

## Shehbaz historic China visit **PM terms CPEC** integral to Pak economic growth

Expressing gratitude to the Chinese President Xi Jinping over the enormous investment in Pakistan under the banner of CPEC, he said that now the project is being entered into a new phase and Business to Business will be its essential component

#### DNA

SHENZHEN: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif today met with Party Secretary of Shenzhen Municipal Committee and Deputy Party Secretary of Guangdong Provincial Committee Mr. Meng Fanli in Shenzhen China. The Prime Minister noted that the deep-rooted ties between Pakistan and China were characterized by frequent engagement and dialogue at the leadership level, people-to-people contacts, cultural and educational exchanges. He lauded the impressive economic growth and exemplary innovative spirit of Guangdong province. He also termed Shenzhen as a trade gateway for China's business linkages with Pakistan. Reaffirming the time-honoured All-Weather Strategic Cooperative Partnership between Pakistan and China, the two sides agreed on the need to explore opportunities for increased cooperation between Pakistan and Guangdong province particularly under CPEC. Shehbaz Sharif and Party Secretary Meng Fanli underlined the importance of robust linkages and exchanges between scientists, innovators and businessmen to harness the true potential for enhanced partnership in science and technology, innovation and trade and economic cooperation. They also agreed that Pakistan-China Business Conference to be held tomorrow can make an important contribution in this regard. Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif says Pakistan has witnessed an immense progress and several projects

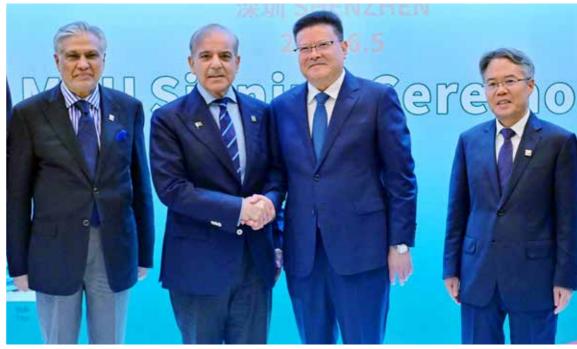
### **PM Shehbaz** Sharif lands in China's Shenzhen

Premier was invited by China's Prime Minister Li Qiang

#### DNA

ISLAMABAD:Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Tuesday arrived in Shenzhen on the first leg of his five-day official visit to China from June 4 to 8. to meet the Chinese leadership and the business community. As the prime minister landed at the Shenzhen Airport, he was warmly received by Vice Mayor of Shenzhen city of China Luo Huanghao, Chinese Ambassador in Pakistan Jiang Zaidong, Pakistan's Ambassador in Beijing Khalil Hashmi and senior diplomatic officials. Shenzhen is the first stop during the prime minister's official visit to China. The premier will meet with Secrewere started under the China Pakistan Economic Corridor. tary of Communist Party of China in Shenzhen

**Continued on Page 06** 



SHENZHEN: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif meeting with Mr. Meng Fanli, Party Secretary of Shenzhen Municipal Committee, and Deputy Party Secretary of Guangdong Provincial Committee, Shenzhen. - DNA

#### **Opp urges** govt to open trade with Afghanistan

Mahmood Achakzai said: "We want the rule of law in Pakistan

#### Khayam Abbasi

ISLAMABAD: Opposition parties' grand alliance has urged the federal government to open trade with Afghanistan and fulfil its commitment to newly-merged districts of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. Opposition Parties Grand Alliance named

## **Behind series of mistakes** Depriving a party of symbol main reason: SC Judge

'All issues would've been resolved if intra-party polls were held', says CJP on SIC's reserved seats plea

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

**'Justice will sound** 

**Continued on Page 06** 

### **Briefs** Iddat case fixed for June 7

Bushra Bibi had requested court to fix appeals against conviction in case for hearing this week

#### ADIL SHAHEEN

ISLAMABAD:Bushra Bibi, the wife of PTI founder Imran Khan, Tuesday moved a district and sessions court in the federal capital, seeking an early hearing of her appeals filed against her conviction in the iddat case. In her petition, the former first lady argued that the appeals against conviction are scheduled for hearing in the local court, requesting it to fix the appeals for hearing this week. Following her appeal, the court fixed the hearing of the appeals on June 7, seeking arguments on the case.

#### Poet Farhad's bail plea rejected

Kashmiri poet, who was missing for several days, is in the police's custody

#### DNA

MUZAFFARABAD: An anti-terrorism court in Muzaffarabad has rejected the bail petition of poet Ahmed Farhad. The development comes a day after the court reserved its verdict after hearing arguments from both sides. Speaking with journalists about the court's orders, the poet's wife UroojZainab said she will challenge the decision. "Details of why the bail was rejected were not disclosed," she said addressing the press. Just two days before the hearing of his bail plea, the ATC had ordered medical examination а of the poet amid concerns of slow poisoning.

IHC stays execution of 5 court-martialled former Navy officials

It directed that "given that the fundamental question of protection of right to life and due process is in question, the petitioners shall not be executed till the disposal of the petition"

#### **COURT REPORTER**

ISLAMABAD: The Islamabad High Court to apologise over (IHC) has stayed the execution of five ex-Navy officers who were previously sentenced to death through a general court martial decree, it emerged on Tuesday. IHC's Justice Babar Sattar issued a written order for Monday's hearing on the request of Navy officers who said they were not provided legal assistance during the general court martial order. The court ordersaid the counsels for the petitioners argued that the documents permissible to be shared with their clients, such as the abstract of evidence and court

Continued on Page 06

## Vawda refuses his anti-judiciary outburst

Mustafa Kamal tenders unconditional apology to SC over anti-judiciary tirade

#### **FAISAL SHEIKH**

of inquiry, were also not shared with them. ISLAMABAD: Senator Faisal Vawda The lawyers asserted that an appeal was on Tuesday refused to say sorry over filed against the death sentence without ac- his anti-judiciary rant in the contempt cess to these documents and was dismissed, of court case. In the contempt of adding that the reasons for the appeal court court case, Senator Vawda submitted

**Shock for Narendra Modi as** 

**Opp set to slash majority** 

India's BJP concedes defeat in Ayodhya,

where Modi opened grand Ram temple

**Continued on Page 06** 

"Tehreek Tahafuzz-e-Ain" leader Asad Qaiser addressing a press conference with other opposition leaders Mahmood Khan Achakzai and Allama Nasir Abbas said that right now Chaman Border was closed and trade with Afghanistan has come to stand still.

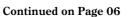
Continued on Page 06 Pakistan Navy seizes large

consignment of drugs at sea

DNA

ISLAMABAD:Pakistan Navy and Pakistan Maritime Security Agency have seized a large consignment of drugs at sea. According to ISPR, in a joint anti-narcotics operation, PMSS Zhob seized a large quantity of narcotics in the North Arabian Sea, worth thousands of dollars in the international market. This is the third major operation of Pakistan Navy against drug smuggling in the last ten days. Pakistan Navy and PMSA maintain constant presence to closely **Continued on Page 06** 

ISLAMABAD: Hearing the Sunni Ittehad Council's appeal for allotment of reserved seats, the Supreme Court on Tuesday observed that depriving a political party of election symbol became the root cause of a series of mistakes. The proceedings were broadcast live on the SC's website and its YouTube channel. Advocate Faisal Siddiqui, representing SIC's women candidates who were denied the reserved seats, resumed his arguments in the case. The hearing was adjourned to 9:30am, with Justice Shah stating that the counsel for both sides would have two days to sum up their arguments in the case. During the proceedings, Justice Munib Akhtar observed that



#### the death knei for oppressors

#### MEHTAB PIRZADA

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) Central Information Secretary Raoof Hasan hailed the Islamabad High Court's (IHC) landmark decisions to exonerate PTI Founding Chairman Imran Khan and Vice Chairman Shah Mehmood Qureshi in the fabricated cipher case and to reopen the party's central secretariat as a resounding

**Continued on Page 06** 

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**Continued on Page 06** 

**News Desk** 

NEW DELHI: Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi's alli-

ance was headed for a narrow majority as vote-counting in

the general election neared completion on Tuesday, with

the tally well short of a widely expected landslide. Modi's

own Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) was falling short of a ma-

jority of its own in the 543-member parliament, the trends

showed. Having to depend on allies to form the government

could introduce some uncertainty in policy-making as Modi

has ruled with an authoritative hold in the last decade. The

Hindu nationalist BJP won a majority of its own when it won

power in 2014, ending India's era of unstable coalition gov-

ernments, and repeated the feat in 2019. The prospect of

Modi having to rely on allies spooked markets with stocks

falling steeply. The blue-chip NIFTY 50 (.NSEI), opens new

tab sank 5.9% and the S&P BSE Sensex (.BSESN), opens

new tab tumbled 5.7%, posting their steepest decline on an election outcome day since 2004. The rupee also fell sharply against the dollar and benchmark bond yields were

India unanimously decided it doesn't want Modi': Rahul Top Congress leader says they had fought the election against entire state machinery

#### AGENCIES

NEW DELHI: As the counting of votes for the 2024 Lok Sabha Elections moves towards culmination, India's main opposition leader and Congress member Rahul Gandhi has said that the Indians unanup. Markets had soared on Monday after exit polls on imously decided that they don't want the ruling

Continued on Page 06

## NATIONAL

### Islamabad **POST** Wednesday, June 05 , 2024

## Punjab, Qatar forge stronger economic ties

Maryam Nawaz Sharif took the opportunity to apprise the Qatari ambassador of the business-friendly policies implemented by the Punjab government

#### ABID RAZA

02

LAHORE: In a significant move towards bolstering economic relations, Punjab and Qatar on Tuesday made a fundamental decision to enhance their

economic partnership. During a meeting between the Chief Minister of Punjab, Maryam Nawaz Sharif, and the Ambassador of Qatar, Ali bin Mubarak Al-Khater, held to discuss mutual interests, several key points were deliberated upon.



Discussions centered around exploring potential investment opportunities in Punjab and facilitating the provision of labor force. Both parties emphasized the importance of promoting economic cooperation and fostering mutual growth. Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz Sharif took the opportunity to apprise the Qatari ambassador of the business-friendly policies implemented by the Punjab government. She extended a warm invitation to Qatari businessmen and industrialists to consider investing in Punjab, highlighting the region's conducive environment for business. In response, the Qatari ambassador commended Pakistan's skilled workforce and expressed interest in increasing recruitment from Punjab for various skilled labor positions. The meeting emphasized upon the commitment of both Punjab and Qatar to strengthen bilateral relations and explore new avenues

#### **Federal Ombudsman** team inspect facilities at AllA

LAHORE : On the direction of Federal Ombudsman Ejaz Ahmad Qureshi, a team of Federal Ombudsman Regional Office Lahore inspected facilities for passengers here at AIIA on Tuesday. According to Federal Ombudsman's Focal Person for media, Shahid Nasim Malik, the team comprising Senior Advisor In Charge Abdul Hameed Razi, Director General Rivaz Hameed Chaudhry and Deputy Director Tahir Zameer, reviewed in detail the facilities provided to the passengers. The team inspected the one-window facility established under the Special Fed-

### World Environment Day 20 organizations honored for outstanding ecological practices

#### audience including envi-ISLAMABAD : In celebraronmental activists, industion of World Environment try leaders, policy makers, Day, twenty organizations and members of the public. from around the country The event was a testament have been recognized for to the collective committheir exemplary efforts in ment towards achieving a promoting sustainable and greener, more sustainable environmentally-friendly world. The award winners practices. They awarded included National Bank of with the newly instituted Pakistan, Bank of Punjab, "Pakistan Environmental Fauji Cement Company Awards", aimed at recog-Ltd, Bestway Cement Ltd, Giga Group, Stary Hydro, Balochistan Rural Support nizing and appreciating the best environmental practices. The Awards highlight Programme, Snow Leopard the innovative approaches Foundation, Murree Brewerv, PTV World Morning and significant contribu-Show, Centre for Climate tions made by businesses,

Director General Ayub Jaceremony was overwhelmmali. Speaking on the occaingly attended by a diverse sion, Shahid Khaqan Abbasi said Today, as we celebrate World Environment Day 2024, I am reminded of the immense beauty and richness of our natural heritage here in Pakistan. Our mountains, rivers, forests, and diverse ecosystems are not only a source of national pride but also vital to our health, prosperity, and well-being. Meanwhile, we cannot forget the havoc that we have played with our natural resources. We need to adopt best practices and put every effort for the restoration of the nature. Belgian Ambassador Charles Delogne said: I would like to thank DEVCOM for inviting me to PNCA on June 4, 2024, for an award ceremony and conference to promote good practices in environmental protection. Climate change is a reality and people know it better in Pakistan than elsewhere. But this concept must not lead to a lack of responsibility.



HYDERABAD: Lady Health worker administering polio drops to a child during anti polio campaign "Polio Free Pakistan" in the city.-APP

## Massive cleaning campaign kicks off in Kalam Forests

ISLAMABAD: The Green

Pakistan Tourism has launched a comprehensive cleaning campaign in the forests of Kalam with the aim to restore and promote tourism in the picturesque region. The campaign garnered widespread support, with the Pakistan Army, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Forest Department, district administration, local residents, and a large contingent of students participating in the initiative, PTV reported on Tuesday. The collaborative effort aims to protect and preserve the natural beauty of Kalam, making it an attractive destination for tourists. The campaign has already seen significant progress, with a large number of saplings planted in various areas across the region, including Takht Bai, Bajaur, Mohmand, Khyber, Orakzai, Dir, and Chitral. The cleaning campaign is a crucial step towards restoring Kalam's lost glory as a popular tourist destination. By involving local commu-

#### DNA

ISLAMABAD : A delegation from United Nations' Children Fund (UNICEF), led by Country Representative Abdullah Fadil, called on Chairperson Benazir Income Support Programme, Mrs. Rubina Khalid, at the BISP headquarters. The meeting centered on strengthening collaboration between the BISP and UNICEF, with a particular focus on enhancing the health and nutrition of women and children in Pakistan Rubina Khalid emphasized her commitment to increasing awareness of the Nashonuma Programme, which aims to address malnutrition among women and children. She highlighted the critical role that awareness plays in resolving various issues related to health and

nutrition, particularly for vulnerable populations.

**UNICEF** country

representative calls

on Chairperson BISP

"My focus will be on raising

awareness of the Nasho-numa Programme," stated

Mrs. Khalid. "By doing

so, we can address many

issues, especially those

affecting women and chil-

dren. BISP and UNICEF

need to collaborate closely

on this front to ensure the

well-being of our commu-

nities." Mr. Abdullah Fadil

praised Benazir Income

Support Programme's in-

itiatives and commended

the program's effectiveness

in shock responsiveness,

targeted assistance, and

financial literacy among its

beneficiaries. He under-

scored the importance of

Benazir Income Support

Programme's role in up-

lifting the socio-economic

status of the most vulner-

able segments of society.

