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Detailed News On Page-07

Gandapur to remove poor performers

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Ronaldo makes history in Saudi Pro League

Detailed News On Page-06



Fires broadside at Imran Nawaz Sharif elected as PML-N head after 6 years

Nawaz says Pakistan would've progressed had he not been removed from Prime Minister's Office repeatedly

ABID RAZA / DNA

LAHORE: Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) Tuesday elected Nawaz Sharif as the party's president "unopposed" — six years after a court ruling had removed him from office. Nawaz had lost the prime minister's office in 2017 and the presidency of his party in 2018, as a result of the Panama Papers ruling. Ever since, the PML-N has constructed a narrative centred around the catchphrase "mujhy kyun nikala" (Why was I removed?), in reference to ex-PM. However, Nawaz was elected as the party president today once again as no other party leader submitted their nomination papers against the party supremo for the top post. While addressing the party's general council meeting after being elected to the top post after a gap of six years, the former prime minister said that Pakistan would have progressed if his governments had not been toppled repeatedly. He said that Pakistan would have held a unique position and power in Asia if the progress under his government had not been halted. Nawaz lamented the practice of "leg pulling", which he said had been going on since 1977 and had weakened the country. "We should accept that we have shot ourselves in the foot. Believe me, we have never gone to anyone with a begging bowl," he added. The three-time prime minister reiterated that he would have never complained if he had been ousted from the prime minister's post for corruption. Nawaz told the party members cheering for him on the occasion, to celebrate not because he was re-elected as the PML-N president but because the decision by former chief justice of Pakistan Saqib Nisar in the Panama Papers case "had been thrown into the waste basket". "Saqib Nisar had given the ruling to remove me from the party's presidency forever. Tell him to come here today and see what happened to his decision," Nawaz added.

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Saad demands withdrawal of NAB Ordinance

Ordinance utilised for shameful political purposes, he says

DNA

LAHORE: Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) leader Khawaja Saad Rafique on Tuesday said the approval of NAB (Amendment) Ordinance into law to extend the period of physical remand for a suspect from 14 days to 40 days was deplorable. "This draconian law cannot be supported, therefore, the ordinance should be withdrawn," he said while reminding that the National Accountability Bureau Ordinance was formulated by a dictator. He said the ordinance was utilised for shameful political purposes and many innocent people fell victim to it. The NAB Ordinance has been amended, under which the period of remanding accused in the NAB cases has been extended from 14 days to 40 days. Acting President Yusuf Raza Gilani Monday signed two new ordinances, NAB (Amendment) Ordinance 2024 and the Elections Act (Amendment) Ordinance 2024.

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ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif chairs a review meeting on Pakistan-China cooperation. — DNA

Youm-e-Takbeer celebrated with enthusiasm

Youm-e-Takbeer reminds us of the unity between our political and defense forces

ADIL SHAHEEN

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Law & Justice Azam Nazeer Tarar said that Youm-e-Takbeer was celebrated with national enthusiasm in memory of the successful nuclear tests conducted on that day in 1998 which made the country's defense invincible. In his special message on Tuesday, he stated that Youm-e-Takbeer is celebrated in Pakistan on Tuesday to commemorate the Chagai-I and Chagai-II series of nuclear tests. He added that

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Saqib Nisar refuses to comment on Nawaz tirade

FAISAL SHEIKH

ISLAMABAD: Former Chief Justice of Pakistan (CJP) Saqib Nisar has refused to comment on Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) President Nawaz Sharif's remarks. According to a private news channel, he said he did not want to respond to "such things". He added: "Everyone knows the truth. Every person has freedom of expression Nawaz Sharif is also free to express his views. I will not comment on what Nawaz Sharif said."

Continued on Page 06

Assures facilitation PM invites Chinese firms to establish textile industry

In the meeting, different ministries presented their proposals to promote the Pakistan-China economic relationship

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Tuesday assuring all-out facilitation by his government, invited Chinese companies, particularly related to the textile sector, to establish their industry in Pakistan. The prime minister, chairing a meeting to discuss the promotion of Pakistan-China cooperation, said China was a key partner in Pakistan's development. Pakistan desires to enhance cooperation with China in agriculture, information technology, and energy besides enhancing its exports to China. In the meeting, different ministries presented their proposals to promote the Pakistan-China economic relationship, a PM Office press release said. The prime minister reiterated that the government would provide foolproof security to Chinese nationals working in

Continued on Page 06

Shehbaz seeks minimum loadshedding amid heatwave

STAFF REPORT

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif Tuesday directed the authorities concerned to minimise the ongoing loadshedding in different areas through better load management, considering public relief in sizzling weather. The prime minister, chairing a meeting on load management and power theft, reiterated that the government would strictly deal with the power thieves and that the ongoing mission against

Continued on Page 06

Briefs

Fazl meets Pir Pagara

Both leaders reject recent election

NAZIR

SIYAL

KARACHI: JUIF chief Maulana Fazlur Reham has met Grand Democratic Alliance (GDA) leader Pir Sibghatullah Shah (Pir Pagara). During the meeting, which was held at the Pir Pagara residence, current situation of the country and other related issues were discussed between the two leaders. Both the leaders rejected the recent elections and were agreed that the country's economy cannot be reformed by the fake elections.

Shehbaz reposes trust in Nawaz: Dar

Shehbaz's wish was that once Nawaz Sharif returned

BUREAU REPORT

LAHORE: Foreign Minister and Deputy Prime Minister Ishaq Dar has said Shehbaz Sharif has reposed trust in Nawaz Sharif. Addressing general council meeting of the PML-N, Dar greeted Nawaz Sharif for becoming party president again after six years. Ishaq Dar said that when Shehbaz Sharif was handed the party presidency, he stated on the very first day that this position was entrusted to him by Nawaz Sharif. Shehbaz Sharif's wish was that once Nawaz Sharif returned, he would hand back the presidency at the general council meeting. "The deputy prime minister said on May 11, 2024, Shehbaz Sharif decided to return the office and he tendered a resignation from the party," Dar explained. "Today is May 28, the election commissioner has completed all the process."

Threatens mass protests after Eid PTI rejects venomous propaganda against Khan

Bhutto emblazoned on his chest odious title of first civil martial law administrator: PTI Spokesperson

KHAYAM ABBASI

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) strongly rejected the venomous propaganda against PTI Founding Chairman Imran Khan and PTI on the basis of the heart-wrenching events occurred during the fall of Dhaka. Reacting to the false propaganda campaign of the mandate-thief regime including Senator Sherry Rehman and its covert and overt supporters, PTI Spokesperson said that if the dreadful events of 1971 were haunting Zardari's followers and political heirs of Zulfikar Ali Bhutto, it was not due to Imran Khan or PTI but the role of their political Imam Bhutto. He called dictatorship as the biggest curse of the universe and said that the devotees of dictatorship were making all hue and cries to please the incumbent dictator. PTI Spokesperson stated that there was panic in the stable of dictatorship and the angry mules were trample over each other, adding that Sherry Rehman was dancing on the grave to earn livelihood,

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'Pakistan reviving BRI projects'

SAIFULLAH ANSAR

ISLAMABAD: Federal minister for Planning, Development and Special Initiatives, Ahsan Iqbal said here on Tuesday that the incumbent government was hopeful to inject some fresh momentum into projects that fall under China's Belt and Road Initiative, as it tries to boost the country's troubled economy. The government is looking forward to joint ventures for renewable energy projects, agriculture collaboration and possibly enticing some Chinese companies to relocate to Pakistan, Ahsan Iqbal, who also co-heads the committee responsible for the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor said in an interview with Bloomberg.

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Spain, Ireland, Norway formally recognize State of Palestine

Spanish PM calls Palestinian statehood 'only route to peace'; Israel accuses Madrid of incitement to Jewish 'genocide'

NEWS DESK

MADRID: The establishment of a Palestinian state is "the only route to peace" in the Middle East, Spanish Prime Minister Pedro Sanchez has said as his country announced formal recognition, alongside Norway and Ireland. Sanchez spoke on Tuesday before a cabinet vote that approved the previously announced plan to recognise a Palestinian state. Norway's recognition has also taken effect, while Ireland has also followed suit. Spanish government spokesperson Pilar Alegria announced that the cabinet had "adopted an important decision to recognise a Palestinian state", which had "one objective: to help Israelis and Palestinians achieve peace". The Spanish prime minister called the move "a matter of historical justice". "The only route towards establishing peace is the establishment of a Palestinian state, living side by side with the state of Israel," he said. "The state of Palestine must be viable with the West Bank and Gaza connected by a corridor and with East Jerusalem as its capital." Madrid will not recognise any changes to pre-1967 borders unless agreed to by both parties, he said. The occupied West Bank, East Jerusalem and Gaza Strip were

Continued on Page 06

PM Shehbaz Sharif welcomes Spain's announcement

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Tuesday welcomed the announcement by Spanish Prime Minister Pedro Sanchez to formally recognise Palestine as a state. The prime minister, in a statement, said that the recognition of Palestine as a state by Spain was a positive development in the international scenario which also manifested the rejection of Israeli barbarism against the unarmed Palestinians by the Spanish people and their Prime Minister Pedro Sanchez. He strongly condemned the recent unprovoked Israeli bombing of Rafah which martyred another 45 Palestinian people, and reiterated his call for an immediate end to the genocide of Palestinian population being carried out by Israel.








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earn redeem experience

Commemorating Youm-e-Takbeer

ISSI hosts seminar on missile developments in South Asia

DG ISSI highlights 1998 nuclear milestone: Pakistan's response restores regional strategic balance

ISLAMABAD : As part of commemoration of Youm-e-Takbeer, the Arms Control and Disarmament Centre (ACDC) at the Institute of Strategic Studies Islamabad (ISSI) hosted a seminar titled "Missile Developments in South Asia: Global and Regional Implications."

SPIR, QAU; Air Commodore (R) Khalid Banuri, Adviser Jinnah Centre for Character and Leadership (JCCL), AHQ Islamabad; Ms. Ghazala Yasmin Jalil, Research Fellow ACDC/ISSI; and Dr. Naem Saik, President Strategic Vision Institute (SVI). In his keynote address, General Zubair Mahmood Hayat provided a profound analysis of India's ideological and strategic shifts. He began

of the current political dispensation in New Delhi, which was effecting the ideological shift from 'India to Bharat'. He argued that the RSS ideology driving this transformation has far-reaching ramifications at both regional and global levels. He asserted that an expansionist and revisionist agenda, now deeply influencing Bharat's strategic intent, significantly diverges from India's historical strategic culture. General Hayat highlighted the politicization of India's military strategy, drawing from historical figures like Chanakya, whose principles emphasized power and deception at all costs. He pointed out that India's aggressive missile developments, including deploying advanced systems like the BrahMos missile and developing MIRVs, reflect this new strategic posture. He emphasized that these developments pose significant regional and global security threats, necessitating Pakistan's vigilant and comprehensive response. He also pointed out that India had the fastest growing nuclear program in the world, which remained opaque. Further, India's nuclear and missile program was the result of vertical and horizontal proliferation. He stressed the need to have a deeper understanding of the ideological shift in India and the imperative for Pakistan to have appropriate counter measures.



HI(M), former Chairman Joint Chiefs of Staff Committee was the chief guest. Distinguished speakers included: Dr. Zafar Nawaz Jaspal, Dean and Professor

by commemorating Youm-e-Takbeer and emphasized that it was a day to reassert national pride and ownership. He stated that missile development in South Asia must be seen as a "tool" in the hands



ISLAMABAD: Chairman PRCS Sardar Shahid Ahmed Laghari along with others launching "Cash Voucher Assistance for the Flood Affected Families in Gwadar" at PRCS Headquarters. APP

Sheikh Aftab greets nation on 26th anniversary of Youm-e-Takbeer

DNA

ATTOCK: Pakistan Muslim League (N) Member National Assembly and Senior vice President Punjab Sheikh Aftab Ahmed has said that Youm-e-Takbeer serves as a testament to our nation's resilience, unwavering determination, and commitment to maintaining regional peace and stability. He congratulated the nation on the 26th anniversary of Youm-e-Takbeer. As per reported by our district representative faisal munir that Sheikh Aftab Ahmed pay tribute to the senior leadership of Pakistan Muslim League, especially former Prime Minister Muhammad Nawaz Sharif, senior military leadership and scientists of Pakistan. Sheikh Aftab has said that On this historic day in 1998, he said PM Nawaz Sharif demonstrated bold leadership by rejecting nerve wracking pressures and inducements to make Pakistan a nuclear armed nation. He said Twenty-six years ago, Pakistan got the honor of becoming the first nuclear power in the Muslim world and the 7th nuclear power in the world. He said that Pakistan's political, military, and scientific leadership came together to achieve this milestone, making May 28 a proud day for the nation.

