



# Islamabad POST

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**D-Day anniversary: Zelensky calls for "unity" to prevail**

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**Motaz honors with Freedom Prize Award**

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**Swiatek enters 3rd straight Paris final**

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## PM assures Chinese investors

# Pakistan taking steps to improve governance: PM

China-Pakistan friendship has no parallel and remains unshakeable, says Premier Shehbaz

DNA / CENTRELINE REPORT

BEIJING: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif Thursday reiterated his resolve to make Pakistan a great nation by following the Chinese development model through utmost hard work and a sharp focus on industrial and agricultural progress. "If we follow the Chinese model, I have no doubt, Pakistan will regain its position in the comity of nations and will be respected like our Chinese brothers are done by friends and foes [...] We will follow your model, work hard untiringly, put in our sweat and blood, and make Pakistan a great country," the prime minister said addressing the 4th Pakistan-China Friendship and Business Reception in Beijing. He told the gathering of Pakistani and Chinese business leaders that Pakistan would follow Chinese President Xi Jinping's vision to focus on progress and prosperity by avoiding conflicts and cited immense Chinese progress and projects like the Belt and Road Initiative, China-Pakistan Economic Corridor, Global Development Initiative (GDI) and the Global Security Initiative (GSI). He said the China-Pakistan friendship had no parallel, noting that it remained unshakeable and unreachable even during the storms, wars, and earthquakes. Recalling the Chinese journey of swift development to become the second biggest economic and military power under President Xi's vision, PM Shehbaz said it was achieved only through hard work and untiring efforts. "All Pakistanis will also have to pass through this thorny process. There is no other way to earn respect in the world," he remarked. He said having come into being two years after Pakistan, China took its trade to trillions of dollars while Pakistan's hovered around \$30-40 billion in terms of exports. Referring to the sad and gruesome attack by banned Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP), in which five Chinese workers were

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## Govt forms SIFC cabinet committee

FAISAL SHEIKH

ISLAMABAD: The federal government has constituted Cabinet Committee on Special Investment Facilitation Council (SIFC) to ensure implementation of recommendations within the contours of SIFC. A notification has been issued to this effect. As per the notification, the committee will submit decisions to the federal cabinet for approval. Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif will be chairman of the committee while the army chief, chief ministers and national coordinator will attend the committee meetings on special invitation. The prime minister has also formed another cabinet committee on immigration, overseas employment and technical vocational education and training. The committee will act as a central forum for all government agencies related to overseas employment and technical training and will review policies in this regard. It will also approve curriculum, monitoring and evaluation framework for vocational training institutions and will devise plans to combat illegal immigration, human trafficking and exploitation of skilled workers. The committee will also develop an action plan to engage with international partners. Earlier, Minister for Information and Broadcasting Attaullah Tarar announced

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BEIJING: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif witnesses signing of Memorandums of understanding regarding cooperation in different fields between China and Pakistan on 6 June 2024. - DNA

## Tunisian ambassador to Pakistan passes away



DNA

ISLAMABAD: Borhene El Kamel, the Tunisian ambassador to Pakistan, has passed away after a prolonged battle with a serious illness. The announcement of his death was made by his son, who shared the sad news with the diplomatic community in Islamabad. He stated, "It is with great sorrow that I announce that my father, Borhene El Kamel, Tunisian Ambassador to Pakistan, has passed away this morning in his hometown of Nabeul, Tunisia."

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## Imran tells top court

# 'Unannounced martial law imposed in country'

Lamenting SC ruling, ex-PM asks, "I did not get it, what political scoring did I resort to"

KHAYAM ABBASI

ISLAMABAD: Incarcerated Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) founder Imran Khan has complained of the "victimisation" that he faced since his ouster from power in April 2022 during the hearing of the NAB amendments case hearing in the Supreme Court. The jailed PTI founder appeared before the Supreme Court's five-member bench via video link from Rawalpindi's Adiala jail, where he has been incarcerated since his conviction in the Toshakhana case last year. The SC bench headed by Chief Justice Qazi Faez Isa and comprising Justice Aminuddin, Justice Jamal Khan Mandokhail, Justice Athar Minallah and Justice Hasan Azhar Rizvi heard the case. Presenting his arguments, Khan told the bench that unannounced "martial law" had been imposed in the country and he was convicted in a matter of five days to keep him from the general elections. He also cited an example of Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal, saying the latter was released on bail ahead of the Indian general elections to run the campaign. Khan also expressed dismay over the SC's judgment rejecting Khyber Pakhtunkhwa's government

## SC reserves verdict on NAB amendments plea

Govt submits details, pictures of Imran's Adiala Jail facilities in Supreme Court

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

ISLAMABAD: The Supreme Court Thursday reserved the verdict in the National Accountability Bureau (NAB) amendments case, providing a week's time for those involved to submit further written arguments. The verdict has been reserved on the federal and provincial governments' plea, challenging the apex court's September 15 majority 2-1 judgment, which was announced by a bench led by former chief justice Umar Ata Bandial. In 2022, the Pakistan Democratic Movement