"We need to work together to find practical solutions for the malnourished community, especially women and children," Mr. Fadil re-marked. "BISP's efforts in better targeting and financial literacy are commendable, and I look forward to our continued collaboration to further these goals." The UNICEF delegation included key representatives: Anteneh Girma Minas, Chief of Nutrition; Sadaf Zulfiqar, Social Policy Specialist; Dr. Noreen Arshad, Nutrition Officer; Dr. Wisal Khan, Nutrition Specialist; Larissa Bruun, Chief of Resource Mobilization; and Xinyi Ge, Program Specialist. The delegation met with BISP Secretary Amer Ali Ahmad and DG NSER/CCT Mr. Naveed Akbar, discussing the strategic direction and operational aspects of their collaborative efforts.

Sahiwal Hospital introduces lab auto machine system

# of cooperation.

eral Ombudsman Secretariat, besides examining the performance of Customs, FIA, OPF and Civil Aviation Authority and issued on spot orders for further improvement.-APP

#### 2,795 new dengue cases reported in country ISLAMABAD: There has

been a significant increase in dengue cases, with 2,795 fresh cases reported in the past week across the country. According to NIH the surge in cases is attributed to the rising temperatures in the country, a private news channel on Tuesday said. Balochistan has been the most affected province, with 1,728 dengue cases reported in the past week. - APP

#### **Public Notice**

ہر گاہ عوام الناس کو مطلع کیاجاتاہے کہ میں سیماب علی عباسی سکنیہ نمب رومال، پھگواڑی (شاختی کارڈ نمبر 3740461516921) رقبہ تعدادی یا پچ مرلے خسرہ نمبر (1906)، کھیوٹ نمبر(749-746)، كھتونى نمبر (1343-1347) مالک زمین ذوالفقار عباسی سے مکان خرید رہاہوں۔ اگر کسی کواعتراض ہو توہر کہ سات ایام کے اندر اندرزیر د شخطی سے رابطہ کریں۔ بعد میں کسی قشم کاکوئی عذر اعتراض قبول نہ کیا جائے گا

non-profits, and educational institutions towards preserving our planet for future generations. The awards ceremony was organized by the Decom-Pakistan in collaboration with the Pakistan Environmental Protection Agency (Pak-EPA), Pakistan National Council of the arts (PNCA), different sub-national EPAs and industrial associations on Tuesday at the PNCA. The

FAISAL SEIKH

Diplomacy, Pak-EPA, Mira Hydro, and Laraib Hydro Power. Former Prime Minister Shahid Khqan Abbasi was the chief guest. The guests of honour included Ambassador of Kazakhstan Yerzhan Kistafin, Ambassador of Belgium Charles Delogne, Deputy Chief of Mission of the Netherlands embassy Hajo Provo Kluit, Pak-EPA Director General Farzana Altaf Shah, PNCA

initiative aims to promote sustainable tourism practices and ensure the longterm conservation of the region's natural resources "The successful execution of the campaign is expected to have a positive impact on the local economy, as a surge in tourism is likely to generate employment opportunities and stimulate economic growth in the region," the PTV said.-APP

nities and stakeholders, the

SAHIWAL: Sahiwal Teaching Hospital has introduced a new facility for patient care with the launch of the Lab Auto Machine System in the Pathology Department on Tuesday. According to details, this sys-

tem allows patients to access their test reports online. Additionally, the inauguration ceremony was held at Sahiwal Teaching Hospital, with Commissioner Sahiwal Division Shoaib Iqbal Syed as the chief guest. Addition-

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al Commissioner Coordination Shafiq Ahmad Dogar, Principal of Sahiwal Medical College Dr. Muhammad Imran Hassan Khan, Medical Superintendent Dr. Akhtar Mehboob, Head of Pathology Dr. Raiyas Abbas Leel, and various department heads including Dr. Muhammad Saleem, Dr.Nisar Ahmad Saeedi, Dr. Zahid Sattar, Dr. Haroon Gilani, and Dr. Azhar Naqvi were also present. Dr. Aamna Javed served as the stage secretary. During

the briefing, Dr. Raiyas Abbas Leel explained that the Pathology Department conducts medical tests for over 1.4 million patients annually, providing all necessary test facilities. He noted that due to better management and patient confidence in test results, the number of tests conducted increased from 600,000 in 2020 to over 1.4 million from July 2023 to May 2024, surpassing figures from some of Punjab's major hospitals.-

## SCCI asks govt to conduct forensic audit of IPPs

#### SHAMIM SHAHID

energy sector. Fuad Ishaq **PESHAWAR** : President demanded disbursement Sarhad Chamber of Comof loans under KP governmerce and Industry, Fuad ment interest-free Youth Ishaq has urged the govloan scheme worth Rs 10 ernment to conduct a fo-Billion through the Bank of rensic audit of the IPPs to Khyber and demanded the pull the country out from revival of IDBP. The SCCI chief said the country's economy could be put on the hovering net of circular debts. He was addressthe right track by framing ing as chief guest at the concluding ceremony of sustainable and durable two-day International Solar policies and low tax rates. Energy Expo – ISE 2024 organised by GreenWend The event was attended by SCCI vice president Ejaz Energy/SunSaviour here, Khan Afridi, former pressaid a press release here. idents Haji Muhammad The SCCI chief said hydel Afzal, Faiz Muhammad and solar energy was the Faizi, and Nadeem Rauf, best solution to the rising Saddar Gul, Faiz Rasool, Fazl e Wahid and others. Paelectricity cost and crisis. He called upon the governtron in chief of the Green-

ment to pay serious atten-Wend Energy Prof Subhan Qureshi, Chief Technical tion to the uplift of the solar Officer Saad Rashid, Dr Ahmad Khattak, Haider Ali, Prof Amanullah, researchers, experts, universities faculty members, business community attached with solar energy sector, universities students, members of business community were present in a large number on the occasion. More than 28 solar energy companies participated in the exhibition. Various stalls were set up wherein the organisers briefed president of the SCCI about various gadgets of solar energy, machines, its efficiency and significance, and alternate solution to the current energy crisis.

Fuad Ishaq addressing the participants said that proposals today presented by GreenWend Energy, were mostly as per SCCI vision and thoughts. He assured the chamber will take initiatives in light of these recommendations for promotion of solar energy sector and other relevant hurdles/ issues. The SCCI president said KP was producing 6500 megawatt electricity in which 2700 megawatt was utilized in summer and only 1100 megawatt in winter season, rest of the produced electricity exported to the national grid, despite this surplus production, electricity tariff is being charged equal to major provinces.

## Health Advocates applaud SIFC, IMF for tobacco tax hike boosting economy

Health activists are hopeful that SIFU will advocate for an increase in cigarettes taxes by 26% in upcoming budget of year 2024-25

#### DNA

ISLAMABAD: In a press release, Society for the Protection of the Rights of the Child (SPARC), appreciated Special Investment Facilitation Council's (SIFC) previous work on investing in better economic decisions. Tobacco tops the list when it comes to increasing taxes on non-essential items for boosting economy. Health activists are hopeful that SIFU will advocate for an increase in cigarettes taxes by 26% in upcoming budget of year 2024-25. This will be a Win -Win situation for both the economy and public health as it will generate PKR 17 Billion in revenue and after this tax increase, there is huge potential for long-term savings in health cost recovery by 19.8%.

Malik Imran Ahmad country head Campaign for Tobacco-Free Kids (CTFK) said that, higher taxes on tobacco products can lead to increased revenue for the government. Pakistan currently holds the highest proportion of young people, as 64% of the total population of Pakistan is below the age of 30. While 29% is between the ages of 15 and 29 years. Approximately, 1200 children initiate smoking every day in Pakistan. This number is growing rapidly every year and as responsible citizens and stakeholders we must all

take action to protect our future generations from addiction and death. Revenue from this proposed tax increase will generate billions of rupees for the national exchequer and can then be allocated to various sectors like healthcare, education or infrastructure, which can indirectly contribute to economic growth. Tobacco is deadly and tobacco-related illnesses are a significant burden on healthcare systems, annually taking lives of around 166,000 people in Pakistan. So reducing tobacco consumption can alleviate some of this burden, freeing up resources for other areas of healthcare. Dr. Khalil Ahmad program manager SPARC, expressed his gratitude towards the SIFU, mentioning the urgent need to make sustainable decisions right now for strengthening economy in the long run and saving Pakistani children. Which is possible if the proposed 26% tax increase on cigarettes secures a place in the upcoming federal budget 2024-25. Increasing the price of tobacco products through taxation is the ultimate form of keeping children and young people away from smoking. Higher prices make tobacco products less affordable and less attractive to youth, who are often more sensitive to price increases. This measure can deter youth from initiating tobacco use and encourage current users to quit.





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#### National Days and Armed **Forces Days**

#### MAY May 03/Poland

National Day

May 06/Bulgaria

Armed Forces Day May 06/UAE

Armed Forces Day May 07/Kazakhstan

**Armed Forces Day** May 08/Czech

Republic

National Day May 09/European Union National Day May 17/Norway **Constitution Day** May 21/Hungary Armed Forced 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



George Steiner, commended the PRCS for its outstanding service during natural disasters and crises

#### MAHNOOR ANSAR

ISLAMABAD: Swiss Ambassador to Pakistan, George Steiner, commended the Pakistan Red Crescent Society (PRCS) for its outstanding service during natural disasters and crises. He emphasized that while all countries have been affected by climate change, Pakistan has suffered particularly severe impacts. By aiding flood-af-fected families, PRCS has honored its mandate and fulfilled its duty to humanity. Ambassador Steiner expressed these sentiments during a meeting with PRCS Chairman Sardar Shahid Ahmad Laghari who visited the Swiss Embassy on Tuesday. The meeting addressed various subjects such as Pak-Swiss relations, mutual cooperation, and the urgent humanitarian challenges brought about by climate change. Ambassador Steiner noted that Pakistan ranks seventh on the climate risk index, which is extremely concerning, and emphasized the need for active participation and stringent measures to combat global warming. He commended



modernize the PRCS and enhance diplomatic relations. Additionally, he acknowledged the significant Chairman Laghari for his efforts to actions taken by PRCS under Laghari's leadership, highlighting the ongoing and future initiatives dedicated to serving humanity. Ambassador Furthermore.

Steiner assured new avenues of support for PRCS. The meeting concluded with both parties exchanging commemorative souve-

collaboration between Pakistan

nirs, marking the occasion as a step forward in fostering deeper and Switzerland

#### Hotels & Restaurants

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## Beijing-Islamabad charity program supports children

#### FAISAL SHEIKH

ISLAMABAD: Marking a guage classes, with a goal of significant milestone in fostering their integration its journey, the Islamabad into society and brighter fu-China-Pakistan Youth One tures. Focused on assisting Heart Step and Cure Home children orphaned by the (ICOSH) completed its 2022 floods, war orphans first year of operation, sucfrom the Kashmir region, cessfully providing timely and severely ill children reassistance to 65 critically siding temporarily, the proill patients, ensuring they ject is a joint effort between

#### support to another 20 orstani non-governmental organization (NGO) Step and phans, including local curriculum and Chinese lan-Cure. Since its inception. ICOSH has worked to alleviate the suffering of vulnerable communities, particularly children, through a combination of Medicaid, educational support and social welfare programs. The one-year anniversary celebration saw the children of the home presented

es under the Belt and Road Initiative" bestowed by the International Department of the Central Committee of the CPC and the China Association for NGO Cooperation in December 2023. With a strong presence in Pakistan, ICOSH has been instrumental in day-to-day operations to ensure the well-being of the residents. With plans for further ex-

## **PFL to play** a key role

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan Football League (PFL) UK Chairman Farhan Ahmed Junejo on Tuesday said that PFL will play a key role in the development of football in the country. The visit of foreign footballers and officials will be an important milestone for the promotion of football in Pakistan, he expressed these views while talking to media on the occasion of an event held in Islamabad in the honour of foreign football professionals. Former Chairman Senate Sadiq Sanjrani, PML-N leader Hanif Abbasi, Senator Abdul Qadir and other personalities also attended the event. Junejo said the Portuguese professional football club Benfiqa will train hundred Pakistani children every year adding that there is a lot of football talent in Pakistan, who need long-term planning to improve the football standard so football can flourish with the heights of success in Pakistan. He said there is a need to provide professional coaching to produce world-class players which needs the right policy to be adopted. He said that future of this sport will be bright in Pakistan as many foreign football clubs hadn't visited before in the history of this country. "We will work with government to create a bright future where every child will have the opportunity to fulfill their dreams in the field of football, " he said adding that the best talent will get an opportunity to come forward through the Pakistan Football League as soccer city will be built in Karachi according to FIFA officials. He said Pakistan has huge potential in sports and such opportunities would help explore hidden talent, bringing youth into the game of football, adding that we will explore talent and provide opportunities for youth to come forward and show their potential. I am very much hopeful to see football gaining momentum in the country and anticipated a bright future for this wonderful sport in Pakistan, Farhan Junejo said.-DNA

#### **IRSA releases** 298.800 cusecs water

ISLAMABAD: The Indus River System Authority (IRSA) on Tuesday released 298,800 cusecs water from various rim stations with inflow of 262,600 cusecs.

According to the data released by IRSA, the water level in River Indus at Tarbela Dam was 1464.40 feet and was 66.40 feet higher than its dead level of 1,398 feet. The water inflow and outflow in the dam was recorded as 96,600 cusecs and 130,000 cusecs respectively. The water level in River Jhelum at Mangla Dam was 1188.60 feet, which was 138.60 feet higher than its dead level of 1.050 feet. The inflow and outflow of water was recorded 52,500 cusecs and 55,000 cusecs respectively.

The release of water at Kalabagh, Taunsa , Guddu and Sukkur was recorded as 183,800, 138,700, 158,000 and 90,000 cusecs respectively. Similarly, from River Kabul, a total of 77,200 cusecs of water released at Nowshera and 7,300 cusecs released from River Chenab at Marala.—APP

ANF recovers 49 kg drugs in five operations

#### DNA

RAWALPINDI: Anti-Narcotics Force (ANF) in its ongoing operations against drug trafficking conducted five raids across the country and managed to recover 49 kg drugs and arrest three accused, said an ANF Headquarters spokesman here on Tuesday. He informed that 4.4 kg ice was recovered from a parcel booked for Australia at a office in Islama bad. 424 grams of ice was recovered from a passenger going to Doha at Islamabad Airport while 35 kg hashish was recovered from Panjgur. 6 kg hashish was recovered from an accused in Sialkot and 4 kg opium was recovered from a drug smuggler arrested near Qasim Chowk Road, Hyderabad. Cases under the Anti-Narcotics Act have been registered against the arrested accused while further investigations are under process.



