



# Islamabad POST

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**Chile joins South Africa's genocide case against Israel at ICJ**

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**China warns of 'limits' to its restraint**

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**Makhachev retains UFC lightweight title**

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## Palestine doubts Tel Aviv intent

# Israel hints to accept Biden's ceasefire plan

Ophir Falk, chief foreign policy advisor to Netanyahu, said Biden's proposal was "a deal we agreed to — it's not a good deal but we dearly want the hostages released, all of them"

NEWS DESK

TEL AVIV: An aide to Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu confirmed on Sunday that Israel had accepted a framework deal for winding down the Gaza war now being advanced by U.S. President Joe Biden, though he described it as flawed and in need of much more work. In an interview with Britain's newspaper, Ophir Falk, chief foreign policy advisor to Netanyahu, said Biden's proposal was "a deal we agreed to — it's not a good deal but we dearly want the hostages released, all of them". "There are a lot of details to be worked out," he said, adding that Israeli conditions, including "the release of the hostages and the destruction of Hamas as a genocidal terrorist organisation" have not changed. Biden, whose initial lockstep support for Israel's offensive has given way to open censure of the operation's high civilian death toll, on Friday aired what he described as a three-phase plan submitted by the Netanyahu government to end the war. The first phase entails a truce and the return of some hostages held by Hamas, after which the sides would negotiate on an open-ended cessation of hostilities for a second phase in which remaining live captives would go free, Biden said. That sequencing appears to imply that Hamas would continue to play a role in incremental arrangements mediated by Egypt and Qatar — a potential clash with

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## US-backed Israeli genocide in Gaza continues

FOREIGN DESK

GAZA: As the US-backed Israeli genocidal war on the Gaza Strip entered day 240 on Sunday, aerial and artillery strikes continued to pound and target different areas and massacre more civilians. Reporters for the Palestinian Information Center (PIC) said that the Israeli occupation army continued to bomb homes in different areas of Gaza during the past 24 hours, amid intensive attacks in Rafah and northern Gaza. According to media sources, a seven-year-old child was martyred when the Israeli army bombed his home last night in al-Sabra neighborhood, south of Gaza City. Medical and civil defense crews recovered bodies of a man with his wife and newborn and rescued other wounded citizens after an Israeli airstrike

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## NATIONAL DAY OF ITALY CELEBRATED



ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Housing Riaz Hussain Pirzada, Senator Sherry Rehman, Ambassador of Italy Ms. Marilina Armellini and Mr. Domenico Polloni cutting cake to celebrate the National Day of the Republic of Italy. The event was attended by a large number of guests hailing from various walks of life. — DNA

## Deputy PM, Iranian acting FM discuss Gaza



ABID RAZA

ISLAMABAD: Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Muhammad Ishaq Dar has reiterated Pakistan's full support for all initiatives aimed at ending the genocide in Gaza and humanitarian relief to the Palestinian people. This he stated during a telephonic conversation with Iran's Acting Foreign Minister Ali Bagheri today. They discussed the situation in Gaza and unabated Israeli atrocities against Palestinians.

## Punjab to ban plastic trade from June 5

DNA

LAHORE: Citing plastic as a source of cancer and other fatal diseases, Senior Punjab Minister Marriyum Aurangzeb on Sunday said production, distribution, and trade of plastic will be banned from June 5 across the province. In a statement, Marriyum said the plastic use was boosting environmental pollution, hence, a crackdown would be launched against the factories manufacturing the illegal products on June 5.

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## Govt 'injustices'

# Opp may launch protest movement

Dispelling the impression that the facilities provided to PTI founder Imran Khan at the Adiala Jail were as per his stature as a former prime minister

STAFF REPORT

LAHORE: Opposition Leader in the Punjab Assembly (PA) and PTI-SIC leader Malik Ahmad Khan Bhachar said on Sunday that a fresh crackdown on the PTI ticket holders and workers had been launched in the province. Addressing a press conference in Lahore with members of the Punjab Assembly Sheikh Intiaz Mehmood, Farrukh Javed Moon and Abu Zar Salman sitting alongside him, he said that cases were again

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## 'Constitutional violations' irk JUI chief

JUI-F chief criticized anti-terrorism efforts, alleged that violence continues to rise in Balochistan, K-P province

DNA

MUZAFFARGH: Jamiat Ulema-e-Islam-Fazl (JUI-F) Chief Maulana Fazlur Rehman lashed out on Sunday at institutions,

Continued on Page 06

## Heatwave sweeps Pakistan

# Another huge fire on Margalla Hills doused

Fire also erupted in forest spreading over area of 15 to 20 acres in Pindi's Baghar Sharif

DNA

ISLAMABAD/RAWALPINDI: Authorities on Sunday doused another forest fire that erupted on Margalla Hills as the country remains under the grip of a heatwave. The deputy commissioner said authorities established a firewall to stop the flames from entering the federal city. The Islamabad administration undertook joint efforts with

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## Briefs

### PML-N, PPP in deadlock over Punjab

Meetings between the PPP and PML-N committees have ended without any result

ADIL SHAHEEN

ISLAMABAD: A deadlock continued between the PML-N and the People's Party over power-sharing in Punjab, sources said. A power sharing understanding between the Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz and the Pakistan People's Party could not come into force so far, sources said. Sources said that four meetings between the PPP and PML-N coordination committees have ended without reaching to any result. People's Party sources complaining that the PML-N, which is ruling Punjab, didn't give an appropriate response.

### IHC to hear contempt case today

The court has sought report from the FIA, PTA and IB

COURT REPORTER

ISLAMABAD: The Islamabad High Court (IHC) has fixed contempt of court cases against the elements who initiated smear campaign against Justice Bar Sattar for hearing. The hearing has been fixed for June 3 (today), which will be headed by IHC Justice Mohsin Akhtar Kayani. Justice Tariq Mehmood Jahangiri and Justice Sardar Ejaz Ishaq Khan are also part of the bench. Earlier, the case was fixed for June 6. It is pertinent to mention here the hearing could not be held on May 23, due to the absence of larger bench. The court has sought report from the FIA, PTA and IB.

## Doha Summit

# Taliban have a chance to prove its relevance

Though Chinese are willing to recognize Taliban, they (Chinese) are aware of the pitfalls as well emanating from their recognition decision

SHAMIM SHAHID / ABDUL WAHEED WAHEED

IN order to participate in third conference scheduled to be held at Doha, Qatar on June 30th till July 3 next, regarding ongoing situation and future prospects of Afghanistan, the Taliban leaders governing Kabul have held talks with representatives of the United Nations and Qatar, and come up with the demand of Afghanistan seat in United Nations. In connection with making successful the event, UN Secretary General's representatives are touring the region. The UN representative had visited Kabul couple of days back and held details conversations with Taliban office holders. Taliban leadership besides listening to UN officials also handed over a list of its demands which included beside others recognition of its

Emirate Islami and giving it the UN seat on permanent grounds. Apart from UN and Taliban, others especially European and Far Eastern world would definitely highlight political and rights issues as no one is allowed to exercise just human rights, since mid of August 2021, forced disappearance, mysterious target and extra judicial killing, detention of men and women, denying just rights of expression to media personnel, making mum and even killing and beating of singers, musicians and artists are considered routine matters across Afghanistan. It will also be hard for the global community to remain silent spectators to what is happening at hands of Taliban inside prison houses and detention centers with all those who have served the country in different categories. All those who either remained in

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# The emerging political scenario and choices we have

COMMENT

ANSAR M BHATTI



THE emerging political situation in Pakistan poses significant risks to its struggling economy and already fragmented social fabric. The potential for clashes among various state institutions further exacerbates the challenges faced by the people, who are desperately seeking a leader capable of guiding them out of the current crisis. Chronic issues of governance and misplaced priorities have long afflicted the nation. The most distressing aspect of this scenario is the lack of a clear roadmap toward peace and progress.

The February 8 elections, despite being flawed and manipulated, were expected to bring political and economic stability. There was hope that the coalition government, comprised of PML-N, PPP, MQM, and other smaller parties, would steer the country out of crisis. However, events did not unfold as anticipated. The ruling elite's primary hope for reviving the economy still hinges on an IMF deal. The Special Investment Facilitation Council (SIFC) has yet to make significant progress, as the friendly countries it has approached have not taken practical steps. Although their promises are encouraging, it remains unclear when these com-

“Given the prevailing blame on the PTI for the political impasse, it could be strategic for its leaders to initiate dialogue with all stakeholders, focusing on a singular agenda: “Join us in signing a charter against corruption.” Such a proactive move has the potential to shift dynamics in favor of the PTI”

mitments will materialize into tangible outcomes. Countries such as Saudi Arabia and the UAE, which genuinely seek to help Pakistan through significant investments, are wary of the country's deteriorating political situation. During high-level interactions with Pakistani officials, the Saudis made it clear that political stability, including the involvement of all political stakeholders including PTI, is essential for successful investment ventures. They emphasized that economic stability cannot be achieved without political stability, a point that makes perfect sense. So, the question now is how to achieve political stability. Undoubtedly, the PTI holds the key to this stability, which is why there is a demand, even from abroad, for the PTI to be engaged in the process. The government claims it is ready and has made efforts to engage the PTI in talks. However, there is no evidence to support these claims. As we know, Imran Khan essentially embodies the PTI, so it raises the question: who from the government side has met with him in prison with the aim of initiating a political rapprochement? The available information indicates that no such effort has been made thus far.

There is yet another intriguing question: will Imran Khan respond positively if approached for talks? The track record of PTI leaders suggests he may not accept this offer, as he views both the PML-N and the PPP as two sides of the same coin. Khan believes there is no point in talking to these two parties because they are the primary defenders of the status quo, whose sole purpose in coming to power is to “loot and plunder the national exchequer.” However, after the events that transpired with PTI and Imran Khan, even his political adversaries believe he may have learned from his past experiences. Whether he likes it or not, he must live and work with the key stakeholders at the helm of affairs. Consequently, he must reconcile with the ground realities if he and his party genuinely aim to rid the country of its ills. There is no doubt that PTI received a resounding mandate in the February 8 elections and deserved a chance to govern at the federal level. Unfortunately, this is how our system operates. In 2018, PML-N and especially Nawaz Sharif suffered a similar defeat, with the aim at that time being to bring PTI into power. If there are flaws in the system, only politicians have the power to correct them. Non-political force-

es are likely to support the status quo because it maintains their influence in politics and other matters. However, the critical question is whether politicians are strong and ethical enough to address these issues. Unfortunately, at this point in time, they are not. Thus, the core problem lies with the politicians, whose dubious credentials invite interventions from non-political entities. Unfortunately, the current situation doesn't offer much hope for immediate improvement. The political landscape is deeply divided, with stakeholders unwilling to engage in meaningful dialogue and compromise. This lack of unity, coupled with the influence of those who benefit from the status quo, creates a significant obstacle to progress. Moreover, the current situation is likely to deter potential foreign direct investments, forcing Pakistan to rely once again on the IMF—a move that could prove disastrous. **Endnote:** Given the prevailing blame on the PTI for the political impasse, it could be strategic for its leaders to initiate dialogue with all stakeholders, focusing on a singular agenda: “Join us in signing a charter against corruption.” Such a proactive move has the potential to shift dynamics in favor of the PTI.



# Forest department degradation due to flawed polices

The Secretary's lack of understanding of seed collection timings further exacerbates the situation

MUMTAZ A BHATTI

ISLAMABAD: The Punjab Forest Department's recent decisions, largely driven by the actions of its secretary, are having detrimental effects on the department's performance and the environment. The unprofessional approach of the Secretary, characterized by ignoring technical advice, has led to several misguided initiatives that are counterproductive and financially wasteful. One glaring example of the Secretary's ill-advised decisions is the order to establish new plant nurseries in May. According to experts, February is the optimal time for raising nurseries due to favorable weather conditions for seed collection and ger-

mination. By choosing to start nurseries in the hotter months of May and June, the Secretary ignored these crucial technical insights. This not only undermines the success of the nurseries but also results in a misuse of resources, as the harsh weather conditions are not conducive to the growth of young plants. The Secretary's lack of understanding of seed collection timings further exacerbates the situation. The recent decision to establish a single type of plant nursery in each district is unprofessional and impractical. People in different districts have diverse preferences and requirements for plants. Limiting each district to one type of plant nursery will force residents to travel to other districts to obtain the plants they desire. This

inconvenience is likely to deter people from engaging in plantation activities, ultimately diminishing their interest in greenery and conservation. A more effective approach would be to delegate the decision-making process to Divisional Forest Officers (DFOs). These officers have a better understanding of local needs, preferences, and ecological conditions. By allowing DFOs to determine the types of plants grown in their respective nurseries, the initiative can better cater to the diverse demands of different communities. This decentralized approach would enhance accessibility, encourage local participation in plantation activities, and foster a more sustainable and enthusiastic engagement with environmental conservation efforts.



ISLAMABAD: CEO Murree Brewery MNA Isphanyar Bhandara presenting a book to Editor Daily Islamabad Post Ansar Mahmood Bhatti. Ambassador of Morocco Mohamed Karmoune, Bastien Blanc CEO of Hashoo Group Hospitality and Maj. Sabih also in the picture.—DNA

## BMP expects cut in markup rate, as inflation lowers

ISLAMABAD: With the decline in the inflation and improvement in external account, the businessmen are expecting a significant cut in the monetary policy framework in the next Monetary Policy Committee meeting being held on 10th of this month, urging the authorities to ensure a significant cut in the markup rate to bolster economy and enhance productivity. While talking to a delegation of various trade and industrial associations, the Businessmen Panel (BMP) Chairman and FPCCI former president Mian Anjum Nisar said

that State Bank's tight monetary policy stance had been hurting the national economy for the last many years, thus there is an urgent need to bring it to single digit. He said the State Bank's tight monetary policy stance had been hurting the national economy for the last many years, thus there is an urgent need to bring it to single digit. He said that it is the State Bank alone that responsible for existing double digit markup but the government is the main player that had made heaviest ever domestic borrowing leaving little breathing

space for business community. He said that the domestic investment at the moment is alarmingly low which has sent a negative signal to the potential foreign investors and now is the time that the federal government should give some patient hearing to the private sector calling. He said if the government was seriously desirous of having economic turnaround in the coming years it would have to do two things that are: an immediate freeze on domestic and foreign borrowing and secondly put in place a well-tailored strategy to

show-case Pakistan's potentials to the outer world. He said that the State Bank, before finalizing the upcoming monetary policy, bear in mind the internal and external challenges, the economy is facing today and if it makes a considerable downward cut, the economic activities would get a boost for a long term. He reminded of the government that it is the private sector that has paid all government dues despite the fact that it had been facing a recession like situation therefore the government should give some relief to the businessmen.—APP