PRCS aid for Gwadar flood victims starts

ADIL SHAHEEN

ISLAMABAD: The Pakistan Red Crescent Society (PRCS) has commenced the provision of cash assistance for 4,000 flood-affected households in Gwadar. The initiative was officially launched by PRCS Chairman Sardar Shahid Ahmed Laghari, with former Chief Minister of Balochistan Mir Alauddin Marri and National Assembly member Malik Shah Gorgaji, at a ceremony held at PRCS National Headquarters on Tuesday. Each household will receive PKR 32,000 in two installments. Mir Alauddin Marri commended the PRCS for

its exemplary response during natural disasters, highlighting the institution's significant contributions to humanitarian efforts. "The PRCS's performance, services, and actions in aid of humanity will be recorded in history in golden letters," stated Marri. He praised the leadership of Sardar Shahid Ahmed Laghari, noting that under his guidance, the PRCS has excelled in providing public health facilities, clean drinking water, financial aid, and sanitation services. Speaking on this occasion, PRCS Chairman Sardar Shahid Ahmed Laghari expressed gratitude for the guests' presence. He reaffirmed the organization's commitment to prioritizing humanity, noting the challenge of the Gwadar response, which was efficiently managed by the national and provincial branch teams. "We have fulfilled our promise by issuing the first installment of cash disbursement," said Laghari. He emphasized the continuous collaboration with PDMA and district administration, assuring that aid will be provided promptly whenever needed. Chairman PRCS also announced that in the coming days, financial assistance would be extended to 200 pregnant and lactating women facing food shortages in Gwadar.

Sehti Haveli transferred for heritage conversion

PESHAWAR : An iconic Sehti Haveli also termed as 'Architecture Jewel of Peshawar' has been handed over to Archeology Department of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa for conversion of the historic building into Pakistan's first 'Heritage Adaptive Reuse Museum'. Mr Suhail Sethi, owner of house, hand over his ancestral property to Archeology Department at a ceremony held at Haveli of Mian Abdul Karim Sehti located in Mohallah Sethian, Bazaar-e-Kalaan, inside walled city of Peshawar. The handing over of the house was made through a public-private partnership between Suhail Sethi and Archeology Department of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. Sarhad Conservation Network, an organization striving for preservation of heritage of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, served as moderator between the two parties.--APP

Secretary launches school toilets and ramps project

MULTAN :Secretary Services South Punjab, Engineer Amdad Shoaib Khan Tareen, inaugurated construction of toilets and ramps in Schools project of Shelter Development Organization here on Tuesday at Government Higher Secondary School Moonlight New Multan. The event was attended by DEO Secondary Schools Sheikh Rasheed, Vice Principal of Government Moonlight School Shahida Babar, Social Welfare Officer Iqbal Sahu, Coordination Officer FDO Mian Tauqeer, and President of Shelter Development Organization Muhammad Rizwan Malik beside others. In his address, Engineer Amdad Shoaib Khan Tareen emphasized that clean drinking water and sanitation facilities are

basic needs crucial for good health. He acknowledged the government's commitment to providing these essential facilities in schools despite limited resources. He called on non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and philanthropists to play their role in social service and nation-building. He highlighted the global practice of NGOs working alongside governments in construction and development efforts, noting the significant contributions of NGOs to the development and progress of Bangladesh. Engineer Tareen urged Anjuman Tajran and similar organizations to adopt government schools in their areas and contribute to their development. He stressed the necessity of

building an adequate number of toilets proportional to the student population in schools. Additionally, he emphasized that it is everyone's responsibility to provide facilities for special persons. The government, he mentioned, has issued instructions to construct ramps for disabled individuals in all government institutions. President of the Shelter Development Organization, Muhammad Rizwan Malik, briefed Secretary Services on the project's progress, reporting that nine toilets have been constructed across various institutions, including six in government schools and three in private schools. Additionally, four ramps have been built for special children in government schools.--APP

Universities vital for job creation, sustainable development

Dr. Mujaddid-ur-Rehman emphasized that stabilizing the country's economy is a collective responsibility

HAVELIAN : Vice Chancellor of Abbottabad University of Science and Technology Universities (AUST) Professor Dr. Malik Mujaddid-ur-Rehman Tuesday said that universities can play a crucial role in creating employment opportunities for students and contributing to Pakistan's sustainable development. He expressed these views while talking to the media here. Dr. Mujaddid-ur-Rehman emphasized that stabilizing the country's economy is a collective responsibility, as Pakistan grapples with severe economic challenges, universities have a significant role in providing respect-

able employment to students through initiatives like freelancing courses. He said that AUST has recently launched such courses, allowing participation from students in various departments, including IT, and children from different schools and colleges, the courses aim to help students secure respectable employment with excellent guidance from faculty. The Vice Chancellor highlighted that future employment will become a significant challenge, with many degree holders currently facing unemployment. He asserted that universities are also facing financial cri-

ses and in response to this economic challenge, AUST has taken the initiative to offer freelancing classes to provide employment opportunities to students. Dr. Mujaddid-ur-Rehman further pointed out that there are 262 universities in Pakistan, with over 2.8 million students enrolled. By promoting these students in various skills, universities can help them secure respectable employment. Abbottabad University of Science and Technology is playing a prominent role in this effort, aiming to equip students with the skills needed to thrive in the job market, adding he said.--APP

Optimized tobacco taxation can boost govt revenue

FAISAL SHEIKH

ISLAMABAD : Health advocates have proposed a 40 per cent increase in taxes on tobacco products in Pakistan to reduce consumption, increase revenue and bridge the gap in health costs associated with smoking. This proposed increase would translate into a substantial rise in government revenue, estimated to reach Rs336 billion from the current Rs240 billion. The intervention would also significantly impact health costs associated with smoking, projected to be reduced from Rs615 billion to Rs418.2 billion, effectively reducing the gap between revenue and health costs to Rs22 billion. Mr Murtaga

Solangi, Former Caretaker Minister of Information and Broadcasting of Pakistan, said all stakeholders must cast their differences aside and unite to protect our children and youth from an industry which is causing billions of losses to the national exchequer. Increasing tobacco taxes is such a step which should be regularly implemented. The low cigarette prices are the reason why children and young people initiate smoking. He added, that smoking-related illnesses and deaths incur substantial economic costs in Pakistan's GDP every year. These increasing health cost burdens encompass healthcare expenses, productivity losses due to illness and premature death, as well as

other indirect economic impacts. Malik Imran Ahmad, Country Head Campaign for Tobacco Free Kids (CTFK) said that the effectiveness of high tobacco taxation as a vital measure in combating tobacco consumption, as advocated by the World Health Organization (WHO). The industry can absorb at least a 40% increase in taxes, and the IMF and World Bank have recommended Pakistan introduce a single-tier tax structure for cigarettes. Despite efforts to increase taxes, low cigarette prices persist, contributing to sustained high consumption levels. By adopting these reforms, Pakistan can make cigarette taxation more effective and align it more closely with international best practices. He further added that the ciga-

rette prices in Pakistan are still cheaper than in many parts of the world. By utilizing price comparison as a reference point, policy-makers can better understand market dynamics and assess the potential of tax hikes on consumer behavior and government revenue. Such an approach allows for a more targeted and evidence-based strategy in formulating taxation policies aimed at curbing tobacco consumption while maximizing revenue for public health initiatives. Malik Imran said that the illicit market share is exaggerated by multinational companies. The industry has been found to under-report production to evade taxes, violating tax laws and prioritizing profits over public health.

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SCCI President boosts Pak Ethiopia trade, investment potential

President SCCI highlighted Ethiopia's attractiveness as an investment destination due to its robust economic growth

Commissioner Hanna Arayaslassie, President ECCSA Eng. Melaku Ezezew, Chairman Trade Development Authority of Pakistan Zubair Motivala, Ambassador of Ethiopia to Pakistan Jamal Beker and Ambassador of Pakistan to Ethiopia Atif Sharif. President SCCI Abdul Ghafoor Malik highlighted Ethiopia's attractiveness as an investment destination due to its robust economic growth, strategic location and favorable investment climate. President SCCI noted, "Ethiopia, with its rich history and large population, offers vast opportunities for Paki-

stani businesses seeking to explore new markets. Boasting one of the fastest-growing economies in Africa, Ethiopia has sustained an impressive average GDP growth rate of around 10% over the past decade." Malik also stressed the importance of addressing trade barriers and building closer business-to-business linkages to capitalize on the untapped potential. He acknowledged significant steps such as the 2023 trade agreement offering a 10-years tax break to Pakistani investors, the initiation of direct flights and the establishment of the Ethiopian Embassy

in Pakistan. President Malik further remarked on the industrial progress and vibrant SME culture of Sialkot, Pakistan known for high-quality products like sports goods, surgical instruments, workwear, gloves and leather products which hold considerable demand in Ethiopia and the African region. The forum set the stage for fruitful B2B meetings, fostering a new era of collaboration and mutual growth. "I am confident that today's forum will lead to long-term partnerships that benefit both our countries," he concluded.

Chairman WAPDA reviews progress on Tarbela 5th extension project

ISLAMABAD : Chairman WAPDA Engr Lt Gen Sajjad Ghani (Retd) reviewed progress on Tarbela 5th Extension Project during his visit to the Project, being constructed at Tunnel No. 5 of Tarbela Dam in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. The Chairman inspected construction activities on various sites, which also include the raised intake, the powerhouse and the tunnel, said a press release. Representatives of the Consultants and the Contractors briefed the Chairman about site-wise progress achieved so far. After the site visit, the Chairman also presided over a meeting at the Project office. A detailed presentation was made about the key components of the Project.--APP

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National Days and Armed Forces Days

May

- May 03/Poland National Day
- May 06/Bulgaria Armed Forces Day
- May 06/UAE Armed Forces Day
- May 07/Kazakhstan Armed Forces Day
- May 08/Czech Republic National Day
- May 09/European Union National Day
- May 17/Norway Constitution Day
- May 21/Hungary Armed Forces Day
- May 22/Yemen Republic
- Re-unification Day(National Day)
- May 24/Eritrea National Day
- May 25/Lebanon Liberation and Resistance Day
- May 25/Argentina National Day
- May 25/Jordan Independence Day
- May 28 /Azerbaijan Republic Day
- May 28/Ethiopia National Day
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Islamabad.....0321-5744480



ISLAMABAD: Ambassador of Nepal to Pakistan Tapas Adhikari briefing to Minister for Religious Affairs and Interfaith Harmony Chaudhry Salik Hussain alongwith Srilankan Minister for Religious and Cultural Affairs and Buddhhasana, Vidura Wickremanayake regarding cultural stall of Nepal on the occasion of Gandhara Symposium and exhibition of Pakistan's Gandhara heritage on Vesak Day 2024 at Ministry of Foreign Office at Federal Capital. —ONLINE

Mass rallies organised to celebrate Youm-e-Takbeer

RAWALPINDI: Rawalpindi District Administration here on Tuesday organized a rally to celebrate 'Youm-e-Takbeer' and pay rich tributes to all those who made Pakistan an atomic power. The rally was led by Deputy Commissioner (DC) Rawalpindi, Hasan Waqar Cheema. A large number of people belonging to different walks of life including students, district administration officers, and officials, carrying national flags, banners inscribed with 'Youm-e-Takbeer' slogans, and nuclear blasts, participated in the rally to celebrate the day with immense zeal and enthusiasm. The participants of the rally raised the slogans 'Takbeer and Pakistan Zindabad'. On May 28, a nuclear explosion

made the country's defense system impregnable, the DC said. Hasan Waqar Cheema addressing the participants said, "Today we salute the heroes who played an important role in making Pakistan a nuclear power." The nation is proud of its heroes who have rendered their services for the security of the country, the DC said adding, that no sacrifice would be spared for the security and defense of the nation.

Another rally was held on the occasion of 'Youm-e-Takbeer' from the main city area. The participants of the rally were carrying national flags. They also raised slogans in support of the Pakistan Army. People belonging to different walks of life attended the rally. The

participants said that it was a day of great joy and happiness for them. The citizens on the occasion said that the explosion of nuclear weapons by Pakistan had created a balance of nuclear power in the region. To celebrate May 28 in memory of the historic nuclear tests, Pakistan celebrates this day as 'Youm-e-Takbeer' every year to pay rich tributes to all those who made Pakistan an atomic power. Like other parts of the country, 'Youm-e-Takbeer' is also being celebrated in the Rawalpindi division with great national enthusiasm. The day dawned with special prayers in mosques for the progress and prosperity of Pakistan, independence of the Indian Illegally Occupied Jammu

and Kashmir, and eternal peace of all the martyrs of Pakistan. Rich tributes were paid to the political leadership including former Prime Ministers Muhammad Nawaz Sharif and Zulfikar Ali Bhutto, scientists and officials of all the relevant organizations for making Pakistan an atomic power by the speakers in the rallies and debate competitions. A local PML-N leader, Ch Tayyab said that Pakistan's defense was made invincible on May 28, 1998. He said it was a day to pledge to work tirelessly for the progress and prosperity of Pakistan and stand shoulder to shoulder with the brave security forces of Pakistan to destroy nefarious designs of the inimical forces. —Agencies

Gilani felicitates Nawaz Sharif

ISLAMABAD: Acting President Syed Yusuf Raza Gilani on Tuesday congratulated Muhammad Nawaz Sharif on his unopposed election as the president of the Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N). The acting president, in a statement, reiterated to work with Muhammad Nawaz Sharif to promote democracy in the country. Expressing good wishes for him, the acting president said that Nawaz Sharif rendered numerous services for strengthening the democracy in the country. —APP

PHA organizes rally to celebrate 'Youm-e-Takbeer'

RAWALPINDI: Parks and Horticulture Authority (PHA) Rawalpindi here on Tuesday organized a rally in connection with 'Youm-e-Takbeer'. The rally was led by Director General (DG) PHA, Ahmed Hasan Ranjha. PHA staff, students and citizens belonging to different walks of life participated in the rally which started from PHA Head Office and concluded at Liaquat Bagh, Murree Road. The DG on the occasion said that Pakistan became a nuclear power on May 28, 1998, and Pakistan's prestige and integrity at the global level increased and Pakistan's defense was made impregnable. —APP

Atta Tarar greets nation on Yaum-e-Takbeer

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Information, Broadcasting, National Heritage and Culture Attaullah Tarar on Tuesday congratulated the nation on the 26th anniversary of Yaum-e-Takbeer. "Twenty-six years ago, Pakistan got the honour of becoming the first nuclear power in the Muslim world and the 7th nuclear power in the world," the minister said in a statement. He



said that Pakistan's defense became impregnable that day. Yaum-e-Takbeer was a golden and memorable day

in history, on this day Pakistan announced that no one can enslave it, he remarked. On this day, the then Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif by rejecting pressure, proved to the world that Pakistanis cannot be coerced. "Every individual who created, nurtured and implemented the nuclear program is a hero of the nation whom we salute," Attaullah Tarar added. The minister reiterated the commitment that there will be no compromise on Pakistan's independence,

sovereignty and national interests. "On this day, we salute the late Dr. Abdul Qadeer Khan, the architect of the nuclear program, his team and all the scientists," he said. On the occasion of May 28, the people involved in May 9 arson, have hatched a new conspiracy but they will never succeed. He said by distorting the history of 1971, they have stooped so low that they were attacking the integrity of the country.