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## Briefs

### FIA gets 2-day physical remand of Burney

US authorities also investigating social worker's involvement in child trafficking, says FIA official

DNA

KARACHI: A local court Thursday granted a two-day physical remand of Sarim Burney to the Federal Investigation Agency (FIA) on charges that the renowned rights activist was involved in human smuggling. Investigation Officer Chaudhry Bilal conducted Burney before Judicial Magistrate Khaleeq Zaman, a day after his arrest on charges of human trafficking. He requested the court to order the social worker's 14-day physical remand in police custody. The IO said that Burney's custody was required to record his statement, obtain the relevant record and arrest his co-accused.

### Gandapur to be indicted on July 5

Additional District and Sessions Judge Abdul Ghafoor Kakar conducted hearing

ADIL SHAHEEN

ISLAMABAD: A district and sessions court of Islamabad on Thursday fixed July 5 to indict Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Chief Minister Ali Amin Gandapur in the audio leak case. Additional District and Sessions Judge Abdul Ghafoor Kakar conducted hearing of the audio leak case against KP CM Gandapur. At the start of the hearing, an application was submitted to court for grant of exemption to Gandapur from attending court. The court fixed July 5 for indictment of Gandapur and his collaborator Asad Khan. The court then adjourned hearing of the case.

## May 9 riots

# Sheikh Rashid urges COAS to grant amnesty

Ex-minister says up to 90pc of people accused of various charges in May 9 cases are innocent

MEHTAB PIRZADA

ISLAMABAD: Former interior minister and Awami Muslim League chief Sheikh Rashid Ahmad appealed to Army Chief Gen Asim Munir and ISI Director General Nadeem Anjum on Thursday to grant amnesty [to those arrested in connection with the May 9 riots] on the auspicious occasion of Eidul Azha. Speaking to a group of reporters on the Islamabad sessions court premises, Rashid observed that almost 80 to 90 percent of people accused of various charges [in the May 9 cases] were innocent. The AML chief also appealed for the release of PTI women leaders Alia Hamza and Sanam Javed, expressing concern over the way they were being transferred from one jail to another, likening their treatment to that of the "queens of Jhansi". Expressing concern over the deteriorating security situation and growing inflation, Rashid lamented that even funeral processions were being targeted by robbers in Rawalpindi. Rashid accentuated

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## SBP's forex reserves see modest increase

NAZIR SIYAL

KARACHI: The State Bank of Pakistan (SBP) reported a modest increase in its foreign exchange reserves, which rose by \$16 million over the past week, reaching a total of \$9.1 billion as of May 31, according to data released on Thursday. The total liquid foreign reserves held by the country, encompassing both the SBP and commercial banks, amounted to \$14.2 billion. Of this, commercial banks held net foreign reserves of \$5.1 billion. The central bank did not provide specific reasons for the increase in its reserves. The SBP's statement read:

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With big majority vote

## Pakistan wins non-permanent seat at UNSC

Pakistan, which was unopposed, garnered 182 votes in the 193-member General Assembly - far more than the required 124 votes representing two-third majority

DNA

NEW YORK: After months of hectic campaigning, Pakistan Thursday was elected, with a massive majority, as a non-permanent member of the UN Security Council, the world body's power centre, pledging to

Continued on Page 06

# Children among 40 killed in Israeli bombing on UN school

The deadly strike, which also wounded dozens more, came on the heels of Israel's fresh air and ground aggression in central Gaza amid rising casualties

NEWS DESK

GAZA CITY: The Israeli military has killed "dozens" of people, including children, after it bombed a school-turned-shelter in the war-torn Gaza Strip. An Israeli strike targeted a UN-run school sheltering displaced people in the Nuseirat refugee camp in the center of the besieged Palestinian territory on Thursday, killing at least 40 people, including five children. According to Ismail al-Thawabta, director of the government media office in Gaza, the death toll is expected to rise due to the large number of serious and critical injuries. The deadly strike, which also wounded dozens more, came on the heels of Israel's fresh air and ground aggression in central Gaza amid rising casualties. In a statement following the school carnage, the Israeli military confirmed that its warplanes had hit a school of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees (UNRWA) in the area, claiming that the compound was a safe haven for fighters of the Palestinian resistance movement Hamas. However, al-Thawabta strongly rejected

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## Spain joins South Africa's case at ICC on Gaza

FOREIGN DESK

MADRID: After Spain recognised Palestinian statehood, Pedro Sanchez met with his Palestinian counterpart, Prime Minister Mohammad Mustafa, and leading officials from several Middle Eastern countries in Madrid. Saudi Arabian Foreign Minister Prince Faisal bin Farhan Al Saud, Qatari Prime Minister Sheikh Mohammed bin Abdulrahman Al Thani, and the foreign ministers of Turkey and Jordan were among the group that later posed for a photo on the steps of the Moncloa Palace in the Spanish capital. "On behalf of President [Mahmoud] Abbas and the government of Palestine, the people of Palestine, we warmly welcome Spain's recognition of the state of Palestine," Mustafa said of Spain's historic move.