## Punjab minister unveils initiatives for minorities

LAHORE: Punjab Minister for Minorities Ramesh Singh Arora has announced a series of significant steps taken by the Human Rights & Minority Affairs department under the supervision of Chief Minister Punjab, Maryam Nawaz Sharif, aimed at improving the welfare of religious minorities, particularly minority students. The minister shared the developments while speaking at an event held at Forman Christian College & University (FCCU), organized by the Center for Law and Justice (CLJ) here on Sunday. He highlighted several key achievements, including the introduction of a 2 per cent minority admission quota in public sector universities across Punjab. Additionally, 18,914 vacancies have been identified and recruited under the 5 per cent minority job quota. In a move to foster inclusivity, a notification has been issued to replace the term "Esai" with "Masih" in all public correspondence. He said the Punjab government has also adopted a no-hate material policy in all textbooks published by the Punjab Curriculum Textbook Board. Under the Punjab Skill Development Program, 5,000 minority students have received free training to enhance their skills and employability. The event celebrated the graduation of 30 female students from the Khush-hali (Prosperity) Fellowship Program. This pioneering program, led by Mary James Gill and Asif Aqeel in collaboration with the British Council, the University of Lancaster, and FCCU, aims to empower young girls from sanitation workers' families in Lahore's underserved slums by helping them overcome educational barriers and improve their occupational mobility. Prominent attendees at the ceremony included French Ambassador in Pakistan Clara Strandhøj, Head of the British High Commission's Lahore Office, FCCU Rector Dr. Jonathan Addleton.—APP

## Health department to dissolve medicine coordination council

DNA

PESHAWAR: The Health Department has decided to dissolve the previous committees of the Medicine Coordination Council for the procurement of government medicines. Three new committees have been formed for the procurement of medicines, said a notification issued here on Sunday. It is worth mentioning here that the disbanded committees were formed last year for the purchase of the current financial year. The newly formed committees will start working from the next financial year (July 1). The Technical and Evolution Committee has been headed by the Additional Director General Monitoring and Evolution Health. Deputy Director Medi-

cine Coordination Council Committee Secretary cum Member while MS Police Services Hospital, Principal Pharmacist Services Hospital. Additional Director MCC, Specialist in Medicine and Specialist in Surgery Nasirullah Babar Memorial Hospital Peshawar. Paediatrics, Anaesthetist Services Hospital, Gynecologist Molvi Ameer Shah Memorial Hospital, Deputy Director Pharmacy Services and one person based on need will be included as members. One Chief Drug Inspector, Senior Drug Inspector and Drug Inspector, one pharmacist from the hospital and one pharmacist from the department of pharmacy of a government university will be taken as members of the inspection committee. In this way, one member will be included in

the inspection committee on the orders of the competent authority. The Rate Contracting Committee will be headed by DG Health Services, said the notification. Additional Director General Monitoring and Development Committee will be secretary cum member. DG Drug Control and Pharmacy Services, Director Finance Health Directorate, Professor of Cardiology at Peshawar Institute of Cardiology, Professor of Medicine at HMC, Professor of Surgery at LRH and the Chairman of the Pharmacy Department of University of Peshawar, a District Health Officer, Additional Director General Drugs, Additional Director Pharmacy Services and one member will join the committee on the orders of the competent authority.

## Parents to administer measles vaccine to children: DC

SARGODHA: Deputy Commissioner of Sargodha, Capt (ret'd) Aurangzeb Haider Khan, said that the anti-measles drive is in full swing in the District. In his statement issued here on Sunday, he said measles could be unpleasant and was a potentially serious and highly infectious disease that could spread easily through respiratory droplets. The DC asked the parents to ensure that measles vaccination would be administered on time to save their children from the deadly disease. He mentioned that the risks of measles were high from March to June, so parents should complete the immunization course issued by the Health Department on time to protect their newborns from deadly diseases like measles. According to the Chief Executive Officer of the Health Authority, Dr. Aslam Asad, "It is vital to administer the first dose of the measles vaccine to young children immediately after nine months.—APP

## Optimized tobacco taxation can boost Govt revenue

Murtaza Solangi said that all stake-holders must cast their differences aside and unite to protect our children and youth

ADIL SHAHEEN

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 Rs82 billion. Murtaza Solangi, Former Caretaker Minister of Information and Broadcasting of Pakistan, said all stakehold-

ers 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 care burdens encompass health-care 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 was a vital measure in combating tobacco consumption, as

advocated by the World Health Organization (WHO). The industry can absorb at least a 40 per cent increase in taxes, and the IMF and World Bank have recommended Pakistan introduce a single-tier tax structure for cigarettes, he said. Despite efforts to increase taxes, he said 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 added. He further stated that the cigarette prices in Pakistan are still cheaper than in many parts of the world. By utilizing price comparison as a reference point, the policy-makers can better understand market dynamics and assess the potential of tax hikes on consumer behavior.

## Cancer Society warns youth against E-cigarettes, hookah

ISLAMABAD: President Cancer Society Dr Ahmed Ijaz Masood on Sunday issued a stark warning about the escalating popularity of tobacco products like e-cigarettes and hookah among youth. Speaking to Pakistan Television (PTV), he said that these products were more dangerous than traditional cigarettes due to the harmful substances they contain. Dr Masood explained that the tobacco industry uses various tactics to hook young people into lifelong addiction by giving these products different names and promoting them through branded materials. He highlighted that e-cigarettes, which contain nicotine and potentially harmful toxins like heavy metals, can damage the lungs and res-

piratory system. "Unfortunately, popular shows, movies and dramas portray smoking in a glamorous fashion," Dr Masood said, urging a discouragement of such scenes. He noted a 110 per cent increase in tobacco-related scenes in popular shows among youth aged 15 to 24, which often depict smoking glamorously. Dr Masood cited global statistics, stating that an estimated 38 million boys and girls aged 13 to 15 use tobacco products. "Nicotine is especially harmful to developing brains," he added, stressing the urgent need to raise awareness about the dangers of smoking. He described smoking as a major curse in society, encompassing products like cigarettes, cigars, pipes, hookahs, beedis, betel leaves, areca nuts, gutka,

and snuff. "Smoking damages almost every organ in the human body and has negative impacts on overall health," the Cancer Society President said. He highlighted that tobacco smoke contains over 7,000 chemicals, most of which are carcinogenic and is the leading cause of lung, mouth, and throat cancers. He detailed that the use of tobacco in any form can lead to lethal cancers, including lung, oral, esophageal, stomach, colon, liver, pancreatic, breast, kidney, prostate, and bladder cancers. Smoking also causes heart attacks, asthma, cardiovascular diseases, and psychological disorders, he added. Dr Masood emphasised the need for a concerted effort to educate people about the harmful effects of tobacco and to take a stand for a healthier future.

# Pak PWD's possible closure to affect country's construction development

Instead of dismantling this vital Dept, efforts should be directed towards enhancing its capabilities and addressing any inefficiencies

MUMTAZ AHMED BHATTI



The possible closure of the Pakistan Public Works Department (Pak PWD) has stirred significant concern among the populace and professionals alike. Established as the Federal Department of Construction, Pak PWD has played a crucial role in the infrastructural development of Pakistan. Its experienced engi-

neers, comprehensive design sections, and state-of-the-art construction capabilities are fundamental to the country's progress. Since its inception, Pak PWD has been integral to Pakistan's development. The department is responsible for constructing and maintaining government buildings, including courts, hospitals, schools, and administrative offices. Its role extends beyond mere construction; it embodies the nation's commitment to sustainable and strategic development. Pak PWD has historically been at the forefront of implementing cutting-edge technology and innovative designs, contributing significantly to the nation's infrastructure progress. Pak PWD's contributions are multifaceted. The department not only constructs buildings but also ensures that these structures meet high standards of safety

and sustainability. Its experienced engineers bring expertise that is difficult to replace, encompassing everything from initial design to final construction. The design section of Pak PWD is particularly notable for its ability to create blueprints for complex and large-scale projects, ensuring that new buildings are both functional and aesthetically pleasing. Pak PWD is involved in maintaining existing government structures, ensuring they remain safe and functional over the years. This maintenance work is vital in a country where infrastructure is constantly subjected to harsh weather conditions and heavy use. Without the diligent upkeep provided by Pak PWD, many of these buildings would fall into disrepair, posing risks to safety and efficiency. The economic consequences of closing Pak

PWD are significant. First, the expertise housed within the department represents a considerable investment of time and resources. Engineers and architects in Pak PWD have undergone extensive training and have accumulated invaluable experience. Dissolving the department would mean a loss of this intellectual capital, which would be difficult and costly to replace. Pak PWD plays a crucial role in the employment sector. Pak PWD not only employs a substantial number of professionals directly but also creates numerous jobs through its projects. Construction projects require laborers, contractors, suppliers, and various other support services. The ripple effect of these projects contributes significantly to the economy. Closing Pak PWD would result in job losses and negatively impact the construction industry and its associated sectors.

Strategically, the closure of Pak PWD would be a setback for Pakistan's long-term development goals. Infrastructure is a cornerstone of national development, underpinning economic growth, social progress, and national security. A dedicated federal department ensures that infrastructure projects are aligned with national priorities and are executed efficiently and effectively. The closure of Pak PWD would likely lead to a fragmented approach to infrastructure development. Without a central body to oversee these projects, there is a risk of duplication of efforts, misallocation of resources, and inconsistent quality standards. This fragmentation could hamper progress and make it more difficult to implement large-scale, coordinated infrastructure projects that are vital for national development. Globally, countries recognize

the importance of dedicated public works departments. These institutions are critical in managing and executing infrastructure projects, ensuring that development is consistent with national goals. For instance, the United States has the General Services Administration (GSA), which oversees the construction and maintenance of federal buildings. Similarly, India's Central Public Works Department (CPWD) plays a vital role in the country's infrastructure development. These departments are often expanded and enhanced to meet the growing needs of the country. They are equipped with advanced technology and staffed by skilled professionals to ensure that infrastructure projects are completed to the highest standards. The potential closure of the Pakistan Public Works Department (Pak PWD) poses a

significant threat to the country's infrastructural integrity and development. The department's historical contributions, economic impact, and strategic importance cannot be overstated. Instead of dismantling this vital institution, efforts should be directed towards enhancing its capabilities and addressing any inefficiencies. By investing in technology, fostering public-private partnerships, ensuring transparent governance, and adopting sustainable practices, Pak PWD can continue to play a pivotal role in Pakistan's development. The government must recognize the value of Pak PWD and work towards its improvement rather than its dissolution. The future of Pakistan's infrastructure and, by extension, its overall development, depends on the continued existence and enhancement of this crucial department.



## 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/Argentina  
National Day

May 25/Lebanon  
Liberation and Resistance Day

May 28/Azerbaijan  
Republic Day

May 28/Ethiopia  
National Day



### Hotels & Restaurants

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



### Airlines

Turkish Airlines.....8494949



### Emergency

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



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PIA Cargo.....9280979  
Railway Inquiry.....117  
Railway Exchange 9270831-5  
WASA Rawalpindi.5555489  
CAA.....9281092



### Hospitals

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



### Departments

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

### Islamabad Metropolitan

Corporation.....9209224  
Potohar Town.....9209224  
Rawal Town.....5773343

### Water Tank

Islamabad.....0321-5744480

# RCCI, ICCI join hands to resolve business community problems

President Rawalpindi Chamber Saqib Rafiq said that for the promotion of business and industrial activities, a business facilitation center (BFC) should be established in Islamabad like Rawalpindi

### DNA

RAWALPINDI: The Rawalpindi Chamber of Commerce and Industries (RCCI) and Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industries (ICCI) have reiterated their firm resolve for collective efforts to resolve the issues of the business community of twin cities. It was reiterated to form a joint working team and organize joint events to promote industrial and commercial activities for the benefit of the region. It was agreed that the two chambers would meet twice a month to resolve issues related to the business community. This was stated by President RCCI Saqib Rafiq during a meeting with ICCI President Ahsan Zafar Bakhtawari during a delegation visit to Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry (ICCI). Senior Vice President Muhammad Hamza Sarosh, Vice President Faisal Shahzad and Member Executive Committee Ikram Ur Rehman were also included in the delegation. ICCI President Ahsan Zafar Bakhtawari, former President ICCI Zafar Bakhtawari, Khalid Chaudhry, Sheikh Jamshed, former President of Islamabad Women's Chamber Ms. Naïma Ansari, among others, were also present on this occasion. During the meeting, prob-



lems faced by the business community of the twin cities, industrial zones, expo center, alternative dispute resolution, issues related to FBR, RDA, CDA, close contact with the district administration and government officials and the business community. Joint efforts to provide maximum facilities were discussed.

President Rawalpindi Chamber Saqib Rafiq said that for the promotion of business and industrial activities, a business facilitation center (BFC) should be established in Islamabad like Rawalpindi. Establishment of expo centers and industrial zones are inevitable, both cities are expanding, to promote SMEs and reduce traffic pressure from the city, it is necessary to establish industrial and economic zones around the ring road. He suggested that commercial and business activities will have to be promoted on the pattern of the Central Business District (CBD). Long-term and planned over a period of three to five years policies required for sustainable growth and projects completions. He said that the

many disputes are linked with the demarcation of boundaries of twin cities as well as many issues be it construction of a road, laying of a water or gas pipeline, matters related to police or other facilities. President Islamabad Chamber Ahsan Zafar Bakhtawari assured that the problems of the business community of the twin cities will be solved together.

presentation on E-FOAS and explained that the government of Punjab had mandated the use of E-FOAS to maintain easily accessible records of notes, approvals, and proposals. "This system helps prevent the loss of critical documents during incidents such as floods caused by heavy rain.—APP

## Ban on plastic bags to be enforced from June 5

RAWALPINDI: The administration on the directives of the Punjab government would enforce complete ban on plastic bags from June 5. According to a Commissioner Office spokesman, Commissioner Rawalpindi Division, Engineer Aamir Khattak had directed the relevant authorities that all-out efforts should be made to provide relief to the citizens. "First priority of the administration is to promote economic activities by providing a favorable environment to the business community," he said. The Commissioner had also directed the Assistant Commissioners to visit all the markets and inform the people about the ban on use of plastic bags. All possible efforts would be made to spread awareness about the ban. Engineer Aamir Khattak had also directed the relevant authorities to accelerate ongoing awareness campaign against use of plastic bags, the spokesman said. The Commissioner instructed the relevant officers to conduct an awareness campaign against the plastic bags in such a way that the citizens realizing its harmful effects abandon the use of plastic bags themselves. "The use of plastic is dangerous for human health," he said. "Along with prevention of everything that causes pollution.—DNA

## Speakers commend PM for taking education initiative

### SAIFULLAH ANSAR

ISLAMABAD: Member National Assembly Muhammad Hanif Abbasi while addressing a seminar entitled 'Education Emergency and our Responsibilities' organized by Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry said that education plays an important role in the development of individuals as well as of society at large and no development is possible without skilled and trained human resources. He added that Character building is one of the main traits of education, so the virtues like honesty, truthfulness, impartiality and empathy should be inculcated among the students through the education process. He said that around 26 million children are out-of-school and it is our prime responsibility to enroll them and make them useful citizens

not only for their families but for the country by imparting education and instilling skill development. He added that improvement in the teachers' skills level is equally important for obtaining the objective and enhancing the literacy level for the development of the country. He said that sitting Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif is the first ever Prime Minister who is taking keen interest in enhancing the literacy level and in induction of out of school children to make them valuable assets of the country. President Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry Ahsan Zafar Bakhtawari while paying glowing tributes to Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif for taking initiative for out of school children to make them beneficial individuals instead of becoming a burden on the society. He demanded that the Government must allow the

commencement of evening classes in mosques, chamber houses, and community halls for the children whose parents are unable to bear the expenses of education, adding that in this way we can usher a revolution in the society by enhancing literacy rate as well as skill development. Ahsan Zafar Bakhtawari said that ICCI is already working for the cause and that it has inked a number of MoUs with the Universities for the promotion of Industry-Academia linkages, it is providing grants for construction of study rooms in schools and colleges, providing water filtration plants, computers, laboratory equipment etc. He added that the doors of Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry are open for this noble cause and that it will extend every possible support to the education ministry as well as the NGOs working on it.