Pak reviving belt and road initiative projects

ISLAMABAD: Federal minister for Planning, Development and Special Initiatives, Ahsan Iqbal said here on Tuesday that the incumbent government was hopeful to inject some fresh momentum into projects that fall under China's Belt and Road Initiative (BRI), as it tries to boost the country's troubled economy. The government is looking forward to joint ventures for renewable energy projects, agriculture collaboration and possibly enticing some Chinese companies to relocate to Pakistan. Ahsan Iqbal, who also co-heads the committee responsible for the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor said in an interview with Bloomberg. "Yeah, I'm very hopeful because I was there in China recently and I had meetings with their senior leadership...So I see great interest on the Chinese side to revive the momentum for CPEC and also to take it into the second phase," he said. Pakistan was seen as a flagship destination for BRI projects, with CPEC – which includes a port in the southern town of Gwadar and new power plants – the crown jewel. The progress on new projects stalled in the aftermath of the COVID-19 pandemic and amid Pakistan's on-going economic difficulties that have required the International Monetary Fund's intervention.

Int'l conference on "Emerging

ISLAMABAD: The Pakistan Academy of Sciences in collaboration with the Chinese Academy of Sciences is organizing the International Conference on "Emerging Issues of Environmental Degradation, Natural Hazards, and Water Security" from June 02-04. According to an official source, this event will bring together renowned scientists, and academics from across the world to debate urgent environmental issues. The conference intends to address crucial challenges such as environmental degradation, natural disasters, and water security while encouraging debate and collaboration to establish long-term solutions. The keynote speakers, panel discussions, and technical workshops will allow exchanging innovative research, best practices, and policy suggestions. This meeting marks a substantial attempt to address environmental challenges via worldwide collaboration and scientific development. The main objective of this international conference is to unite leading experts, researchers, policymakers, and industry professionals to exchange knowledge, research findings, and practical solutions regarding the pressing challenges of environmental degradation, natural hazards, and water security. It is envisaged that this conference will enhance global understanding to develop sustainable strategies and bridge the gap between research and policy implementation to address the interconnected issues of environmental degradation, natural hazards, and water security. Secretary General, PAS, Dr. Aslam Baig and Focal Person, PAS, Dr. Tasawar Hayat will be the chief organizers while President PAS, Dr. Kausar Abdulla Malik will be the Patron in Chief. The conference will be attended by experts from Pakistan, China, and Malaysia who will share their insights on the emerging issues related to environmental degradation and its impacts on human life. —DNA

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Briefs

PM takes notice of fire erupted again at Margallah Hills

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Tuesday took notice of the fire which erupted again at the Margallah Hills, instructing the authorities concerned to extinguish it before spreading further. The prime minister asked the relevant departments to immediately mobilize their teams to control the fire which broke out again a day after it was extinguished through a joint operation by the Pakistan Army, NDMA, Islamabad administration and the climate change ministry. Prime Minister Shehbaz also directed the departments concerned to control the fire by ensuring the safety of human lives.

NDMA warns of deceptive website FERU

ISLAMABAD: National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA) on Tuesday warned the masses to be aware of a website titled "FEDERAL EMERGENCY RESPONSE UNIT-PAKISTAN" which was falsely representing the organisation. The website has been unlawfully advertising job vacancies and soliciting application processing fees, a news release said. "We strongly advise public to exercise due diligence and verify the legitimacy of any employment offers through NDMA'S official website and other contact channels. <http://www.ndma.gov.pk/> The official website of NDMA Pak is the sole source of authentic information regarding job opportunities and other related information," the NDMA said. The NDMA appreciated public cooperation in remaining vigilant against such practices.—APP

Police conducted search operations

RAWALPINDI: Police have conducted search operations in Saddar Barooni, Kalar Syedan and Race Course and adjoining areas to ensure law and order, said a police spokesman here on Tuesday. He informed that Rawalpindi district police, women police and other law enforcement agencies under the supervision of senior police officers participated in the search operations. He said that Rawalpindi district police on the directives of Senior Superintendent of Police, Operations conducted search operations and inspected 52 houses, collected data of 06 tenants, 18 shops, besides checking 121 persons. The supremacy of the law would be ensured and the crackdown against the lawbreakers would be continued, SSP Operations said.—APP

09 gamblers apprehended in successful operation

RAWALPINDI: In a successful operation, Police have apprehended nine gamblers and recovered bet money Rs 30,000, 07 mobile phone, 04 gold rings and other valuables from their possession here on Tuesday. Taxila police during course of action conducted raid and arrested those who were identified as Riasat, Nizakat, Ameer, Qasim, Mushtaq, Tariq, Sarfaraz, Irfan, and Kamran. Police have registered separate cases against all of them and started further investigation. The commendable efforts of the SHO Taxila and the police team were lauded by SP Pothohar, who emphasized that gambling is root cause of other crimes. He further asserted that those involved in such illicit activities will not evade legal consequences, reaffirming the commitment to continue taking action against gamblers.—APP



ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Interior Mohsin Naqvi shaking hands with the personnel of Emergency Services at CDA Headquarters.—DNA

PDMA issues advisory for farmers, herders, general public

The Meteorological Department has issued a weather alert indicating that weak westerly winds are expected to impact the upper regions of the country starting May 28. This weather system is anticipated to bring intermittent rain, thunderstorms, and strong winds from the evening of May 28 to June 1

MEHTAB PIRZADA

ISLAMABAD: The Provincial Disaster Management Authority (PDMA) on Tuesday issued a comprehensive advisory urging farmers, herders, tourists, and the general public to take essential precautionary measures in light of the anticipated dust storms and severe weather conditions. According to the details, the Meteorological Department has issued a weather alert indicating that weak westerly winds are expected to impact the upper regions of the country starting May 28. This weather system is anticipated to bring intermittent

rain, thunderstorms, and strong winds from the evening of May 28 to June 1.

The regions likely to be affected include Chitral, Dir, Swat, Abbottabad, Mansehra, Haripur, Kohistan, Shangla, Buner, Malakand, Waziristan, Kohat, Lakki Marwat, Bajaur, Mohmand, Karak, Khyber, Peshawar, Mardan, and Kurram. Heavy rainfall during this period may trigger landslides in the upper regions of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, specifically in Chitral, Dir, Swat, Kohistan, Shangla, Buner, Mansehra, and Abbottabad. Strong winds and thunderstorms could damage structures such as electric poles,

signboards, billboards, and solar panels. Local administrations were advised to utilize available resources to plan and control traffic in sensitive and tourist areas. Ensuring the safety of residents and visitors by protecting them from weak structures, advertising boards, electric poles, and solar panels is paramount. In urban areas, steps should be taken to clear stormwater drains of any obstacles to prevent flooding caused by rain, ensuring that water flow remains unobstructed. The public is urged to remain vigilant and follow the guidelines issued by local authorities to minimize potential damage and ensure safety

during this period of adverse weather conditions. Farmers were strongly advised to protect their crops through timely harvesting and safe storage practices. Measures should be taken to mitigate the adverse effects of dust storms on agricultural produce. Herders should also adopt necessary precautions to ensure the safety of their livestock. The tourists were also advised those who will travel on provincial and national highways, especially in areas at risk or already affected by severe weather, should stay informed about the latest weather conditions. The National Highway Authority (NHA) and other relevant local authorities

will guide to safe waiting areas to ensure traveler safety. The PDMA also issued special directives for emergency services, including Rescue 1122, Fire Brigade, Ambulance, and Civil Defense, and ordered them to remain on high alert and fully equipped to respond. Law enforcement agencies, in collaboration with local administration, will regulate level crossings and manage traffic diversions, especially with the potential for rapid water flow in storm drains. The PDMA's emergency operations center is fully operational. The public is encouraged to report any incidents or emergencies to the toll-free helpline at 1700.

Salik for promotion of unity to fight extremism, injustice

The two-day event brought together religious leaders and experts from Nepal, Sri Lanka, Thailand, and Vietnam, besides scholars, diplomats, historians, and art enthusiasts to provide them a platform to exchange ideas and foster connections

FAISAL SHEIKH

ISLAMABAD: Minister for Religious Affairs and Interfaith Harmony Chaudhary Salik Hussain on Tuesday emphasized the concerted efforts to promote tolerance and understanding as well as unity to fight the menace of extremism posing threats to the world's peace and security. "In today's world, extremism poses one of the most potent threats to peace and security... Let us promote tolerance and understanding recognizing that our diversity is our strength. We must stand united against extremism and injustice," the minister said addressing a symposium titled "From Gandhara to the World: The

Legacy of Gandharan Buddhism" held by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs here in connection with Vesak Day. The two-day event brought together religious leaders and experts from Nepal, Sri Lanka, Thailand, and Vietnam, besides scholars, diplomats, historians, and art enthusiasts to provide them a platform to exchange ideas and foster connections. The minister said that the diverse gathering representing different countries and cultures underscored the deep and enduring ties between the nations, besides serving as a reminder of the profound connections that unite them in shared aspirations. Highlighting the significance of intercultural and interfaith

dialogue, Minister Salik said the Vesak festival reminded us of the profound wisdom and compassion that underpinned Buddhist teachings. In his address, Minister of Buddhasasana, Religious and Cultural Affairs of Sri Lanka Vidura Wikramanayaka called for harnessing the values of Buddha and promoting cultural diplomacy to bring the people and nations together. "Let us make Gandhara a bridge to serve for the purpose... We have to make Gandhara a living legacy," he remarked. He said Gandhara was a focal point of human civilization from where the message of Buddha was disseminated to other parts of the world.

Public outrage against IPPs is growing

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Dr. Muhammad Hanif Mughal, Chairman of Pakistan Tehreek-e-Shadbad, said on Tuesday that public anger against independent power producers (IPPs) is growing due to frequent tariff hikes. For decades, IPPs have been looting the masses in the name of business. Now that they have earned trillions of rupees, they should reduce their charges; otherwise, they and their political facilitators may soon face the wrath of the public, he said. Dr. Hanif Mughal told party workers that we cannot allow IPPs to make extraordinary returns, which have

depleted the nation and the masses. He warned that they must provide some relief to the people, or else they may face severe consequences in the event of public backlash. He said that it is surprising that many people still consider the facilitators of private power plants and those who extend their disastrous contracts to be leaders instead of enemies of the country. According to official data, the IPP bill is the third largest debt owed to the government after defence expenditures and foreign debt repayments. However, despite paying this amount and continuously increasing the cost of electricity, the circular debt is increasing to become a

heavy burden on the national treasury. According to Dr. Hanif Mughal, due to their aligned interests and lack of concern for the plight of the masses, no major political party will ever speak against the plunder of IPPs. He stated that although such agreements with IPPs are impossible to cancel or amend, they cannot protect IPPs and their owners from violent public reaction. A minor political party has accused the ruling elite of sucking the blood of the people, as they own 70 percent of IPPs. Meanwhile, other sources assert that the leaders of major political parties or their partners own all but a few power plants.