#### Emergency

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



#### Enquiry

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



#### Hospitals

СМН	5611111
MH	561116
Cantt Hospital.	9270907-11
DHQ	5556311-4
RGH	9290301-7
Holy Family	9290322-7
PIMS	9261170-79
Polyclinic	9218300-09
Shifa Internatio	onal 4603666



#### Departments

CDA9221334-43
CDA9208301-04
Met Office9250360-6
RDA5555864
TMA5770886
Cantonment Board 9270151-3

#### Islamabad Metropolitan

Corporation......9209224 PotoharTown......9209224 Rawal Town......5773343

Water Tank Islamabad.....0321-5744480

have a safe shelter and adequate food. Alongside this, the initiative has provided long-term care to 15 orphans, bringing the warmth of a home into their lives, as well as regular educational

the Beijing-based charity One Heart Sphere Charity Foundation (BOHS), the Islamabad-based volunteer organization China-Pakistan Youth Exchange Community (CPYEC), and the Paki-

**UNHCR** announces

major energy project

ISLAMABAD: On World Environment Day, UNHCR, the UN Refugee Agency has an-

nounced that it would solarize 125 educational and health facilities across Pakistan this

year. These state-of-the-art solar systems will provide clean and sustainable energy, ben-

efiting refugees and their hosting communities. The facilities being solarized include 103

girls and boys public educational institutions, 16 public health facilities, four vocational

training centres along with other critical community infrastructure - delivering uninter-

rupted and affordable energy and improving access to essential services for Pakistani and

refugee families. The impact of the investment is already being felt: teachers report an

increase in school attendance, including of girls, as well as improving the overall learning

environment. "Having a fan and lights at the school means I can concentrate on my learn-

ing," said Amina, a refugee child in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa's province. "I've encouraged

other girls in my community to join me, to spend evenings in the classroom environment

to finish our homework after the school day ends, now that it is cool," she added. As part

of this major endeavour, UNHCR will also distribute and install more than 34,000 Solar

Home Systems, in refugee villages in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and Balochistan, said a press

release issued here. These solar home systems, which are portable solar kits, power three

lights and a fan, can charge a mobile phone and will have a transformative impact on fami-

lies who currently have no access to electricity. More than 300 solar streetlights have also

already been installed in a number of remote refugee villages, transforming security and

tax evasion and underlined

the need for large scale

reforms in Federal Board

of Revenue and called for

privatization of losing mak-

ing government entities

and promotion of exports

for a sustainable journey

towards the economic sta-

bility. Demanding incen-

tives in the budget to allure

investors for strengthening

the economy, he went on to

say that NTN must be de-

clared mandatory for open-

ing of bank accounts and for

sale and purchase of prop-

erties and that supplies to

retailers having no NTN

should be stopped hence-

forth. He said that all this

process should be complet-

ed pleasingly without any

He said that launching of

an amnesty scheme in the

budget for bringing the

non-filers in the tax net

will also go a long way to

achieve the goal, assert-

ing that the Government

should acknowledge and

honour the outstanding

business leaders as nation-

al role models by conferring

intimidation and bullying.

social interactions among refugees of all age groups, especially women and girls.-APP

with beautiful schoolbags, a symbol of encouragement and hope for their academic pursuits. The recognition follows the award of "Small and Beautiful Project of the People-to-People Exchangpansion and enhanced services, ICOSH aims to continue its mission of bringing hope and healing to vulnerable children in the region, Gwadar Pro reported on Tuesday.

#### Sania Hameed posted **Director in CDA**

**ISLAMABAD:** Sania Hameed, an officer of Pakistan Administrative Services (PAS)/BS-18, waiting for posting in Human Resource Development (HRD) is transferred/posted as Director Land and Rehabilitation, Capital Development Authority (CDA) (in her own pay and scale). According to a notification, she will also look after the work of the post of Director, Directorate of Municipal Administration (DMA), Metropolitan Corporation Islamabad (MCI) (in addition to her own duties) with immediate effect and until further orders.-APP

## Govt has to acknowledge outstanding business leaders

#### MEHTAB PIRZADA

ISLAMABAD: President Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry Ahsan Zafar Bakhtawari has said that the ICCI has forwarded the proposals for budget-2024-25 to the Finance Ministry and that to widen the tax net consultations with business community and formulation of ioint committees at district levels are need of the hour. He said this while ad-dressing the ' Tajir Dost Scheme' seminar held here at the Chamber House which was largely attended by the business leaders of Islamabad as well as the Chief Commissioner Operations Regional Tax Abid Me-

hmood and his team. Ahsan Zafar Bakhtawari said that business community of the country is well aware of the significance of the tax for economic development, that's why it always remained at the forefront for paying the tax. He termed the track and trace system as imperative

them national awards. to check those involved in In his address, Chief Commissioner Regional Tax Abid Mehmood said that till now 2187 traders belonging to different area of Islamabad have got them voluntarily registered under the Tajir Dost Scheme. He assured that there will be no harassment or threats hurling to traders for the purpose and that doors of his office are opened for the community to facilitate it in the process. He also expressed his gratitude to ICCI President and his team for the cooperation on the subject and therein organizing the seminar. Mr. Naeem Mir, Chief Coordinator Tajir Dost Scheme explained in detail the merits of the Tajir Dost Scheme by asserting that removal of traders reservations about this

particular scheme must also be removed. President All Pakistan Anjuman-e-Tajran Ajmal Baloch said that the government has to repose confidence in business community if it really wants to broaden the tax net. He also called for lessening the tax rate for the

success of the Scheme. Senior Vice President ICCI Faad Waheed and Vice President Engr. Azhar ul Islam Zafar said that like other citizens' traders are also duty -bound to pay tax with full honesty but provision of level playing field for ease of doing business is also equally important for the task. Convener Tajar Dost Scheme, Islamabad Shaikh Jamshaid Akhtar said that he will sincerely play the role of a bridge between the government and the business community to make the Scheme a result oriented. ICCI member Mian Mohammad Ramazan briefed the attendees about the Scheme through a pres-

entation. ICCI executives Rizwan Chheena, Fassihullah Khan, Ch. Mohammad Ali, Akhtar Abbasi, Ashfaq Chattah as well as Khalid Chaudhry, Abdur Rehman Siddiqui, Zahid Qureshi, Naeem Akhtar Awan, Ch. Irfan, Malik Nadeem and other also attended the seminar.





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## 04

## **TWIN CITIES**

Islamabad **POST** Wednesday, June 05 , 2024

### **Briefs**

#### **Five drug** peddlers netted with five kg charras

RAWALPINDI: Rawalpindi district police in an action against suspected drug peddlers on Tuesday arrested five accused besides recovering five kg charras and other items from their possession. A police spokesperson said that Taxila police held an accused namely Asad Mehmood for having 1500 grams charras and Farhad with 1420 grams charras. Saddar Wah police rounded up Sadaqat on recovery of 1400 grams charras. Saddar Baroni police netted Saad Ali for possessing 700 grams charras while Rattaamral police nabbed an accused namely Yousaf and recovered 550 grams charras from his possession. Separate cases have been registered against all the accused while further investigations are underway. He said, Rawalpindi district police on the directives of the City Police Officer had accelerated ongoing operations against drug peddlers, bootleggers and other lawbreakers.-APP

#### Five drug peddlers netted with five kg charras

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Tarar grieved

## **Chinese consumers show** enthusiasm in Pak gemstones

Chinese consumers showed consistent enthusiasm for gold, jade, pearls, and other precious items. Notably, there was a marked interest in colored gemstones, with a significant crowd around the booths of exhibitors from Pakistan and Sri Lanka

#### DNA

ISLAMABAD: Chinese consumers showed consistent enthusiasm in Pakistan's colourd Gemstones. China Economic Net (CEN) reported on Tuesday. According to the report, the 2024 Beijing International Gold, Jewelry, and Gemstone Exhibition concluded on June 3 at the Beijing Exhibition Center.

The event featured exhibitors not only from major Chinese cities such as Beijing, Shanghai, Shenzhen, and Guangzhou but also from various international jewelers. Chinese consumers showed consistent enthusiasm for gold, jade, pearls, and other precious items. Notably, there was a marked interest in colored gemstones, with a significant crowd around the booths of exhibitors from Pakistan and Sri Lanka. "The quality of colored gemstones from Pakistan and Sri Lanka caught my eye, so I stopped to ask about the prices. I might find something good to buy," a consumer shared with the reporter. In 2023, the total import and export value of China's jewelry industry reached a record high of \$145.334 billion, an increase of 8.62% year-onyear. Chinese consumers show a

strong interest in gold and silver jewelry products for both their aesthetic and investment value. Additionally, Pakistan's exports of gems and precious stones to China saw a 47 percent increase in 2023, indicating growing recognition of the quality of Pakistani gemstones among Chinese buyers. Muhammad Amjad, the owner of PIEDRA, a Pakistani colored gemstone company, brought emeralds, aquamarines, and other gems from Peshawar to the exhibition. "I came to China in 2006 and have been in the colored gemstone business ever since. The reason for choosing to do business in China is simple: the good relationship between the two countries and the strong purchasing power of Chinese consumers. My partners here have never deceived me, which I value highly. Although sales have fluctuated in the past few years due to various factors, the market is now recovering, and I am very confident," Muhammad Amjad told the reporter. Since 2023, demand for colored gemstones in China has been steadily expanding, supplementing the traditional safe-haven asset of gold. According to market research by the China Gems and Iade Association (Beijing) Fund Management

Co., the average price increase for colored gemstones across all categories in China during the first half of 2023 ranged between 30% and 50%. Prices for larger or relatively rare gems surged by as much as 100% to 150%. "Although the demand for precious-colored gemstones hasn't surged as dramatically as that for gold, it has remained relatively stable, with a consistent customer base. In recent years, with the rise of e-commerce and social media platforms, younger consumers have become increasingly accepting of colored gemstones," said Ma Xiaozhong, a jeweler from China. Ma owns Muny Asia Jewellery, a colored gemstone company in Beijing, and has been in the business for over 20 years. "We source raw gemstones from around the world, process them domestically, and sell them both locally and in Western markets. Unfortunately, we haven't established stable cooperation with Pakistan." When asked why, Ma provided a cautious response: "Pakistan's gemstone industry has a longer history than China's. In Peshawar's gemstone market, you can find family businesses that have been around for a century. It's difficult for outsiders to enter the market. and it's not easy for foreigners to do business there. Pakistan's gem cer-

tification institutions aren't aligned with international standards, and some certification documents are not recognized." Ma's story highlights a missed opportunity. Various indicators suggest that China, as Pakistan's all-weather strategic partner, boasts a thriving and growing market for colored gemstones. Pakistan, with its diverse geological conditions, is rich in high-quality natural-colored gemstones. However, the two countries have not fully leveraged their friendly relations to explore the potential of this industry. Currently, a few Pakistani companies with stable cash flow. gemstone resources, and professional design teams have the necessary conditions to enter the Chinese market. In contrast, Peshawar-based traders, who rely on bulk sales, face numerous challenges in establishing deeper cooperation with China. From the perspective of a brand jeweler, Muhammad Amjad shared some insights with us: "One problem is that Pakistan lacks effective advertising methods. Chinese businessmen are smart; they use short video platforms like TikTok and Kuaishou to promote their brands or unique national gemstones, leaving a lasting impression on consumers and even driving up product prices. In contrast,

we can only wait in Peshawar for buyers from other countries.' Indeed, lacking product visibility hampers sales, especially for goods with financial attributes, but visibility must be predicated on quality. Muhammad added, "Secondly, we urgently need to establish a gem certification institution that meets international standards. Our laboratories don't meet these standards, and traders from around the world label our gems with other countries' tags and sell them to high-end jewelry brands like Cartier. This harms us." Recently, Pakistani Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif emphasized in a statement from his office, "Efforts should be made to obtain international certifications for precious stones and the products made from them, and to ensure Pakistani representation in global exhibitions." Furthermore, Pakistan's gemstone export industry faces significant hurdles due to a lack of financial infrastructure. In Azad Market Namak Mandi, gem trader Abdul Ahad highlighted key issues: "One major issue is payment; many of our clients prefer PayPal, which is not available in Pakistan. Another issue is the lack of DHL branches, leading to slow shipping times of 15-20 days, despite using DHL's name."

**Pak PWD** abolition a step in right direction

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minis-ter Shehbaz Sharif on Tuesday reiterating zero tolerance for corruption, inefficiency and incompetence, said that his decision to abolish Pakistan Public Works Department (Pak PWD) was a step towards removing the rot that was eating the system like a cancer from within. He was referring to his government's decision to abolish Pakistan Public Works Department (Pak PWD) due to years' long poor performance and corruption, as well as the department's failure to achieve its objectives. "I am fully committed to building a more honest, dedicated and efficient bureaucracy that will deliver high-quality public service and raise standards of governance," the prime minister wrote on his X timeline, a day after he issued the directives in a high-level meeting on Monday. In the meeting, the prime minister was apprised of a report compiled by a committee headed by Deputy Chairman of Planning Commission Jahanzeb Khan which recommended the abolition of certain government entities and the merger of others. The prime minister directed the committee for finalization of further recommendations.-APP

**IESCO** to launch modern mobile app

ISLAMABAD: Spokesperson Islamabad Electric Supply Company Asim Nazir Raja Tuesday disclosed that to ensure zero electricity management IESCO has decided to introduce modern-tech Automated Metering Infrastructure (AMI) project to facilitate million consumers and a mobile app which would be functional within month for filing consumer complaints. Talking to PTV news channel, he said that with this mobile app consumers will get meter reading done automatically and a message will also be sent via email to the consumers regarding the bills and they will be able to verify it physically and through the app. He said that the objective for the launch of the App is to facilitate the consumers without visiting the offices concerned and avoiding the long queues. He said this technology-based system will also allow consumers to get an idea about their electricity use and the expected bill through monitoring of electricity usage. It will automatically register complaints to the power company in case.-DNA



### **AIOU** faculty board approves programs of social sciences

ISLAMABAD: Faculty Board meeting of Social Sciences and Humanities, functioning under Allama Iqbal Open University (AIOU) held here. Dean, Prof. Dr Abdul Aziz Sahir presided over the meeting. Different scheme of studies of postgraduates, BS, MPhil and PhD level programs and other academic related matters were discussed in the meeting. All the teachers of the faculty and external member Dr Salman Basit participated in the meeting. Prof. Dr Abdul Aziz Sahir said that in the light of the instructions of the Vice Chancellor, Prof. Dr Nasir Mahmood, special attention is being paid on quality education and all the programs would be aligned with the contemporary requirements as per the instructions of higher education commission (HEC).