## 11 temporary cattle markets in Rwp district

RAWALPINDI: District administration Rawalpindi is finalizing all the arrangements to set up 11 temporary cattle markets in connection with Eid-ul-Adha in different tehsils of the district. According to a district administration spokesman, all possible facilities would be provided in the cattle markets which would be fully functional 10 days before Eid-ul-Azha. Three cattle markets would be established in Cantt areas at Bhatta Chowk near Koh Noor Mill, Al-Haram City Mouza Misriot and Gulistan Colony near National Park Rawalpindi. A cattle market would be at Khayaban-e-Sir Syed, Sector 2 in city area while a cattle market would also be established at Rawat in Saddar division area. A cattle market would be in Tehsil Gujjar Khan at Majeed Mor outside Prism Town main GT Road, he said adding, two cattle markets would be established in Tehsil Taxila at New Sharif Hospital main GT Road and HIT near Sunday Bazaar in Taxila Cantt. Two mandis of the sacrificial animals to facilitate the residents of Tehsil Kallar Syedan and Kahota would also be set up, he informed. He informed that a temporary cattle market would be established in connection with Eid-ul-Azha at Mangal Bypass cattle sale point in Tehsil Kallar Syedan while a mandi would be in Tehsil Kahota at Sakhi Sarwar Tingi Road. The Rawalpindi Cantonment Board (RCB) has auctioned fee collection the cattle market in Bhatta Chowk for Rs109.9 million. The entry fee for sacrificial animals such as cows, bulls and camels in the market has been fixed at Rs3,000 each, and for goats and sheep at Rs2,000 each. According to a RCB spokesman, a total of 20 contractors participated in the auction, while Riaz Hussain won the contract with the highest bid compared to last year.

## Experts advise people to use pineapple to avoid heatstroke

ISLAMABAD: Defeating an unemployment with a share will power and determination, Zakir Ali (45), a poor fruit-seller despite sizzling temperature in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa loads his handcart with mangoes and pineapples every morning at Chamkani fruit market where he earns upto Rs.5,000 per day. As the sun rays bath his stones made house at Dheri Ishaq in Nowshera district, the motivated fruits seller starts his motorcycle and arrives Chamkani fruits market located near motorway at Peshawar city where he loads his handcart after purchasing mangoes, banana and pineapples through an open auction. "After the death of my father Pashum Khan, I left my education incomplete in

1998 and adopted fruits selling business as profession. With the grace of Allah Almighty, today my children are reading in top private school, constructed own house and performed an umra with wife," he said. He said the demands of pineapple has been increased in local markets keeping in view of its unique quality of hydrating people for a longer hours that help fight heatstroke. "Pineapple is very useful summer fruit as it carries about 86 percent water, and can help prevent people from heatstroke and dehydration if used in natural form," said Professor Dr Aurangzeb Khan Wazir, head of the medical department, government hospital Pabbi, Nowshera. Packed

with vitamins B and C, he said the fruit carries magnesium, potassium, manganese and an anti-inflammatory enzyme which was also useful for people with kidney problems. Dr Fazal Bhari, Director General, Agriculture Research KP said that pineapple plant is valued universally for its edible fruit with very sweet taste and aromatic odour. Advised people to make it part of their diet due to high water content, he said the plant thrives in tropical and sub-tropical climate mostly between March-August and can adapt itself to even moderate climates such as in the interior Sindh and southern districts of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and Punjab provinces.—APP

## RDA organizes training session on E-Filing system

RAWALPINDI: Rawalpindi Development Authority (RDA) on the directives of Director General (DG)

RDA Kinza Murtaza has organized a training session on the E-Filing and Office Automation System (E-FOAS) for all the RDA officers. According to a RDA spokesman, Ishfaq Ali Dhillow, Director of Operations at Punjab Information Technology Board (PTTB), provided a comprehensive

presentation on E-FOAS and explained that the government of Punjab had mandated the use of E-FOAS to maintain easily accessible records of notes, approvals, and proposals. "This system helps prevent the loss of critical documents during incidents such as floods caused by heavy rain.—APP



## Government of Pakistan

# PAKISTAN PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT

NO. CEMD-1/AB/695 Dated: 30.5.2024

## NOTICE INVITING TENDER

Sealed tenders are invited from the contractors/ firms registered with Pakistan Engineering Council under relevant category (C6 & above) on percentage above or below basis on Pak. PWD schedule of Rates 2022 & Market Rates, who possess valid renewal with PEC. Single Stage One Envelope bidding procedure will be adopted as per PPRA Rule 36(a) whereby each bid shall comprise one single envelope containing separately, technical proposal and financial proposal. Bidding documents can be purchased from the office of the undersigned during office hours on any working day till 20/06/2024 with written request on letter head of the firm accompanied with attested copy of CNIC, Income Tax Registration Certificate as active taxpayer (filer), the bidder must have valid copy of valid registration of PEC under relevant category after paying a non-refundable fee of **Rs. 5,000/-** as cost of bidding documents. Tenders will be issued to the proprietor of the Firm / Company or their legally authorized representatives having registered power of attorney in his name. The tenders in sealed cover should be dropped in the tender box kept in the office of undersigned on **21/06/2024 upto 11:00 A.M.** The respective tenders will be opened on the same day at **11.30 A.M.** in the presence of contractors or their authorized representatives, having registered power of attorney.

Technical proposals shall comply with eligibility criteria of bidding documents in IB 26.

S. No.	Name of Work	Bid Security	Period of Completion	Cost of Bidding Documents	Relevant PEC code
	EXTENSION OF DISPLAY EXHIBITS, COLLECTION REPOSITORIES IMPROVEMENT AND RESEARCH FACILITIES ENHANCEMENT AT PAKISTAN MUSEUM OF NATURAL HISTORY (PMNH) BLOCK NO. 3,4,5.				
1	(SH : Networking System)	Rs. 600,000/-	18 Months	Rs. 5,000/-	EE-07
2	(SH: CCTV, Surveillance System)	Rs. 800,000/-	18 Months	Rs. 5,000/-	EE-02
3	SH Telephone System and Public Address System)	Rs. 450,000/-	18 Months	Rs. 5,000/-	EE-01

**TERMS & CONDITIONS:**

- Bid Security in the shape of CDR in favor of the "Executive Engineer Central E/M Division NO.1, Pak. PWD, Islamabad" issued by any scheduled bank from the account of applicant / firm must be submitted with application.
- All Bid Securities shall be deposited in federal treasury and will be returned upon issuance of "Letter of Acceptance" to the successful bidder.
- The applicant firm should have completed at least one similar nature of Work in Government sector. Documentary evidence to this effect in the shape of work order be submitted with the application
- The participating bidders must possess and provide documentary proof of relevant capabilities as per eligibility criteria of bidding documents.
- Bidders submitting their bid at rates lesser than engineer estimate shall be required to submit an additional bid security of amount equivalent to rebate quoted from approved cost.
- An affidavit on judicial paper of Rs. 100/- must be submitted along with application, to the effect that the contractor/firm is not involved in any litigation with any government/semi government department and has not been blacklisted till date.
- The bidder must provide account maintenance certificate.
- No tender will be issued / received through Postal Services, E-mail, Fax or Telegraph etc.
- Any information/Clarification regarding the detail of work, specification and condition etc, can be sought from the office of the undersigned through written request on working days and during the office hours before closing date.
- The submission of bids implies that the bidder is fully conversant with the nature of work, scope, site condition, applicable rules, codes and procedures etc.
- Under Rule 33(1) of Public Procurement Rules, 2004, the competent authority reserves the right to accept or reject all bids or proposals at any time prior to the acceptance of bid or proposal.
- Tender notice is also available at PPRA website ([www.ppra.org.pk](http://www.ppra.org.pk)).
- Un-contested tender will be issued up to dated 20/6/2024 and will be opened on 24/06/2024. other terms and conditions will remain the same.

(Tariq Masood Sadiq)  
EXECUTIVE ENGINEER  
CENTRAL E/M DIVISION.1,  
PAK. P.W.D., ISLAMABAD. PH NO. 051-9101099

PID (I) No.7425/23



## Briefs

Real estate  
- Paying  
price of an  
economic  
gimmickry

M. Aftab Zahoor

ISLAMABAD: Billions of rupees black money was thrown to the real estate basket when former Premier Imran Khan announced incentives for tax evaders, paving way for whitening their black money and resultantly creating an artificial boom in this sector. Seeing the market dynamics hundreds of thousands common people with moderate income also stepped in having a desire to buy some property for their kids and future needs. But, they were mistaken as the bulk investors sold out their properties to individual buyers and made their way leaving them in turmoil. If some invested their retirement dues, the others invested their savings or the provident fund money - they were accumulating penny after penny over the decades with an innocent desire of getting their children married after earning some profit by selling their plots. But, swayed by desire to have an abode, they fall prey to real estate tycoons least knowing about their exploitive tendencies and plans to suck their hard earned money. Some developers and builders described the PTI era boom in real estate as a bubble that when burst, washed away the belonging of hundreds of thousands small investors leaving them in dire desperation. "This policy of the previous government was a severe blow to real estate sector as the tax evaders escaped by whitening their money and faulty policies supplemented by economic recession struck billions of rupees of common people," said a builder Falak Khan. "The previous government ruined real estate sector. The artificial bubble has burst leaving hundreds of thousands investors in lurch." He opined that a gradual development in this sector could have ensured sustainability. "But, abruptly forging ahead has trapped local investors as well as overseas Pakistanis. Therefore, the government should seriously look into this crisis and bail out small investors." Seeing the series of events, one can easily understand how the poor people are deprived of their money. Firstly, there is a bobby trap of small down or advance payment; then an affordable installments payment plan and promises of early delivery of plots. But, when there is good response in buying files, the society owners oversell files meaning that more files than the actual land acquired for a society. Once the bulk stock of files is sold out, they themselves float rumors that society does not have required land that result in panic selling of files by the investors. Here step in the cronies of developers who artificially down the prices and buy back these files on lesser rates for the same developer, inflicting loss on average investors. For example if somebody has paid Rs 600,000 for a file.

## PRCS has achieved significant milestones

Newly appointed Chairman PRCS Balochistan calls on PRCS National Chairman

FAISAL SHEIKH

ISLAMABAD: The Pakistan Red Crescent Society (PRCS) views its branches as the essential lifeblood of its National Headquarters. A strong and active branch network is vital for PRCS's success. We are committed to ensuring the stability of our branches by enhancing staff capabilities and expanding our programs. Every possible measure will be taken to achieve this goal. PRCS is dedicated to humanitarian service, with a proven track record of timely responses to natural disasters and emergencies. The National Headquarters provided all necessary assistance to the Balochistan branch during the devastating floods of 2022. PRCS Chairman Sardar Shahid Ahmed Laghari shared these views during a meeting with the newly appointed Chairman of the Balochistan branch, Abdul Wali Khan Ghibzai who visited the PRCS National Headquarters on Friday. Sardar Shahid Ahmed Laghari praised Abdul Wali Khan Ghibzai's appointment as a positive step for the Red Crescent Balochistan branch, emphasizing that no



effort will be spared in serving the disaster-affected people of Balochistan. He assured that the National Headquarters would provide all necessary technical support to the branch. Abdul Wali Khan Ghibzai ac-

knowledged that under Sardar Shahid Ahmed Laghari's leadership, PRCS has achieved significant milestones. Many initiatives have been launched to advance humanitarian efforts. The financial aid provided to the flood affected families

of Gwadar will be remembered as a historic gesture. He noted that PRCS's visionary leadership has earned international recognition, which is a source of pride for all. He emphasized that the National Headquarters serves as a beacon

of hope for the branch. At the conclusion of the meeting, PRCS Chairman Sardar Shahid Ahmed Laghari presented a souvenir to Abdul Wali Khan Ghibzai, the newly appointed Chairman of the PRCS Balochistan branch.

## 'Spare taxpayers and punish tax evaders'

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Former President of the Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry (ICCI), Dr. Shahid Rasheed Butt, said on Sunday that unresolved issues and tough business environment are driving international investors away, which is not good for the reputation of the country.

He stated that it is crucial to resolve the issues of foreign investors immediately to ensure their continued presence in Pakistan. How new investment will come to Pakistan when local and foreign investors are fleeing the country, he asked. Shahid Rasheed Butt said in a statement issued here today that many foreign companies working in oil, gas, pharmaceuticals, mining, telecom, transport, and many other sectors have already left Pakistan. In contrast, dozens of companies have scaled down their operations while several companies have sold their shares in large numbers to reduce their presence in Pakistan, which discourages other investors while defaming the country.

He said that last year, Shell, which had been doing business in Pakistan for 75 years, decided to sell all its assets to a Saudi retailer.

## Saigol wants end to importers' exploitation

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Maritime Affairs Qaiser Ahmed Sheikh has assured the trade and industry of his best possible support by introducing right policies and their implementation, as the private sector can play a pivotal role in driving economy in the country. He was talking to the Chairman of Pakistan Industrial and Traders Associations Front (PIAF) Fahimur Rehman Saigol who met him here today. The federal minister observed that the primary objective of the government is to facilitate the new investment and stimulate the economic growth by removing unnecessary barriers and obstacles. Qaiser Ahmed Sheikh said that the economy is the top priority of the government and it is taking all necessary steps to revive it by overcoming challenges and facilitating the trade and industry. He said that the government has been focusing on economic growth instead of levying just taxes. Fahimur Rehman Saigol greeted

Qaiser Ahmad Sheikh on becoming the Federal Minister for Maritime Affairs and hoped the problems of the business community would be resolved. On this occasion, he also extended warm felicitations to Mian Muhammad Nawaz Sharif on his successful re-election as the President of Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N). He said that successful election of Mian Nawaz Sharif as the president of the PML-N is not only a good omen for the party but it would also usher into new era of development and prosperity for the nation. He also said that Mian Nawaz Sharif is a seasoned and visionary political leader as the election of Nawaz Sharif is a manifestation of the full confidence of the leaders and workers of the Party on his charismatic leadership skills. He expressed his confidence that under the leadership of Nawaz Sharif, the PML-N will be proactive and will lead the country to development and prosperity. He said that Mian Nawaz Sharif has always done politics based on principles and made tough decisions for the sake of the country's interests. Talking about the

issues related to his ministry, Fahimur Rahman said the business community condemned the huge increase in container terminal charges. He apprised the minister that the business community is in a state of shock and disbelief at the increase in container terminal charges. He urged him to immediately rationalize the charges and said any future increase should be announced two to three months in advance. He stressed that shipping lines and container terminals need to be brought under a strong and effective regulatory authority to put an end to exploitation of importers and exporters at their hands. Federal Minister Qaiser Ahmed Sheikh appreciated PIAF Chairman's suggestions and promised to solve the problems of the business community soon and assured of his cooperation. The Federal Minister expressed that any pragmatic suggestions from the private sector on economic growth will be welcomed and appreciated. He accepted the invitation to visit the central office of the PIAF and said that he will visit the central office of the PIAF soon.