Rana Tanveer pays tribute to nation's heroes

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Industry, Production, and Food Security, Rana Tanveer on Tuesday paid tribute to the nation's heroes on the occasion of Youm-e-Takbeer. "I pay tribute to the senior leadership of Pakistan Muslim League, especially former Prime Minister Muhammad Nawaz Sharif, senior military leadership and scientists of Pakistan," said Rana Tanveer. According to the Ministry of Industry statement, due to his determined will and courage, the defense of Pakistan became impregnable for ever. He said that Pakistan's political, military, and scientific leadership came together to achieve this milestone, making May 28 a proud day for the nation.—DNA

Youm-e-Takbeer rally held in Murree

RAWALPINDI: In commemoration of the historic nuclear tests conducted by Pakistan on May 28, 1998, Murree administration organized a rally here on Tuesday. According to the details the rally was conducted from GPO Chowk to Marhaba Chowk led by Deputy Commissioner Murree Agha Zaeher Abbas Shirazi along with Assistant Commissioner Murree Captain (ret) Abdul Wahab Khan. A large number of officers, personnel and civil society members of various district departments participated in the rally. The participants carried national flags, banners and placards with slogans about Youm-e-Takbeer written on them. The participants of the rally were chanting Pakistan Zindabad slogans. Addressing on the occasion, the deputy commissioner said Takbeer Day reminds the Pakistani nation of the unprecedented unity to make the defense of the country invincible. It is the day to renew the pledge to work hard collectively for the security and prosperity of the country.—APP

Pakistan, Cambodia sign MoU on trade

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan and Cambodia on Tuesday signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) on the establishment of a joint trade committee. The deal was inked in Phnom Penh between Cambodian Minister of Commerce Cham Nimul and Pakistani Ambassador to Cambodia Zaeheruddin Babar Thaheem, Xinhua reported while quoting a news release from Cambodia's Ministry of Commerce. "This MoU will significantly contribute to the elevation of the two countries' relations, particularly on trade and economic cooperation," Nimul said at the event. "The joint trade committee established under this memorandum will serve as a mechanism that allows both sides to explore ways to create favourable conditions for businesses and investors and to diversify economies, expand production bases, and foster bilateral trade," she added. Under the MoU, both countries will work together and actively engage the private sectors, including chambers of commerce and business associations, to promote trade and economic activities, the news release said.—APP

MOST EXPERIENCED MANUFACTURERS & EXPORTERS OF MARTIAL ARTS UNIFORMS IN PAKISTAN

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

Warmongering Stoltenberg still stoking crisis

FIVE months away from his delayed retirement from the post, NATO Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg has called on the alliance's members to ease the prohibition on Kyiv using weapons they supply to it to strike military targets in Russia, showing his intention of stoking the crisis as a legacy to his successor. In an interview, the warmongering NATO chief said that Ukrainians have the right to defend themselves and that denying them the possibility of using Western-provided weapons "against legitimate military targets on Russian territory makes it very hard" for them to do so. The strong opposition to his remarks, even from within the transatlantic security alliance, should serve to remind the NATO chief that his aggressive worldview is not shared by all. "Stoltenberg should either retract his statement, apologize, or resign," said Deputy Prime Minister of Italy Matteo Salvini. "NATO cannot force us to kill in Russia, nor can anyone compel us to send Italian soldiers to fight or die in Ukraine." That rebuke is fully justified, as the move urged by Stoltenberg, if taken, will instantly expand the Ukraine crisis to the rest of Europe. Moscow has warned the West that it is risking a global war over Ukraine and that a direct conflict between Russia and the North Atlantic Treaty Organization would mean the planet is one step away from "World War III".

That is why even the Joe Biden administration, which has demonstrated it has no qualms about starting and prolonging conflicts, has always been cautious about the reckless proposal Stoltenberg has put forward. Stoltenberg, who saw NATO suspend all its cooperation with Russia shortly after taking office in 2014, and swell its ranks four times since then – Montenegro joining in 2017, North Macedonia in 2020, Finland in 2023 and Sweden this year – is in a better position than most others to know that the ongoing Ukraine crisis is to a large extent attributable to the actions of the organization he is the belligerent head of. Instead of looking to worsen the crisis, Stoltenberg should reflect on why the so-called defensive security organization he heads has made the region where 30 out of its 32 members are located an increasingly dangerous place to live. As a stooge of the US, he has allowed NATO to become overbearingly bellicose, expansionist and interventionist, and not only in Europe as the organization now has its sights set on the Asia-Pacific and other new frontiers such as cyberspace and outer space. The Ukraine crisis can only be resolved by political means. The tragedy should spur the European countries to weigh the gains and losses of their security strategies over the past 10 years. During that period of time, NATO was turned from an organization whose purpose was collective defense into a de facto gang of ruffians doing Washington's bidding. Stoltenberg will be remembered as a key figure in this process. And as a key agent for the shattering of the postwar security mechanism for Europe, as a result of its surrendering its strategic autonomy to the US.



Sino-Arab spirit of solidarity will carry forward

CHINA and Arab states enjoy a long history of friendly exchanges. But their relations are now the best they have ever been, the two sides having nurtured a friendly partnership featuring solidarity and mutual assistance, equality and mutual benefit, and inclusiveness and mutual learning. China has been the largest trading partner of Arab countries for many years in a row, and it has signed cooperation documents on the Belt and Road Initiative with all 22 Arab countries and the Arab League. The two sides have implemented more than 200 large-scale cooperation projects under the BRI framework, benefitting people on both sides. In December 2022, the two sides held their first summit and agreed to make every effort to build a China-Arab community with a shared future, and planned the blueprint for the development of China-Arab relations. The upcoming 10th ministerial meeting of the China-Arab States Cooperation Forum that opens in Beijing on Thursday is of great significance, as it is the first since the China-Arab Summit two years ago. This year is the 20th anniversary of the establishment of the China-Arab States Cooperation Forum. Over the past 20 years, the forum has sought to strengthen dialogue and cooperation between the two sides for the purpose of promoting peace and development. In an increasingly turbulent world, the two sides, which share similar views on regional and global issues, have supported each other on their respective development paths and sought to work together to jointly safeguard the common interests of the Global South. Hence, it can be expected that the upcoming gathering will not only help expand new horizons for China-Arab cooperation in a wide range of fields but also facilitate communication and forge consensus on issues of mutual concern.

With the Gaza conflict raging and wreaking havoc in the Middle East, it is anticipated that the two sides will voice a joint stance on the Palestine issue. In stark contrast to the United States which has been the source of trouble and strife in the Middle East, China has always been committed to building peace and stability in the region and resolving differences and defusing conflicts through dialogues and negotiations. It is expected that at their meeting in Beijing this week, the two sides will enhance their communication and exchanges and carry forward the spirit of China-Arab friendship by strengthening their solidarity. The Palestine issue is fundamental to peace and stability in the Middle East. The injustices done to the Palestinian people should end immediately and their demand for an independent state should be met. It is to be hoped that the meeting in Beijing will help give greater momentum to the efforts to end the ongoing conflict in Gaza and build long-term stability in the Middle East.

Cost Paid by Heroes of 28th May

Qamar Bashir



The tenure of first hero Mr. Nawaz Sharif's as Prime Minister of Pakistan was abruptly interrupted on October 12, 1999, when General Pervez Musharraf orchestrated a military coup, relegating Sharif from the apex of power to the depths of political obscurity transforming him from head of the government to an alleged hijacker within the span of a single day. Mr. Nawaz Sharif was swiftly apprehended, stripped of his office, and incarcerated. Subsequent legal proceedings saw him convicted on charges of hijacking and terrorism in April 2000, resulting in a life sentence

ON May 28th, Nawab Kaifi, a distinguished veteran in the realms of production, acting, journalism, and media ownership, shared a poignant song commemorating the historic atomic bomb tests of Chagai. The song vividly depicted scenes of horsemen and common folk, adorned with flags, converging towards the blast sites, evoking a powerful imagery of unity and national pride. As a fellow producer hailing from Balochistan, I couldn't help but query the portrayal of horsemen, seemingly transporting the event back to antiquity, and the depiction of missile firings in a setting devoid of missile launch facilities. In response to my inquiry, Mr. Kaifi promptly clarified that the song, titled "MOJZA," was a recipient of the National Award. It was a collaborative effort supported by ISPR and championed by Nawaz Sharif, the Prime Minister at the time of the nuclear tests in 1998. In the video, two pivotal figures in orchestrating this historic achievement were depicted: Nawaz Sharif, the Prime Minister at the time, and Dr. Abdul Qadeer Khan. Both of these individuals played instrumental roles in realising this monumental feat, which fortified the defence capabilities of the nation. Remarkably, the very country which had endured the scars of three previous wars found itself transformed after May 29, 1998. With its newfound nuclear deterrent, Pakistan's sovereignty and territorial integrity stood fortified, deterring any potential aggressors from daring to challenge its defences. Thus, the sacrifices and efforts of Nawaz Sharif, Dr. Abdul Qadeer Khan, and countless others ushered in an era of unparalleled security and resilience for the nation, forever altering its geopolitical landscape. However, their contributions were soon overshadowed by the ominous spectre of retribution, serving as a cautionary tale for the 250 million citizens of Pakistan and the global community at large. The tenure of first hero Mr. Nawaz Sharif's as Prime Minister of Pakistan was abruptly interrupted on October 12, 1999, when General Pervez Musharraf orchestrated a military coup, relegating Sharif from the apex of power to the depths of political obscurity transforming him from head of the government to an alleged hi-

jacker within the span of a single day. Mr. Nawaz Sharif was swiftly apprehended, stripped of his office, and incarcerated. Subsequent legal proceedings saw him convicted on charges of hijacking and terrorism in April 2000, resulting in a life sentence. The weight of this verdict, coupled with the ignominy of imprisonment, bore heavily upon Sharif, marking a stark reversal of fortune for the once-powerful leader. However, in December 2000 Sharif was granted clemency and permitted to go into exile thus teaching him a good lesson to portray as a hero. The narrative of Dr. Abdul Qadeer Khan, often hailed as the father of Pakistan's atomic bomb, is a poignant tale of heroism overshadowed by adversity. His unwavering dedication and groundbreaking contributions to Pakistan's nuclear program earned him reverence and admiration across the nation, as his efforts culminated in Pakistan becoming the first Muslim country to possess nuclear capabilities. However, amidst the accolades lay a darker undercurrent of humiliation and persecution. Dr. Khan's legacy was marred by coerced confessions and relentless surveillance, casting a shadow over his towering achievements. In a moment of poignant reflection, he lamented returning from a life of comfort and acclaim in Holland to devote his intellect and energies to his homeland, only to be met with ingratitude and scorn. His words serve as a sobering reminder of how easily we can turn our heroes into zeroes, tarnishing their legacies with the weight of indifference and betrayal. One person who was not in the video was Zulfiqar Ali Bhutto, a statesman of remarkable vision and determination who played a pivotal role in laying the cornerstone of Pakistan's nuclear research and development program. His unwavering commitment to national security was underscored by a resolute vow to pursue atomic capabilities, even at the cost of enduring profound sacrifices, famously stating that Pakistan would "eat grass" if necessary to attain nuclear power. Bhutto's aspirations were abruptly curtailed by a military intervention by General Zia ul Haq on 5th July 1977. On April 4, 1979, Bhutto met his tragic demise, as he was executed by hanging—a verdict that remains

contested. Zulfiqar Ali Bhutto, the third most significant figure in Pakistan's odyssey to nuclear prowess was deprived of his life, rather than to be cherished and held in high esteem. Pakistan's prime minister in the late 1980s and early 1990s was Benazir Bhutto. She was the first Muslim female Prime Minister and one of few worldwide. She was Prime Minister twice: 1988–1990 and 1993–1996 and relentlessly supported the nuclear programme. She embraced Shahadat in a Rawalpindi political rally suicide attack on December 27, 2007. Imran Khan is one of Pakistan's most famous cricketers and regarded as one of the finest all-rounders in the sport's history who founded the Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) in 1996, and after winning the general election in July 2018, became Pakistan's 22nd Prime Minister and is now behind bars. A nation that respects its heroes, both civilian and military, fosters a strong sense of unity, pride, and national identity. Honouring those who have made significant contributions through acts of bravery, innovation, or service reinforces the values and principles upon which a nation is built. This recognition encourages others to strive for excellence, promoting a culture of respect and admiration for those who positively impact the country's progress. Conversely, disrespecting heroes can lead to a loss of national pride and disillusionment and decline in motivation as future generations may be discouraged from pursuing paths of service and innovation. To undo the harm caused by disrespecting heroes, a nation must publicly acknowledge past mistakes and offer sincere apologies, establishing systems to honour and commemorate their contributions. Educational reforms should integrate the stories and achievements of national heroes into the curriculum, ensuring that future generations respect and learn from their legacies. Community engagement, robust support for veterans and contributors, and promoting positive narratives through media and public platforms are essential steps. By taking these measures, a nation can repair psychological and societal damage, fostering renewed unity, pride, and motivation for collective progress and development.

Raisi's death triggers regime crisis as Iranians celebrate

Baria Alamuddin

The incompetent spectacle around Raisi's death – with professional rescue teams struggling to be allowed access amid a clumsy media crackdown – sparked a firestorm of conspiracy theories among Iranians over whether his death was an inside job. Vladimir Putin was unable to resist remarking that the two accompanying helicopters that survived the incident were Russian-made. Only the aging American craft crashed. Online posts compared the supreme leader's stoic demeanor at the funeral of Raisi...