He said that following the directives of the Government of Pakistan, Fahm ul-Quran and Seerat-i-Taiba have been included in all teaching programs. He added that Constitution and Ideology of Pakistan will also be included in next phase. He also instructed to finalize the BS Political Science and International Relations programs as soon as possible to offer in the next admissions. All the decisions of the Faculty Board's approval would be given in the next meeting of the Academic Council and the Executive Council. Meanwhile, one-day international seminar on "Islamic Thought on Global Peace for the Sustainable Future of Humanity' was held here at AIOU campus. President, International Quran Research Association (IQRA), USA, Dr. Safi Kaskas was the keynote speaker, while Dean, Faculty of Arabic and Islamic Studies, Prof. Dr Shah Mohyuddin Hashmi presided over the seminar. -DNA

#### over demise of senior journalist mother

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Information, Broadcasting, National Heritage and Culture Attaullah Tarar on Tuesday expressed deep grief and sorrow over the death of the mother of senior journalist Amir Sajjad Sved. In a condolence message, he expressed his heartfelt condolence and sympathy to the family of the deceased. The minister said he was really sad to hear about the death of Aamir Sajjad Syed's mother and he shared the grief of the bereaved family. He prayed to Allah Almighty to rest the departed soul in eternal peace and grant courage to the bereaved family to bear this loss with fortitude.-APP

ISLAMABAD: Chairman CDA listening to the complaints of people during an open kutchery on Tuesday. -DNA

### Services exports increase by 1.18 pc in 10 months

the country grew by 20.77 ISLAMABAD: The exports percent and it was regisof services during the first tered at \$8.347 billion as ten months of the current compared to the import of financial year increased by \$6.912 billion in the same 1.18 percent as compared period last year. On a yearto the exports of the coron-year basis, the services responding period of the exports from the country last year. During July-April grew by 16.59 percent in 2023-24, exports of servic-April 2024 as compared es were recorded at \$6.441 to the exports of the same billion as against the exmonth of last year. In April ports of \$6.366 billion dur-2024, services valued at ing the same period of last \$646.03 million were exyear, according to the data ported as compared to of the Pakistan Bureau of exports of \$554.10 million Statistics (PBS). During in the same month of last the period under review, year. The imports of serthe services imports into vices into the country also

surged by 14.85 percent during the period under review as it was recorded at \$833.03 million against \$725.34. On month on month basis, the services exports decreased by 7.57 percent and imports by 2.22 percent respectively in April 2024 as compared to March 2024. During April 2024, the services exports were recorded at \$646.03 million as compared to the exports of \$698.92 million of the previous month. whereas imports were registered at \$833.03 million as compared to the imports

of \$851.90 billion of last month.-APP



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### Billions invested in petroleum, gas sector will be wasted

ISLAMABAD: The Pakistan Petroleum Dealers Association (PPDA) on Tuesday opposed the plan to sell diesel on roads through Doorstep Delivery Tankers (DDTs) across the country and termed it against the national interests. It said the decision would further increase smuggling and cause the government to lose billions in revenue. It added that this decision will endanger the lives and property of the people while sinking the billions of dollars invested by oil and gas companies and their dealers. At an emergency meeting of petroleum dealers, Hassan Shah, a member of the Central Executive Committee of the PPDA, warned that such a move would result in the loss of hundreds of thousands of jobs and the bankruptcy of thousands of businesses. He said that dealers make a profit of a few rupees on the sale of a liter of diesel, while the smuggled oil sellers make a profit of Rs 70 to Rs 80 per liter. However, he said, most petrol pump owners cannot sell the smuggled oil because doing so risks their investment of Rs 300 to Rs 400 million. However, it will be easier for smugglers to sell fuel through benami tankers. He informed that the decision would facilitate smugglers and the mafia under the pretext of providing convenience to the people. He questioned the decision's rationale, given the widespread presence of petrol pumps across the country and its lack of practice globally. He said that the government should refrain from implementing this project; otherwise, after Shell, other companies will also leave the country, affecting Pakistan's image. According to Hassan Shah, the legalization of smuggled diesel will shrink the size of the documented economy and increase the size of the black economy. Smugglers are already installing nozzles on tankers similar to those installed on filling stations to discharge fuel wherever they please, which will raise concerns about public safety, he underlined. He stated that when smuggled Iranian oil is available at their doorstep, consumers will never purchase pricey fuel. Selling fuel on roads via tankers will become the most profitable business in Pakistan, at the expense of energy companies and dealers. Smugglers will recover their entire investment on tankers within a few days due to unbelievable profits. According to Hasan Shah, the PPDA has met Chairman OGRA, DG of the Explosives Department, and sent letters to the Ministry of Petroleum to inform them of their concerns. However, the project's rapid progress raises concerns and suggests the mafia's influence, he said, adding that an influential petroleum company involved in large-scale smuggling is lobbying hard to achieve the goal. He stated that petroleum dealers would not allow anyone to play with the future of the nation in order to benefit a few influential people, as it is obvious that after the sale of diesel on roads, the sale of petrol and gas will also be allowed.-DNA

### **CPEC** phase-II to grow business links between Pak-China: Minister

ISLAMABAD: Minister for Planning and Development Ahsan Iqbal Tuesday said that the economic and cultural connections between the people of China and Pakistan are strong and focused. In a video message ahead of Prime Minister

Shehbaz Sharif's visit to China, he said that a delegation comprising of one hundred and twenty six Pakistani businessmen is also visiting China, PTV news channel reported. "China has an important role in Pakistan's development. It

has always helped Pakistan in difficult times," he added. He said there is a big opportunity for us to export the country's products to neighboring China, adding, Pakistani business delegation will sign investment and export agreements with

their Chinese counterparts during the visit. The Minister for Planning also recalled that the first phase of CPEC focused on infrastructure de velopment, adding, this also provided two hundred thousand job opportunities to the youth.-APP

## 05

## US tariffs on China

AY 14 was a sad day for the multilateral trading system. The United States has dealt another heavy blow to the World Trade Organization. In a sweeping decision on China tariffs, the Biden administration decided to keep intact all the duties former president Donald Trump slapped on some US\$300 billion of Chinese goods. Furthermore, it has imposed new, hefty tariffs on products such as semiconductors, ship-to-shore cranes, advanced batteries, solar cells, steel and aluminium - including a quadrupling of the tariffs on Chinese electric vehicles (EVs). The decision is the culmination of a four-year review of Section 301 tariffs introduced under Trump in 2018. Some of these duties were judged by a WTO expert panel in September 2020 to be violating the organisation's rules. The Biden administration could have shown its professed commitment to the world trade body by ditching the duties. Instead, it chose to defy the WTO ruling and has gone further by expanding the tariffs. It claims it is a defence against China's "unfair" trade, which results from what it claims is the country's technology thefts and intellectual property infringements. Back in 2020, the US accused Huawei Technologies in a court case of stealing a long list of American technologies and trade secrets, which Huawei, already the leader in 5G technologies, denied. There is also no capacity whatsoever in the United States to manufacture the kind of cranes the tariff targets

And its EV and solar power industries lag behind their Chinese counterparts. In these and other sectors, Chinese companies enjoy a technological edge over their American competitors. Clearly, US President Joe Biden's justification is nothing short of a myth. The tariffs largely represent Washington's efforts to reverse its fortune in sectors where the US is losing ground. Struggling to compete against China, it appears to increasingly find it necessary to upend the international rules. WTO principles and rules are thus seemingly sacrificed to "outcompete China". The US, the most conspicuous self-styled champion of the so-called rules-based international order, is in effect breaking the very rules it helped to write decades ago. I dare Biden to take his case to the WTO, if he genuinely thinks international law is on his side. Taking matters into one's own hands only calls into question the White House's accusations and arouses suspicion that Washington does not have a good chance of winning the case at the WTO. Indeed, Biden's latest tariffs, invoking the same legislation and based on the same rationale as Trump's, are almost certain to receive the same unfavourable WTO ruling should China sue. But the Biden administration does not seem - or need - to be concerned. Thanks to Washington's singular efforts, the WTO's appellate body has been dysfunctional since 2019 after the US stopped appointing judges to it, despite calls from WTO members to restore its functions. When the WTO ruled against the Trump administration tariffs on China, the US appealed - to an appellate body it had single-handedly paralysed. The Biden administration is likely to do the same and appeal to the void. The big tariffs certainly measure up to the promised high fence but when duties cover over two-thirds of Chinese imports, no amount of term-twisting can describe the area covered as a "small yard". The US' criteria for what it considers a national security concern is also unique.

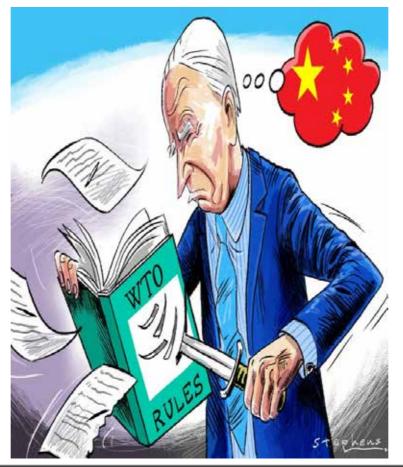
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## How resistance ensures Israeli capitulation

HE Israeli occupation's heinous crimes and massacres in Gaza will not go unanswered, and nothing can relent the Palestinian resistance. The latter fired a large barrage of rockets toward Tel Aviv and has since cut through occupation defenses in northern Gaza. The resistance's highly coordinated operations also make it abundantly clear that all occupation soldier positions are well within sight and fully exposed. Rafah as the launchpad of resistance attacks says it all: the site where scores of brave Palestinians are clustered together in defiance of Israeli illegal occupation and continuing onslaught. The resistance reaction out of Rafah thus captures the spectacular symbolism of the Palestinian cause, its deep roots, and its unwillingness to cede an inch to genocidal forces that prey on innocent Gazan lives. "[Continuation of the Israeli aggression] means more Israeli captives in the hands of the Palestinian resistance in the Gaza Strip," said senior resistance official BassemNaim in a recent interview. The Israeli occupation deserves to be put on the back foot for its unspeakable atrocities against Palestinian civilians in Rafah. Scores of innocent faces were burned to death in unwarranted airstrikes, and the genocidal regime thinks it can proceed with such murders upon will. This is a recipe for occupation destruction. The resistance has shown that "Israel's" deliberate bombardment will warrant swift, high-precision attacks that expose occupation vulnerabilities. These retaliatory attacks are also geared towards settling Palestinian blood with firm defiance.

Such were the scenes when resistance operations continued to push up IOF casualties on various fronts, and confronted occupation troops in the Tel al-Hawa neighborhood of southwestern Gaza city. It is the undeniable right of Palestinian resistance forces to respond to "Israel's" murderous campaign against civilians. The occupation was repeatedly warned but never listened. Palestinians will not blink twice in putting their principled resolve into action for all times to come. Interestingly, the Israeli occupation is feeling the heat and should prepare for continued pushback if genocidal massacres do not cease. The resistance has shown it can strike Israeli personnel carriers, muster a powerful response to invading Israeli helicopters, target soldier coordinates, occupation troop positions, and any so-called "defense" that the genocidal regime insists on. This is important because war criminal Benjamin Netanyahu is leading a campaign of assassinating all Palestinians, and is banking on an unwarranted occupation status-quo to justify this slaughter worldwide. But make no mistake. Resistance forces continue to halt IOF attempts to penetrate the Gaza Strip on all fronts, and enjoy asymmetrical leverage in ambush tactics. Occupation forces appear to capitulate against these tactical strengths and have no response to the resistance's complex counteroffensive operations across the Strip. Invading forces have been compelled to retreat, a significant example of the on-ground effectiveness and strategic prowess of the resistance. From occupation tanks to bulldozers, none of the Israeli assets are outside of the resistance's attack radar.

# Punjab: Banking on IT & education sector reforms for development

#### **Abdul Rashid Shakir**



The Government of Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz Sharif fully understands the need of a quality school education system to better reap the fruits of higher education outcomes, because 'GIGO (Garbage in Garbage Out)' is a proven maxim. Therefore, it has started a comprehensive program of school education reforms. It includes outsourcing of some 13000 non-performing or under-performing schools out of the total 49000 public sector schools in Punjab. The Government is focused on complete overhaul of the education system in the province, for which it is not only categorizing...

HE 4th Industrial Revolution (4IR) of the 21st century, characterized by rapid advances in the cutting edge technologies like Artificial Intelligence, Machine Learning, Robotics, Augmented and Virtual Realities has resulted in a paradigm shift in the ways we produce, consume, think and even interact with others. The very fascinating memories of the Digital Revolution of the 1990s have lost steam. Things like ChatGPT, Self-driving cars, Face and Speech Recognition softwares, Virtual Personal Assistants and Internet of Things (IoT) were unheard-of not a very long time ago. Freelancing, remote work, flexi office hours and the 'fatal' intrusion of social media in our lives are corollaries of these changing tech trends that have shook our work ethics and social interaction values to the core. Working knowledge of high-tech devices like smartphones, tablets, PCs, smart watches and digital cameras have become central to digital literacy in modern times. World Economic Forum's 'Future of Jobs Report 2023' explores how tech trends will shape our workplace in future. It finds that analytical and creative thinking, AI and big data will be the top in-demand skills by 2027. 06 in 10 workers will require training before 2027, signifying the importance of life-long learning by the modern workforce in order to keep them relevant in the ever-changing job market. In a right desire to keep pace with these changing job market trends, Punjab Government under the progressive leadership of its Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz Sharif is all set to exploit wonders of the modern technology by laying focus on market-driven technical skills and education sector reforms. The start of Pakistan's first IT City: Nawaz Sharif IT City is a right step in the right direction. Nawaz Sharif IT City features in IT & Tech District, an Education City and a Film City. The Government of Punjab has declared the

project tax-free for 10 years in order to lure a proven maxim. Therefore, it has started a in huge investments both local and foreign. Major tech giants of the world including 16 Chinese tech companies have not only given their consent to work with Pakistan's first IT City, but 08 of them are immediately ready to establish their business offices here. Well-reputed international educational institutions are being convinced to set up their campuses in Nawaz Sharif IT City, so that our youth could get rewarding international degrees in their own beloved homeland, Pakistan. To fulfill the need of quality human resource, ablytrained in the modern highly-tech skills and vocational trades, the Government has also started restructuring of Technical Education and Vocational Training Authority (TEVTA) in order to enable it run market-driven advanced training courses in the fields like artificial intelligence, robotics, machine learning, augmented and virtual realities etc instead of the old conventional trades like plumbing, refrigeration and motor winding. It has also started imparting advanced training to 4000 young boys and girls under Chief Minister's Skill Development Programme. In order to promote a culture of research and higher education in youth, Government of Punjab has announced multiple programs including foreign undergrad scholarship program for the talented but deserving students across Punjab, besides augmenting the existing undergrad scholarship Programs in the local universities under Punjab Education Endowment Fund (PEEF). It has also announced the grant of iPads and laptops to the talented students, besides providing them 20,000 bikes (E-bikes and petrol bikes) on interest free easy monthly installments. The Government of Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz Sharif fully understands the need of a quality school education system to better reap the fruits of higher education outcomes, because 'GIGO (Garbage in Garbage Out)' is

comprehensive program of school education reforms. It includes outsourcing of some 13000 non-performing or under-performing schools out of the total 49000 public sector schools in Punjab. The Government is focused on complete overhaul of the education system in the province, for which it is not only categorizing schools on the basis of their performance but is also devising workable model to engage private sector in the quality uplift of overall teaching-learning exercise in public sector schools of the Province. Moreover, it has also launched teachers' training program in the province. Another sore point of the school education sector in Punjab is reflected in a recent report of Pakistan Institute of Education, prepared in collaboration with UNESCO, that Punjab has 10.11 million Out-of-School children (OSC). In order to fix this issue, Punjab has started a school enrolment Programme. Another major speed trap in the development of kids' cognitive abilities is the prevalence of stunting and malnutrition in a greater number of kids across the province. Therefore, the Government has planned to start giving nutritious milk packs to the students of primary classes in public sector schools. This valuable intervention of Punjab Government would not only spur creative thinking and analytical abilities of the students but would also equip them with the courage and stamina needed to undertake challenging assignments in life. To wrap up the discourse, we can rightly claim that these quality interventions in the education sector, besides shifting focus of skill training from conventional to high-end technical trades, would no doubt go a long way in raising a productive human resource that would be instrumental in the socio-economic development of the province, acting as its real asset instead of being a precarious liability.