## Citizens applaud China's role in Pakistan's satellite missions

ISLAMABAD: The people from countrywide have expressed their gratitude for China's support in launching Pakistani satellites into space. According to Gwadar Pro, after the successful deployment of back to back two space satellites ICUBE-Q and PAKSAT MM-1, they expressed their appreciation for China's role in Pakistan's space missions. Expressing their thoughts on social media, a number of Pakistanis view China's support in their space missions as a significant collaboration that enhances their capabilities and strengthens bilateral ties. They regarded China's assistance as crucial in initiating and advancing Pakistan's satellite capabilities, fostering a robust partnership in space exploration. On X (formerly Twitter), a user expressed gratitude and credited the Chinese side. The user quoted a saying from late Chinese leader, Deng Xiaoping. Another user posted on social media that launching of this satellite would address several issues we currently face in Pakistan, particularly internet outages. The successful satellite launch received applause not only from overseas Pakistanis but also from those residing in China. The internet was flooded with congratulatory messages celebrating Pakistan's flourishing space missions. The report says, the launch of PAKSAT MM-1, Pakistan's second communication satellite will bring a multitude of benefits to the country. It will significantly improve internet connectivity across Pakistan, especially in remote areas. The satellite will support tele-education and telemedicine services, allowing people in remote areas to access quality education and healthcare services that were previously unavailable to them. It will also support e-governance and e-commerce, which will help streamline government services and boost economic activities in the country. The satellite will play a pivotal role in the socio-economic uplift of the country by strengthening its communication infrastructure. It will help meet the growing demands of the Telecom sector and address the increasing demand for high-speed internet and seamless connectivity. Therefore, the launch of MM-1 is seen as a testament among the locals to the strong collaboration and partnership between Pakistan and China in the field of space technology. They believe this partnership will continue to benefit both countries in the future. Citizens applaud China's role in Pakistan's satellite missions Islamabad, June 1 (): The people from countrywide have expressed their gratitude for China's support in launching Pakistani satellites into space. According to Gwadar Pro, after the successful deployment of back to back two space satellites ICUBE-Q and PAKSAT MM-1, they expressed their appreciation for China's role in Pakistan's space missions. Expressing their thoughts on social media, a number of Pakistanis view China's support in their space missions as a significant collaboration that enhances their capabilities and strengthens bilateral ties. —DNA

## CCP and PICG agree to enhance their collaboration

MEHTAB PIRZADA

ISLAMABAD: The Competition Commission of Pakistan (CCP) and Pakistan Institute of Corporate Governance (PICG) agree to broaden the canvas of their collaboration with inclusion

of competition law modules in other PICG trainings in addition to the existing Directors Training Program (DTP). In the meeting held between senior officials of CCP and PICG in Karachi, it was discussed that competition law provides enabling environment and level play-

ing field to all stakeholders in the economy. It is very important for the decision makers, board members, entrepreneurs, corporate managers, officials of state-owned enterprises to have a good understanding of the Competition Law. During the meeting, PICG offi-

cialists apprised that they are launching an ESG Executive Track Programme soon that will comprise of mandatory as well as optional modules. This programme is globally acknowledged to enhance knowledge and capacities of participants at the mid-career level too. It was discussed that existing collaboration between CCP and PICG will further expand and CCP will assist PICG in developing modules and will also provide resource persons to impart the trainings on modules pertaining to deterring deceptive marketing, process of reviewing mergers & acquisitions.

## MM-1 - A leap forward to regain past glory

SHUMAILA NOREEN

ISLAMABAD: The successful launch of a new satellite PakSat MM-1 by Pakistan Space and Upper Atmosphere Research Commission (SUPARCO) is hoped to prove a stepping stone towards digitalizing Pakistan and pave way for future space explorations. The satellite launched with support of China under the National Space Program 2047 would revolutionize communication infrastructure in Pakistan for regaining the past glory of launching its first rocket in space in 1960's. On July 07, 1962, Pakistan launched the first rocket known as "Rehbar-I" in space - a two staged solid fuel rocket after that made the country first in Islamic world, third in South Asia and 10th in the entire world to launch a vessel into outer space. However, the country could not keep up with the exemplary initiative taken in 1960s apparently due to lack of political will or paucity of resources - lagging behind in this race. But, now once again it has embarked on this journey to push country forward into modern digital world. "For now, Pakistan achieved the goal of sending its satellite to space in collaboration with other countries. But, days are not far off when it will send its own independent mission to space" said Dr. Khurram Khurshid, Head Electrical Engineering Department, Institute of Space Technology (IST). "Engineers and SUPARCO team are making concerted efforts to

materialize this dream." Emphasizing to educate new generation in space technology traits, its applications and usage for our development, he said, the country needs more engineers, technicians and experts in this field." Dr Khurram informed that newly launched satellite MM-1 will provide communication services like broadband internet, TV broadcasting, media and telecommunication. "It is set to be positioned in a geostationary orbit 36,000 kilometers above Earth and will play an important role in promoting economic activities besides e-commerce and e-governance." The satellite PakSat MM1 - conceived to meet growing needs of country in broad spectrum of communication and connectivity - was launched from Xichang Satellite Launch Center (XSLC), China. This project is a hallmark of technological cooperation between People's Republic of China and Pakistan. Based on advanced communication technologies, the satellite will digitally transform Pakistan by contributing in establishing a sophisticated communication network to meet growing demand of telecom sector, high speed internet and seamless connectivity. According to SUPARCO, "this high-power multi-mission satellite will provide communication services in C, Ku, Ka Bands and SBAS services in L Band and various communication services like broadband internet, TV broadcasting, Mobile bank -hauling and VSAT connectivity." "The primary objective of launching PAKSAT

MM-1 satellite is to strengthen Pakistan's communication infrastructure and broaden the horizons for connectivity, serving the underserved Tele-education, E-health/Tele-medicine, E-governance and E-commerce by transforming Pakistan into a digital powerhouse," remarked Project Manager MM-1, SUPARCO, Dr. Usman Iftikhar. "As communication infrastructure plays a pivotal role in any country's progress, therefore, we hope this satellite to improve connectivity to country's remote areas. This is a communication satellite successfully sent to Geostationary Orbit," he added. This advanced satellite, developed by Pakistani scientists and engineers through relentless effort, marks a major step forward in the nation's aspirations to enhance connectivity across all regions. After a recent successful lunar mission, the introduction of PakSat MM1 reflects nation's growing expertise in space technology. "This satellite will help provide high-speed internet services and ensure connectivity even in the far-flung areas of Balochistan and Gilgit-Baltistan," stated Director SUPARCO, Atiqur Rehman. "With its deployment, we hope to address the issues of digital divide in different regions, improve TV broadcasting, cellular phone and broadband service across Pakistan. Its service would start in August," Atiqur Rehman informed. Earlier, Pakistan's historic lunar mission iCube-Qamar (ICUBE-Q) was launched on May 03 on board China's Chang'E6 from

Hainan with this satellite mission marking Pakistan's first lunar exploration effort and a significant milestone for country's space endeavors. The satellite iCube-Q was designed and developed by Electrical Engineering Department of the Institute of Space Technology (IST) in collaboration with China's Shanghai University SJTU and Pakistan's national space agency SUPARCO. Weighing about 7kg, this satellite successfully captured and transmitted its inaugural images from lunar orbit, providing a unique perspective of moon's surface. According to SUPARCO, three types of satellites are essential for any country - firstly for communication, secondly for remote sensing and reconnaissance and thirdly for navigation. These satellites are incredibly beneficial for humanity in communication, navigation, weather forecasting, earth observations, scientific research, disaster management, remote sensing and telemedicine besides advancing scientific knowledge and benefiting humanity in different arena of life and well-being of people. As the country has revived its space program, no matter even if with the support of scientists from other countries, our policy makers must know that there is no dearth of talent in Pakistan if our emerging scientists are provided proper opportunities to excel - they will prove to be outstanding and compatible to known world scientists. What we need is the targeted approach, result oriented policies and conducive environment for our geniuses to flourish.

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## China-US relations at critical stage

CHINA-US relations are at a critical stage of preventing deterioration and promoting stability and the US' approach of seeking dialogue while harming China's interests is unworkable. There is no future in zero-sum games under the guise of competition, and China will not accept suppression or deprivation of its legitimate development rights, Chinese Vice Foreign Minister Ma Xiaoxu said while holding consultations with US Deputy Secretary of State Kurt Campbell in Washington on Thursday local time. Ma is paying a visit to the US from Thursday to Sunday at the latter's invitation. According to a release from the Chinese side on Friday, during Ma's consultations with Campbell, both sides had a candid and in-depth exchange of views on China-US relations and international and regional issues of mutual concern. The talks were described as constructive. Chinese analysts said on Saturday that Ma's visit to the US, on one hand, is to maintain communication between the two countries and make the most important bilateral ties of the world more predictable, while on the other hand, it also sends a clear message from China to the US on critical topics like the Taiwan question and the Ukraine crisis, to make sure the US understands the consequence of crossing China's red lines. Ma said the bilateral relations are at a critical stage of preventing further deterioration and promoting stability. Implementing the important consensus reached at the meeting between the two heads of state in San Francisco last November, further stabilizing and developing China-US relations, is in the interests of both countries and is a common expectation of the international community. The US should meet China halfway and implement President Biden's commitments. China is committed to stabilizing and developing China-US relations while firmly safeguarding its national sovereignty, security, and development interests, said Ma. "In the first half of 2024, we see that the US suppression and hostile measures against China in all fronts still exist and are even increasing despite some communication channels being rebuilt. From China's perspective, we hope to manage the differences by communication and stabilize the tension. However, unfortunately, the US is not thinking in this way, as Washington believes that as long as the communication exists, the US can be more assertive and aggressive to take actions against China's core interests and development," Li Haidong, a professor at the China Foreign Affairs University, told the Global Times. During the meeting, Ma also emphasized that the Taiwan question is the first red line that must not be crossed in China-US relations, and that it is the most important and sensitive question. "Taiwan independence" and peace in the Taiwan Straits are incompatible. If the US truly wants peace and stability in the Taiwan Straits, it should adhere to the one-China principle and the three China-US joint communiqués, and fulfill its commitment not to support "Taiwan independence." Ma noted that the so-called "small yard, high fence" strategy by the US has become an "iron curtain." China urges the US to stop politicizing economic, trade, and technological issues, stop hyping the so-called "overcapacity" topic, cancel the tariffs on Chinese products, and lift illegal unilateral sanctions against Chinese enterprises.



## Rousseau's general will theory and its abuse

ROUSSEAU advocated for direct democracy and the inherent liberty of people in their natural state, as reflected in the United Nations Charter, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, and the European Union Charter. His ideas have influenced contemporary international relations, which has used them to implement long-awaited social changes, while also twisting some of his theories to excuse power abuse, authoritarianism, and suppression of freedom of expression. One may come to wonder what liberalism means or what Rousseau's general will theory is used for. Rousseau's social contract theory emphasizes the "general will" as an expression of freedom, aiming to establish principles that rational people would agree to under idealized conditions. In *Du Contrat Social*, Rousseau argues that individuals are born free and equal, with equal authority over themselves and others. The social contract tradition aims to make coercive power legitimate by determining moral principles that should underpin a state and designing one to meet those standards. Rousseau asserts that sovereignty cannot be transferred and that adopting a social pact based on collective lawmaking can prevent despotism. The General Will theory conceptualized "democratic ideals" and called for establishing institutions that would make sure they were implemented. The theory did not define what those ideals are, so state institutions may give a "democratic image" to the laws implemented, while justifying authoritarian laws and law implementations as needed steps to "ensure the democratic ideals are respected" as many European states justify the crackdown of opposition or anti-establishment dissent. Historically speaking, one of the most interesting periods of Europe's history was during the rise of Napoleon from an elected representative to an authoritarian "emperor", having cleverly twisted the newly liberal democratic and republican ideals into new authoritarian ones after extensively studying Rousseau's social contract and especially the general will as a baseline theory. The relationship between EU countries and NATO, or the North Atlantic Alliance (which is a military alliance), in itself, is contradictory to liberal ideals due to NATO's involvement in military actions against sovereign nations in the world, where liberalism has been used as a pretext for illegal bombings. Liberalism has the potential to be used as a tool to suppress dissidents and nations that hold different cultural values and do not align with its principles. The concept of the "rule of law" has been extensively misused, as numerous EU countries have apprehended individuals for expressing their opinions, thereby suppressing freedom of speech. Countries such as France, Germany, and the Netherlands have used riot police against university students protesting for the end of the war on Gaza. These countries have justified the violent suppression of the marches and the student encampments under the pretext of students attacking the police, and of course, linking it to anti-Semitism even if a large part of the protesters are of Jewish descent themselves.

## Donald Trump's indictment: What next?

Qamar Bashir



The guilty verdict against Donald Trump carries significant implications for his future. Legally, it could result in penalties such as fines, probation, or imprisonment if the conviction is upheld. Politically, it may harm his reputation and influence, complicating any potential 2024 presidential run.

Personally, the ongoing legal battles and public scrutiny will take a considerable financial and emotional toll. Trump has several forums available for appealing the verdict. Initially, his legal team can file post-trial motions in the trial court that delivered the verdict, requesting a new trial or to set aside the verdict based on procedural errors or new evidence. If these motions are unsuccessful...

FORMER President Donald Trump has been charged with 34 felony counts of falsifying business records in the first degree. These charges stem from an investigation into hush-money payments made to adult-film actress Stormy Daniels to cover up an alleged affair before the 2016 election. The charges, brought by Manhattan District Attorney Alvin Bragg, allege that Trump, along with others, orchestrated a scheme to influence the election by suppressing negative information about him, thus violating election laws. Under New York state law, falsifying business records with the intent to defraud or conceal another crime is a felony. Trump has pleaded not guilty to all charges and has called them politically motivated. The guilty verdict against Donald Trump has significant implications for his potential presidential run in the upcoming elections. Legally, a felony conviction does not automatically disqualify a candidate from running for or being elected as president, as the U.S. Constitution does not list a criminal conviction as a disqualifying factor. Therefore, despite the charges and any subsequent convictions, Trump can still contest the elections. However, the charges and ongoing legal battles may influence voter perceptions, divert campaign resources, and attract intense public and media scrutiny, potentially impacting his campaign's effectiveness. There have been numerous claims that the verdict against Donald Trump is biased, with critics arguing that the jury was selected to include individuals predisposed against him. Concerns have been raised about the impartiality of the jurors, suggesting that the selection process was manipulated to ensure an anti-Trump outcome. Additionally, Trump's supporters have accused the presiding judge, Juan Merchan, of bias. They claim that his rulings were unfairly prejudicial against Trump, indicating a judicial partiality. Judge Merchan, known for his tough but fair approach, has faced scrutiny in this high-profile case where the stakes are particularly high. Allegations of judicial bias are common in politically charged cases, but there has been no substantiated evidence provided to support these claims against Judge Merchan specifically. The most prominent claim is that the Biden administration is using the legal system to un-

dermine Trump's credibility ahead of the 2024 election. Critics argue that the timing and nature of the charges are politically motivated, suggesting a coordinated effort to discredit Trump and prevent him from running for office again. Prominent Trump supporters, including his legal team and political allies like Representative Marjorie Taylor Greene and Senator Lindsey Graham, have publicly denounced the charges as part of a broader campaign to silence Trump. While the investigation was initiated by the Manhattan District Attorney's office, which operates independently of the federal government, the perception of political motivation remains strong among Trump's supporters.