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Invigorating Corporate Retreats

Coming Soon

HUNZA SERENA HOTEL

# CM Maryam directs to develop Murree on modern lines

CM Maryam Nawaz Sharif directed to prepare a new design of a multi storey Parking Plaza which will cater to parking capacity of more than 1500 vehicles. The tourists can visit Murree through the latest tram from the Parking Plaza

ABID RAZA

LAHORE : Chief Minister Punjab Maryam Nawaz Sharif and PML-N President Muhammad Nawaz Sharif presided over a special meeting at Punjab House Murree in which it was principally decided to rehabilitate ancient and historical buildings of Murree to their original condition. According to a handout issued here by the DGPR, the proposal to establish a 'Murree Street' on the pattern of excellent street model of the world was reviewed in the meeting. It was agreed to run the latest 'Smart Tram' and directions were issued to submit a plan within 15 days in this regard. CM Maryam Nawaz Sharif directed to prepare a new design of a multi storey Parking Plaza which will cater to parking capacity of more than 1500 vehicles. The tourists can visit Murree through the latest tram from the Parking Plaza. A 15-day timeline was set to install digital counting cameras on the entry routes of Murree. Murree Traffic Management Plan was approved in the meeting while Murree Cable Car Service will be linked to obtain

a fitness certificate after undergoing its repair and rehabilitation. The CM directed early completion of the upgradation project of Samli TB Sanatorium. Excellent toilets will be built for the tourists at various sites of Motorway including the Mall Road. She directed to build specific toilets for the differently-abled persons along with kids rest places. She directed to establish a wheel chair centre for the differently-abled persons and elders at the Mall Road. The proposal to establish an 'Entertainment Park and Clipping Pod Village' were reviewed in the meeting. It was appraised during the briefing that more than 90 percent construction and extension of 12 roads of Murree has been completed. A water supply scheme is going to be launched for the provision of clean water in Murree and in the surrounding areas from the incumbent system and River Jhelum. The participants were appraised about elimination of encroachments and crackdown being launched against illegal constructions. A principle approval was granted to provide financial aid to the injured workers during the launching of anti-encroachment

campaign. CM Maryam Nawaz Sharif said, "Anti-encroachment campaign will continue and no compromise will be made in this regard." President PML-N Muhammad Nawaz Sharif said, "Laws causing delay to cater to the welfare and need of general public need to be amended. We build the Motorway and others had been discouraging us to build it. We had set a record of development projects along with elimination of terrorism and load shedding. The Motorway being built by the Korean company did not dilapidate for 10 years and it was destroyed in the past. Those causing damage to the national assets should be held accountable." A briefing regarding district Murree development projects and the Master Plan was given in the meeting. Senior Provincial Minister Marriyum Aurangzeb, Provincial Minister for C&W Sohaib Ahmad Barth, Special Assistant Rashid Nasrullah, Chief Secretary Zahid Akhtar Zaman, Secretary C&W Sohail Ashraf, Commissioner Amir Khataq, Deputy Commissioner Zaheer Sherazi, RPO and other relevant officers attended the meeting.



ISLAMABAD: Visitors taking interest in various items displayed on the sidelines of the World Environment Day celebrated at Islamabad Serena Hotel.—DNA

## Rawalpindi E-Bus service to be functional next year

RAWALPINDI : The E-Bus service in Rawalpindi will be functional next year. The projects aims to resolve commuting issues being faced by the citizens. There will be six routes including, one from Taxila, Wah Cantt, IJ Principal Road to Octori 26, and another connecting Daultala with Rawalpindi. Maintenance work on Metrobus tracks will be carried out from June to December this year. This was disclosed by Provincial Transport Minister, Bilal Akbar Khan during a press conference here on Thursday. He informed that he was regularly paying visits to Rawalpindi on the special instructions from Chief Minister Mariam Nawaz Sharif to solve prevailing issues of transportation and traffic management in the city. He said that consultation with the members of the national and provincial assemblies was also underway in that regard. Suggestions have been taken from local MNAs and MPAs to review the routes. The minister noted that the Metrobus service was provided in the city eight to nine years ago, but the previous government did not invest a single penny on its functionality and repair. The repair work of Metrobus track will start from June and will be completed by December. The minister said successful Metrobus service has rejected the negative propaganda which was launched against PML-N for building metrobus, he said adding that millions of citizens travel by metro bus at present. Without Metrobus, the road conditions would have been worsened, he added. While highlighting the key development initiatives by the Punjab government, the minister said chief minister added 32 new field hospitals in the health care system in 100 days, including delivery dispensary pharmacies where 35 thousand people approximately are receiving free treatment on daily basis. Moreover stern actions are being taken against complaints of harassment of women. In the E-bikes project, 20 thousand students will be given motorbikes without interest, on two years installments. All 7500 female applicants will be provided e-bikes. He informed that almost all government institutions of the province have been digitized. The files of the certificated vehicles will be delivered at the doorstep under Dastak project. A fee of Rs.900 has been fixed, out of which 100 rupees will be charged as a token fee by the Government of Punjab.—DNA

