close ally of the United States. When the reports surfaced last month about seeking course of action by the ICC chief prosecutor, the administration of President Joe Biden was quick to condemn the move, saying that "the ICC has no jurisdiction in this situation and we do not support its investigation." The court has been investigating Israel's actions in the occupied territories for the past three years - and more recently the brutal war in the Gaza Strip as well. Netanyahu asked Biden to prevent the arrest warrants against the regime's officials. Israel's genocidal war on Gaza prompted South Africa to file a case against Tel Aviv in the International Court of Justice (ICJ) in December 2023.

Girls back to school in North Waziristan, destroyed by terrorists

ISLAMABAD: Ministry of Federal Education and Professional Training by fulfilling its commitment to provide education to each and every child in the country, on Monday reopened a girls' school in North Waziristan that was destroyed by the terrorists one week ago. In a message, Ministry of Federal Education and Professional Training said that "we are thrilled to share the news that, by the grace of Almighty, we have accomplished our mission. The Afia Girls School has reopened its doors after undergoing reconstruction. Today, our little angels returned with smiles on their faces, brimming with hope and enthusiasm". The Ministry said that just a week ago, this same school faced destruction at the hands of extremists. However, "we stood firm in the face of adversity, and today, we celebrate the triumph of perseverance and determination. We celebrate the resilience of our daughters and the nation's commitment to education". According to the ministry of education, in a latest tragic incident in North Waziristan, a private girls' school fell victim to unidentified militants who mercilessly targeted it, causing destruction and fear in the community. Despite the attackers' efforts, no lives were lost, but the psychological and educational impact is significant. This is not the first time such violence has struck educational institutions in the region, highlighting a disturbing trend of targeting education, particularly for girls. However, amidst the darkness, there is a glimmer of hope as the Ministry of Federal Education has rebuilt the school in record one week. The Ministry sources confirmed that the 120 girls are backed in their classes today (Monday) morning. "This act symbolizes resilience, defiance against extremism, and a firm commitment to providing education for all, especially for the daughters of the nation. Stay tuned for the inspiring story of rebuilding and national solidarity" the ministry added. It is to mention here that a private girls' school was blown up by unidentified militants in Tehsil Shewa of North Waziristan district on Wednesday night, the police sources said. - APP

Assange wins right to challenge US extradition

LONDON: Wikileaks founder Julian Assange can bring a new appeal against extradition to the US, the High Court has ruled. He was granted permission to appeal against the order that he be sent to the US to stand trial for leaking military secrets. The decision means Mr Assange will be able to challenge US assurances over how his prospective trial would be conducted and whether his right to free speech would be infringed. Mr Assange's lawyers hugged each other in court after this latest ruling in the legal saga. They have argued that the case against him is politically motivated. In a short ruling this morning, two senior judges granted him permission to appeal against an earlier order, ruling that he needs to be given a full appeal in the UK. - Agencies



ISLAMABAD: National flag flies half mast at National Assembly building as Prime Minister announce a day of mourning in the country over the death of Iranian President Ebrahim Raisi who died in a helicopter crash. - APP

Pentagon vows to keep weapons moving to Ukraine

Ukrainian troops have been fighting to halt Russian advances in the Kharkiv region, while also increasing their offensive attacks in Crimea, including on military infrastructure sites on the Black Sea coast and in the Russian-occupied city of Sevastopol

WASHINGTON: Defense Secretary Lloyd Austin committed Monday to keeping US weapons moving to Ukraine as Kyiv faces one of its toughest moments against a renewed assault by Russia. Austin and as many as 50 defense leaders from Europe and around the world were meeting Monday to coordinate more military aid to Ukraine, as Kyiv tries to hold off a Russian offensive in the northeast while launching its own massive assault on the Russia-occupied Crimean Peninsula. "We're meeting in a moment of challenge," Austin said, noting that Russia's new onslaught of Kharkiv showed why the continued commitment by the countries was vital to keep coming. Austin vowed to keep US weapons moving "week after week." The US announced no new aid packages Monday, even as Ukrainian forces continue to complain that weapons are just trickling into the country after being stalled for months due to congressional gridlock over funding. Pentagon officials have said that weapons pre-positioned in Europe began moving into Ukraine soon after the aid funding was approved. It's unclear how much of that has reached some of the front lines, where Russian troops have intensified their assault. Russian President Vladimir Putin said on Friday during a visit to China that Moscow's offensive in Ukraine's northeastern Kharkiv region aims to create a buffer zone

but that there are no plans to capture the city. Ukrainian troops have been fighting to halt Russian advances in the Kharkiv region, while also increasing their offensive attacks in Crimea, including on military infrastructure sites on the Black Sea coast and in the Russian-occupied city of Sevastopol. Ukraine has also struggled to get enough troops to the front lines, as the war drags on into its third year and fighting takes its toll. In an effort to increase troop numbers, President Volodymyr Zelensky signed two laws, allowing prisoners to join the army and increasing fines for draft dodgers fivefold. The controversial mobilization law goes into effect on Saturday. In the three weeks since President Joe Biden signed the \$95 billion foreign aid package, the US has sent \$1.4 billion in weapons pulled from Pentagon stockpiles and announced it was providing \$6 billion in funding through the Ukraine Security Assistance Initiative. USAI pays for longer-term contracts with the defense industry and means that the weapons could take many months or years to arrive. In recent packages the US has agreed to send High Mobility Artillery Rocket Systems (HIMARS) and rockets for them, as well as munitions for Patriot and National Advanced Surface-to-Air Missile Systems, artillery, anti-aircraft and anti-tank munitions, and an array of armored vehicles, such as Bradley and Mine Resistant Ambush Protected vehicles. - Agencies