The guilty verdict against Donald Trump carries significant implications for his future. Legally, it could result in penalties such as fines, probation, or imprisonment if the conviction is upheld. Politically, it may harm his reputation and influence, complicating any potential 2024 presidential run. Personally, the ongoing legal battles and public scrutiny will take a considerable financial and emotional toll. Trump has several forums available for appealing the verdict. Initially, his legal team can file post-trial motions in the trial court that delivered the verdict, requesting a new trial or to set aside the verdict based on procedural errors or new evidence. If these motions are unsuccessful, he can appeal to the intermediate appellate court, which in New York is the Appellate Division of the Supreme Court. If the Appellate Division upholds the conviction, Trump can further appeal to the New York Court of Appeals, the state's highest court, which has the discretionary power to select cases of significant legal or public interest. In certain circumstances, if there are claims of constitutional violations or issues of federal law, Trump could take his case to federal courts, potentially leading to the U.S. Supreme Court, although this requires substantial legal grounds.

The success of Trump's appeals will depend on several factors, including the strength of his legal arguments. Demonstrating significant legal errors during the trial or presenting new evidence that materially impacts the verdict could improve his chances. Historically, appeals have seen varying degrees of success based on these grounds. For example, in *\*United States v. Skilling\** (2010), the U.S. Supreme Court narrowed the scope of the honest services fraud statute, leading to a resentencing for former Enron CEO Jeffrey Skilling. While appellate courts are generally deferential to the trial court's findings of fact, they thoroughly review alleged legal errors. High-profile cases attract significant public and media attention, which can indirectly influence the legal environment. Trump's case will likely follow this pattern, impacting the procedural aspects of the appeal process. Overall, Trump's path forward involves leveraging the appellate mechanisms, with success hinging on the robustness of his legal arguments and the interpretations of the appellate courts.

If Trump is elected president and later declared guilty by the final federal court, several complex constitutional questions would arise. One major issue would be presidential immunity. The U.S. Department of Justice has maintained that a sitting president cannot be indicted or prosecuted, based on concerns about the separation of powers and the executive branch's functionality. This stance was notably referenced during the investigations into Presidents Nixon and Clinton. However, this opinion is not legally binding and could be challenged. Another potential consequence of a final guilty verdict could be impeachment. If Trump were convicted of serious crimes, Congress could pursue impeachment and removal from office, which is the constitutional mechanism for addressing presidential misconduct. The process and outcome would depend on the political climate and the composition of Congress at the time. Historical precedents, such as the impeachments of Nixon (who resigned before he could be impeached) and Clinton, provide some context but no direct parallels, as no president has been convicted of a crime while in office. Ultimately, any legal battles over presidential immunity or the ability to prosecute a sitting president could reach the U.S. Supreme Court, which would have the final say on these unprecedented issues. While Trump can legally run for and serve as president despite his legal troubles, the implications of a final guilty verdict would introduce significant constitutional complexities and potential political turmoil.

## How South Africa sets an example while US falls short

Hamzah Rifaat

Additionally, South Africa's official stance of linking global divestment in the pre-1994 era with the 2023-24 genocide of "Israel" is anchored in historical sensibility, a need to win vote banks during the 2024 elections, and prevailing historical guilt. The United States government on the other hand has been fairly consistent with its historical disconnect between official priorities and student activism. Note that during the apartheid era, American workers were demanding their pensions be 'South Africa Free' and the Committee to Oppose...

ACADEMIC voices anchored in constructive criticism, castigation of genocidal machineries and promotion of a more inclusive, tolerant and pluralistic world order are needed to put an end to prevailing genocide. Such voices became more pronounced and vocal since "Israel's" genocide took place in the Gaza strip. American universities witnessed strong student lobbies, pro-Palestinian advocacy groups, and anti-Zionist Jewish groups protesting against varsities for having financial ties and academic linkages with the genocidal regime. Known as the 'Student/ Intellectual Intifada', these student voices have also pressed for severing ties with Israeli universities such as Ariel, which are built on Palestinian land. Yet at the same time, the Biden administration and its various counterparts in academia have not responded positively to the agitations. Take the South African government and its academic community. The post-apartheid state was previously governed by a white minority government and had extensive diplomatic, political, military, and economic ties with "Israel". In the post-1994 era, however, it is seen at the forefront of calling out Netanyahu's genocide by filing cases at the International Court of Justice to penalize "Israel" for its fascist conduct. South African universities and their respective administrations are also setting an example of promoting the Palestinian cause through visionary leadership and historical sensibility. The University of Witwatersrand in Johannesburg for example, has publicly condemned "Israel's" invasion in Gaza and called for a ceasefire after pressure from students and advocacy groups. The University of Cape Town, on the other hand, remains undecided but unlike certain American university officials have not called the protesters vagrants or anti-state elements. At Wits, the Palestine Solidarity Committee successfully pushed the University's Senate to vote in favor of an immediate ceasefire in Gaza. Commendable work also dates back to 2011 when the University of Johannesburg voted to end its

25-year relationship with the Ben Gurion University in Beersheba. While South Africa's response to "Israel's" genocide has been marginally better than American varsities, institutions have also resisted calls for a full-blown academic and financial boycott of "Israel".

There is a caveat, however. Note that unlike the United States government which remains passive over "Israel's" massacre in Rafah and refrained from pressurizing American universities to clampdown on genocidal support while in many ways endorsing it, the South African government has called on its universities to eschew neutrality on Palestine. It has also urged institutional-focused academic boycotts akin to what was imposed globally in pre-1994, apartheid South Africa. There exists a realization in Pretoria, Cape Town and Bloemfontein that any academic support for "Israel" will be equivalent to support for racial segregationist policies that South Africa itself was subjected to. Hence, previous divestments worth \$50 million from varsities such as the University of Michigan on apartheid South Africa should also apply to "Israel". This is an important distinction. Universities across the republic are facing pressure from both the government and student groups with the former being virtually absent in the United States.

Additionally, South Africa's official stance of linking global divestment in the pre-1994 era with the 2023-24 genocide of "Israel" is anchored in historical sensibility, a need to win vote banks during the 2024 elections, and prevailing historical guilt. The United States government on the other hand has been fairly consistent with its historical disconnect between official priorities and student activism. Note that during the apartheid era, American workers were demanding their pensions be 'South Africa Free' and the Committee to Oppose Bank Loans to South Africa was formed by the American Committee on Africa, the Clergy and Laity Concerned, and the American Friends Service Committee. However, for a long time the US government supported the racist, white su-

premacist National Party in South Africa due to the latter's 'anti-communist' orientation which was crucial to contain the Soviet Union. American academics too, have been mixed in their response to the 2023-2024 Israeli genocide. Columbia University's MinoucheShafiq who is of Egyptian origin and is the President of the varsity, is an example of academic apathy towards the Palestinian cause. She called on the New York Police Department to forcibly dismantle more than 100 protestors on campus over bogus criminal charges. In contrast, South African academics have been more measured, vocal, vociferous, and stern in their denunciation of "Israel". Thousands of individuals in the country's higher educational sector wrote an open letter imploring institutions to do the same. The letter was supported by researchers, administrators, lecturers students, and other structures that condemned the humanitarian catastrophe in Gaza. The latter also called out barbaric attacks on hospitals and blockading water, emergency services and fuel into the enclave. Nowhere in South African academia, however, is there an attempt to equate "Israel's" barbarity with its so-called 'right to defend itself'. In America, academics such as law professor Catherine Fisk constantly cited the self-defense argument while gaining notoriety for attacking a pro-Palestinian student, Malak Afaneh. Beyond academia, high-profile figures in South Africa have also been largely unanimous in denouncing "Israel's" apartheid as have those who have sponsored them. From biblical figures such as Desmond Tutu to Cricket South Africa's decision to sack their Under-19 captain, David Teeger for his pro-occupation forces remarks, South Africa has employed a zero-tolerance policy which is supporting the Palestinian cause. The polarizing views of high-profile figures in the United States, however, have spawned cyber space movements. What is clear however, is that officially, academically and principally, South Africa has done and is doing much more for the Palestinian cause than the United States ever has.



## Briefs

## Israel hints to accept Biden's ceasefire plan

FROM PAGE 01  
Israel's determination to resume the campaign to eliminate them. Biden has hailed several ceasefire proposals over the past several months, each with similar frameworks to the one he outlined on Friday, all of which collapsed. In February he said Israel had agreed to halt fighting by Ramadan, the Muslim holy month that began on March 10. No such truce materialised. The primary sticking point has been Israel's insistence that it would discuss only temporary pauses to fighting until Hamas is destroyed. Hamas, which shows no sign of stepping aside, says it will free hostages only under a path to a permanent end to the war. In his speech, Biden said his latest proposal "creates a better 'day after' in Gaza without Hamas in power". He did not elaborate on how this would be achieved, and acknowledged that "there are a number of details to negotiate to move from phase one to phase two". Falk reiterated Netanyahu's position that "there will not be a permanent ceasefire until all our objectives are met".

## US-backed Israeli genocide...

FROM PAGE 01  
targeted a house in al-Daraj neighborhood in the east of Gaza City. The head of the Municipal Emergency Committee in North Gaza announced that the Israeli occupation forces (IOF) destroyed 50,000 housing units and bulldozed drainage networks and roads in most municipalities in northern Gaza. In a press conference on Sunday, the Chairman of the Committee declared Jabalia camp a disaster area, referring to the destruction of 35 water wells, schools, UNRWA facilities, and warning of an imminent famine that threatens northern Gaza. He called on the United Nations and international organizations to urgently intervene to prevent famine and put an end to the Israeli aggression.

## Taliban have a chance...

FROM PAGE 01  
civil or in security organs since November 2001 last are still treated by Taliban as "enemies and American agents." Hundreds of such people are locked in prisons for undine since August 2021 last. Except Russian Federation, no other country extended either any support to Taliban or is willing to endorse its demand for giving representation in UN and recognition of its regime. Though Chinese are willing to recognize Taliban, they (Chinese) are aware of the pitfalls as well. It could be hard for China to formally recognize Taliban regime before any other member of international community. Pakistan is making conditional all of its support and cooperation to Taliban. Compare to recent past, Pakistan's position on the issue of Afghanistan is now different but still it affecting rest of the worlds on the grounds of its domains over "Islamic hardlines."

## Punjab to ban plastic trade from...

FROM PAGE 01  
The measures against plastic are being taken by the Punjab government in light of Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz's directive to launch "No to Plastic" campaign. Giving food in plastic bags at hotels and other eateries will be strictly restricted under the campaign. The government has reportedly completed arrangements to strictly implement the strategy for plastic ban. Ahead of Earth Day 2024, the Punjab government had on April 19 decided to launch environment-friendly initiatives in the province. As part of this initiative, the CM had endorsed a comprehensive ban on plastic bag usage, effective from June 5.

## Co-hosts USA beat Canada in T20 World Cup opener

Aaron clubbed a brutal unbeaten 94 help USA beat Canada by 7-wickets

OUR CORRESPONDENTS

DALLAS: Aaron Jones struck an explosive unbeaten 94 from 40 balls as the USA beat Canada by seven wickets in the opening game of the T20 World Cup on Saturday. Jones, born in New York but raised in Barbados, bludgeoned the Canadian attack, smashing ten sixes as he totally changed the momentum of the game in a superb 131-run third wicket partnership with Andries Gous. Former South Africa Under-19 batsman Gous made 65 off 46 balls before he holed out to deep midwicket off Nikhil Dutta, ending a partnership that had taken the Americans from struggling at 42-2 in the seventh over to close to their finish line at 173-3 in the 16th.

Corey Anderson, the former New Zealand

## ICC T20 World Cup Schedule

T20 WORLD CUP GROUPS

- Group A - India, Pakistan, Ireland, Canada, USA
  - Group B - England, Australia, Namibia, Scotland, Oman
  - Group C - New Zealand, West Indies, Afghanistan, Uganda, Papua New Guinea
  - Group D - South Africa, Sri Lanka, Bangladesh, Netherlands, Nepal
- The top two teams in each group will advance to the Super 8s stage, with the top two in each Super 8s pool then reaching the semi-finals.

all-rounder, came in to accompany Jones who fittingly ended the contest with his 10th six of the night. It was the perfect start to the tournament for the co-hosts, with the crowd at the compact Grand Prairie Stadium roaring with delight as Jones smashed the Canadian attack around the ground. "I don't think it is easy to put it into words," said Jones, whose 10 sixes

are the second most in a T20 World Cup innings behind West Indian Chris Gayle's 11 against England in 2016.

"With our batting line-up, we knew anything under 200 is chaseable. I go through my processes and I like my power hitting. I know if I get it in the middle, it will go for sure. I like to come in when the team is under pressure, it brings out the best in me,"

he said. Canada, also making their T20 World Cup debut, had set what appeared a challenging target with Navneet Dhaliwal making a well-paced 61 off 44 balls, including six four and three sixes after opener Aaron Johnson had set the early pace with an aggressive 23 off 16 balls. Nicholas Kirton maintained the momentum in the back half of the innings with 51 off 31 balls and Shreyas Movva's 32 off 16 was crucial in getting Canada to what looks to be a strong total in the Group A match with a strong finish. The USA is co-hosting the tournament with the West Indies with 16 of the group stage games being held in three American venues - South Florida and New York along with Dallas. India, Pakistan and Ireland are also competing in Group A with two nations qualifying for the Super Eight stage.

## Djokovic advances past Musetti in 5 sets at FO

PARIS: Novak Djokovic's French Open title defense - and his hold on the No. 1 ranking - are still alive thanks to a 7-5, 6-7 (6), 2-6, 6-3, 6-0 comeback victory over 22-year-old Italian Lorenzo Musetti in a third-round match that lasted 4 1/2 hours and did not conclude until Sunday after 3 a.m., the latest finish in tournament history. It is Djokovic's 369th win at a Grand Slam tournament, tying Roger Federer for the most in tennis history. Djokovic can break the mark on Monday, when he'll face No. 23 seed Francisco Cerundolo of Argentina.

Djokovic briefly looked as if he might be unable to recover against Musetti but instead ran away with the final two sets and now will continue his bid for a record 25th Grand Slam title and fourth at Roland Garros. "I was in real trouble and credit to Lorenzo for making me uncomfortable on the court and playing some really amazing tennis. Very high level. At one point, I didn't know, really, what to do," the 37-year-old Djokovic said. "It didn't feel great playing him that third set and the beginning of the fourth."