## PUC chairman urges pilgrims to avoid political activities

Ashrafi specifically advised pilgrims to avoid carrying political flags, banners, or pictures, and to steer clear of political gatherings or communal debates

LAHORE :Pakistan Ulama Council (PUC) Chairman, Hafiz Muhammad Tahir Mehmood Ashrafi on Thursday underscored the importance of maintaining the sanctity of Hajj as a purely religious duty. Speaking alongside prominent Ulama and Mashaykh, and Hajj Organisers Association of Pakistan (HOAP) Punjab Zone Chairman Saeed Malik here at a press conference, he urged pilgrims to refrain from engaging in political and sectarian activities during their pilgrimage to Saudi Arabia. Ashrafi specifically advised pilgrims to avoid carrying political flags, banners, or pictures, and to steer clear of political gatherings or communal debates. He emphasised that adherence to Saudi

laws and regulations was crucial for a successful and respectful pilgrimage. Highlighting the scale of this year's pilgrimage, Ashrafi mentioned that between 68,000 government-sponsored pilgrims and an additional 90,000 private pilgrims were expected to perform Hajj. He noted that all operations related to Hajj would be completed by June 12. Addressing economic issues, Ashrafi praised the efforts of Army Chief General Syed Asim Munir and local traders, which resulted in the stabilisation of the dollar, bringing it down from 332 to 287. Ashrafi also reminded prospective pilgrims that performing Hajj requires official permission. Those intending to perform Umrah or holding an Iqama must secure the necessary approvals

to participate in Hajj, he added. He expressed gratitude to the Saudi government for their exceptional Hajj arrangements, specifically thanking Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman and the Saudi Ambassador to Pakistan, Nawaf bin Said Al-Malki, for the 'Route to Makkah' programme. Concluding his remarks, Ashrafi addressed an unfortunate incident involving Pakistani beggars in Haram, calling it a source of national shame and urging better conduct from all pilgrims. Other notables at the press conference included Maulana Muhammad Aslam Siddiqui, Maulana Qari Abdul Hakeem Athar, Mufti Naseem Islam, Maulana Qari Mubasher Rahimi, and Qari Faisal Amin.

## SCCI suggests no new tax on business community for success of TDS

SHAMIM SHAHID

PESHAWAR : President, Sarhad Chamber of Commerce and Industry (SCCI) Fuad Ishaq on Thursday urged the government that there should be no any new tax on the business community after implementing the TDS for its success. Speaking to members of the business community during the visit of Chief Commissioner, Regional Tax Office Peshawar Zafar Iqbal here, he suggested that scheme should be approved by Parliament of Pakistan for next 20 year,

along with a guarantee that there would be no impose new tax on business community after implementation of the scheme. The SCCI chief demanded further reform initiatives to simplify the taxation system and bring the tax rate to single digit. Besides, elimination of double taxation, traders should be facilitated under one-window operation, he stressed. He also called for promoting close liaison and coordination between chambers, business community and tax-collection authorities to take joint measures for amicable resolution of the traders' issues. Fuad Ishaq was speaking to members of the

business community during the visit of Chief Commissioner, Regional Tax Office Peshawar Zafar Iqbal here. Chief Coordinator Tajir Dost Scheme, Naem Mir, Commissioner RTO Peshawar Dr Syed Ferooz Jamil, Additional Commissioner Aisha Dilshad, DC Headquarters Riaz Ahmad Khan were accompanied by the Chief Commissioner RTO Peshawar. The meeting was also attended by SCII Vice president Ejaz Khan Afridi, former presidents Haji Muhammad Afzal, Zahidullah Shinwari, Sherbaz Bilour, former senior vice presidents Ziaul Haq Sarhadi.

## Elevate raises \$5 million for US-based \$ accounts

Elevate simplifies receiving USD payments by supporting free and fast deposits from US and international employers as well as platforms like Upwork, Fiverr, Paypal, Deel and Toptal

NAZIR SIYAL

KARACHI : Elevate, a fintech, based in London and Dubai, has secured financing of \$5 million to expand further into South Asia. They've raised a total of \$10 million in equity and debt from investors including Y Combinator, Goodwater, Global Founders Capital and VSQ and since launching earlier this year, over 50,000 Freelancers and remote workers from Pakistan and more than 150,000 have signed up in total.