PRESIDENT Ebrahim Raisi's sudden death last week illustrated how hollowed-out at the top the Islamic Republic had become. It is not just that the list of those slated to replace him looks starkly feeble, but also that many believed that the complex shenanigans for elevating the unpopular Raisi to the presidency in 2021 marked him out as a likely shoo-in as supreme leader after Ayatollah Ali Khamenei's long-anticipated passing. This leaves the latter's son, Mojtaba Khamenei, as the most widely talked-about next supreme leader – an unaccountable, hereditary succession that would undercut the ayatollahs' arguments for deposing the shah's monarchy in the first place. Mojtaba is a shadowy figure, known for enforcing his father's agenda and managing his sprawling financial empire from behind the scenes. "The winner from Raisi's death is Mojtaba," said a former Iranian minister. The incompetent spectacle around Raisi's death – with professional rescue teams struggling to be allowed access amid a clumsy media crackdown – sparked a firestorm of conspiracy theories among Iranians over whether his death was an inside job. Vladimir Putin was unable to resist remarking that the two accompanying helicopters that survived the incident were Russian-made. Only the aging American craft crashed. Online posts compared the supreme leader's stoic demeanor at the funeral of Raisi and Foreign Minister Hossein Amir-Abdollahian with his uncontrollable sobbing at the 2020 memorial for Qassem Soleimani, along with the conspicuous failure to accord Raisi the epithet of "ayatollah" in Khamenei's perfunctory eulogy, which paid far more attention to events in Gaza. "The administration of the country will not be disrupted at all," was Khamenei's dismissive assessment of the impact of Raisi's absence. There were widespread reports of fireworks parties and Iranians celebrating behind closed doors. What sort of regime sends their president and foreign minister up in a 50-year-old helicopter, through remote

and treacherous mountains in dense fog, without any sort of security protocols – at a time of heightened threats from Israel and other enemies? What sort of regime then takes 17 hours to find its missing president using chaotic ad hoc search parties? A state that bankrolls its paramilitary activities through selling military drones to Russia had to humiliate beg Turkey for a spare drone with which to locate its lost leader. There were widespread reports of fireworks parties and Iranians celebrating behind closed doors. Among older generations, Raisi is best known for dispatching thousands of political prisoners to their deaths in the 1980s. Among a younger generation, Raisi is associated with the 2022 hijab crackdowns and widespread killings, detentions, torture and rape in the aftermath of MahsaAmini's brutal death. As one commentator noted, Raisi's ascent to the presidency "was not a function of any discernible charisma or political skill," but rather "mindless loyalty to the ruling system" and "a track record of unsentimental brutality." How Khamenei stage manages the upcoming presidential elections will speak volumes about how the country's leadership is to be configured. If he desires to impose his own choice and banish all other candidates, that will seriously depress voter turnout, while reminding Iranians that their only prospects for actual change are through vigorously dismantling the entire system. Conversely, Khamenei's occasional past allowance of candidates from the reformist fringes could at least offer a veneer of legitimacy at a critical moment. Few Iranians will feel motivated to vote for hard-liner establishment candidates like caretaker president Mohammed Mokher or previous failed candidate Saeed Jalili. Weaker figures in the positions of supreme leader and president would further empower the Revolutionary Guards, auguring a military dictatorship and more overseas aggression. The succession of "Islamic resistance" warlords paying their respects at Raisi's funeral served as a reminder of Tehran's regional mafioso role. They included Hamas' Ismael Haniyeh, Hezbollah's Naim-

Qassem and representatives from the Houthis and Palestinian Islamic Jihad, while some notorious underlings like Bashar Assad and several Iraqi paramilitary leaders were conspicuously absent. The Arab world will be closely gauging whether the incoming regime will be more or less confrontational. As well as Iran's regional proxies upping their attacks on Israeli and Western targets in recent weeks, the ayatollahs have continued to accelerate their nuclear activities toward the threshold of being capable of deploying atomic weapons. Soaring regional tensions and domestic uncertainties may indeed prompt Iran's theocracy to make the final dash toward nuclear breakout. "We have no decision to build a nuclear bomb but should Iran's existence be threatened, there will be no choice but to change our military doctrine," Kamal Kharazi, an adviser to Khamenei, warned this month. With Iran such a significant piece in the regional jigsaw, the Arab world will be closely gauging whether the incoming regime will be more or less confrontational. The presence of several senior figures from a number of Arab states at Raisi's funeral hence sent an important message about how Iran, if it were to put aside overseas warmongering, could enjoy a transformed relationship with its neighbors. Given that Iran's incoming leaders are predicted to be weak, unpopular figures, one of the smartest things they could do for the sake of the regime's survival would be to decisively mend fences with neighboring states and demobilize transnational paramilitaries, while defanging their nuclear program and stepping back from the brink of triggering a futile and ruinously destructive war. Iran is blessed with millennia of cultural heritage, a youthful population and immense resources. The only factor holding it back is its dire leadership. The ayatollahs' tyranny has never looked more fragile – affording millions of Iranians hope that these accumulating symptoms of regime disintegration herald the beginning of the end of their hated theocratic dictatorship.

– Sourced by Arab news

Briefs

**Nawaz Sharif
elected as
PML-N head...**

FROM PAGE 01

"Four to five people compromised the people's mandate," he said while referring to his ouster after being elected by the masses. The newly elected PML-N president said that he felt pride that his party members had never cared about any difficult situation. He also hailed his brother, PM Shehbaz for his "resilience" as he always stood with him, saying that many people tried to create rifts between them by offering Shehbaz the post of prime minister but he didn't give into it. "Shehbaz Sharif said, 'I reject the top ministry being given in exchange for disloyalty'," Nawaz said. He also congratulated his daughter, Punjab Chief Minister Mariam Nawaz, for keeping the party active. Turning his guns towards the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) founder, Nawaz asked which of the cases against Imran Khan were fake. He also asked Imran whether he was the "third force" behind his ouster.

**Spain, Ireland,
Norway...**

FROM PAGE 01

part of the territory Israel seized in 1967 in the Arab-Israeli War. The leaders of Spain, Ireland, Malta and Slovenia said in March that they were considering recognising a Palestinian state as "a positive contribution" towards ending the war in Gaza. As Oslo's recognition took effect, Foreign Minister Espen Barth Eide said in a statement, "For more than 30 years, Norway has been one of the strongest advocates for a Palestinian state. Today, when Norway officially recognises Palestine as a state, is a milestone in the relationship between Norway and Palestine." Ireland's cabinet approved formal recognition shortly after the Palestinian flag was raised in Dublin outside the seat of the Irish parliament.

**Shehbaz
seeks...**

FROM PAGE 01

they would be taken to the logical end. Vowing to hold a monthly review of the power theft situation, he asked the provincial governments, law enforcement agencies, and other departments to extend their support in the anti-power theft drive in the national interest and for the country's progress. The prime minister told the participants of the meeting that the government in no way would tolerate the over-billing. He directed to accelerate the privatisation process of the power distribution companies by engaging the experts and formulating a strategy to solarise the tube wells in Balochistan. During the briefing on load management and power theft issue, the participants were informed that under a joint strategy formulated following a conversation between Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Chief Minister Ali Amin Gandapur and federal minister for power, it had been agreed to reduce load shedding and line losses and ensure recovery of dues from defaulters in the province.

**PTI rejects
venomous...**

FROM PAGE 01

who was still carrying a memo of dictatorship in his neck. He pointed out that whenever Bhutto's political heirs turned their faces towards history, it sent them back red-faced with slaps of facts, adding that Zardari's followers especially Sherry who was trying to teach history lessons needed to recall their leader Bhutto's complicit role in the fall of Dhaka. PTI Spokesperson recalled that PTI Founding Chairman and PTI briefly mentioned the events of the 70s with the purpose to take guidance from history and avoid repeating the painful history that led to disintegration of Pakistan. "If Imran Khan is not a patriot, then there is no patriot in this country, and if Imran Khan is not loyal to Pakistan, then those who swear loyalty to the constitution in the name of Allah and openly flout it are not even close to him," he added.

HEC and POA partner to celebrate Olympic Day

Mr. Memon emphasized that these celebrations will not only promote the Olympic Movement across Pakistan's universities but also inspire students to adopt healthy lifestyles

DNA

KARACHI: The Higher Education Commission, Pakistan (HEC) and the Pakistan Olympic Association (POA) are joining forces to organize Olympic Day celebrations across Pakistan's Higher Education Institutions (HEIs). This initiative aligns with the visionary policies of Prof. Dr. Mukhtar Ahmed, Chairman HEC, to provide exceptional educational and research opportunities to the youth and encourage their participation in extracurricular activities.

Under the guidance of Prof. Dr. Mukhtar Ahmed, HEC's Director Sports and Co-curricular Activities Division, Mr. Javed Ali Memon issued a circular to all HEIs across

the country, urging them to actively participate in the Olympic Day celebrations scheduled for June 20-23.

The circular states that the Pakistan Olympic Association is planning a comprehensive program of sports and athlete-related activities across the country in connection with Olympic Day celebrations. "These activities include sports events, tree plantation drives, cultural performances,

photo exhibitions, and educational seminars on the benefits of sports", the circular added. Mr. Memon emphasized that these celebrations will not only promote the Olympic Movement across Pakistan's universities but also inspire students to adopt healthy lifestyles, inculcate the values of sportsmanship and camaraderie, and enhance their skills through both curricular and extracurricular activities. The circular highlights

the crucial role of students in shaping Pakistan's sporting future and encourages universities to fully engage them in the Olympic Day festivities. It further underscores HEC's unwavering support for these endeavors, emphasizing their potential to foster the Olympic Movement, promote healthy lifestyles, encourage sports participation, cultivate a spirit of brotherhood, and showcase the talent and passion of Pakistan's youth. HEC's commitment to providing quality education to Pakistan's youth extends beyond the classroom. The HEC actively collaborates with the Pakistan Sports Board, the POA, and other sports federations and associations to encourage university students to participate in extracurricular activities, including sports.



Djokovic begins French Open defense amid adversity

SPORTS DESK

PARIS: Novak Djokovic is set to begin the defence of his French Open title on Tuesday, banking on his extensive Grand Slam experience to counterbalance a challenging season. Despite holding the world number one spot and aiming for a fourth Roland Garros title, as well as a record-extending 25th major, Djokovic is experiencing his most difficult run since 2018.

At 37, Djokovic has not secured a title in 2024, with his best performances being semi-final appearances at the Australian Open and the Monte Carlo Masters. He also endured an unusual incident in Rome, where he was accidentally struck on the head by a metal water bottle, leading to nausea and dizziness. Last week in Geneva, Djokovic was ousted by Tomas Machac of the Czech Republic, compounded by a stomach ailment. Reflecting on his

season, Djokovic described his challenges as "bumps on the road" and remained forward-looking. He downplayed his struggles, avoiding detailed explanations and emphasising his focus on the future: "What has happened, happened, and it's in the past. I know exactly what I need to do in a Grand Slam environment."

Djokovic's first-round opponent is French wildcard Pierre-Hugues Herbert, whom he defeated in their only previous meeting at the Paris Masters in 2013. Herbert, ranked 142, has not won a main tour match this year. In the women's draw, Aryna Sabalenka, a two-time Australian Open champion and world number two, begins her quest for a first Roland Garros final. Sabalenka has reached the semi-finals in each of the past six Grand Slams and remains the only woman to have defeated world number one Iga Swiatek in a clay final since 2019. Sabalenka credits Swiatek for motivating

her to improve, noting significant progress in her game due to this rivalry. Meanwhile, fourth seed Elena Rybakina, with her best Roland Garros result being a quarterfinal in 2021, faces Greet Minnen of Belgium. Also in action is Argentine qualifier Roman Andres Burruchaga, the son of Jorge Burruchaga, who scored the winning goal for Argentina in the 1986 World Cup final. Ranked 144, Roman makes his Grand Slam debut against Germany's Jan-Lennard Struff. As the French Open progresses, both Djokovic and Sabalenka are poised to overcome their recent challenges and leave their mark on Roland Garros. Meanwhile, Frenchwoman Alize Cornet's career ended with a straight-sets defeat by Zheng Qinwen in the French Open first round on Tuesday, in her record-extending 69th consecutive Grand Slam appearance. Cornet was no match for China's Australian Open runner-up Zheng on Court Philippe Chatrier, losing 6-2, 6-1.

Gambhir all set to be named India's new head coach

NEW DELHI: The new head coach of Team India following discussions with the Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI), according to reports. With the T20 World Cup 2024 marking the end of Dravid's tenure as coach, he is anticipated to reapply for the position. In the search for a new head coach, Gambhir has emerged as the leading candidate. While there is no official confirmation yet, Gambhir has likely applied for the role of head coach. The deadline for submitting applications was Monday, 27th May.