Gasping for breath while leaning over with hands on knees, or taking so much time between points that he earned a warning, Djokovic appeared to be exhausted at times against his much younger, backward-hat-wearing opponent. Musetti was propelled to the lead by a one-handed backhand, a deft touch at the net and a 5-for-5 success rate on break chances - playing, in sum, "the tennis of his life," as Djokovic put it. Djokovic said he found the damp and cold conditions, and heavy clay, hard to deal with, especially "when you're playing 20-plus-shot rallies at 2 a.m.; who plays at 2 a.m., you know?" But Djokovic is nothing if

not a determined problem-solver. And once Djokovic got headed in the right direction in the fourth set, thanks to playing more aggressively on service returns and closer to the baseline during groundstrokes exchanges, the 30th-ranked Musetti could not withstand the charge. One telling stat: Djokovic improved to 39-11 in fifth sets over his career; Musetti fell to 2-6. Djokovic has spent more weeks atop the ATP rankings than anyone, but if he fails to return to the final at the French Open, he will cede that spot to Musetti's countryman, current No. 2 Jannik Sinner. That's because a loss in this match would have been the latest in a series of disappointing results in 2024 for the oft-dominant Djokovic, who won 12 of the last 20 Grand Slam events he entered and hasn't been beaten this early at a major since the Australian Open in January 2017.

Not only hasn't he earned a trophy at any tournament this season, but he hasn't even reached a final. That's why, a week ago, Djokovic assessed his mindset when arriving in Paris with a 14-6 record this year: "Low expectations and high hopes." Those words also might have described Djokovic's thoughts entering the fourth set against Musetti, who never has been past the fourth round at any Slam. The bundled-up spectators frequently chanted Djokovic's first name, or his two-syllable nickname, "NoLe." Musetti heard plenty of support in Court Philippe Chatrier, too. The sound reverberated off the underside of the retractable roof, which was closed because of showers that arrived earlier Saturday, the fifth day in a row with showers. That weather was partially responsible for Djokovic

and Musetti not setting foot on court until 10:30 p.m., more than two hours later than originally planned: Tournament organizers moved an additional contest into the safe-from-rain main stadium ahead of Djokovic-Musetti to try and make sure the third round would get completed on time.

"Things could have been handled a different way," Djokovic said of the scheduling choice. This was a rematch from the 2021 French Open, when Musetti was just 19 - and making his Grand Slam debut - and took the first two sets off Djokovic. But Djokovic grabbed the next two sets, and Musetti stopped playing in the fifth because of back pain and cramps. Once again, Musetti took the lead before succumbing. This time, Djokovic was actually a point from taking a two-set lead while ahead 6-5 in the second-set tiebreaker. But Musetti took the next three points and that set. At the ensuing changeover, Djokovic tried to persuade chair umpire Adel Nour to have the court cleaned more frequently. "I ask you to sweep the court, because there's so much clay," Djokovic said. "I don't know why it's asking so much at 1 a.m., after waiting 20 hours to play." He would drop the next set, too. Musetti had to know Djokovic would not go quietly. Surely, the vocal crowd did, too. Suddenly, Djokovic broke to 3-2 in the fourth set. He shook a fist and, as he sat in his sideline chair, motioned for more noise. They obliged. As that set ended, with Djokovic reaching a shot ball and replying at an impossible angle, he windmilled his arms and then pointed to his ear. Soon, he was the winner, roaring on the court while his wife jumped and shouted in the stands. - Agencies

## Babar Azam eyes T20 World Cup glory

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan captain Babar Azam has expressed his aim to lift the ICC T20 World Cup 2024 trophy, after coming up short in previous editions. The Green Shirts under Babar Azam played the semi-final and final of the 2021 and 2022 T20 World Cup respectively. The star batter opened up about his desire during an appearance on PCB Podcast, stating that he wants to spread happiness across the nation with the T20 World Cup victory. "I want to give happiness to the nation by winning the T20 World Cup. We came very close in the last two World Cups but failed to win," said Azam. "As a captain, I regret not winning an ICC event so far. This time we have to win and for that, we have to play as one unit." Upon being asked about the preparations for the high-octane clash against arch-rivals India on June 9, Azam stressed that every game is important and the team is preparing accordingly. "Not only the India match but all the matches are important for us. In order to lift the trophy, we have to overcome every opposition," said the right-hander. The star batter also shed light on his training and preparation for the mega-event as a batter. "I do not play for my personal record, the first priority is the Pakistan team. I have done a lot of work on improving my strike rate," he stated. "I bat according to the team's situation. Everyone has a different batting style and my game is not to start hitting sixes from the word go." The Green Shirts will start their ICC Men's T20 World Cup 2024 campaign against the USA on June 6 before taking on arch-rivals India in a blockbuster clash on June 9 at the Nassau County International Cricket Stadium in New York. - DNA

## Google celebrates T20 WC with lively doodle

LONDON: Google is celebrating the commencement of the T20 World Cup 2024 with a vibrant doodle on Sunday. In a gripping start to the tournament, the United States defeated Canada by 7 runs earlier today, with Aaron Jones joining the elite company of the West Indies' Chris Gayle. This marked the ninth edition of the T20 tournament, which is co-hosted by the United States and the West Indies. The colourful doodle shows how exciting the cricket tournament is and reminds us of the importance it carries. It's a colourful way to get its fans pumped up for the forthcoming matches. This tournament features 20 teams, with the finest players in the world representing each squad. In the approaching matches, every participant is prepared to display their abilities. All the teams have been divided into four groups; A, B, C, and D. The two teams at the top of each group will qualify for the Super Eight round. - Agencies

## Wapda triumphs in basketball tournament memorial

AFZAL JAVED

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan Wapda emerged victorious in a nail-biting showdown against Pakistan Air Force, clinching the All Pakistan Muhammad Majid and Abdul Nasir Memorial Basketball Tournament on Sunday here at Siddique Memon Sports Complex Karachi organized under the umbrella of Pakistan Basketball Federation (PBBF). In a fiercely contested match, both teams displayed exceptional skills and tenacity, battling until the final moments. Wapda, however, seized control in the last quarter, securing a thrilling 68-67 points victory. Zainul Hassan of Wapda emerged as the hero of the day, contributing a stellar performance with 34 points, while teammate Muhammad Israr added 10 points, respectively. Despite a valiant effort from PAF, Wapda's dominance in the closing stages proved decisive. Umair Jan led the scoring for PAF with 26 points, followed by Umair Siddiqui with 12 points. Managing Director of United Medical and Dental College Dr. Bilal Faiz was the chief guest of concluding ceremony who presenting the winning trophy to the captain of the Pakistan Wapda team while Pakistan Basketball Federation (PBBF) Secretary General Khalid Bashir, Karachi Basketball Association (KBBA) President Muhammad yaqoob, Tournament chief organiser Dr. Umer Daraz Khan, PBBF Associate Secretary Yaqoob Qadry and others dignitaries were also present during the concluding ceremony. Earlier In the third position match, Punjab Rangers secured a convincing 72-61 points victory against Islamabad, claiming the third position.

## Makhachev retains UFC lightweight title at UFC 302

The Russian defeated veteran Dustin Poirier with a fifth-round submission to defend his UFC lightweight belt in the USA

WASHINGTON: Islam Makhachev held on to his lightweight belt, getting Dustin Poirier to tap out in the fifth round of their main event bout at UFC 302 in Newark, New Jersey.

Entering the fifth round on Saturday night, the Russian was sporting a substantial forehead cut as a result of repeated takedowns by Poirier, 35, in the third and fourth rounds.

But it was Makhachev (26-1-0) who turned the tables on Poirier, winning by submission at 2:42 of the final round and has now prevailed in 14 straight UFC fights, a streak that started with a victory over Chris Wade on September 17, 2016.

Meanwhile, Poirier (30-9-0) has alternated wins and losses over his past six fights. Post-match, the American hinted he might retire from the UFC. In other action, Sean Strickland (29-

6-0) downed Paulo Costa (14-4-0) by split decision in a middleweight bout, with the cards reading 46-49, 50-45, 49-46. Kevin Holland (26-11-0) also prevailed in a middleweight fight, defeating Michal Oleksiejczuk (19-8-0) by submission just 1:34 into the first round. Niko Price (16-7-0) and Randy Brown (19-5-0), two welterweights, also won their respective fights. Price and Brown both won by unanimous decision.

**Main Card Results:** Islam Makhachev defeats Dustin Poirier by Submission (D'Arce choke) at 2:42 of Round 5. Sean Strickland (46-49, 50-45) defeats Paulo Costa (49-46) by Split Decision Kevin Holland defeats Michal Oleksiejczuk by Technical Submission (armbar) at 1:34 of Round 1. Niko Price (29-28, 29-28, 29-28) defeats Alex Morono by Unanimous De-

cision Randy Brown (29-28, 29-28, 29-28) defeats Elizeu Zaleski dos Santos by Unanimous Decision

**Preliminary Card Highlights:** Jailton Almeida defeats Alexandr Romanov by Submission (rear-naked choke) at 2:27 of Round 1 Grant Dawson (29-28, 30-27, 30-27) defeats Joe Solecki by Unanimous Decision Jake Matthews (29-28, 29-28, 30-27) defeats Philip Rowe by Unanimous Decision Basil Hafez (30-27, 30-27, 29-28) defeats Mickey Gall by Unanimous Decision Ailin Perez (30-27, 29-28, 29-28) defeats Joselyne Edwards by Unanimous Decision Andre Lima (30-27, 30-27) defeats Mitch Raposo by Split Decision

The intensity and drama of UFC 302 left fans eagerly anticipating the next chapter in the careers of Makhachev and other top fighters. -Agencies

## Real Madrid clinches 15th European Cup with 2-0 victory

Real Madrid defeats Borussia Dortmund 2-0 to clinch Champions league final victory

SPORTS DESK

LONDON: Vinicius Junior scored and sealed a record-extending 15th European Cup for Real Madrid after a 2-0 win against Borussia Dortmund in the final. The Brazil forward doubled Madrid's lead in the 83rd minute at Wembley Stadium, nine minutes after Dani Carvajal headed the Spanish giant in front. Victory sealed a record-extending fifth Champions League title for coach Carlo Ancelotti, his third with Madrid. Meanwhile Carvajal, Luka Modric, Toni Kroos and Nacho have won European club soccer's biggest prize on six occasions to equal the benchmark set by Madrid icon Paco Gento. Dortmund paid the price for not making the most of its first half dominance when Madrid goalkeeper Thibaut Courtois pulled off a series of saves and Nicolas Fullkrug hit the post. Madrid took full advantage after the break. Carvajal met Kroos' corner at the near post in the

74th to power a header past Dortmund keeper Gregor Kobel. Jude Bellingham nearly doubled the lead moments later, but then turned provider when slipping



in Vinicius. With just Kobel to beat, the forward fired his shot into the far corner and raced off in celebration. Rock star Lenny Kravitz got the crowd go-

ing before kickoff with a pre-game show that included fireworks and some of his biggest hits like "Are You Gonna Go My Way." It was Vinicius who was dancing after his goal effectively killed off Dortmund's hopes of pulling off one of the biggest Champions League upsets in recent memory. For a long time, the German side looked capable of halting Madrid after dominating the chances in the first half. Coach Edin Terzic tactically outmaneuvered Ancelotti in every department, with Madrid's stars subdued. Only a combination of Courtois and the frame of the goal kept the scores level at the break after the keeper twice kept Karim Adeyemi from scoring and then watched as Fullkrug's sliding effort came back off the post. The break clearly helped Madrid and it slowly took control in the second half. Carvajal's goal came straight from the training ground, with the defender heading over from one corner before eventually converting, while Vinicius put the game beyond doubt.

Monday June 3  
Namibia vs Oman  
Bridgetown,  
Barbados (1.30am)  
Sri Lanka vs South Africa  
Long Island,  
New York (3.30pm)

## Opp may launch protest movement

FROM PAGE 01  
being registered against the PTI ticket holders. "Wherever our 10 workers gather, they are whisked away by the police," he lamented. "And whenever we approach a deputy commissioner for permission for a rally, he starts making excuses," he said, adding, "The circumstances have now forced the PTI to go for a resistance movement." Dispelling the impression that the facilities provided to PTI founder Imran Khan at the Adiala Jail were as per his stature as a former prime minister, Bhachar said that only three days ago, he had been provided an air-cooler. "Does the government think that by resorting to such tactics it can make Imran capitulate? No certainly not," he said. The opposition leader said it was so unfortunate that while on one hand, notices had been issued to the PTI leaders in connection with a tweet, on the other no action was taken against the PML-N leaders Nawaz Sharif, Khawaja Asif and Sardar Ayyaz Sadiq for defaming the state institutions on the floor of National Assembly.

## 'Constitutional violations'...

FROM PAGE 01  
stating that the entities which break the constitution are the ones responsible for carrying out the rebellion. While addressing a rally in Muzaffargarh, the JUI-F chief asserted that certain institutions played no part in the creation of Pakistan but contributed to its disintegration. Fazl accused the establishment of tampering with the constitution, asserting that those who break it are the true rebels, not them. He criticized the current government setup while reflecting on the ongoing fight against terrorism, noting, "[They] declared a war against terrorism, yet terrorism continues to rise." "If terrorism is crossing the borders, then where are you standing on the borders?" Fazl stated while questioning the military's effectiveness. Discussing the deteriorating law and order situation, the JUI-F chief noted, "The people of KP and Balochistan are suffering from severe unrest."

## Another huge fire on Margalla...

FROM PAGE 01  
the KP government to contain the flames, he added. The Margalla range, part of the Himalayan foothills, has experienced bushfires relatively often in the summer months. Lately, the fire intermittently erupted in the Islamabad hills. Officials are yet to confirm if the fires are related to the high temperatures or due to arson. However, three suspects were arrested on suspicion of igniting the forest fires, the capital's administration said on Friday. Separately, the fire also erupted in the forest area spreading over an area of 15 to 20 acres located in the Baghar Sharif area of Rawalpindi's Kahuta Tehsil. Rescue teams and police officials are battling the flames to bring it under control. The rescue officials said the risk of fire spreading was increasing as it is a rugged and mountainous area, adding that the rescue officials are extinguishing the fire wherever it is accessible. The district administration has launched an emergency operation and called for more personnel and machinery to contain the blaze.