Having received unpre-

cedented response from Pakistani freelancers in a very short span of time, Elevate is looking at registering over 500,000 Pakistani freelancers and remote workers facilitating them to increase their business share in the USA as well as other developed markets. Elevate simplifies receiving USD payments by supporting free and fast deposits from US and international employers as well as platforms like Upwork, Fiverr, Paypal, Deel and Toptal. Online spending is enabled through a virtual debit card and for sending money home Elevate offers market

leading FX rates. When customers receive payments into their Elevate accounts the funds sit with Bangor Savings Bank, a 172-year-old bank located in Maine, United States. Bangor Savings Bank acts as the depository taking institution and card issuer, and because they are an FDIC-member, customer deposits are FDIC-insured up to \$250,000. This makes it the only service available for people in countries like Pakistan, Bangladesh, and Philippines to open an FDIC-insured U.S. bank account. Khalid Keenan, CEO of Elevate said that

"Freelancing and remote work is going to be a key source of foreign income for emerging markets. Platforms like Upwork, Fiverr and Deel have empowered talent from countries like Pakistan to compete on a global scale and earn in USD". Existing platforms like Payoneer have not serviced the region well with excessively high fees. Our mission at Elevate is for freelancers and remote workers to quickly and easily get paid at minimal cost so they keep as much of their hard-earned earnings as possible, Khalid added.

## Visit of Ambassadors of Central Asian States to RCCI

RAWALPINDI: The ambassadors from Central Asian States visited the Rawalpindi Chamber of Commerce and Industry (RCCI) and had an interactive session with RCCI leadership and representatives from the business community. The esteemed ambassadors included H.E. Mr. Atadjan Moylamov, Ambassador of Turkmenistan, H.E. Mr. Ulanbek Totuaev Ambassador of Krgyzstan, H.E. Mr. Yerzhan Kistafin, and Ambassador of the Republic of Kazakhstan, H.E. Mr. Khazar Farhadov and Ambassador of the Republic of Azerbaijan. President of the Rawalpindi Chamber of Commerce and Industry (RCCI), Saqib Rafiq along with Group Leader Mr. Sohail Altaf extended a warm welcome to the ambassadors of Central Asian countries during an interactive session held at RCCI.—DNA

## OGRA organizes successful seminar on LNG in Pakistan

ISLAMABAD : The Oil and Gas Regulatory Authority (OGRA) successfully hosted an insightful seminar titled "Navigating the Future of LNG in Pakistan," bringing together key stakeholders, policymakers, and industry leaders from the LNG sector. The seminar aimed at knowledge sharing and unlocking the potential of LNG in Pakistan, especially in the context of depleting indigenous natural gas reserves. The historical significance of natural gas in Pakistan's energy mix and the benefits of LNG as a cleaner alternative with a lower carbon footprint, reducing SOx and NOx, were central themes. The Chairman of OGRA, Masroor Khan, welcomed all guests, particularly those from the industry. He assured attendees of OGRA's robust regulatory framework designed to support the LNG industry while respecting individual rights and protecting consumers. (Oil), Zain-ul-Abideen Qureshi, in his opening address, underscored the vast opportunities for new LNG project developers and highlighted the critical role of existing terminal operators in enhancing Pakistan's energy infrastructure. He reaffirmed OGRA's commitment to fostering a supportive regulatory environment to attract investment and drive innovation in the LNG sector. Presentations during the seminar covered a wide range of crucial topics. These included the development of new Floating Storage Regasification Units (FSRUs), expansion plans for existing terminals, and the strategic importance of LNG in ensuring Pakistan's energy security and economic growth. Speakers delved into policy frameworks, regulatory incentives, and technological advancements essential for strengthening LNG infrastructure. Participants lauded the seminar as a valuable platform for networking, knowledge exchange, and collaboration. The discussions highlighted the importance of public-private partnerships in achieving the ambitious goals set for Pakistan's LNG sector. The successful seminar concluded with a collective commitment from all stakeholders to work towards a sustainable and prosperous future for LNG in Pakistan. OGRA reaffirmed its dedication to supporting the industry's growth, ensuring a reliable and efficient energy supply for the nation.—DNA

## ILO empowers journalists to combat forced labour

ILO Country Director, Geir T. Tonstol emphasised the crucial role of media in raising public awareness about forced labour and promoting fair recruitment practices