The report indicated that the BCCI and Gautam Gambhir are in discussions, with negotiations ongoing on various aspects. Both parties share the belief that "we must do it for the country". "The buzzword inside the coach selection circle is 'deshkei-yekarnaha'. Both the BCCI and Gambhir share the belief that 'we must do it for the country.' And the conversation between Jay Shah and Gambhir is understood to be centred around this idea," the report said. It has come to light that a prominent IPL franchise owner, who maintains close ties with the BCCI high-ups, has already confirmed Gambhir's appointment as the head coach of Team India, declaring it a done deal with an official announcement coming soon. On the other hand, a well-known commentator, who is also closely connected to the BCCI's activities, stated that efforts are underway to bring Gambhir on board as the head coach of the team. - Agencies

Ronaldo makes history in Saudi Pro League

RIYADH: Cristiano Ronaldo broke the record for the most goals in a Saudi Pro League season, scoring his 34th and 35th goals in Al Nassr's final game. "I don't follow the records, the records follow me," the 39-year-old Portuguese forward tweeted. The former Real Madrid and Manchester United star scored in first-half stoppage time and again in the 69th minute, leading Al Nassr to a 4-2 victory over Al Ittihad. The previous record of 34 goals was held by Moroccan striker Abderrazak Hamdallah since the 2018-19 season. Despite Al Nassr finishing second, 14 points behind champion Al Hilal, Ronaldo's individual brilliance shone through. Having joined Al Nassr in December 2022, Ronaldo's influence has marked a significant influx of overseas talent in the Saudi league. Additionally, Ronaldo, who led Portugal to victory at the 2016 Euros, has been selected for the squad for this year's edition in Germany, marking his 11th international tournament. He holds the record for the most capped player in men's international football with 206 appearances and 128 goals. - Agencies

Indian climber Banshi passes away in Nepal

NEW DELHI: An Indian climber, Banshi Lal, who was rescued from Mount Everest, has died in a hospital in Kathmandu, raising this season's death toll on the world's highest peak to eight, according to Nepali tourism official Rakesh Gurung. Lal, 46, was evacuated from Everest last week but succumbed to his injuries on Monday. Among the fatalities this season, three individuals, including a British climber and two Nepali guides, are still missing and presumed dead. Despite these losses, the death toll this year is relatively low compared to the previous season, which saw 18 climbers perish. In addition to Everest, three climbers died on other Nepali peaks: a Romanian on Lhotse and both a French and a Nepali climber on Makalu. Nepal, home to eight of the world's ten highest mountains, attracts hundreds of adventurers each spring due to favourable weather conditions. All Everest deaths occurred in the "death zone," above 8,000 metres, where low oxygen levels significantly increase the risk of altitude sickness. This season also witnessed record-breaking achievements, including Nepali climber Phunjo Lamam's fastest female ascent and Kami Rita Sherpa's record 30th summit. Nepal has issued over 900 climbing permits this year, including 419 for Everest, generating more than \$5 million in royalties. More than 600 climbers and their guides have reached Everest's summit so far. Meanwhile, China has reopened the Tibetan route to Everest for foreign climbers for the first time since the 2020 pandemic lockdown. - Agencies

Wapda, PAF, Rangers, Sindh Greens triumph in basketball tournament

AFZAL JAVED

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan Wapda, Air Force, Rangers, Sindh Greens wins their matches in the first round of All-Pakistan Muhammad Majid and Abdul Nasir Memorial Basketball Tournament here at Siddique Memon Sports Complex Karachi organized under the umbrella of Pakistan Basketball Federation (PBBF). The six-day tournament was inaugurated by Mayor Karachi Murtaza Wahab Siddiqui while Associate Secretary of Pakistan Basketball Federation Muhammad Yaqoob Qadry and other personalities were also present on the occasion.

On the first day of the event, Pakistan Wapda after a one-sided competition defeated Sindh Whites by 74 points against 36 points. In the second match, Pakistan



Rangers defeated Balochistan by 74-40 points while Sindh Greens defeated Sindh Whites by 84-53 points. In the fourth match the Pakistan

Air Force defeated Islamabad by 75 points against 43 while Police defeated Sindh Yellow by 62-32 points. Mayor Karachi Murtaza Wahab Siddiqui

appreciated the excellent arrangements of the tournament and the efforts made by the organizers to attract the youth to the game of basketball.

Alison 'excited' to present PFL launching event in Lahore

As a female football presenter, Alison has played an instrumental role to inspire women in the world of football media

LONDON: Well-known football presenter and commentator Alison Bender has been announced as the official presenter for Pakistan Football League (PFL). Speaking to Geo News, the famous Sky News football presenter said she was "excited to visit Pakistan". "I love travel, and was lucky enough to have been

involved in the launch of Real Madrid TV at a significant time in their history. I can't wait to see what's in store for the PFL as well as discovering the country for the first time. This will be my first visit to Pakistan and I am so looking forward to it, to meet the people of Pakistan and the young footballers," Alison

Bender said. As a female football presenter, Alison has played an instrumental role to inspire women in the world of football media and she is known for making huge strides in world football, announcing ground breaking stories from the England men's matches to interviewing world famous names such as Mikel Arteta, Pep Guardiola, Pele, David Beckham and Cristiano Ronaldo. Melanie Grace, director of communications of PFL, said: "It is truly exciting to have Alison on board for PFL as the official voice and face to anchor our league inauguration. These are truly changing times and a testament to women in football leading the narrative for PFL. I look forward to Alison's flair and passion in bringing PFL to life in front of a passionate and fresh audience in Pakistan." - Agencies

Saad demands withdrawal...

FROM PAGE 01

He signed the ordinances on the advice of Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif, as President Asif Zardari is currently in Dubai. The promulgation came after federal cabinet's approval of the amendments to the ordinances. Under the amended NAB law, the sentence duration for an officer, convicted for framing cases based on ill will, has been reduced to two years from five years. After the promulgation of the Elections Act (Amendment) Ordinance 2024, the election tribunals will have retired judges as its members, besides the serving jurists.

Youm-e-Takbeer celebrated...

FROM PAGE 01

Prime Minister Muhammad Nawaz Sharif made the bold decision to test Pakistan's nuclear weapons, thereby balancing the strategic power in the region. Youm-e-Takbeer reminds us of the unity between our political and defense forces under the green crescent flag, strengthening the country's defense. The minister recalled that on this day in 1998, former Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif exhibited bold leadership by resisting immense pressures and inducements, making Pakistan a nuclear-armed nation.

Saqib Nisar refuses to comment...

FROM PAGE 01

Nawaz Sharif became PML-N president six years after he lost the party's top seat following a Nisar-led bench decision in the Panama Papers case. Addressing the general council meeting, Nawaz said it was time to rejoice not because he was re-assuming the presidency but because 'Saqib Nisar's decision has been thrown into the dustbin'.

PM invites Chinese firms to...

FROM PAGE 01

Pakistan as a comprehensive security plan had already been formulated. He told the participants of the meeting that the government was preparing for the second phase of the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) and expressed the hope that with China's cooperation, Gwadar Port would become a logistics hub. Prime Minister Shehbaz said that the CPEC second phase would also feature the establishment of Agriculture Demonstration Zones, and instructed the ministries to prepare for the launch of new projects with Chinese cooperation and enhancing business-to-business linkages. He told the meeting that China could also assist Pakistan in formulating a strategy to boost its exports. Federal ministers Ahsan Iqbal, Jam Kamal Khan, Ahad Khan Cheema, Muhammad Aurangzeb, Attaullah Tarar, Dr Musaddik Malik, Rana Tanveer Hussain, Awais Ahmed Leghari, and Qaiser Ahmed Sheikh, State Minister Shaza Fatima Khawaja, Special Assistant to PM Tariq Fatemi, Deputy Chairman of Planning Commission Jahanzeb Khan and relevant senior officers attended the meeting.

Nicotine pouches – a new menace

MUHAMMAD KASHIF

UNDER the guise of "Smoking Cessation" and "Reduced Harm" international tobacco giants have launched a new menace into society in the shape of nicotine pouches. Brands like ZYN and VELO have become extremely popular amongst the youth, considered to be the "it" product. Available in dozens of flavors, including recent additions, it is the latest addition to Big Tobacco's portfolio of products marketed to the youth. Nicotine pouches are extremely affordable and available at all shops, including corner markets or khokhas. Nicotine pouches are more commonly used by young adults aged 18 to 24. A study by Global Tobacco Control showed that 22% of tobacco vendors across 8 megacities have nicotine pouches displays at stores and 13% of tobacco vendors have advertisements for these products posted at their point of sale. International Tobacco Companies have been using numerous marketing strategies to attract not only chronic cigarette consumers but non-smokers as well. These include but are not limited to free sampling at public spaces, hiring actors such as Fawad Khan and Mahira Khan, exuberant ad campaigns, and sponsoring music shows

such as the VELO Sound Station with over 400 million views. The use of deceptive marketing strategies is explicitly prohibited under Section 10 of the Competition Act 2010; hence these strategies



are a blatant disregard of the law.

Moreover, on January 30, 2020, the Ministry of Health's Tobacco Smoke Free Cities project issued SRO 72(1)/2020, prohibiting online and point-of-sale promotion of tobacco products. According to WHO, tobacco-derived NGTPs such as E-cigarettes and nicotine pouches are harmful to the lungs, pose a health risk, and require regulation. However, alternate nicotine products, especially nicotine pouches, stay majorly unregulated with no proper taxation system and health warnings. Often, these items manage to evade scrutiny, circumventing existing regulations and posing further health risks to users. It is imperative to implement rigorous measures to curb the proliferation of such products and ensure the protection of consumers, especially youth, from potential harm. Regulating nicotine pouches in Pakistan stands as a crucial public health imperative. Establishing a comprehensive regulatory framework entailing implementing vendor licensing and regulating all forms of smokeless tobacco, drawing insights from global practices, addressing the menace of unregulated nicotine pouches, and addressing addiction among children. Prompt and resolute action by policymakers is imperative to safeguard the health of the people and mitigate the escalating health risks associated with nicotine pouch consumption in Pakistan.

Briefs

PM okays amendment to MP scale policy

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif has approved the amendment to the Management Pay Scale Policy 2020 providing changes in experience requirements for multiple scales. Under the new changes, the experience and trial period for MP1, MP2 and MP3 scales have been shortened. The aforesaid scales are equivalent to Grade 22, 21 and 20, respectively. For the MP1 scale, a minimum of seven years of experience in the relevant field would be required if the individual holds a PhD degree. However, in the case of a Master's degree, the minimum experience has been set at nine years. Meanwhile, a minimum of five and seven years of experience will be required for the MP2 scale in the case of PhD and Master's degrees, respectively. A minimum experience of three years would be required in the case of a PhD degree, and a minimum experience of five years would be required in the case of a Master's degree for the MP3 scale. Previously, a minimum experience of 14 years was required in the case of a PhD degree, and 18 years in the case of a Master's degree for the MP1 scale. -APP

Police arrest four for possessing illegal weapons

RAWALPINDI: Rawalpindi district police on the directives of the Senior Superintendent of Police, Operations Rawalpindi conducted raids in different areas and netted four accused for possessing weapons, ammunition, and other items. According to a police spokesman, Bani, Kahuta, and Jafli police conducted raids in their respective jurisdiction and rounded up four accused namely Faisal, Abdullah, Naem, and Abdul Raheem, and recovered three 30-bore pistols, ammunition, and a dagger. The SSP said that strict action in accordance with the law was being taken against the lawbreakers and operations against aerial firing and illegal weapon holders would continue. -APP

DPM Dar greets nation on Yaum-e-Takbeer

ISLAMABAD, May 28 (APP): Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Ishaq Dar on Tuesday extended his greetings to the nation as the country observed Yaum-e-Takbeer to commemorate the 26th anniversary of Pakistan's nuclear tests. The deputy prime minister, in a social media post on X, said that it was the brave leadership of that time Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif which led Pakistan to become a nuclear power. "28th May 1998 was a proud day for the nation when PM Nawaz Sharif's brave leadership decided to make Pakistan a nuclear power in the comity of nations, AlhamdoLillah," DPM Dar said. -APP

Secretary LG&CD deptt chairs meeting

RAWALPINDI: Secretary of Local Government & Community Development (LG&CD) Department Punjab Shakeel Ahmad has chaired a high-level meeting and reviewed the activities under 'Suthra Punjab Programme' (SPP). According to Chief Digital Monitoring Officer, Dr Abdullah Tabasum, the secretary directed all DCs, ACs, DDLGs, ADLGs, and secretaries to play an active role in the success of the Suthra Punjab Programme. Moreover, all DCs to ensure the conduct of meetings of the management committees by the ACs fortnightly to review the progress of the programme. Shakeel Ahmad also directed ADLGs to ensure checkgrounds and verification of activities on a daily basis. -APP

Justice Mansoor visits Supreme Court of Canada

The Chief Justices underscored the importance of continuous judicial education and training. They agreed to initiate exchange programs for judges and judicial officers, aimed at sharing knowledge and expertise in areas such as case management, development of curriculum modules, digitalization of courts, and alternative dispute resolution mechanisms

DNA

OTTAWA: Senior Puisne Justice of the Supreme court of Pakistan Justice Syed Mansoor Ali Shah called on the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of Canada Honorable Richard Wagner, here today in Ottawa. They held a landmark meeting to discuss judicial collaboration, enhance mutual understanding, and explore opportunities for sharing best practices between their respective judicial systems, and avenues for the strengthening of bilateral relations. This meeting marks a significant step towards fostering greater collaboration between the judicial branches of the two countries. Stephanie Bachand, Executive Legal Officer and Chief of Staff of Chambers of Chief Justice were also present on this occasion. The Chief Justices underscored the importance of continuous judicial education and training. They agreed to initiate exchange programs for judges and judicial officers, aimed at sharing knowledge and expertise in areas such as case management, development of curriculum mod-



ules, digitalization of courts, and alternative dispute resolution mechanisms. Both parties recognized the growing role of technology in the judiciary. They explored the potential for collaboration between the Federal Judicial Academy of Pakistan and National Judicial Institute of Canada in developing and implementing advanced judicial technologies, including electronic filing systems, virtual courtrooms, and AI-driven legal research tools. Emphasizing the significance of judicial independence and ethics, the Chief Justices exchanged views on best practices for maintaining impar-

added while visiting the National Judicial Institute (NJI). "This meeting signifies a new chapter in our judicial relationship. By working together, we can enhance the efficiency and fairness of our judicial systems for the benefit of our citizens", said by the High Commissioner of Pakistan to Canada Mr. Zaheer A. Janjua. The meetings concluded with both Chief Justices expressing optimism about the future of judicial collaboration between both the countries. They pledged to continue these dialogues and implement the initiatives discussed. It is highlighted over here that these meetings not only enhance bilateral judicial relations but also contribute to the global dialogue on justice and the rule of law. They provide a platform for mutual learning and the sharing of experiences, which can lead to improvements in the judicial systems of both countries involved. Justice Mansoor Ali Shah also held meetings with Honorable Andromache Karakatsani, Justice Karakatsani's Chamber and the Honorable Mahmud Jamal, Justice Jamal Chamber.