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## Recognizing Palestine marks new era in diplomacy

Dr. Muhammad Akram Zaheer



The decisions by Ireland, Spain and Norway's involvement (though not an EU member) are significant for breaking the EU's diplomatic unity rather than for their legal impact. Most of the few EU members that recognized Palestinian statehood did so in 1988 before joining the EU and were mainly former Warsaw Pact countries

RELAND, Spain and Norway recently decided to recognize Palestinian statehood. This move could potentially help revive the idea of a two-state solution which is a long-supported international goal that Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu strongly opposes. Spain's Prime Minister Pedro Sanchez clarified that this decision should not be seen as an action against Israel. Despite Netanyahu labeling it a "reward for terrorism" Sanchez views it as a step towards peace. Other European countries might follow suit adding to the over 140 nations that already recognize Palestinian statehood.

However, the situation remains complex and tense. Rafah, a city in the Gaza Strip is under the heavy attack despite international calls for restraint. This includes appeals from the International Court of Justice, the United States and the European Union. This makes it challenging to see these diplomatic recognitions as anything more than symbolic gestures, highlighting internal divisions within Europe and its struggle to apply coordinated pressure on Israel. The actions by Ireland, Spain and Norway might reflect growing frustration in Europe over stalled peace efforts and the Israeli government's perceived stubbornness. Yet, without a unified European approach, these individual recognitions may not significantly change the situation. The ongoing violence in Rafah emphasizes the gap between diplomatic actions and on the ground realities. Even though more countries recognizing Palestinian statehood could be a symbolic win for Palestinians, it is uncertain if this will lead to real progress towards peace especially with strong opposition from key players like Israel and the United States.

For these recognitions to be effective, Europe needs to present a unified and strong front which is difficult given current geopolitical dynamics. The decision by Ireland, Spain and Norway was expected due to their national debates and growing public support for action supporting Palestine. Politically, this is notable because other European countries, such as Malta, Slovenia and Belgium have hesitated to take similar steps. Belgium has been vocal about Palestinian rights during its presidency of the Council of the European Union however national elections and other factors have made it cautious. National election cycles and the upcoming election of a new European Parliament have influenced how European governments handle the sensitive Middle East issue, depending on their domestic politics and the views of their ruling parties.

The decisions by Ireland, Spain and Norway's involvement (though not an EU member) are significant for breaking the EU's diplomatic unity rather than for their legal impact. Most of the few EU members that recognized Palestinian statehood did so in 1988 before joining the EU and were mainly former Warsaw Pact countries. Before the recent declarations only Sweden had departed from the EU's general stance on Palestine, doing so in 2014. The current Swedish government's different stance compared to the previous one shows how volatile this issue can be. There is still no consistent, unified approach among all 27 EU member states that goes beyond national political cycles and short-term agendas. Even though there has been some agreement within the EU since the conflict started, reaching a comprehensive EU-wide consensus is still far off.

It would be too cynical to dismiss the entire EU diplomatic effort after the October 7, 2023, Hamas terrorist attack as futile. The EU High Representative Josep Borrell has worked hard to coordinate a common European position during critical moments of the conflict, sometimes with success. The Spanish and Belgian EU presidencies have tried to convince Israel that resuming peace talks is a key to defeating Hamas politically not just militarily. Despite Israel's ongoing military campaign which has killed tens of thousands, EU leaders like Germany and France have become more critical of Israeli policy. French President Emmanuel Macron even said in February that recognizing Palestinian statehood is no longer a taboo for Paris.

However, the EU has not yet united around measures that would apply real pressure especially in trade and economic relations. The EU is the largest provider of aid to Palestinians and Israel's biggest trade partner. Recently, sanctions were seriously discussed for the first time at an EU foreign ministers' meeting but no agreement was reached. It's important for the EU to stay involved in resolving the conflict by engaging with Arab countries, but its effectiveness is limited by internal differences and political cycles. With pro-Israel Hungary taking over the EU Council presidency in July, achieving a common and meaningful EU position will remain a challenge.

## WORLD / SPORTS

## Briefs

06

#### **PM terms CPEC** integral to Pakistan...

#### FROM PAGE 01 In an interview to the China Media Group, he termed the economic progress of country as a part and par-cel of CPEC. Terming the One Belt One Road as a remarkable project of Chinese President Xi Jinping, he said it reflects that progress and prosperity is not possible without the establishment of peace in the world. Commenting on the vast coal reservoirs at Thar, the Prime Minister said that not only affordable electricity can be generated through coal as compared to furnace oil, but it will also avoid importing coal, saving billions of dollars.

#### PM Shehbaz Sharif lands in China's...

FROM PAGE 01 Meng Fanli to discuss the ways to promote bilateral cooperation. During his two-day stay, PM Shehbaz and his delegation will meet the leadership of the Guangdong province and Shenzhen Municipal Government as well as leading Chinese companies in innovation and high-tech sectors. He will also inaugurate the Pakistan-China Business Conference in line with his vision to support, promote and lead collaboration between the businessmen of the two countries. A business delegation of leading Pakistani business persons will attend the conference for collaboration with the influential Chinese counterparts.

#### Shock for Narendra...

FROM PAGE 01 June 1 projected Modi and BJP would register a big victory, and the ruling National Democratic Alliance (NDA) was seen getting a two-thirds majority and more. At 1100 GMT. TV channels showed the NDA was ahead in nearly 300 of the 543 elective seats in the lower house of parlia ment, where 272 is a simple majority, with about half the votes counted. Full results are likely later on Tuesday evening. They showed BJP accounted for under 250 of the seats in which the NDA was leading, compared to the 303 it won in 2019. BJP's numbers were likely pulled down by the party's poor showing in the country's most populous state, Uttar Pradesh, which also sends 80 lawmakers to parliament. the highest of any state.

## **Creative minds organization** holds cricket tournament

Sadaf Shan. the President of the **Creative Minds** Organization said that they were deeply honored to have esteemed guests who joined them for this special event

#### DNA

ISLAMABAD: Creative Minds Organization is thrilled to announce the resounding success of its interfaith harmony Youth Cricket tournament, held on June 1st and 2nd! This two-day event brought together young crick-



et enthusiasts from diverse backgrounds, fostering a spirit of unity, friendship, and healthy competition.

The tournament was a spectacle to behold, with talented young players showcasing their skills and teamwork. The atmosphere was electric, with cheering crowds and inspirational displays of sportsmanship.

Sadaf Shan, the President of the Creative Minds Organization said that they were deeply honored to have esteemed guests who joined them for this special event, sharing their wisdom and enthusiasm with the players and spectators alike. Their presence added a special dimension to the tournament, inspiring the youth to embrace the values of harmony, respect, and fair play. She extended heartfelt gratitude to honorable guests, players, officials, and volunteers for making this tournament an unforgettable experience. Together, we celebrated the power of sports to unite and uplift our communities, she added.



Islamabad **POST** 

Wednesday, June 05, 2024

#### Vawda refuses to apologise over his...

#### FROM PAGE 01

a reply in the Supreme Court. Vawda, in his reply, said he respected court and could not even think of undermining its dignity. "In accused's opinion image of the court should be unblemished in the eyes of the public. Solution to all the problems of Pakistan lies in an active and dynamic judicial system,' he argued. The senator quoted the chief justice as having said court must own and accept its mistakes. The senator further said the purpose of his press conference was not aimed at insulting the judiciary, rather he held the presser for the good of the country. He said the court should observe restraint in proceeding with contempt of court issues.

#### Depriving a party of symbol...

#### FROM PAGE 01

the Supreme Court decision was announced just before allocation of election symbols to parties. He remarked that there were a series of legal mistakes which began from this point. Chief Justice of Pakistan QaziFaez Isa asked if the apex court had given ruling that the bat symbol would not be allotted to the PTI. PTI lawyer Faisal Siddiqui said, "No, the Supreme Court did not say so." The CIP said court

had not asked the PTI to hold intra-na tions. Had the PTI conducted the intra-party elections, all the problems would have been solved, he observed.

## Swiatek roars into FO semis as Alcaraz battles Tsitsipas

#### SPORTS DESK

PARIS: Reigning women's champion Iga Swiatek continued her ruthless demolition of French Open opponents Tuesday as she stormed into the semifinals, while Carlos Alcaraz and Stefanos Tsitsipas square off in a repeat of last year's quarter-final. Swiatek thrashed Wimbledon champion Marketa Vondrousova 6-0, 6-2 to set up a last-four showdown with American third seed Coco Gauff, the player she beat in the 2022 Roland Garros final. World number one Swiatek improved her career record in Paris to 33-2 and is on course to become the first woman to lift the Coupe Suzanne Lenglen three years in a row since Justine Henin in 2005-07. After Swiatek's 40-minute rout of Anastasia Potapova in the last 16, the only consolation for Vondrousova was her snapping the Pole's incredible run of 20 consecutive games won early in the second set. "Honestly I think everything worked," said the 23-year-old Swiatek. "I felt like I was in the zone today."

Since saving a match point against Naomi Osaka in round two, Swiatek has looked every bit the tournament favorite and goes into her semifinal with Gauff having won 10 of their 11 meetings, all in straight sets.

Gauff has come up short against Swi-

#### atek in four attempts on clay and was beaten by the top seed on her way to the title in Rome last month.

"You don't want to change your routines. Not to put too much baggage on vour shoulders, just treat it like any other match and not something huge," said Swiatek. "Against Coco it's not easy, she really likes playing on clay especially here, I think so I'll just focus on myself." Gauff passed her toughest test of the fortnight as she fought back from a set down to beat three-time Grand Slam finalist Ons Jabeur 4-6, 6-2, 6-3. The 20-year-old Gauff is set for a third straight Grand Slam semifinal, after also making the last four at the Australian Open.

Tunisian eighth seed Jabeur is still waiting for a maiden major title, having lost three finals and four quarter-finals. Alcaraz appears to be moving through the gears in Paris after an injury-hit preparation, taking care of 21st seed Felix Auger-Aliassime with minimal fuss Sunday to make the last eight here for the third year on the trot. Next up is an opponent he has dominated in his young career, winning all five previous encounters with Tsitsipas. Three of those have come on clay, including Alcaraz's straightsets win in the 2023 French Open quarter-finals. "I'm really looking forward to playing this match. I love this challenge and these kind of matches."

said the 21-vear-old Spaniard, attempting to add to his Wimbledon title from a year ago and the 2022 US Open.

"I have seen a lot of matches from Stefanos lately. He has a lot of confidence right now and is playing great tennis. I think I have the key against him so I will try to make him in trouble."

Tsitsipas found himself in danger of falling two sets behind against Italy's Matteo Arnaldi in the last 16, saving four set points before swinging the match in his favor. The Greek ninth seed, who lost the 2021 French Open final in five sets to Novak Djokovic, hopes to put a stop to Alcaraz's dominance. "He has said in the past he likes playing against me, so I hope he gets to like it a little bit less this time," said Tsitsipas. Jannik Sinner dropped his first set of the tournament against Corentin Moutet, but the second seed quickly righted the ship to ease into a seventh Grand Slam quarter-final. It is the first time he has made the last eight at Roland Garros since the pandemic-delayed 2020 edition, when he was beaten by Rafael Nadal in a match that finished at 1:26am. That had stood as the record for the latest ending at the French Open prior to Djokovic's 3:07am conclusion against Lorenzo Musetti in the early hours of Sunday. Sinner next plays Grigor Dimitrov, the 10th seed from Bulgaria who is set for his first Roland Garros quarter-final on his 14th visit.

GUYANA: Rahmanullah Gurbaz and Ibrahim Zadran's fiery half-centuries, followed by Fazalhaq Farooqi's five-fer helped

### Afghanistan thump Uganda by 125 runs in T20 WC

Afghanistan thump Uganda by 125 runs in the fifth match of the ICC Men's T20 World Cup 2024 here at Providence Stadium on Monday. Uganda, playing their first-ever T20 World Cup match, bowled out for a meagre 58 in 16 overs, while chasing 184. Farooqi picked back-to-back wickets in the first over of the innings but missed the hat-trick as Riazat Ali Shah survived the yorker. Mujeeb Ur Rahman and Naveen-ul-Haq also joined the fray, with the latter taking two wickets in the fifth over, reducing Uganda to 21-5 in the powerplay. Riazat Ali Shah (11) and Robinson Obuya (14) then added 29 runs from 45 balls for the sixth wicket before Farooqi returned to the attack and broke the stand. Farooqi once again missed the hat-trick after dismissing Brian Misaba on the next ball. However, he added another wicket to his tally in the next over, registering his first fivefer in T20Is. Afghanistan's captain wrapped up the innings as he claimed wickets on consecutive balls in the 16th over earning a massive victory for his side. Farooqi returned with figures of 5-7, while Naveen-ul-Haq and Rashid Khan registered 2-4 and 2-12 respectively. Earlier, the Afghan openers gave their side a flying start after they were invited to bat first by Uganda, scoring 66 runs in the powerplay. Gurbaz took Uganda bowlers head-on from the word go and completed his half-century in 28 balls, while Zadran took 34 balls to reach the milestone. They raised 154 runs for the first wicket before Uganda skipper Brian Masaba removed Zadran in the 15th over. Zadran scored 70 runs from 46 balls with the help of ten boundaries, including one six. Gurbaz also fell four balls later as he was caught by Riazat Ali Shah off Alpesh Ramjani after scoring a 45-ball 76, which featured four boundaries and as many sixes. Uganda bowlers did not allow Afghanistan to make a comeback as they squeezed the run-flow. - Agencies

#### India unanimously...

FROM PAGE 01 Bharatiya Janata Party's (BJP) Narendra Modi, who is the current prime minister of the country. The poll result disappointed the BJP, which seems to fall below the major ity mark of 272 even though the ruling alliance is all set to form the government, as per Times of India. Meanwhile, the Congress, which faced successive defeats in the past two Lok Sabha elections, appears poised to surpass the 100-seat mark. This resurgence signals a potential revival for the party after a period of electoral setbacks Referring to Modi's failure to achieve a landslide victory, Gandhi - who won both Uttar Pradesh and Kerala seats in a stunning comeback - said on Tuesday that the people had collectively punished the right-wing nationalist politician.