ADIL SHAHEEN

ISLAMABAD : The International Labour Organisation (ILO), in collaboration with the US Department of Labour (USDOL), held a comprehensive training workshop to enhance the capacity of journalists. The workshop was held at the ILO office here under the auspices of the BRIDGE project, an initiative focused on eliminating forced labour and promoting fair labour practices. The two-day workshop brought together a diverse group of 25 journalists representing print, electronic, radio, and digital media platforms. National project coordinator at ILO, Dr Faisal Iqbal and renowned journalist Aoun Sahi jointly led the training workshop. Dr Faisal Iqbal emphasised the significance of media in addressing the pressing issues of forced labour

and fair recruitment. He explained the 11 indicators recognised by the ILO globally to identify forced labour, including abuse of authority, deception, movement, isolation, physical and sexual violence, intimidation and threats, and retention of identity thefts. "Globally, 28 million people were trapped in forced labour," said Dr Iqbal. "Forced labour is a criminal offence and a serious violation of fundamental human rights." He also highlighted the importance of social protection measures by the government to combat forced labour effectively. Aoun Sahi provided journalists with extensive training on forced labour, labour migration, on the role of media, story identification and pitching, finding relevant data and information, gender-sensitive and rights-based approaches and effective storytelling techniques

for different media platforms. He also discussed the importance of humanizing the story of forced labour and fair recruitment and interviewing survivors in light of ethical considerations. "Reporting on these subjects must be conducted with clarity and thorough research, and voices from all players must be included in the story," Sahi stressed. Aoun Sahi also shared insights from an ILO report "Profits and poverty: The economics of forced labour" issued in March 2024, revealing that the annual costs and profits of forced labour globally amount to a staggering \$236 billion. He further highlighted that 3.5 out of every thousand individuals worldwide are involved in forced labour, with industries, services, and agriculture being the top three sectors affected, according to the report. Earlier, the ILO Country

Director, Geir T. Tonstol in his opening remarks emphasised the crucial role of media in raising public awareness about forced labour and promoting fair recruitment practices. "Media can be key influencers in shaping public perceptions about forced labour and labour migration," he said. He expressed concern over the prevalence of forced labour and bonded labour in Pakistan, with an estimated 3.4 million individuals subjected to such conditions. Tonstol also briefed the journalists on the four goals of ILO in Pakistan, which include employment for youth, social protection, international labour standards, and occupational safety and health. The workshop concluded with participants showing keen interest and actively engaging in discussions, group work, and practical exercises throughout the two days.



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## National Days and Armed Forces Days

### JUNE

June 02/Itlay National/Independence Day

June 04/Finland Armed Forces Day

June 06/Sweden National Day

June 10/Portugal Portugal Day (National Day)

June 10/Jordan Arab Revolution & Army Day

June 11/United Kingdom Birthday of Her Majesty The Queen Elizabeth

June 12/Philippines Independence Day

June 12/Russian Federation

Day of Sovereignty of the Russian Federation (National Day)

June 13/Zambia Armed Forces day

June 17/Iceland National Day

June 18/Seychells National Day

June 25/Croatia National Day

June 25/Mozambique National Day

June 26/Azerbaijan Army Day

## Hotels & Restaurants

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



## Airlines

Turkish Airlines.....8494949



## Emergency

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



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CAA.....9281092



## Hospitals

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



## Departments

CDA.....9221334-43  
CDA.....9208301-04  
Met Office.....9250360-6  
RDA.....5558664  
TMA.....5770886  
Cantonment Board 9270151-3

## Islamabad Metropolitan

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

## Water Tank

Islamabad.....0321-5744480

# Japan provides grant-aid for HRD scholarships

JDS is designed to support the social and economic development of the country by providing government officials with the opportunity to obtain Master's or Doctoral degree in Japan with aims to enhance their knowledge in public administration and to strengthen relationship between Japan and Pakistan

MAHNOOR ANSAR

ISLAMABAD: The Government of Japan today announced grant aid worth 326 million Japanese Yen (around 2.08 million USD) for the Human Resource Development Scholarship (JDS) program in the Islamic Republic of Pakistan. Mr. Mitsuhiro WADA, Ambassador of Japan to the Islamic Republic of Pakistan, and Dr. Kazim Niaz, Secretary of Ministry of Economic Affairs, signed the Exchange of Notes (E/N) on this program at the ceremony on Thursday. The Grant Agreement (G/A) for the aforementioned program was also signed between Mr. Saeed Ashraf Siddiqi, Joint Secretary of Ministry of Economic Affairs and Mr. MIYATA Naoaki, Chief Representative of Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) Pakistan Office. JDS is designed to support the social and economic development of the country by providing government officials with the opportunity to obtain Master's or Doctoral degree in Japan with aims to enhance their knowledge in public administration and to strengthen relationship between Japan and Pakistan. The participants of JDS program engaging in the formulation and implementation of such policies will be enrolled at the partner universities in Japan and are expected to acquire further knowl-



edge in their field while learning about the Japanese culture and traditions. Since 2018 when JDS was launched in Pakistan, 50 government officials have successfully completed their degrees while 33 are currently pursuing their academic goals in Japan. Further, 17 officials will be dispatched to Japan in the middle of the year 2024. This occasion celebrates