Fidan: Israeli killing shows real Gaza spillover threat

'It would not be possible for this genocide to continue without support of some countries, especially the US, to Israel,' Fidan also says

WEB DESK

ISTANBUL : Israel's killing of an Egyptian soldier in the Rafah border crossing has shown how real the risk of a spillover of the Gaza conflict is, Turkish Foreign Minister Hakan Fidan said in a live presser on Tuesday. Speaking in a news conference alongside his Cambodian counterpart Sok Chenda Sophea, who is in the Turkish capital Ankara on an official visit, Fidan also criticized the US and other Western nations for their support to Israel. "It would not be possible for this genocide to continue without the support of some countries, especially

the US, for Israel," he said. The Egyptian army said Monday that a soldier was killed in a shooting near the border with the Gaza Strip, saying it is investigating the incident, while the Israeli army said on the same day that an exchange of fire had occurred with Egyptian forces at the Rafah border crossing between Egypt and Gaza. Fidan also called for increased recognition of the Palestinian state. "Palestinian statehood is crucial because Israel is increasingly taking control of more Palestinian territories through illegal settlements," he underlined. "Although the international community is falling behind on the recognition of the

Palestinian state, there is now a more positive atmosphere," Fidan said, also thanking his Cambodian counterpart for his efforts to improve Turkey-Cambodia relations. Fidan's remarks come amid moves by Spain, Ireland, and Norway to recognize Palestine. Spain on Tuesday formally recognized Palestine, as the decision was approved by the Spanish government, while Ireland's and Norway's decision to recognize it as a state is expected to take effect later in the day. Israel's Sunday attack on Rafah that killed at least 35 Palestinians has been widely condemned by the foreign ministers of three

European countries, underscoring the urgency for a permanent cease-fire and a two-state solution. Israel has killed more than 36,000 Palestinians in the Gaza Strip since a cross-border attack by the Palestinian group Hamas on Oct. 7 last year. The military campaign has turned much of the enclave of 2.3 million people into ruins, leaving most civilians homeless and at risk of famine. Israel stands accused of genocide at the International Court of Justice, which has ordered it to ensure its forces do not commit acts of genocide and take measures to guarantee that humanitarian assistance is provided to civilians in Gaza.

Donors vow \$5.4 billion for Syrian refugees

BRUSSELS : International donors led by the EU to pledged five billion euros (\$5.4 billion) for Syrian refugees, as Brussels insisted they should not be "pushed back" to their war-torn homeland. An annual gathering hosted by the EU and chaired by its foreign policy chief Josep Borrell saw the European Union commit 2.12 billion euros for 2024 and 2025. That figure included 560 million euros already promised this year for Syrians displaced inside the country and in Lebanon, Jordan and Iraq, and the same amount for 2025. The bloc also pledged one billion euros for Syrian refugees in neighbouring Turkey. "The situation in Syria is more dire today than one year ago. In fact, it has never been so dire and humanitarian needs are at all time high," Borrell said. "Today 16.7 million Syrians are in need of humanitarian assistance, the highest level since the start of the crisis over 13 years ago." EU humanitarian chief Janez Lenarcic said that on top of the five billion euros in grants, a further 2.5 billion euros was promised by donors in loans. He said the EU and its member states overall accounted for three quarters of the grants pledged. The United States said it had also pledged nearly 545 million euros (\$593 million) in humanitarian assistance for Syria. Washington "remains committed to assisting the Syrian people and encourages other donors to continue their support for Syrians", a State Department statement added. -DNA

Peru's president accused of bribery in Rolexgate scandal

LIMA : Peru's attorney general accused President Dina Boluarte of accepting bribes in the form of Rolex watches, in the latest twist of a corruption scandal shaking her unpopular government. Attorney General Juan Carlos Villena said that her receiving the luxury items from a governor amounted to accepting bribes. Villena "presented a constitutional complaint against Dina Boluarte as the suspected author of passive corruption," his office said on X, formerly Twitter. The scandal erupted in March with the discovery of a trove of undeclared luxury Rolex watches and jewelry in the president's possession. Boluarte told prosecutors last month the Rolex watches had been loaned by a friend, the regional governor of Ayacucho, Wilfredo Oscurima. She is being investigated on suspicion of "passive corruption" for receiving improper benefits from public officials. The attorney general's accusation, presented to Congress, does not amount to an indictment because the president has immunity while in power. Prime Minister Gustavo Adrianzen criticized the accusation as "persecution" of Boluarte. "This is nothing more than an example of the systematic persecution in fiscal matters that is carried out against the president in an improper, unconstitutional and illegal manner," Adrianzen told television Canal N. A congressional committee must now debate the accusation before the whole chamber does so. Ultimately, it would be up to the courts to decide whether to put her on trial after her term ends in July 2026. The president, who has an approval rating of 12 percent according to an Ipsos poll, does not have or lead a party in Congress, requiring her to secure backing from conservatives. -DNA

N Korea says spy satellite launch ends in failure

SEOUL : North Korea's latest attempt to put a spy satellite into orbit ended in a mid-air explosion, Pyongyang said late Monday, hours after its announcement of a planned launch was criticised by Seoul and Tokyo. Putting a spy satellite into orbit has long been a top priority for Kim Jong Un's regime, and it claimed to have succeeded in November, after two failed attempts last year. Seoul claims Kim received Russian technical assistance for that launch, in return for sending containers of weapons to Moscow for use in Ukraine. But its attempt Monday to launch the "Malligyong-1-1" reconnaissance satellite ended in failure after it "exploded in the air during the first flight stage and failed to launch," the North's National Aerospace Technology Administration said in a statement. An "expert review concluded that the cause of the accident was the operational reliability of the newly developed liquid oxygen and oil engine," the statement, carried by the official Korean Central News Agency, added. Japanese broadcaster NHK ran footage of what appeared to be a flaming projectile in the night sky, which then exploded into a fireball, saying it had filmed it from northeast China at the same time as the attempted launch. Pyongyang had notified Japan earlier Monday that it was planning to put another satellite into orbit, prompting criticism from both Seoul and Tokyo, which urged Kim to call it off. South Korea's military said it had detected the launch but that the satellite "is presumed to have exploded in the air". "The South Korean and US intelligence authorities are analysing it in detail in close cooperation," the Joint Chiefs of Staff said. Nuclear-armed North Korea is barred by multiple UN resolutions from tests using ballistic technology, and analysts say there is significant technological overlap between space launch capabilities and the development of ballistic missiles. The launch "is a provocative act that clearly violates the UN Security Council resolution prohibiting the use of ballistic missile technology," South Korea's military said. The US Indo-Pacific Command (INDOPACOM) called the launch a "brazen violation of multiple unanimous UN Security Council resolutions", and said in a statement that it "risks destabilising the security situation in the region and beyond". Japan briefly issued an alert warning residents of southern Okinawa prefecture to take cover in shelters, but it was lifted minutes later. The attempted launch came just hours after Seoul, Beijing and Tokyo wrapped up their first trilateral summit since 2019. South Korea's President Yoon Suk Yeol said Monday that another satellite launch - North Korea's fourth attempt - would "undermine regional and global peace and stability". The South Korean military conducted attack formation flight and strike training on Monday to demonstrate "the strong capabilities and will of our military" after North Korea notified Japan of its plans to launch a satellite by June 4. Experts say that spy satellites could improve North Korea's intelligence-gathering capabilities, particularly over South Korea, and provide crucial data in any military conflict. Kim met President Vladimir Putin in Russia last September, and Putin suggested afterwards that his nation could help Pyongyang build satellites. Seoul and Washington have both subsequently accused Pyongyang of shipping weapons to Moscow, with South Korea saying earlier this year that Pyongyang had sent thousands of containers of weapons to Russia for use in Ukraine. A group of Russian engineers entered North Korea to help with the launch preparations, Yonhap reported Sunday, citing a government official. -Agencies

Canada to quintuple visas for Gaza Palestinians

Immigration Minister Marc Miller says 5,000 visas will be offered to Palestinians seeking to join family in Canada

FOREIGN DESK

OTTAWA : Canada has announced a five-fold increase in visas for Palestinians in Gaza seeking to join their family members in the country, but that movement out of the territory is currently not possible due to factors outside Ottawa's control. Gaza residents who wish to join family in Canada must obtain approval from Israeli authorities to leave the territory, before undergoing biometric screening in Egypt. Israel's military earlier this month seized control of the Gaza side of the Rafah border crossing with Egypt as part of its offensive in the southern city. "While movement out of Gaza is not currently possible, the situation may change at any time. With this cap increase, we will

be ready to help more people as the situation evolves. Our focus remains on keeping families together," Miller said. US politics, Canada's multiculturalism, South America's geopolitical rise - we bring you the stories that matter. "Canada continues to put forward the names of those who have passed preliminary screening to local authorities to secure their exit from Gaza. Israel and Egypt are both important partners in implementing these temporary, humanitarian measures and helping people reunite with their family in Canada." But the Canadian visa programme has been widely criticised, in large part because Canada has been unable to get any Palestinians out of the Gaza Strip as a result of the scheme. That

has fuelled frustrations and anger from families trying to bring their relatives to safety amid Israel's continued war on Gaza, which has killed more than 36,000 Palestinians since early October. Some Canadian visa-holders managed to get out of the coastal territory on their own after paying thousands of dollars to reach Egypt, but such exits were done without Canada's assistance. Palestinian visa applicants also have been forced to answer invasive and confusing questions that lawyers and other experts say go beyond what is typically required by Canada. "It is such a disaster," Debbie Rachis, a Toronto immigration and refugee lawyer who represents families seeking to bring their relatives to Canada, told Al Jazeera

last month about the programme. "It is the worst thing I've ever seen or experienced." Monday's announcement came as Canadian Minister of Foreign Affairs Melanie Joly joined a chorus of international condemnation following a deadly Israeli attack on a camp for displaced Palestinians in Rafah. "This level of human suffering must come to an end. We demand an immediate ceasefire," Joly said in a statement. At least 45 people, including 23 women, children and elderly, were killed and 249 others wounded in the attack on the tent camp, according to Gaza's Ministry of Health. Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu has said the civilian deaths were a "tragic mistake" and the incident is being investigated.

UN chief condemns Israeli strike on Rafah camp

WASHINGTON: UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres condemned Israel's deadly airstrike on a camp of displaced people in Rafah city, southern Gaza Strip. "I condemn Israel's actions which killed scores of innocent civilians who were only seeking shelter from this deadly conflict" Guterres wrote on X. The UN chief emphasized that there is "no safe place in Gaza" and urged an end to "this horror." At least 45 people, mostly women and children, were killed and nearly 250 others injured in an Israeli strike on a camp for displaced people in Rafah on Sunday. The attack occurred near the logistics base of the UN agency for Palestinian refugees (UN-RWA) in Tal al-Sultan, said the Gaza-based Government Media Office. Israel has killed more than 36,000 Palestinians in the Gaza Strip since a cross-border attack by Hamas on Oct. 7 last year. The military campaign has turned much of the enclave of 2.3 million people into ruins, leaving most civilians homeless and at risk of famine. The attack came despite a ruling by the International Court of Justice that ordered Israel to halt its offensive in Rafah, where over a million Palestinians had sought refuge from the war before it was invaded on May 6. -Agencies

Philippines deploys river rangers against plastic

MANILA: Using a long-handled net, Ronnel Narvas scoops up discarded plastic soft drink bottles, shopping bags and palm-sized sachets as he wades through a foul-smelling tributary in the Philippine capital Manila. Narvas, 30, is one of more than a thousand rangers employed by the government to clean up the city's waterways, where tons of rubbish end up every year. "It's disappointing, because no matter how diligent we are at cleaning up, the garbage does not run out," Narvas said of the never-ending battle against trash. "But we need to persevere... at least we are managing to reduce it instead of letting it pile up more."

Inadequate garbage collection services, lack of disposal and recycling facilities, and grinding poverty have been blamed for the growing problem of plastic waste across the country. The Philippines produces about 61,000 tons of trash every day, up to 24 percent of it plastic, figures from the environment department show. The country is the world's top source of plastic that ends up in the oceans, a 2021 study by Dutch non-profit The Ocean Cleanup found. It said the Pasig river, which flows through the capital and into Manila Bay, is the "most polluting" in the world. Sachets and other single-use plastics are a huge part of the problem. "When the rains come, we are literally swimming (in) them," Environment Secretary Maria Antonia Loayza said last month. -APP

Deadly BD cyclone one of longest seen

PATUAUKHALI : Bangladeshi weather experts said Tuesday that a deadly cyclone that carved a swath of destruction was one of the fastest-forming and longest-lasting they'd experienced, blaming climate change for the shift. Cyclone Remal, which made landfall in low-lying Bangladesh and neighbouring India on Sunday evening with fierce gales and crashing waves, left at least 38 people dead, destroyed thousands of homes, smashed seawalls and flooded cities across the two countries. The toll includes 12 workers who died on Tuesday when a quarry collapsed in India's Mizoram state, which the government attributed to torrential rains as the storm progressed inland. "In terms of its land duration, it is one of the longest in the country's history," Azizur Rahman, director of the state-run Bangladesh Meteorological Department told AFP, adding it had battered the country for more than 36 hours. -Agencies

Briefs

Possibility of sending Polish troops to Ukraine

WARSAW: Poland's foreign minister says the NATO nation should not exclude the possibility of sending troops to Ukraine and should keep Russian President Vladimir Putin in suspense over whether such a decision would ever be made.