IHC stays

execution...

tion was vested with him to

form "an opinion that sup-

ply of any proceedings may

be prejudicial to the safety

or interests of the state"

## Mbappe makes 'dream' move to Real Madrid

MADRID:Kylian Mbappe signed a five-year deal to move to Real Madrid from Paris Saint-Germain on Monday and hailed the move as a "dream come true". The announcement is the culmination of Real's long courtship of one of the most prolific forwards in world football. "Real Madrid have reached an agreement for the player to be at Real Madrid for the next five seasons," the club said in a statement. "So happy and proud to join the club of my dream @ realmadrid. Nobody can understand how excited I am right now. Can't wait to see you, Madridistas, and thanks for your unbelievable support," 25-year-old Mbappe added on social media. He will earn 35 million euros (\$38 million) a season, according to reports in Spain. Mbappe's last contract with PSG, signed in 2022, was a two-year deal worth some 72 million euros before tax with lovalty bonuses of a similar amount and a signing-on fee of 150 million euros.

Mbappe had verbally agreed to move to Real in February and then announced in May he would leave PSG at the end of the season. Real, fresh from winning their 15th Champions League on Saturday with a 2-0 victorv against Borussia Dortmund, moved to confirm the deal on Monday before Mbappe is involved in pre-Euro 2024 friendlies for France. A World Cup winner as a teenager in 2018, Mbappe scored a club record 256 goals for PSG since joining the Qatar-owned club from Monaco on an initial loan in 2017. He eventually moved to PSG in a 180-million-euro deal - all at the age of 18. Mbappe helped PSG to six Ligue 1 titles and steered them to the 2020 Champions League final, but they lost to Bayern Munich. He scored a hat-trick in the World Cup final against Argentina in Qatar in 2022 but still finished on the losing side as Lionel Messi's Argentina won on penalties. PSG lavished huge sums to put Mbappe, Brazil star Neymar and Messi in the same team, hoping to finally unlock the Champions League puzzle. But the French club came up short. - Agencies

## Lok Sabha polls Yusuf Pathan Scores Big for TMC On Poll Debut

NEW DELHI: Lok Sabha Elections Results 2024: Yusuf Pathan has won the Baharampur seat for Trinamool Congress (TMC) in West Bengal in his debut electoral venture. Veteran Congress MP Adhir Ranjan Chowdhury emerged as the first runner-up. Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) candidate Nirmal Kumar Saha has come in third.

Back in 2019, Adhir Ranjan Chowdhury successfully held onto his Baharampur seat, a position he first won a decade ago in 2009. Chowdhury, a seasoned politician, achieved a decisive victory by securing nearly 6 lakh votes, which represented 45.47 per cent of the total votes cast. His closest competitor, Apurba Sarkar (David) of the Trinamool Congress (TMC), managed to obtain 39.26 per cent of the votes, unable to dethrone the long-term incumbent.

In this electoral race, former cricketer Pathan entered the political fray, banking on the substantial support for the TMC and his own celebrity status from the 2011 World Cup-winning Indian cricket team to make his political debut. It seems that his bet has paid off. Exit polls conducted by ABP News and CVoter suggested a notable victory for BJP in West Bengal. According to the poll, the BJP was projected to secure between 23 and 27 seats in the state. On the other hand, TMC was anticipated to win between 13 and 17 seats, indicating a significant drop from their previous election performance. The opposition coalition, known as the INDIA bloc, faced grim prospects, with projections suggesting they might only secure 1 to 3 seats. This predicted outcome poses a considerable setback to the bloc's attempt to challenge Prime Minister Narendra Modi's stronghold in the current electoral cycle.

West Bengal emerged as a critical battleground, with 42 Members of Parliament elected over seven phases in the 2019 elections. In the previous Lok Sabha polls, the BJP made substantial gains by winning 18 seats, while the TMC captured 22 seats, and Congress secured just 2 seats. The current exit poll forecasts indicate an even stronger performance by the BJP, underscoring the party's growing influence in the region. Meanwhile, List of Celebrities Contesting the Lok Sabha Elections in 2024

#### Kangana Ranaut - Mandi Lok Sabha

Bollywood actress Kangana Ranaut is contesting the elections this year from her hometown Mandi in Himachal Pradesh. She is contesting the elections on the Bharatiya Janata Party ticket against Congress candidate Vikramaditya Singh, son of former CM Virbhadra Sing and sitting MP Pratibha Singh. Ranaut is currently leading in her home seat against the congress candidate and will be declared winner. Manoj Tiwari - North East Delhi Lok Sabha

Actor, Political and BJP candidate Manor Tiwari is contesting the elections from the North-East Delhi Lok Sabha Seat against Kanhaiya Kumar of the Congress. Tiwari is currently leading and will be declared winner soon. Shatrughan Sinha - Asansol Lok Sabha

Actor Shatrughan Sinha is contesting the elections from Asansol in West Bengal under the Trinamool Congress ticket. He is fighting against Surinderjeet Ahluwalia from BJP. Sinha is also a former Union Minister. Sinha is now leading Hema Malini - Mathura Lok Sabha

Actress Hema Malini is a sitting MP competing from Mathura on a BJP ticket. She was elected minister from Mathura in 2014 and 2019. This year she is pitted against Congress candidate Mukesh Dangar and Suresh Singh from BSP. Arun Govil - Meerut Lok Sabha

Actor Arun Govil known for his portrayal of Lord Ram in the hit TV series Ramayana is contesting the elections from Meerut, Uttar Pradesh on a BJP ticket. He is pitted against Devrat Kumar Tyagi of BSP and Sinita Verma of SP. the actor is currently trailing in his seat. - Agencies

field of football", adding that we will get a

boost while the best talent will also get an

opportunity to come forward through the

Pakistan Football League as soccer city will

be built in Karachi according to FIFA stand-

ards. He said that Pakistan has huge poten-

tial in sports and such opportunities would

help explore hidden talent, bringing youth

into the game of football, adding that we will

explore talent and provide opportunities for

youth to come forward and show their poten-

tial. I am very much hopeful to see football

gaining momentum in the country and an-

ticipated a bright future for this wonderful

sport in Pakistan, Farhan Junejo concluded.

It is pertinent to mention that the Pakistan

football League UK delegation also met

with Chairman Senate Syed Yousaf Raza

Gilani and Advisor to the Prime Minister

on Inter Provincial Coordination (IPC)

Rana Sanaullah and discussed the way for-

wards for the promotion and development

of the game of football in Pakistan.

#### 'Justice will sound the...

FROM PAGE 01

triumph of truth and justice. PTI Central Information Secretary expressed profound gratitude to the IHC on behalf of PTI for its courageous decisions rooted in justice and law. He emphasized that the establishment of a robust and independent justice system, the supremacy of the constitution, and the rule of law would deal a fatal blow to oppressors, tyrants, and their sinister agenda, heralding a new era of peace, justice, and prosperity for the country and its people.

#### Opp urges govt to...

FROM PAG 01

Resultantly the economic backbones of the tribal areas' residents have broken. Assad Qaiser said PTI and Opposition parties have never supported smuggling but the people of the area have no other choice. AsadQaiser said if economic uncertainty persisted, unemployment would grow and it would cost the country. He demanded that trade with Afghanistan should be opened on a priority basis. Asad demanded that in the upcoming budget, the people of Fata should not be ignored. Allama Nasir Abbas said that "sincere rulers gain the trust of the people but unluckily here the enemy was taking advantage".

#### Pak Navy seizes large..

#### FROM PAGE 01

monitor sea lanes Successful joint anti-narcotics operation is a result of effective surveillance at sea by Pakistan Navy and Pakistan Maritime Security Agency. Pakistan Navy and Pakistan Maritime Security Agency maintain constant presence to closely monitor sea lanes. The successful joint anti-narcotics operation is a result of effective surveillance at sea by Pakistan Navy and Pakistan Maritime Security Agency.

#### **PFL will enhanced football development in Pakistan** Farhan Junejo said that the Portuguese professional football club Benfiqa will train hundred Pakistani children every year adding that there is a lot of football talent in Pakistan

#### **AFZAL JAVED**

FROM PAGE 01 ISLAMABAD: Pakistan Football League upholding the sentence (PFL) UK Chairman Farhan Ahmed Junejo were not shared with the pehas said that PFL will play a key role in the titioners. Furthermore, the development of football in the country, the lawyers said that they were visit of a large number of foreign footballers given limited access to docuand officials will be an important milestone ments despite a court order for the development of Pakistan football. and this prevented the peti-He expressed these views while talking to tioners from defending their the media on the occasion of an event held rights. Meanwhile, Assistant in Islamabad in the honour of foreign foot-Attorney General (AAG) Akeel Akhtar Raja said that ball diginities. Former Chairman Senate Sadiq Sanjrani, PML-N leader Hanif Abba-Chief of the Naval Staff Adsi, Senator Abdul Qadir, Senior journalist miral Naveed Ashraf had and Analyst Mohsin Jamil Baig and other the authority to access the personalities also attended the event. documents and according to rule 193 of the Pakistan Navy Rules, 1961, discre-

Farhan Junejo said that the Portuguese professional football club Benfiqa will train hundred Pakistani children every year adding that there is a lot of football talent in Pakistan, who need long-term planning to improve the football standard so football can flourish with the heights of success in Pakistan. He said that there is a need to

provide professional coaching to produce world-class players which needs the right policy to be adopted; the future of this

sport will be bright in Pakistan as so many foreign football clubs were never

visited before in the history of Pakistan. 

" We will work with government to create a bright future where every child will have the opportunity to fulfill their dreams in the



## **BUSINESS / WORLD**

## Briefs

07

#### **Australia** opens military to noncitizens

SYDNEY : Australia will allow non-citizens to join its armed forces, the government said, as the sparsely populated nation struggles to meet recruitment targets. Defence Minister Richard Marles said on Tuesday that from July, looser eligibility criteria would allow "permanent residents who have been living in Australia for 12 months" to serve. Citizens from Britain, Canada, New Zealand and the United States are being favoured. he added. Australia has a coastline that would stretch one-and-a-bit times around the Earth, but a population of just 26 million. Canberra has surged defence spending in recent years, buying fleets of submarines, jets and scores of fighting vehicles to meet mounting regional tensions. But it has struggled to find enough pilots, mariners and troops to operate and maintain them. Experts warn too few Australians don a uniform to meet even current requirements, much less a beefier military of tomorrow. The Australian Defence Forces can today count on about 90,000 personnel, including reserves, according to the Australian Strategic Policy Institute. China's military, by contrast, has an estimated two million personnel. Marles said growing the Australian Defence Force was "essential to meet the nation's security challenges through the next decade and beyond".-APP

#### Musk's X updates policies to formally allow adult content

WASHINGTON : Elon Musk's social media platform X has updated its policies to formally allow adult content. Under the updated guidelines, the platform formerly known as Twitter will allow users to share sexualised content so long as it is con-

## Turkiye, China reaffirm vision for greater ties



GENEVA : The UN human rights chief on Tuesday

urged for an end to killings

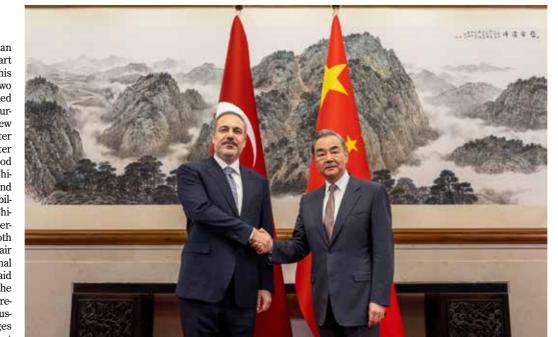
**Islamabad POST** 

Wednesday, June 05 , 2024

in the West Bank by Israeli FM Fidan met his Chinese counterpart Wang Yi in Beijing on Tuesday where he lauded growing ties and forces. On Saturday, Israeli expressed pleasure with China's support for two-state solution for Palestine and Israel

#### DNA

**BEIJING:** Foreign Minister Hakan Fidan met his Chinese counterpart Wang Yi on the second day of his visit to China as his guest. The two ministers reaffirmed strengthened ties between their countries during the meeting, which came a few months after the Chinese minister met Fidan in Ankara, shortly after both took office. Fidan said good relations between Türkiye and China would contribute to regional and global peace, prosperity and stability. He stated that Türkiye and China's views on many aspects of international affairs overlapped and both advocated dominance of a more fair understanding of the international system. The Turkish minister said Türkiye was closely following the developments in the Asia-Pacific region and their geopolitical repercussions. "We believe that challenges in the Asia-Pacific require efficient cooperation based on constructive dialogue and joint priorities," he said. Fidan welcomed China's sensitivity on the Palestine issue and said they appreciated China's solidarity with Palestinians and strong support for a two-state solution. He underlined that it was very important that Chinese President Xi Jinping called for a comprehensive and efficient international peace conference for a solution in Pales-



tine. The Turkish minister's visit comes at a time when China raised its voice about the Palestinian-Israeli conflict. This week, the Chinese president called for a Middle East peace conference. Beijing has kept a relatively low profile amid the conflict, unlike its major rival, the United States, which has fervently endorsed Israel amid brutal massacres of Palestinians. Türkiye, for its part, leads diplomatic efforts to end

the conflict and for a two-state solution. Fidan has been busy with a diplomatic blitz in cooperation with counterparts from the Arab League and the Organisation of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) to that extent. Minister Fidan said they would work with China for a cease-fire in Gaza, uninterrupted, safe delivery of humanitarian aid to Gazans and a two-state solution.