the signing of the seventh batch of this program in Pakistan. For this batch, the maximum number of the slots for JDS participants in Pakistan is 17 seats for the Master's degree and one seat for the Doctoral degree. Mr. WADA highlighted that "This project supports 'People First', the first pillar of the Pakistan Vision 2025, which places developing social

and human capital at the center of sustainable development in the country. The Government of Japan fully understands the importance of social and human capital development in public administration that can effectively address the multi-dimensional development challenges in this country." Mr. MIYATA while speaking at the event said "Since the very begin-

ning of Japan ODA, which is 70th anniversary in this year, training program has been delivered and from Pakistan, around 7,000 officials participated to the training. We desire that all JDS fellows together with those ex-trainees contribute to the development of Pakistan and improve the relationship between Pakistan and Japan into the future.

## Indonesian embassy officials in visit SCCI

DNA

ISLAMABAD: The Sialkot Chamber of Commerce and Industry (SCCI) extended a warm welcome to Chargé D'affaires Rahmat Hindiartha Kusuma and First Secretary of Political Affairs Ferry J. Mudiaryah from the Indonesian Embassy in Pakistan. Their visit was aimed to bolster engagement with the Sialkot business community and explore avenues for enhanced trade collaboration between Pakistan and Indonesia. In his welcome address, Senior Vice President (SVP) SCCI Wahub Jahangir underscored the longstanding historical and cultural ties between the two nations. He emphasised the importance of forging connections between the Indonesian private sector and Sialkot's businessmen, noting the potential for Indonesian companies to procure high-quality Pakistani products, particularly in sectors such as surgical instruments, work-wear, gloves, sports goods, and sports apparel, which enjoy high demand within Indonesia. Jahangir further highlighted the mutual interest of both governments in strengthening relations and maximising their economic synergy. He pointed out the significant progress in bilateral relations between Pakistan and Indonesia in 2023, particularly focusing on economic cooperation through government-to-government dialogues.

## ICCI marks 'World Environment Day'

MEHTAB PIRZADA

ISLAMABAD: Member National Assembly Dr. Tariq Fazal Chaudhry has said that climate change is a global phenomenon and Pakistan is also one of the victims of it, therefore, we have to deal with it effectively by learning from good practices and examples from around the world, as well as by planting more trees and improving green character of our cities. He said this while addressing a ceremony organized by Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry in connection with the World

Environment Day, under the them, 'Land restoration, desertification and drought resilience' under the slogan 'Our land. Our future, with large scale attendance by academia, students of different Universities of Islamabad as well as the business leaders. He said that we have to take practical steps by formulating environment friendly policies and action plans to maximally mitigate its negative impacts and that government-private sector collaboration can play a vital role in creating awareness among the masses over the issue. Dr. Tariq Fazal Chaudhry said that Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry always remains in

forefront in taking initiatives on such important issues and that very soon, he himself will arrange a ceremony on the subject in collaboration with the Climate Change Ministry in which all the stakeholders will be invited including the business community leaders to chalk out a worthwhile road map to tackle the issue. President Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry, Ahsan Zafar Bakhtawari said that we all are well aware of the fact that global warming, greenhouse gases and carbon footprint are posing serious challenges to the ecosystem and Pakistan despite its less than 1pc share in Green House Gases.

## Electricity supply to Park Enclave ordered

ISLAMABAD: Chairman Capital Development Authority (CDA), Muhammad Ali Randhawa Thursday ordered for immediate supply of electricity to Park Enclave Phases II and III. He directed the establishment of a separate grid station for Park Enclave to guarantee an uninterrupted power supply. The Chairman directed the Member Finance and Member Engineering of CDA to promptly contact officials from the Islamabad Electric Supply Company (IESCO). Muhammad Ali said the final date for submitting dues for Park Enclave Phase I has been set as June 30. --APP

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## Energy crisis in Pakistan, causes and remedies

GHAZALA ANBREEN

For Pakistan's growth energy sector is very important. In Pakistan 75 percent energy comes from fossil fuels at present. Pakistan's energy mix indicates that natural gas is largely used for electricity production in Pakistan and has a share of 35 percent. Next comes hydroelectric power. Approximately 26 percent of electricity is produced from water and then there is about 17 percent use of coal. Renewable sources have a very minimal share. We must not forget the fact that Pakistan is blessed with immense renewable energy resources like sun, wind and tidal power. Studies suggest that 1000 Megawatt energy can be produced through Tar Coal reserves. Although there are impurities, yet it has a great potential to mitigate the energy crisis to a considerable extent for many years. It would be important to note that a large amount of electricity can be generated through tidal and wind energy sources.