Radek Sikorski made the comments in an interview published Tuesday in the Gazeta Wyborcza daily. "We should not exclude any option. Let Putin be guessing as to what we will do," Sikorski said when asked whether he would send Polish troops to Ukraine.

Sikorski said he has gone to Ukraine with his family to deliver humanitarian aid.

But a spokesperson for Poland's Defense Ministry, Janusz Sejmej, told Polish media on Tuesday he had "no knowledge of that" when asked about a report in Germany's Der Spiegel magazine suggesting Poland might send troops to Ukraine. The idea of sending foreign soldiers to Ukraine, which is battling Russian military aggression, was floated earlier this year in France, but no country, including Poland, has publicly embraced it. - Agencies

Bugti pledges to foil every conspiracy

DNA

QUETTA: Balochistan Chief Minister Sarfraz Bugti has said he will thwart all kinds of conspiracies against Pakistan. Addressing the closing ceremony of the 13th National Workshop Balochistan in Quetta, Bugti said the monster of terrorism would be eradicated in every case. "People are being instigated on the basis of religion and linguistic grounds but Pakistani forces and the nation are united," he added. "The social media has destroyed entire fabric of our society due to the lack of awareness, creating a huge gap between the state and the youth through false narratives," the Balochistan CM said. He vowed to engage the youth at all levels, initiating a continue process of dialogues. Bugti said the workshop had enabled him to present the true picture of Balochistan before the youth.

12 Indians killed in quarry collapse

NEW DELHI: Torrential rains in the wake of a powerful cyclone caused the collapse of a quarry in India's Mizoram state killing 12 people, government officials said on Tuesday. "So far 12 bodies have been found, we are looking for more," deputy commissioner of Aizawl district Nazuk Kumar told AFP. Rescue efforts in the quarry were being hampered by "heavy rains," police director general Anil Shukla said, NDTV news network reported. Mizoram Chief Minister Lalduhoma offered compensation to families of the victims of the "landslide due to Cyclone Remal". "I pray for the success of rescue and relief operations and wish a speedy recovery of the injured," India's President Droupadi Murmu said on social media. - Agencies

Symposium and exhibition on Pakistan's Buddhist heritage

It is aimed at showcasing Pakistan's rich cultural heritage, and underscoring the importance that the government attaches to inter-faith harmony

KHAYAM ABBASI

ISLAMABAD: The Ministry of Foreign Affairs is organizing a symposium and an exhibition, titled "From Gandhara to the World", on 28-29 May 2024. A large number of Islamabad-based diplomats, government functionaries, scholars, artists and art-lovers are attending the event, alongside around 25 foreign delegates, including some at the Ministerial level, from Sri Lanka, Nepal, Thailand and Vietnam. The event is being organized in connection with the 'Vesak Day', which commemorates Lord Buddha's birth, enlightenment and death. It is aimed at showcasing Pakistan's rich cultural heritage, and underscoring the importance that the government attaches to inter-faith harmony.

Sri Lanka's Minister for Buddhasasana, Religious and Cultural Affairs, Honorable Vidura Wikramanayaka was the guest of honor at the inaugural session, which took place earlier today. While the welcome remarks were delivered by Additional Foreign Secretary, Ambassador Maryam Madiha Aftab, prominent Buddhist monks and scholars also addressed the inaugural session. Their list included Most Venerable Thich Ductuan from Vietnam, Venerable Anil Sakya from Thailand, Mr. Om Charan Amatya, scholar-cum-politician from Nepal, Mr. Stefano Davide Bettera, President, European Buddhist Union and Mr. Li Xiguang, Director, Pakistan Culture and Communication Centre, Tsinghua University, Beijing. A message from Venerable Dhimbukum-



bure Sri Sarankara Vimaladhamma Thera, Chief Incumbent of the Ancient Rajamah Viharaya of Kandy, Sri Lanka was also read out by Venerable Tempitiye Indawimala. In his keynote address at the inaugural session, Federal Minister for Religious Affairs and Interfaith Harmony, Chaudhary Salik

Hussain, emphasized the importance of building bridges between different communities, celebrating the shared values, and working together for a more peaceful world. He underscored that Gandhara, which brought together diverse cultural influences, is a powerful symbol of what can be achieved through

understanding and collaboration. The subsequent sessions of the symposium will explore various dimensions of Gandharan heritage that emerged, over three thousand years ago, in the northwest of Pakistan out of the interaction between Hellenistic and local philosophical and cultural traditions.

Taiwan's parliament passes bill pushing pro-China changes

FOREIGN DESK

TAIPEI: Taiwan's opposition-controlled legislature has ignored large protests to push through legislative changes seen as favourable to China. The controversial bill, adopted on Tuesday, diminishes the power of President William Lai Ching-te, who was sworn in last week, and his pro-independence Democratic Progressive Party (DPP) government. The reforms, pushed through by the opposition nationalist Kuomintang (KMT) and smaller partner Taiwan People's Party, give lawmakers the power to require the president to give regular reports to parliament and answer lawmakers' questions. It also criminalises contempt of parliament by government officials. The bill also hands the legislature increased control of budgets, including defence spending. The legislature will also be able to demand that the military, private companies or individuals disclose information deemed relevant by parliamentarians.

Gandapur to remove poor performers from his cabinet

SHAMIM SHAHID

PESHAWAR: Two to three members of the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa cabinet are soon likely to be removed over unsatisfactory performance, government sources say, as Chief Minister Ali Amin Gandapur has already given them a warning. The sources say Gandapur will apprise Imran Khan - the PTI founding chairman - of the situation resulting out of these provincial ministers not showing any progress. Any progress during the meeting between the chief minister and the party founder will lead to their dismissal, they said, but added that they would be given the last before the extreme action. In case, the said ministers are unable to change the state of affairs even after that, they will ultimately be removed from the cabinet.

Tanks reach Rafah's centre as Israel presses assault

Despite global outcry, military continued operating in Rafah killing at least 45 Palestinians, half of them children

NEWS DESK

CAIRO: Israeli tanks entered the centre of Rafah for the first time on Tuesday, marking three weeks into a ground operation in the southern Gaza city that has drawn global condemnation. The tanks were spotted near Al-Awda mosque, a central Rafah landmark, the witnesses told Reuters.

The Israeli military has continued to operate in the Rafah area without commenting on reported advancements in the city centre. Overnight, its forces pounded the city with airstrikes and tank fire pressing its offensive despite an international outcry over an attack on Sunday that sparked a blaze in a tent camp, killing at least 45 Palestinians, more than half of them children, women and the elderly. Since that strike, at least 26 more people have been killed by Israeli fire in Rafah. Israeli tanks pushed towards western neighbourhoods and took positions on the Zurub hilltop in western Rafah in one of the worst nights of bombardment reported by residents.

On Tuesday, witnesses reported gunbattle between Israeli troops and Hamas-led freedom fighters in the Zurub area.

Israeli military appeared to have brought in remote-operated armoured vehicles and there was no immediate sign of personnel in or around them. Since Israel launched its incursion by taking control of the border crossing with Egypt three weeks ago, tanks had probed around the edges of Rafah and entered some of its eastern districts but had not yet entered the city in full force.

Reacting to Sunday night's attack in a camp where families displaced from assaults elsewhere in Gaza had sought shelter, global leaders urged the implementation of a World Court order to halt Israel's assault. Judges at the top United Nations court ordered Israel last Friday to immediately halt its military assault on the southern Gaza city of Rafah, in a landmark emergency ruling in South Africa's case accusing Israel of genocide. Israel has kept up attacks despite the ruling by the UN ordering it to stop, arguing that the court's ruling grants it "some scope for military action" there. Residents said the Tel Al-Sultan area, the scene of Sunday's deadly strike, was still being heavily bombed.



RAWALPINDI: Neil Hawkins, the Australian High Commissioner accompanied IDF General Angus J Campbell to the Commonwealth War Cemetary to pay respects to Flying Officer Geoffrey Scott, one of the four Australian Air Force officers who died in Pakistan during WWII. - DNA

Donald Trump vows to crush pro-Palestinian protests, if re-elected

WASHINGTON: Former US president Donald Trump has vowed to suppress ongoing pro-Palestinian demonstrations in American universities, saying that he will "throw out" students who attend the protests, if he was elected back to office. Speaking to a small group of predominantly Jewish donors at an event, Trump said he will deport all pro-Palestinian student protesters to ensure that they "behave." "One thing I do is, any student that protests, I throw them out of the country. You know, there are a lot of foreign students. As soon as they hear that, they're going to behave," Trump said. Trump, 77, who is the presumptive Republican candidate, referred to the protests against Israel's genocide in Gaza as a "radical revolution" and assured donors that he would set the movement back 25 or 30 years with their support in defeating Joe Biden in the upcoming presidential election in November.

"If you get me re-elected, we're going to set that movement back 25 or 30 years," Trump replied, according to the Washington Post, which first reported the event. In recent months, demonstrations against the Gaza war have rocked various educational institutions throughout America. The

movement originated at Columbia University in New York, where the use of tent enclosures and campus occupations led to the disruption of the final weeks of classes and the cancellation of the graduation ceremony. The ex-president commended the New York police for their efforts in clearing the encampments at Columbia University and suggested that other cities should follow suit. "It has to be stopped now," stated Trump. Republicans have been actively attempting to turn the campus protests into a focal point of the upcoming election, portraying them as a representation of "chaos" running rampant under Biden's leadership. According to The Washington Post, Republican donors have urged Trump to adopt a more assertive position in backing Israel and its PM Benjamin Netanyahu. Trump has also reportedly told the donors in private that he backs Israel's right to persist in its ongoing genocide. His latest remarks do not mark the first occasion he has shown backing for Israel during the ongoing Gaza conflict, as in a previous interview on Fox News in March, Trump declared his unwavering support for Israel and endorsed their military actions against Gazans, stating that "you have to finish the problem." - Agencies

EU pushing to boost military aid to Ukraine

The push by some EU states to raise support comes as others, such as Hungary, have worked to block military aid

WEB DESK

KIEV: European Union defence ministers are meeting in Brussels to try again to raise military support to Ukraine. The meeting on Tuesday comes as Ukraine and several EU states seek to increase supplies of weapons and ammunition amid efforts by Hungary, which has long appeared to follow a pro-Russian line, to block aid. The urgency has grown in the third year of Moscow's full-scale invasion as Ukraine finds itself on the back foot, provoking pleas from Kyiv and increased efforts by its closest allies.

Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy is on a two-day tour of Spain, Belgium and Portugal in a bid to drum up additional support. He has already secured several pledges. Belgian Foreign Minister Hadja Lahbib said on Tuesday that Brussels will equip Ukraine with 30 F-16 fighter jets with the first deliveries planned for this year, the Belga news agency reported. The planes will be supplied as part of a security agreement signed

between the two countries that will see Belgium provide at least 977 billion euros (\$1.06bn) in military aid. "Ukraine can only push back the invader if we provide better arms at faster pace," Belgian Prime Minister Alexander De Croo said. Zelenskyy signed a similar deal with Spain on Monday, securing a pledge from Madrid for additional air defence missiles to help fight the nearly 3,000 bombs that he said Russia launches against Ukraine every month. Dutch Defence Minister Kajsa Ollongren announced on Tuesday that the Netherlands will deliver parts for a Patriot air defence system to Ukraine. The Dutch government is talking to other countries about sending other parts to assemble a complete system, she added. As it is subjected to nightly barrages of Russian missiles and drones, Ukraine has been desperately urging its allies to send more air defence systems. Also on Tuesday, Ukrainian Prime Minister Denys Shmyhal was due to meet a group of EU leaders in Prague to discuss a Czech-led initiative to provide ammunition to Kyiv. Speaking before the meeting, Czech Prime Minister Petr Fiala confirmed that the first deliveries of ammunition procured as part of the initiative, which sources supplies from outside the EU, would reach Ukraine in June. However, an estimated 6.5 billion euros (\$7bn) in military aid remains stalled by the Hungarian government of Prime Minister Viktor Orban, considered Russia's staunchest ally in the EU. Member states have wide veto powers in the bloc, and Hungary has long delayed funds to boost Ukraine's defence. Anger among EU leaders with Budapest has been rising over the past year as it has prevented payouts from a central EU fund to reimburse member states for weapons sent to Ukraine. The Hungarian hold-up also threatens to delay the spending of billions more in interest from frozen Russian Central Bank assets that the EU expects to start receiving in July. "We cannot let European military support to Ukraine be taken hostage of [by] other decisions which have nothing to do with this specific issue," EU foreign affairs chief Josep Borrell said after a meeting of foreign ministers in Brussels.



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