Fidan said that during his visit,

he also extended President Recep Tayyip Erdo an's invitation for Xi Jinping to Türkiye this year. Fidan also spoke about Kashgar and Urumqi cities in Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region, two "ancient Turkic Islamic cities contributing to China's cultural wealth." "These cities act as a bridge between China and the Turkic world, China and the Islamic world. They are symbols of our ancient friendship

and neighborhood. The togetherness of communities and people is the greatest wealth of strong states. I will be pleased to witness the historic and cultural wealth of this region," he said. Türkiye and China enjoy close ties, although the issues relating to the rights of the Uyghur community in China's Xinjiang overshadowed relations in the past. Fidan will visit two cities on Wednesday. Fidan stressed that Türkiye fully supported China's territorial integrity and political sovereignty. "We support China against armed terrorist groups. We do not approve international initiatives seeking to incite strife in China and to stop China's economic development," he said. The minister added that it was highly alarming for world peace, stability and development that there were attempts to portray China's economic competitiveness in a different way and force it to create a new global fight. "The world has to get used to civilized competition," he said. "It is an acceptable consequence that markets established by dominant powers in the previous century are changing hands in competitive market conditions. Nobody should allow it to evolve into a war. The world has enough prosperity for everyone. We need civilized, fair, equal economic competition, economic development models," he said.

forces shot dead 16-year-old Ahmed Ashraf Hamidat and critically wounded 17-yearold Mohammed Musa Al Bitar near Aqabat Jaber refugee camp, Jericho. Al Bitar died the following day, according to the human rights office. Their deaths, along with the killings of four more Palestinians by the Israeli army on Monday, took the number of Palestinians killed in the West Bank to 505 since Oct. 7. "As if the tragic events in Israel and then Gaza over the past eight months were not enough, the people of the occupied West Bank are also being subjected to dayafter-day of unprecedented bloodshed. It is unfathomable that so many lives have been taken in such a wanton fashion," Volker Turk said in a statement. "The killing, destruction and widespread human rights violations are unacceptable, and must cease immediately," said. "Israel must not only adopt but enforce rules of engagement that are fully in line with applicable human rights norms and standards." He stressed that any allegation of unlawful killings must be "thoroughly and independently" investigated and those responsible held to account. "Pervasive impunity for such crimes has been commonplace for far too long in the occupied West Bank. Such impunity has created an enabling environment for more and more unlawful killings by the ISF," he warned, referring to the Israeli Security Forces by initials. The office noted that ISF has often used "lethal force as a first resort" against Palestinian protesters throwing stones, incendiary bottles, and firecrackers at ISF armored vehicles, in cases where those shot "clearly

Turk

'High likelihood' of

did not represent an immi-

nent threat to life."-DNA

## ineffective without Russia

Russia says it is open to dialogue on the basis of the "new realities" it has created on the ground, where its forces control about 18% of Ukraine

#### WEB DESK

KYIV : The Kremlin said on Tuesday it was understandable that some countries were declining to take part in a Swiss-hosted peace summit on Ukraine this month because the gathering lacked clear goals and it was absurd to hold it without Russia. Ukraine says more than 100 countries and organisations have agreed to attend the summit on June 15-16, to which Moscow has not been invited. "This is a completely absurd activity, this is an idle pastime," Kremlin spokesman Dmit-

**News Desk** 

LONDON : Palestine on

Monday filed an application

at the International Court of

Justice (ICJ), seeking permis-

sion to intervene in South

Africa's genocide case against

Israel. This move comes as

a crucial development in the

ongoing legal proceedings,

with Palestine emphasizing

its vested interest in the out-

come. The application for in-

tervention follows Palestine's

formal declaration, made on

the same day, accepting the

ICJ's jurisdiction over dis-

putes covered by Article IX

of the Genocide Convention.

Palestine's filing is described

as both "cumulative and alter-

#### ry Peskov told reporters. ter for Saudi Arabia. The He said it was obvious the meeting is taking place at meeting was not geared toa crucial point in the third wards results, and "that's year of the war in Ukraine, why many countries don't where Russian forces have want to waste time." In a recorded a series of gradblow to Ukrainian Presiual gains since February. In recent weeks a numdent Volodymyr Zelenskiy, China has said it will not ber of NATO countries take part - something Rushave said they will allow sian parliament speaker Ukraine to strike targets Vvacheslav Volodin noted inside Russia with weap-

ground, where its forces control about 18% of Ukraine. Kyiv says peace can only be based on a full withdrawal of all Russian forces and the restoration of its territorial integrity. Meanwhile, Kremlin on Tuesday said it welcomed Türkiye's interest in the BRICS economic bloc. "We, of course, all welcome the

### **Colombia facing** budget shortfall

BOGOTA : A collapse in Colombia's tax collection is setting off alarm bells for the market, which says the government will need to contend with an estimated budget shortfall of some 27 trillion pesos, about \$6.9 billion, this year. Finance Minister Ricardo Bonilla has predicted fiscal ad-

justments in the fourth quarter, but analysts said changes will need to come sooner, lest the country miss fiscal targets or ratings agencies take notice. Tax collection fell 40.9% in April to \$4.83 billion, taking the overall shortfall to about \$2.85 billion in the first four months of the year compared to the target. The DIAN tax agency has already said the country will not meet targeted collection of nearly \$2.6 billion from arbitrations during 2024, and a court decision allowing extractive companies to continue deducting royalties from their taxes will also hit public coffers. "The fiscal situation is worrying, both at the level of spending and of income," said Andres Abadia, head economist for Latin America for Pantheon Macroeconomics. "The economy will

# **Swiss Ukraine Summit**

sensual and clearly labelled. The revised policy, which was updated over the weekend, states that "users should be able to create, distribute, and consume material related to sexual themes as long as it is consensually produced and distributed". "Sexual expression, whether visual or written, can be a legitimate form of artistic expression,<sup>2</sup> it says. "We believe in the autonomy of adults to engage with and create content that reflects their own beliefs, desires, and experiences, including those related to sexuality." Exposure to graphic material will be restricted for children and adult users who choose not to see it, and users will not be allowed to share content "promoting exploitation, nonconsent, objectification, sexualization or harm to minors, and obscene behaviours", according to the policy. The change, first reported by TechCrunch, formalises a relatively tolerant attitude towards adult content that pre-dates Musk's purchase of Twitter in October 2022.

Unlike platforms such as Instagram, Facebook, TikTok and YouTube, Twitter has never expressly banned nudity and sexualised content. Under Musk's tenure, X has dramatically scaled back moderation on the platform and reinstated previously banned accounts, including those of for.--Agencies

#### Tokyo shares close lower

TOKYO : Tokyo shares closed lower on profit-tak-Tuesday following ing falls in the US Dow index. The benchmark Nikkei 225 index fell 0.22 percent, or 85.57 points, to end at 38,837.46, while the broader Topix index slid 0.38 percent, or 10.59 points, to 2,787.48. "Trading was lacklustre, with investors in a wait-and-see mode, as concerns about the US economic outlook emerged following a series of downbeat economic indicators,' IwaiCosmo Securities said. Wall Street had a mixed close on Monday as investors tried to look past weaker-than-expected economic data, with the Dow retreating 0.3 percent. In Tokyo, Toyota lost 1.29 percent to 3,298 yen while Honda dropped 2.24 percent to 1,726 yen.-APP

egram post on Tuesday. He cited press reports saying Saudi Arabia would not go either, although the kingdom has not publicly announced its position on the summit. Peskov said that was a sovereign mat-

with satisfaction in a Tel-

permission to intervene,

arguing that all states party

to the Genocide Convention

have a legal interest in com-

pliance with the convention.

This, Palestine asserts, gives

it a legitimate "interest of a

legal nature which may be af-

fected by the decision in the

case." Furthermore, Pales-

tine emphasizes its "special

interest" as a particularly af-

fected state, highlighting the

unique stake it holds in the

proceedings. Additionally,

Palestine submitted a decla-

ration of intervention under

Article 63 of the Statute

of the Court.

to Kyiv, something that President Vladimir Putin has warned could escalate the war into a global conflict. Russia says it is open to dialogue on the basis of the "new realities" it has created on the

ons they have supplied

increased interest in BRICS on the part of our neighbors, including such important partners as Türkive." Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov told reporters in a press briefing in Moscow.

have to pay for it." The government will need to make adjustments in its mid-year fiscal plan in mid-June if it wants to avoid a crisis in investor confidence, analysts said. The finance ministry did not respond to requests for comment. Various market sources who spoke to Reuters said the government faces a dilemma when trying to react to lower-than-expected income - should it significantly reduce spending, take on more debt or both?.-APP

countries are strengthening

their cooperation in renewa-

ble energy, new technologies

and energy resource diversi-

ty, he said. The president

welcomed the recent posi-

tive developments between

Azerbaijan and Armenia

and emphasized once again

that the peace agreement

to be signed is a historic

opportunity for the future

of the region.Erdogan re-

called that Azerbaijan will

host the 29th Conference of

the Parties (COP 29) of the

**UN Framework Convention** 

on Climate Change on Nov.

11-22 and expressed read-

iness to provide all kinds

of support for the confer-

ence.

#### more landslides at PNG disaster site

PORT MORESBY : Papua New Guinea authorities have warned there is a high risk of more landslides at the site of a recent deadly disaster, with government experts demanding the area be evacuated and declared "no-go-zone". A draft internal report by Papua New Guinea's mining and geohazards department, obtained by AFP on Tuesday, warns that the highland community where hundreds are feared to have died on May 24 needs to be urgently cleared of people. "This area has to be declared a nogo-zone," the report warns, citing a litany of risks from further landslips, teetering boulders and underground streams. Stating that there is a "high likelihood of further landslides to occur in the immediate future", the report concludes that "any access to the area should be restricted to experts". Rescue workers have already given up on finding any survivors in the 600 metre-long (1,970 feet) scar of soil.-APP

#### **Palestine** joins Turkmenistan to export gas South Africa's UN to Türkiye, Europe : Erdogan genocide case native," reflecting its strate-

#### gic approach. Firstly, under Article 62 of the Statute of FOREIGN DESK the Court, Palestine requests

BAKU: It is only a matter of time before Turkmenistan's gas is transferred to Türkive and Europe through the expanded Trans Anatolian Natural Gas Pipeline Project (TANAP), the Turkish president said Tuesday. "Our long-standing cooperation, crowned with infrastructure investments such as Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan, Baku-Tbilisi-Erzurum pipelines and TANAP, has not only benefited Türkiye and Azerbaijan, but has also made significant contributions to the energy

security of the region and Europe," said Recep Tayyip Erdogan in a statement. His comment was read out at the International Caspian Oil and Gas Exhibition in Baku, Azerbaijan. "We are aiming to complete electricity export on Nahcivan and Igdir-Nahcivan natural gas line projects as soon as possible," he said. Erdogan said Türkiye is determined to maintain peace and stability in the West Caucasus. "The fact that our work on these issues will bear fruit very soon will undoubtedly be another joint achievement of Türkiye and Azerbaijan," Erdogan said. The Turkic world is willing to further develop and deepen

their cooperation in the field of energy as well as in various fields, he said. "I would like to take this opportunity to express my satisfaction that the next summit of the Organization of Turkic States will be held next month in Shusha, hosted by Azerbaijan. "The six-fold capacity increase in freight transportation to be achieved with the completion of the modernization works of the Baku-Tbilisi-Kars railway, which is the backbone of the Middle Corridor that brings the historical Silk Road to life on rails, is of strategic importance for the development of the regional transportation network." The two

## **Environmental degradation: planet on the brink**

**GUL HAMEED** 

argely occurring due to carbon emitting vehicles, chemharmful human activiical fertilizers and pesticides ties, deterioration of our have caused air, water and soil environment is one of the most pollution. Overpopulation and pressing concerns of our times. subsequent rapid urbanization Mounting pollution, overconhave led to massive cutting of sumption of earth's resources trees. Studies have shown that and mass indifference to the imhalf of the world's forests have pending doom have pushed us been depleted, and with that, to the verge of a dangerous prechalf of world's forest wildlife ipice. If this continued, it is only has also been lost. Harmful a matter of time that our planet emissions combined with dewill no longer be able to sustain forestation has led to depletion many of life forms including of Ozone layer which has led to humans. Urgent transformative disturbed temperature balance actions are more than ever necon earth along with other probessary to restore our relationlems. Advancement in technoloship with the planet to balance gy, enabling us to extract more and sustainability. Environment natural resources, has led to unfriendly policies and individuchecked consumerism resulting al efforts can still pull us back in overexploitation of land and from the brink. Following the oceanic resources. Improved Industrial Revolution, the invendefense against disease has intion of technologies from mechcreased lifespan, and this couanized looms and steam-powpled with high birthrate has led ered engines to the modern-day to ever-expanding human popumind-bending advancements in lation now living beyond earth's all facets of human existence, accommodating capacity. have led to improved living There are grim statistics on environmental degradation occurstandards and economic condi-

tions. However, this progress

tivities. According to UN's Food has had a downside to it in the form of damage to the earth's and Agriculture Organization, environment. Industrial waste, 420 million hectares of forest have been lost during last one hundred years. Presently, forest cover is being lost at the rate of 375 square km per day. A research from World Health Organization (WHO) shows that 92% of the world population lives in the places where air pollution exceeds safe limits. In the year 2012 alone, there were approximately 7 million deaths worldwide from diseases related to air pollution. Land degradation driven by mining, ranching, urbanization and farming has reached unprecedented levels resulting in 1692 acres of productive land becoming desert every hour. Oceans sustain life on earth by providing sustenance and employment. However, plastic pollution, industrial waste and overexploitation of living and non-living resources have affected the health of oceans negatively. There are 46,000 pieces of plastic in every square mile of our oceans and about 8 million pieces of plastic end up into the oceans every day. These colossal amounts of plastic pollution cause immense damring due to harmful human acage to ocean health and marine

biodiversity. Moreover, release of industrial waste into oceans, unsustainable fishing and tourism practices, oil spillage and pollution from maritime transport have rendered seas more acidic which has had a negative impact on marine biodiversity. Many may find it surprising to know that about 90% of predatory and 80% of commercial fish in our oceans has died and if this continues unchecked, we will have barren oceans void of fish. Nearly half of coral reefs and many of the fish species in our oceans have already gone. Some of the fish species which have recently gone extinct include black fin cisco, galapagos damsel, silver trout, and yellow fin trout. All this has come down very heavily on our environment, disturbing the balance between human consumption and earth's ability to heal itself and replenish its resources. The problem is that the pervasive human progress and the earth's environment mutually contradict. Presently, we are borrowing from our future to cater for our present needs. Estimates show that without adopting sustainable practices, in the coming decades, human consumption will be twice the accommodating capacity of the planet and there will be the same amount of plastic in the oceans as fish. Scientists have warned that by 2050, air pollution will be the top cause of death and water scarcity can affect 5 billion people worldwide. This definitely calls for immediate remedial actions. Certainly it is not an overnight fix; however, environment friendly policies and individual choices can make a difference. Shifting of industries to far flung areas, using natural fertilizers, promoting public transport, disposing off industrial wastes effectively, controlling the use of plastic, adopting sustainable practices to manage natural resources along with regulatory framework and legislation can help thwart the imminent catastrophe. Educating the masses to play their role for reducing carbon print on earth ensuring responsible individual action is also vital. There are many international protocols and conventions in place for the conservation of environment: however, throughout previous decades. the environmental degradation and mass oblivion have run ahead of our will to reverse the damage. UN Climate Change Conference

(COP26) noted that the state of political will in the world and cuts in global carbon emissions are far from enough to confront the challenge. Similarly, COP28 also noted that progress on reducing harmful emissions and strengthening resilience against climate change had been slow. COP26 produced new framework to improve implementation of the Paris Agreement through collective action which can guarantee low-carbon, sustainable future course. Under COP28, decisions were made to engage governments to accelerate progress on transition to renewable sources of energy to augment climate commitments. It is to be remembered that no piece of legislation or proposition is self-executing; these must be supported by the will to implement. Currently, human consumption is already in overshoot as compared to the earth's carrying capacity. We, however, have a choice; a choice between sustainability and mindless consumerism. Responsible actions at government and individual levels can enable us to stop borrowing from our future and hand over the planet to the next generation with grace and dignity.