## Briefs

## Called to vote in EU polls, Belgian teens feel 'lost'

BRUSSELS : They are a generation glued to social media where politicians are competing hard for their backing - but Belgium's youngest voters still describe feeling "lost" in the countdown to EU elections next weekend. The country's 16- and 17-year-olds will be breaking new ground on June 9: not only has Belgium extended voting to include them, but its top court ruled it compulsory, as is the case for adults. With 830,000 teens and young adults casting ballots for the first time, universities and associations have been holding workshops to help them get to grips with the political landscape. On a Saturday morning in May, some 20 youths took part in one such initiative in a Brussels auditorium - entitled "Just Vote". A video presenting fictional candidates from across the spectrum opened with an ominous warning: "A bad show lasts an hour, a bad government is for five years." Using handheld devices they answered a series of on-screen questions, and had the chance to ask for campaign programmes and to watch the "candidates" debate each other - before making a decision. In this case, the centrist candidate - the oldest and least radical on offer - got the most votes. Rivals who called for Belgium to exit the European Union were voted down. For Aitana, a 17-year-old taking part, it was a "useful" exercise that will encourage her "to watch candidates' programmes on the internet, and talk it over with friends". She said she did not know who she would vote for: "Maybe I won't find a party that 100 percent represents me." Another teen, Balkis, 16, said she looked forward to voting, though she did not yet know the real-life candidates, or even who currently filled the top EU jobs. Issues important to her were gender equality, the environment and youths' place in society. She said she was worried about opinion polls showing Europe's far right will likely make election gains, and that it was attracting younger voters. -APP

## Sudanese refugees in Egypt embrace rich cuisine

CAIRO :Sudanese entrepreneur Julie Samir's dream of opening a restaurant has finally come true, but it's a bittersweet achievement after she fled Egypt from her war-torn homeland of Sudan. Now, Samir has one aim for her menu: winning over the palate of Egyptians with a taste of Sudan's complex culinary traditions, born from a rich history at the crossroads of the Middle East and Africa. "I'm targeting the Egyptian consumer, I want them to get to know Sudanese culture," the 42-year-old told AFP from her sun-lit eatery in eastern Cairo, the scent of simmering aromatics wafting out of the kitchen. Across the sprawling megalopolis of Cairo - home to over 20 million people - many Sudanese refugees have opened businesses, bringing a taste of home and hoping to make a name for themselves. Samir and her two children have been in the Egyptian capital for over a year, since making the 2,000-kilometre (around 1,200-mile) journey from their home in Khartoum, with half a million other Sudanese, they fled the war between Sudan's regular army and the paramilitary Rapid Support Forces to neighbouring Egypt - and got to work rebuilding a life. Today, on the lawns of one of Cairo's upscale sporting clubs, Samir's restaurant 'Kush Children's Village' serves up a fusion menu. "The name was my father's idea, inspired by the Bible," she said, explaining the reference to Kush, the ancient kingdom that straddled modern-day Egypt, Sudan and Ethiopia. "We serve all three cuisines," she said proudly, but insisted the restaurant is still distinctly Sudanese. Everyone who works here is from Sudan, all of us came here fleeing the war," she said, explaining how the team found each other through solidarity networks on social media. -Agencies

## Chile joins SA's genocide case against Israel at ICJ

Chilean President announces support for genocide case against Israel in address to lawmakers

NEWS DESK

SANTIAGO : Chile has joined a coalition of countries backing South Africa in its genocide case against Israel at the International Court of Justice (ICJ). Chilean President Gabriel Boric, addressing lawmakers announced its country's support for a genocide case against Israel, expressing his deep concern over the "catastrophic humanitarian situation" in Gaza, especially against women and children. "Chile will become a party to and support the case that South Africa presented against Israel before the International Court of Justice in The Hague," Boric said. Speaking to the National Congress, he strongly criticized the Israeli military for employing "indiscriminate and disproportional" force. "These acts demand a firm and permanent response of the international community," the president said. Boric had previously said the war in Gaza has "no justification" and is "unacceptable." Early in January, Chile along with Mexico submitted a case to International Criminal Court (ICC) to

## Iran's acting FM urges support for Palestinians

TEHRAN : Iran's Acting Foreign Minister Ali Bagheri Kani has called on Muslim countries to work hand in hand and not miss any chance to support the Palestinian nation. He made the remarks during a telephone conversation with Turkish Foreign Minister Hakan Fidan. Bagheri Kani enumerated the crimes, which are being committed by "the cruel and bloodthirsty Zionist regime" in the Gaza Strip, among them the incursion into Rafah and blocking the southern city's crossing, halting much-needed aid delivery to the besieged Palestinian territory. "The Islamic countries' cooperation and synergy creates an important and effective capacity to support the oppressed people of Gaza," he said. "Muslim states must spare no opportunity to support the Palestinian people." Israel waged a genocidal war on Gaza on October 7 after the Hamas resistance movement carried out its historic operation against the usurping entity in retaliation for the regime's intensified atrocities against the Palestinian people. On May 7, the occupying regime began a ground offensive in Rafah, home to about a million displaced Palestinians who have fled from the rest of Gaza amid the Israeli onslaught. So far, Israel has killed at least 36,379 Palestinians, mostly women and children, and injured 82,407 others in the Gaza Strip. Also in his remarks, Bagheri Kani expressed gratitude to Turkey for its messages of condolence and sympathy over the martyrdom Iranian President Ebrahim Raisi and Foreign Minister Hossein Amir-Abdollahian in a helicopter crash last month. He further expressed hope that Iran and Turkey would discuss issues of mutual interest on the sidelines of an emergency meeting of foreign minister of the group of Developing Eight (D8) Islamic countries in Istanbul. Fidan, for his part, described as very important and productive the continuation of Ankara-Tehran consultations on the issue of Palestine and other important bilateral and regional topics. He also emphasized the need for coordination among Islamic countries on the Palestinian issue and welcomed a proposal by the Islamic Republic for an extraordinary meeting of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) on the situation in Gaza. The Zionist regime has besieged Gaza with the aim of eliminating the Palestinian people, and thus all capacities should be used to stop the Zionists' genocide in Gaza and crimes against humanity, he noted. Additionally, the top Turkish diplomat once again condoled with Iran on the demise of President Raisi and Foreign Minister Amir-Abdollahian. -APP

investigate the ongoing conflict in Palestine. The Chilean Foreign Minister Alberto van Klaveren said his nation was "interested in supporting the investigation into any possible war crime" wherever they might occur. Chile has recognized Palestine as a state since 2011. South Africa lodged a complaint against Israel in the ICJ last year on December 29, nearly three months after the occupying regime launched its brutal aggression against Gaza. The complaint asked judges in the court to declare that Israel was committing genocide in Gaza and order the regime to stop its attacks on people. The ICJ found it plausible that Israel's acts could amount to genocide and issued an initial ruling ordering Israel to refrain from acts that could fall under the Genocide Convention. The World Court issued another verdict in March ordering the regime to ensure that basic food supplies can reach people in Gaza. Last month, South Africa submitted another request to the ICJ for three urgent orders, known as "provisional measures," as it probes into Israel's violations of the 1948 UN Genocide Convention. -APP

## "Magic of Childhood" festival at Pak embassy Belarus held

MINSK : The Embassy of Pakistan in Minsk took part in the Charity Festival "Magic of Childhood" held at Gorki Park to celebrate International Children's Day. The festival was organized by the Minsk International Women's Club of Spouses of Ambassadors, diplomats, and foreign representatives, in collaboration with the Minsk City Executive Committee. The event featured several engaging segments, including country stalls set up by participating nations, a charity lottery, an art exhibition, an international culinary festival, and various activities aimed at promoting children's well-being. The Pakistan Embassy's stall received the "Best Stall Award" among the participating countries. The stall was beautifully adorned with traditional handicrafts



such as truck art, onyx items, salt products and hand embroidered wall hangings. Visitors enjoyed a taste of Pakistan with food items like chicken biryani, samosas, and jalebi. On the main stage, Pakistan was represented by talented students from the

Belarusian State University of Culture and Arts who performed a traditional Pushto dance to a popular song. Additionally, Tatiana Kremis captivated the audience with her rendition of a beautiful Urdu song. The Embassy of Pakistan in Minsk is proud to have

been part of this inspirational event celebrating the magic of childhood and the importance of community support. We extend our sincere gratitude to the organizers and participants for their dedication to making a difference in the lives of children. - Agencies

## Turkish forces neutralize 16 more PKK/YPG terrorists

ANKARA : Turkish security forces "neutralized" a total of 16 PKK/YPG terrorists in northern Iraq and Syria, said the country's National Defense Ministry on Sunday. The ministry added that 14 PKK terrorists were detected in the Hakurk and Metina regions of northern Iraq, and neutralized by the Turkish Armed Forces. The other two PKK/YPG terrorists were neutralized in the Euphrates Shield operation zone in northern Syria, it added on X. "Operations will continue with determination and resolve to eliminate terrorism at its source!" the ministry further said. Turkish authorities use the term "neutralize" to imply the terrorists in question surrendered or were killed or captured. Ankara has launched a trio of successful anti-terror operations since 2016 across its border in northern Syria to prevent the formation of a PKK/YPG terror corridor and enable the peaceful settlement of residents: Euphrates Shield (2016), Olive Branch (2018), and Peace Spring (2019). In its nearly 40-year terror campaign against Türkiye, the PKK-listed as a terrorist organization by Türkiye, the US, and the EU has been responsible for the deaths of more than 40,000 people, including women, children, and infants. The YPG is the PKK's Syrian offshoot. -DNA

## Key issues hanging over the EU elections

BRUSSELS : With the European Union's 370 million voters being called on to decide their next European Parliament in June 6-9 elections, here are the key issues at stake: Opinion polls predict a far-right surge. That should benefit the two main extreme-right groupings in the parliament: the European Conservatives and Reformists, which counts Italian Prime Minister Giorgia Meloni's Brothers of Italy in its ranks; and the Identity and Democracy grouping, which kicked out Germany's scandal-ridden AfD but remains home to the National Rally of France's Marine Le Pen. An unknown going into the elections: Where will the currently unaffiliated Fidesz - the nationalist ruling party of Hungary, which maintains warm ties with the Kremlin - end up? Together, far-right forces could theoretically outnumber the parliament's top group, the centre-right European People's Party (EPP) of EU Commission chief Ursula von der Leyen. But they remain divided on several issues, including over whether or not to support Ukraine in its fight against Russia. After the elections, the political balance of power will help determine who gets the top jobs running the EU's main institutions, most notably the European Commission and the European Council. The leaders of the 27 member countries will tackle that tricky carve-up at a June 27-28 summit. Von der Leyen is seeking a new five-year term as boss of the commission, and is considered the front-runner. But she will need not only the leaders' backing but also endorsement from the incoming parliament, which is potentially complicated by her overtures to Meloni, which have already angered left-wing allies. One name circulating as a possible alternative is Mario Draghi, Meloni's technocrat predecessor as premier and a respected former chief of the European Central Bank. The EU has already made progress toward its ambitions of a carbon-neutral future by legislating a phase-out of combustion-powered cars, banning imports from deforested areas and introducing a carbon border tax. But further initiatives are facing headwinds, from burdened households, irate farmers and leaders calling for a "pause". -Agencies

## Iceland's Tomasdottir wins presidential election

REYKJAVÍK :Halla Tomasdottir, a businesswoman and investor, has won Iceland's presidential election, topping a crowded field of candidates in which the top three finishers were women, the country's national broadcast service reports. Tomasdottir, 55, was elected to the largely ceremonial post with 34.3 percent of the vote, defeating former Prime Minister Katrin Jakobsdottir, with 25.2 percent, and Halla Hrund Logadottir, with 15.5 percent, RUV said on Sunday. Tomasdottir is currently on leave as chief executive of The B Team, a global nonprofit co-founded by UK business tycoon Richard Branson to promote business practices focused on humanity and the climate, and has offices in New York and London. Iceland's president holds

a largely ceremonial position in the parliamentary republic, acting as a guarantor of the constitution and national unity. He or she, however, has the power to veto a legislation or submit it to a referendum. Tomasdottir campaigned as someone who was above party politics and could help open discussions on fundamental issues such as the effect of social media on the mental health of young people, Iceland's development as a tourist destination and the role of artificial intelligence. She will replace President Gudni Th Johannesson, who did not seek re-election after two four-year terms. Tomasdottir will take office on August 1. Iceland's second woman president Iceland, a Nordic island nation located in the North Atlantic, has a long tradition of electing women to high office. -DNA

## Erdogan says 'barbarian' Netanyahu must be stopped

'Türkiye objects to persecution, massacre, injustice going on for 76 years on every platform,' says President Recep Tayyip Erdogan

FOREIGN DESK

Ankara : President Recep Tayyip Erdogan on Sunday had fresh insults for Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu as Tel Aviv keeps pounding the blockaded Gaza Strip. "This barbarian called Netanyahu, who is dragging our region, whole world into disaster, must be stopped," Erdo told his ruling Justice and Development Party (AK Party) lawmakers at a consultation meeting. Erdo convened the party's Central Decision Making and Administrative Committee in Ankara for a three-day camp to discuss Türkiye's stance on the Palestinian cause amid Israel's war on Gaza and a road map to the 2028 local elections.

"Türkiye objects to the persecution, massacres, and injustice going on for 76 years on every platform. We stand by Palestinian people with all our means," he said. The Turkish leader has been a virulent critic of Israel, has met Hamas leaders and welcomes the Palestinian resistance group as a liberation movement, unlike the majority of the Western world. More than 36,400 Palestinians have been killed in Gaza in Israel's deadly offensive on Gaza since last Oct. 7 following a Hamas attack. The majority of those killed have been women and children, with over 82,600 others injured, according to local health authorities. Vast tracts of Gaza lay in ruins amid Israel's crippling blockade of food, clean wa-

ter and medicine. Israel is accused of genocide at the International Court of Justice (ICJ), whose latest ruling ordered Tel Aviv to immediately halt its operation in Rafah, where more than 1 million Palestinians had sought refuge from the war. Netanyahu's office on Friday rejected a three-phase deal that would end hostilities in Gaza and secure the release of hostages, despite U.S. calls to accept it and reiterated his intention to continue his deadly offensive in Gaza until all of Tel Aviv's war goals are achieved. On the fight against terrorism, Erdo said: "Türkiye cannot find peace or feel secure until the terror-producing swamps in northern Iraq and Syria are drained." He was referring to the

PKK terrorist group that operates a stronghold in northern Iraq's Qandil region close to the Turkish border and its Syrian offshoot, the YPG, which has occupied the country's northeastern regions with U.S. support since 2015. The PKK has led an insurgency in Türkiye since 1984 that has killed tens of thousands of people. As for a brand-new constitution to replace the 1980 coup-era document for Türkiye, Erdo said his party was "sincere" in reaching a consensus with other parties to produce a joint draft. Turning to the meeting's purpose, he assured the AK Party aimed to "transfer the next election-free four years into a complete mobilization of service and action."