#### **Briefs** US sanctions Iranian drone makers

## **Mohsin Naqvi, Pope Francis discuss promotion of peace**

The Pope said that his message to the people of Pakistan was peace, adding "We all should work together for establishing peace in the world"

State Department has announced sanctions on four Iranian organizations and one individual believed to be involved in the development and production of drones, which Washington claims are being supplied to Russia and militant groups across the Middle East.

WASHINGTON: The US

In a press statement published on the department's website on Monday, Washington noted that the measures are being imposed at the same time as EU sanctions on individuals and entities involved in Iran's UAV industry.

The latest targets of US sanctions include four entities associated with the Rayan RoshdAfzar Company, as well as an Iranian executive with the Iran Aviation Industries Organization – a subsidiary of the Iranian Ministry of Defense and Armed Forces Logistics, which oversees UAV manufacturers including Iran Aircraft Manufacturing Industrial Company and Qods Aviation Industries.

Washington's move follows EU-imposed sanctions on a number of Iranian and North Korean individuals and organizations last Friday. Brussels accused six individuals and three entities from the DPRK of providing assistance to Russia, as well as generating funds for illegal nuclear and ballistic-missile programs in violation of UN Security Council resolutions. – **Agencies** 

#### Sikh separatist leader elected from jail

NEW DELHI: An Indian Sikh separatist and a staunch opponent of Prime Minister Narendra Modi from disputed Kashmir were both set to be elected lawmakers from behind bars on Tuesday. Firebrand preacher Amritpal Singh, 31, a Sikh separatist leader



#### DNA

VATICAN CITY: Minister for Interior, Mohsin Naqvi on Tuesday met Pope Francis at

the Vatican City during his visit to Europe. The Minister was accorded a warm welcome upon his arrival in the Vatican City. During the meeting, both sides discussed ways to promote peace, brotherhood, inter-

faith harmony and dialogue. Pope Francis commended Pakistan's efforts towards immediate repair and reconstruction of Churches in the aftermath of Jaranwala tragedy. The Pope said that his

## Bidenhints Netanyahu prolonging Gaza war

More than 15,000 Palestinian children have been killed since October, when the Israeli regime launched its genocide against the Gaza Strip, the Palestinian Ministry of Education says

#### News Desk

WASHINGTON: US President Joe Biden swiped at Benjamin Netanyahu in an interview with Time magazine published Tuesday, saying there was "every reason" to conclude the Israeli prime minister was dragging out the Gaza war to save himself politically. Biden added that he had a "major disagreement" with Netanyahu over the post-conflict future of Gaza, and said Israel had engaged in "inappropriate" conduct during the war sparked by Hamas's October 7 attack. More broadly, the 81-year-old pitched his case in the interview as better placed than election rival Donald Trump to secure the United States as "the world power" on issues ranging from Ukraine to Taiwan and Gaza. Speaking to Time days before his announcement of an Israeli proposal for a Gaza ceasefire deal that Netanyahu greeted coolly, Biden was asked if he believed the Israeli was dragging out the war for political self-preservation. "There is every reason for people to draw that conclusion," Biden replied. Biden admitted that he and Netanyahu, who have had tense relations as the death toll in Gaza has soared, were particularly at odds over the need to create a Palestinian state. "My major disagreement with Netanyahu is, what happens after... Gaza's over? What, what does it go back to? Do Israeli forces go back in?" said the Democrat. "The answer is, if that's the case, it can't work."

#### message to the people of Pakistan was peace, adding "We all should work together for establishing peace in the world." He also stated that the Prime Minister of Pakistan had invited him for a visit and he

Pakistan had invited him for a visit and he would try his best to visit Pakistan soon. The Pope expressed concern over the situation in Palestine, stating that it was a cause of huge concern.

He added that he stayed updated on the humanitarian situation in Palestine through daily briefings with workers engaged in relief efforts. He emphasized that the interfaith dialogue and harmony was the key to resolve issues. Minister, Mohsin Naqvi thanked him for his effective stance on the Palestine issue, which had been widely appreciated. The minister apprised Pope Francis regarding Pakistan's sacrifices and efforts in the war against terrorism.

He lauded the services of the Pope towards promoting peace and harmony in the world. The minister said that the protection of minorities was top priority of the government of Pakistan adding that teachings of our Holy Prophet (PBUH), Father of the Nation and constitution emphasized the protection and well-being of minorities. He highlighted that the Constitution of Pakistan ensured equal rights to all minorities. The meeting concluded with the Pope praying for Pakistan's progress and prosperity and expressing good wishes IHC orders CDA to de-seal PTI office

#### COURT REPORTER

ISLAMABAD: The Islamabad High Court (IHC) Tuesday ordered the Capital Development Authority (CDA) to de-seal the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf's (PTI) Central Secretariat, providing relief to the former ruling party. "CDA may take action strictly in accordance with law in case of any non-conformity or violation of the applicable laws," IHC's Justice Saman-RafatImtiaz stated in a six-

page written order. This is the second major relief to the party as the IHC on Monday annulled jailed founder Imran Khan and party's Vice-Chairman Shah Mahmood Qureshi's conviction in the cipher case containing charges of misusing and misplacing the classified diplomatic document. The order said that CDA had issued notice and show-cause notice to the previous owner in 2022 and 2023, however, it failed to provide an explanation for the sending the notices.

Hamas fundamental part of Gaza political landscape

#### FOREIGN DESK

CAIRO: A high-ranking member of Hamas political bureau says the Palestinian Gaza-based resistance movement is an inseparable part of the Gaza political landscape. Ghazi Hamad made the remarks in an interview with the Qatar-based Al Araby television network on Monday night in reaction to US President Joe Biden's announcement on Friday that Israel had "offered a new three-phase roadmap" to end its nearly eight-month genocidal war against Palestinians

NATO preparing troop plans for potential Russia conflict: Report

for the people of Pakistan.

#### Monitoring Desk

NEW YORK: NATO is working on plans to rush tens of thousands of US troops along "land corridors" in Europe in the event of war with Russia, a senior strategist has told The Telegraph. Last year, members of the US-led military bloc agreed to keep 300,000 troops ready for deployment, purportedly in response to a potential Russian attack. However, training exercises have exposed red tape and infrastructure bottlenecks that prevent the rapid transfer of personnel and materiel across the continent. NATO military leadership is therefore working to ensure that the flow of troops would not be stopped by likely Russian strikes on ports used by the US military to unload its cargos, The Telegraph reported on Tuesday. "It is clear that huge logistics bases, as we know it from Afghanistan and Iraq, are no longer possible because they will be attacked and destroyed very early on in a conflict situation," Lieutenant General Alexander Sollfrank, head of NATO's JSEC logistics command, told the newspaper. The primary route for American troops in the event of war with Russia would be via the Dutch port of Rotterdam to Germany and Poland, the report said. Alternative corridors would start in Italy. Greece. and Türkiye, and would respectively run through Slovenia and Croatia to Hungary and through Bulgaria and Romania. There are also plans to involve Norway, Sweden, and Finland for backup logistics. The US and its allies have claimed that Moscow could attack NATO, and that sending arms to Ukraine to fight Russia will help stall or prevent that outcome. Moscow has denied having any such intentions, and has accused Western governments of creating false threats to deceive their populations over the Ukraine conflict.

arrested last year after a month-long police manhunt in Punjab state, defeated 26 other candidates including 17 independents in Khadoor Sahib constituency.

Singh rose to prominence calling for a separate Sikh homeland known as Khalistan, the struggle for which sparked deadly violence in India in the 1980s and 1990s. His mother thanked the voters for their support and "love" for her son, who won nearly 200,000 more votes than his nearest rival as an independent.

"I sincerely thank all the supporters from the bottom of my heart," Balwinder Kaur told reporters. "Our victory is dedicated to the martyrs." Weeks before Singh's April 2023 arrest, he and armed supporters raided a police station, after one of the self-styled preacher's aides was arrested for assault and attempted kidnapping. Singh has styled himself after Jarnail Singh Bhindranwale, a figurehead of the Khalistan movement, who was killed when the Indian army stormed the Golden Temple in Amritsar, a major Sikh site, in 1984.

#### MQM to present shadow budget: Sattar

#### NAZIR SIYAL

KARACHI: MQM leader Farooq Sattar has said they are presenting a shadow budget for the development of the people of Pakistan. Talking about the shadow budget, he said Muttahida Business Forum had prepared the budget after intense working. He said anti-Karachi budget were presented and the party had always opposed that moves. Sattar said, quoting Quaid-e-Azam's saying, "If we properly uses our resources, our country will develop". The independence of any country always depended on economic strengthens, he said. "If our suggestion are accepted in the budget, people of Pakistan will get relief," he said adding only Karachi Monitory Fund could set the country free of the IMF. He urged Islamabad and Rawalpindi to break their shackles to bring the country out of the economic crises.

### PTI leaders challenge FIA summons in X post controversy

"...petitioners have already explained their and party's position on TV shows," says plea

#### MEHTAB PIRZADA

ISLAMABAD: The Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) has moved the Islamabad High Court (IHC) against the Federal Investigation Agency's (FIA) summons issued to party leaders as the body probes Imran Khan's X post on the 1971 war. In the petition, PTI Chairman Barrister Gohar Khan, Information Secretary Raoof Hasan, and Secretary-General Omar Ayub Khan alleged that the government and its allies were targeting the party through a "pre-planned attack". A post on X, formerly Twitter, was attributed to the former prime minister, which read: "Every Pakistani should study the Hamoodur Rahman Commission Report and get to know who was the true traitor, General Yahya Khan or Sheikh Mujibur Rahman." The post drew flak from government members and other politicians, with Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif saying that Khan's true face was finally in front of the nation, imThe defense of Ukraine against Russia's invasion has been a cornerstone of Biden's foreign policy, and he argued he was better placed than Trump to continue that in a second term. Biden said the Russian military had been "freaking decimated" and added: "Peace looks like making sure Russia never, never, never, never occupies Ukraine."

plying that he wanted to divide the country. In response, the party said the PTI founder had nothing to do with the post since he was in jail. Later, a leader said everything was posted with Khan's approval, opening a new Pandora's box. However, the party later owned the post and said it was uploaded to inform the public about past mistakes as it was crucial to learn from them so they aren't repeated. The FIA then issued notices to the party leaders. In the petition filed today, the PTI leader said: "...in the garb of the alleged tweet, the FIA is hell-bent on making another case against Imran Khan, workers of PTI and its leadership." The notices issued to the leaders, the plea said, are void, illegal, without jurisdiction, and malafide, having been issued without lawful authority, and are liable to be set aside.

The plea said that the contents of the notices - issued on May 30 - are vague and the purpose of the notice, the information sought, and its connection with the complaint has not been explained. They mentioned that "it is well established" that the right to a fair trial includes the right to a fair investigation. In this case, however, it said, it is clear from the complaint and surrounding circumstances and the notice that the petitioners would not be treated in accordance with the law and would also be denied a fair investigation. They added that in the case, it appears that the complainant, namely Anees Ur Rehman, technical assistant FIA, CCRC, made the alleged complaint without "approval of the federal government and under a dictation". The plea said that Rehman is neither personally aggrieved nor is there any reference to any previous approval with regard to the alleged commission of offence granted by any authority or institution.

# EU polls: What a right-wing surge could mean for the EU

Polls show that Europe is facing a potential shift to the right in elections set for June 6-9, when millions of EU citizens will vote to elect new members of the European Parliament

BRUSSELS: As the world's second-largest democratic, the European elections have the power to reshape the political landscape across the continent and beyond. From June 6-9, approximately 400 million EU citizens will head to the polls to elect new members of the European Parliament (MEPs). The 720 legislators in the new parliament will have the power to shape policies on climate, migration, industry, defence and security. But they will also vote on what should be prioritised in the EU budget, which can be essential to policies like providing aid for Ukraine.

Once elected, MEPs will join supranational parliamentary "groups" according to ideology (greens, socialists, centre-right, far-right, etc.). The two largest parliamentary groups are usually the centre-right European People's Party (EPP) and the centre-left Socialists and Democrats (S&D). But right-wing parties have been making significant inroads and are expected to do well in 2024, with the farright Identity and Democracy party possibly becoming the third-largest group in the European Parliament.

A coalition of centre-right Christian democrats, conservatives and right-wing MEPs could thus be on track to hold a majority for the first time. The influence that the European Parliament has on foreign policy is overshadowed by the European Council, which is made up of leaders from the 27 members states and has the final say on foreign policy. It is up to member states to decide jointly on sending munitions to Ukraine or to agree on imposing EU sanctions against Russia, for example. "MEPs can vote on resolutions and political groups can put out calls to try and push something in a certain direction, but as such they do not have much competence on foreign policy," says Sebastien Maillard, associate fellow of the Europe programme at international affairs think-tank Chatham House. That does not mean the European Parliament is powerless on foreign policy, however. And as one arm of the EU's budgetary authority, it has a say on EU spending priorities. If the assembly sees a large shift to the right after the elections in June, calls for the EU to supply military assistance to Ukraine or humanitarian aid to Gaza could dwindle.

Political groups setting the agenda in the next European Parliament are likely to maintain their current stance on Ukraine. Since Russia launched its full-scale invasion in February 2022, Western states have backed military, financial and strategic aid for Kyiv. But with a growing number of right-wing MEPs likely to join the assembly this year, Europe's staunchly pro-Ukrainian stance may begin to falter, given that many on the right are sympathetic to Russia. National parties may also weaken their backing for Ukraine as a response to the shift in voter attitudes in the European elections; if voters opt for more pro-Russian MEPs, European leaders may be less staunch on the decision to back Ukraine. – **Agencies**  n in the Gaza Strip.

The ceasefire proposal includes a three-phase plan, an exchange of Israeli captives for Palestinian prisoners, the evacuation of Israeli forces from Gaza, and the rebuilding of the devastated coastal territory.

The proposal excludes Hamas from remaining in power, something that the group has repeatedly rejected. Hamad said the Gaza ceasefire proposal announced by the US president is open to doubt.



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