## Indonesian envoy visits Jamia Haqqania

"Indonesia is made up of 17 thousand islands where 280 million population are living, which 87 percent of them are Muslims while the rest are Catholic, Protestant, Hinduism, Buddhism, and Confucianism, said the CDA

AKORA KHATTAK : The Indonesian Chargé D'Affaires (CDA), Rahmat Hindiarta visited Jamia Dar-ul-Uloom Haqqania to meet Vice Chancellor Maulana Rashid-ul-Haq Sami along with the Haqqanian academics and students. The purpose of the visit was mainly to share Indonesia's best experience in managing pluralism to the Jamia. Opening the session, Maulana Rashid-ul-Haq accompanied by his brother Maulana Hamid-ul-Haq Haqqani, highlighted i.a. Indonesia as an exemplary of Islam rahmatan lil 'aalamiin. "The cleanliness and public order are part of the life in Indonesia. The Indonesian people are friendly and having mutual respect," he said as Maulana Rashid-ul-Haq previously in November 2023 was part of the Pakistani Ulama and Muslim Scholar Delegation to Indonesia, which was collaboratively held by the Indonesian Embassy in Islamabad and the International Research Council for Religious Affairs (IRCA). In his turn, the CDA addressed Indonesia is currently the largest Muslim country in the world in spite of miles away from the birthplace of Islam in Mecca, and it is such a blessing from Allah. "Indonesia is made up of 17 thousand islands where 280 million population are



living, which 87 percent of them are Muslims while the rest are Catholic, Protestant, Hinduism, Buddhism, and Confucianism," he spoke to the Haqqanian students in Arabic. "For sure, managing pluralism is challenging. But Indonesia has continuously maintained the efforts for it through the implementation of Pancasila, as a result of the consensus by the founding fathers and mothers of Indonesia. Indeed, Indonesia does not explicitly declare as an Islamic country. However, the first principle of Pancasila is Belief in the One Almighty

God," continued and informed that the visit coincided with 1 June as the Pancasila Day. Pancasila was first presented to the public in the speech of first Indonesian President Sukarno on 1 June 1945 during the preparation for Indonesia's Independence. The birth of Pancasila reflected a profound commitment to forging a cohesive national identity from the diverse tapestry of Indonesian society. Sukarno articulated Pancasila as a guiding light, encompassing the principles of belief in One Almighty God, just and civilized humanity, Indonesian unity,

democracy guided by the inner wisdom in the unanimity arising out of deliberations amongst representatives, and social justice for all Indonesians. Responded to the first question from the teacher, the CDA confirmed that Pakistan can reach stronger bond among its different cultural and religious backgrounds, as long as the fraternity as "One Pakistan" is always embedded and well maintained. While the second question from the student on some view that Indonesia considers all religions as one, the CDA denied the view confirming that Indonesia recognizes the respect of all religions. At the end of the session, the CDA handed over the plaque of Pancasila as the sign of understanding between the Embassy of the Republic of Indonesia and the Jamia of Dar-ul-Uloom Haqqania, while the Jamia gave to the Embassy several books written by the late Maulana Sami-ul-Haq and his son, Maulana Rashid-ul-Haq. During the visit, the CDA and Third Secretary Mr. Axelsyah Miraza were escorted in tours to library, mosque, classes, and other Jamia's facilities, as well as the graveyard of the founders of Jamia Dar-ul-Uloom Haqqania. - DNA

## SL monsoon floods kill 14

COLOMBO : Flash floods, mudslides and falling trees have killed at least 14 people in Sri Lanka as the island nation is battered by monsoon storms, the country's disaster center said Sunday. Some drowned, including three members of the same family swept away near the capital Colombo on Sunday. Others were buried alive in mudslides, including an 11-year-old girl and a 20-year-old man, the Disaster Management Center (DMC) said. Nine other people were crushed and killed when trees fell on them in seven districts since the monsoon intensified on May 21, the DMC said. While Sri Lanka depends on the seasonal monsoon rain for irrigation as well as hydroelectricity, experts have warned that it faces more frequent floods as the world heats due to climate change. The DMC said 20 out of the country's 25 districts were affected by heavy rain and issued warnings to people living on the banks of main rivers to move to higher ground. Flights arriving at Colombo's main international airport were diverted to a smaller airport, and some key highways were flooded at several exits. The government also ordered all schools to remain shut on Monday after the weekend holiday, as more rain was forecast. "There could be more heavy rains accompanied by strong winds and thunder," the DMC said. Last week, wildlife authorities found seven carcasses of young elephants who drowned in the biggest single loss of the animals in five years. The onset of the southwest monsoon triggered flooding in the elephant habitat in Dimbulagala, around 250 kilometers (155 miles) northeast of Colombo. -DNA



**Briefs**

**South Africa's ANC to enter coalition talks**

JOHANNESBURG: South Africa's ruling ANC on Sunday said it will enter talks with other parties to form a new government, after losing its three-decade-old absolute majority in a watershed election.

With 99.91 percent of the votes from Wednesday's election counted, President Cyril Ramaphosa's African National Congress had only 40.2 percent, a catastrophic slump from the 57.5 percent it won in 2019.

"The ANC is committed to the formation of a government that reflects the will of the people, that is stable and that is able to govern effectively," ANC secretary-general Fikile Mbalula told a press conference.

The party must negotiate a coalition government or at least persuade others to back Ramaphosa's re-election in parliament to allow him to form a minority administration. Mbalula said the ANC will hold discussions internally and with other groups "over the next few days". This marks a historic turning point for South Africa as the party has enjoyed an absolute majority since 1994, when liberation hero Nelson Mandela led the nation out of white-minority rule and into democracy. "The results send a clear message to the ANC," Mbalula said. "We wish to assure the people of South Africa that we have heard them. We have heard their concerns, their frustrations and their dissatisfaction." - Agencies

**Naqvi orders issuance of urgent passports to overseas**

**FOREIGN DESK**

LONDON: Taking notice of delays in issuing passports to overseas Pakistanis, Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi on Sunday ordered the issuance of urgent passports within seven days. During his visit to the Passport and NADRA office in London, he said that normal passports will be issued to Pakistanis living abroad within 30 days. "The policy will apply to all Pakistani missions across the world," he said, adding, "Delay in the issuance of passports will not be tolerated at any cost."

Prior to the interior minister's orders, overseas Pakistanis would get normal passports in four months while urgent passports in one and a half months.

He made it clear that he would take action against the officials who would not issue the passports within the stipulated time period. Naqvi also set up a monitoring cell so that timely issuance of passports could be ensured. ASP Shehr Bano, PSO to the minister, will head the cell. Pakistani immigrants will now be able to complain to the cell via e-mail to complaints.passport@interior.gov.pk in case they do not receive their passports on time. Pakistanis, who were present at the NADRA's office on the occasion, praised the staff's performance. The interior minister, too, applauded the employees for performing well. He also took notice of shortage of the staff at the office, and ordered an effective staff management in order to deal with the problem.

**PTI's intra-party elections case on June 6**

**DNA**

ISLAMABAD: The Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) has scheduled June 6 for the hearing of PTI intra-party election case, following its removal from the agenda on May 30 due to the unavailability of a bench. The Election Commission has sent notices to Tehreek-e-Insaf leader Barrister Gohar Ali and Raoof Hasan. The ECP had raised seven objections to the PTI intra-party elections on March 3.

**World Bicycle Day celebrations**

# Sustainable transportation choices need of the hour

Serena Hotels together with Turkmen embassy Mark World Bicycle Day with Healthy Initiative

**DNA**

ISLAMABAD: In celebration of World Bicycle Day, the Turkmenistan Embassy and Serena Hotels organized a cycling event to promote a healthy, eco-friendly lifestyle under the Sports Diplomacy initiative. The event highlighted the commitment to encourage an active lifestyle and environmental sustainability. Participants gathered at D-Chowk, where they were greeted with a lively atmosphere filled with excitement and solidarity. Along the way, participants experienced the scenic beauty of Islamabad while engaging in a healthy activity. The event was attended by the diplomatic community, corporate and media personnel and Serena Hotel's associates.

Mr. Ahmed Naseem Wwarraich, Additional Foreign Secretary (Afg. & West Asia) was the chief guest of the event, who highlighted the significance of cycling in fostering a healthy lifestyle, decreasing reliance on fossil fuels, and reducing noise pollution by minimizing road traffic. He also advised for a transition to sustainable transportation choices and urged for the hosting of additional events to champion cycling as a viable and efficient means of travel.

H.E. Mr. Atadjan Movlamov, the Ambassador of Turkmenistan to Pakistan, expressed his enthusiasm for the event, stating, "we are delighted to celebrate World Bicycle Day with this wonderful event. Cycling is not only a fantastic way to stay fit, but it also contributes to a cleaner and greener environment. We hope this event inspires more people to take up cycling and make it a part of their daily lives".

Serena Hotels, beyond its environmental efforts, is deeply committed to supporting sports initiatives that contribute to community well-being and development. By sponsoring and hosting sports events, Serena Hotels provides a platform for



athletes to showcase their talent and promotes a culture of health and fitness among guests and employees alike. One such initiative is the World Bicycle Day,

an annual event that brings together cycling enthusiasts to explore scenic routes while promoting eco-tourism and adventure sports. By organizing events

like these, Serena Hotels not only promotes a love for sports but also encourages responsible tourism practices that benefit local economies and ecosystems.

## China warns of 'limits' to its restraint on US provocation

Addressing the three-day annual forum, Dong also warned that the Chinese military is ready to "forcefully" stop Taiwan independence

SINGAPORE: China's defense minister has warned the US over the deployment of ballistic missiles in the Asia-Pacific region, stressing that there are "limits" to Beijing's restraint in dealing with such acts of provocation in the South China Sea. Dong Jun raised the alarm at an international security forum in Singapore on Sunday in a clear reference to the United States and the Philippines, which have been boosting their military ties to contain what they claim to be China's growing military might and influence in the strategic body of water. "China has maintained sufficient restraint in the face of rights infringements and provocation, but there are limits to this," Dong told the Shangri-La Dialogue, which is attended by defense officials from around the world. The two longstanding treaty allies, the United States and the Philippines have been working to

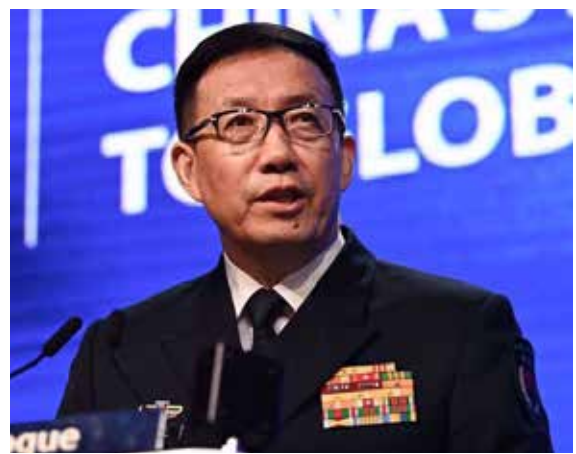
consolidate their alliance and partnership in the Asia-Pacific region, which has enraged Beijing.

The US Army said in April that it had deployed a Mid-Range Capability missile system capable of firing the Standard Missile 6 (SM-6) and the Tomahawk Land Attack Missile in the northern Philippines for annual joint exercises. Dong said the deployment of "medium-range ballistic missiles" was "severely damaging regional security and stability."

Manila and Beijing have a long history of maritime territorial disputes in the South China Sea but tensions have worsened under Philippine President Ferdinand Marcos, with Manila pivoting to Washington, which supports the country in its maritime dispute with China.

China rebuked the Philippines in a statement in February for its unfriendly maneuvers in the South China Sea, saying Manila "stirs up trouble" by holding joint air patrols with "extraterritorial countries." China's Southern Theater Command underlined that it had coordinated with its front-line naval and air forces to closely monitor the Philippines' joint military maneuvers. China's claim of sovereignty over almost the entire South China Sea overlaps with the maritime claims of the Philippines, Malaysia, Vietnam and Brunei, in addition to, Chinese Taipei, also known as Taiwan.

Also, China has constructed several artificial islands over the past few years in the Spratly archipelago in the South China Sea, which is a marginal sea of the Western Pacific Ocean. The move has drawn harsh criticism from the Philippines and the United States. The South China Sea is believed to sit atop vast reserves of oil and gas. Addressing the three-day annual forum, Dong also warned that the Chinese military is ready to "forcefully" stop Taiwan independence. Dong reiterated Beijing's position that Taiwan is part of China and expressed commitment to peaceful reunification. - Agencies



## Zelensky accuses Russia and China of undermining summit

Speaking at an Asian security forum, he also said there were "elements of Russia's weaponry" that come from China

**NEWS DESK**

KIEV: Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky has accused Russia and China of attempting to undermine his upcoming global peace summit in Switzerland. He said Russia was trying to dissuade other states from attending the event, and that China was working to do this as well. Speaking at an Asian security forum, he also said there were "elements of Russia's weaponry" that come from China. China says it does not side with either side of the Ukraine war, a position that has been increasingly questioned particularly by the US. Beijing is accused of aiding Moscow by sending components for weapons. It is also seen as propping up the Russian economy by purchasing vast quantities of oil and gas, softening the impact of Western sanctions.

Mr Zelensky made a surprise appearance at the Shangri-La Dialogue in Singapore attended by defence chiefs from around the world, including US Secretary of Defense Lloyd Austin and Chinese defence minister Dong Jun. The visit was aimed at drumming up support from Asian countries. Besides meeting regional leaders, he also urged delegates to attend his summit due to be held later in June. Mr Zelensky said it would focus on achieving nuclear security, food security, and the release of prisoners of war and

Ukrainian children held in Russia. So far 106 countries said they would send high-level representatives or their leaders to the summit, he said. Russia has not been invited and China is not attending. A formal invitation was not issued to Russia as Moscow had told Switzerland early on that it did not want to participate, the BBC understands.

Mr Zelensky claimed that Russia was attempting to disrupt the summit by pressuring countries not to attend, through threats of a blockade of agricultural goods, chemical goods, and energy. Certain countries were assisting this "diplomatic disruption", he added. He named China later on, and said it was "working for countries to not come to the peace summit", unlike the US which has promised to send a high-level representative and is encouraging others to attend. China's foreign ministry had said that the conference "should have the recognition of Russia and Ukraine" and equal participation. "Otherwise, it is difficult for the conference to play a substantive role in restoring peace," a spokeswoman said on Friday.

Mr Zelensky also said China's leader Xi Jinping had earlier promised him they would "stand aside in this war and would not support Russia with weapons". But, he added, there are now "elements that are part of Russia's weaponry" that come from China, according to various intelligence agencies. He called for China to maintain a "consistent" position. The US has said that China is helping Russia make more munitions, armoured vehicles and missiles. It estimates about 70% of the machine tools and 90% of the microelectronics Russia imports come from China. Earlier on Sunday, Chinese defence minister Dong Jun said they do not supply weapons to either party of the Ukraine conflict.

## Irshad elected President, Aijaz named SG of CPNE



Irshad Arif Editor in Chief of 92 News was elected as the President of CPNE & Aijaz

**STAFF REPORT**

ISLAMABAD: Council of Pakistan Newspaper Editors (CPNE) held its annual elections in Karachi on 31st May 2023. The elections witnessed active participation from the member editors of the council, highlighting the commitment to upholding journalistic standards and integrity in Pakistan. In a significant development, Irshad Arif Editor in Chief of 92 News was elected as the President of CPNE & Aijaz

Ul Haq Managing Editor of Express Group was elected as the Secretary General. Election in highest and esteemed body of editors of Pakistan is expected to strengthen the operational aspects of the CPNE, ensuring that the council remains a robust advocate for the rights and responsibilities of newspaper editors across the country. Tahir Farooq Editor in Chief of Daily ITTEHAD Media Group & Pakistan Economic Net was elected unopposed as the Vice President of Council of Pakistan Newspaper Editors of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa chapter. A veteran journalist, Tahir Farooq has always stood up for the rights of media and journalists, earning respect and admiration from his peers for his unwavering dedication to the cause. Tahir Farooq was appreciated for his outstanding work in the year 2023/2024. Farooq held the chairmanship of Foreign Relations Committee, his efforts in connecting with international organizations various were widely lauded.