We have to understand modern day energy economics in term of energy generation to supply and to consumption. The environmental factor should also be considered alongside. Also it is necessary to understand what is the issue with Pakistan's energy crisis? Financial crisis in the power sector has created the circular debt amounting to 5.5 trillion Rupees as reported by World Bank in a recent study. Circular debt in the power sector is actually the power sector deficit in which a situation ensues upon when the money owed by the electricity distribution companies to the distribu-

tor (power supplier) is not transferred or partially transferred. Its effects are very detrimental to the economy. The results of this increasing circular debt in the power sector are alarming. Power outages and high tariffs are some of the examples. The government is forced to borrow from the commercial banks to meet this power deficit and a huge share of the budget is shared to finance the power sector deficit, which leads to neglecting the other development expenditures consequently. The causes responsible for energy crisis are multiple. There is high generation cost from thermal sources and an unfavorable dollar to rupee parity. There are technical and management problems and governance issues. The way the power is distributed is obsolete. The equipment is outdated at most places. Transmission lines are not upgraded with the passage of time. Old technology is used in generation and distribution of electricity. Infrastructure is aging and line losses are also there.

In 1994 an IPP policy was promulgated to encourage the investor in power sector. It gave inequities to the investors in terms of dollars. IPPs operate independently and sell the electricity to the end user or distribution companies (DISCOs). Last year according to an ADB report inefficiencies of DISCOs were largely responsible for energy crisis in Pakistan. Mainly 31 percent of the burden was because of inefficient DISCOs and 35 percent was because of inability of the government to collect increase in tariffs. There were delayed tariff adjustments in terms of fuel prices. On Technical side there are problems as for instance

the issue of raising power capacity is not being addressed properly. Tackling the energy crisis should be the top priority. For this purpose a transition to sustainable sources from short term to long term is desperately required. There is a monopoly of distribution companies. Their efficiency should be increased. Renegotiation of tariff packages can also be done. I believe that a gradual shift to renewable energy should be adopted. However, here mention may be made of the suggestion proposed by an energy expert, who said that, "In my opinion currently Pakistan has round 46,000 MWh of total energy production with peak demand of only 29,000 MWh. The transmission network capacity is at around 22,000 MWh so we are unable to use not even 29k MWh of energy of the total 46k MWh. This also results in a power shortage of 7,000 MWh in summer. So we may increase our transmission capacity to utilize that installed capacity which is enough to cater for increase in electricity consumption for the next 10 years. It will result in cheaper electricity in the long run. And then we can think about going solar gradually in the coming decades". The authorities must control the power theft issues, manage the line losses and adopt on grid solution like increasing power generation and reducing transmission and distribution losses. Some international oil and gas companies expressed interest in purchasing abandoned gas wells in Pakistan which signifies that there are potential shale reserves in our country. Shale gas, a

form of natural gas can be used as an energy source. Hydraulic fracture technology for shale gas also known as (fracking) can be a technique for this purpose. Structural adjustments in economy are required. Power sector needs swift policy reforms. Instead of importing furnace oil the government can rely on autochthonous renewable energy sources. A strict financial strategy oriented towards punishing the defaulters who do not pay the bills for more than two months can be implemented. Another way of penalizing the culprits is that load shedding can be centered more in areas of high theft. Innovative policy solutions are required to deal with the issue of meeting the power theft or non payment of electricity bills. For curbing power theft and dismantling illegal kunda (direct hooking), installing kunda resistant cables can be encouraged. This does not allow to draw electricity from power supply cables and may lead to stop electric theft. As regards the addressing the question of how to socially contextualize energy problems, transition of administrative and operational activities of the distribution companies can also be a way out. Efficiency can be increased through public private partnerships and liberalization of energy market.

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## Briefs

## Artist Jimmy and Education ministry sign MoU

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan National Council of the Arts, organized an event at Gallery No. 1, where an agreement was signed between Pakistan's renowned artist Jimmy Engineer and the Federal Education Ministry. The agreement aims to provide educational institutions access to Jimmy Engineer's artistic works. Secretary Education Mohiuddin Ahmed Wani participated in the ceremony.

A large number of students from the educational institutions of Islamabad participated in the event. Speaking at the event, Jimmy Engineer said, "My aim is to serve Pakistan. I want the new generation to benefit from my writing and painting." Secretary Education Mohiuddin Ahmed Wani praised Jimmy, stating, "Jimmy is a great artist; his paintings are famous all over the world.

By granting copyrights to educational institutions, students will benefit from Jimmy's expertise." On this occasion, DG.PNCA Mohammad Ayub Jamali acknowledged Jimmy's efforts, stating, "Jimmy's efforts have always been for the welfare of Pakistan and its people. He has represented Pakistan in the world of art." Appreciating the copyright initiative, DG.PNCA added, "This initiative will create interest in art among students and help them to become new artists." The event was attended by a large number of students, who expressed their gratitude and happiness to Jimmy Engineer through applause.

## NIH issues advisory on Cholera

ISLAMABAD: National Institute of Health (NIH) has issued an advisory for the prevention and control of Acute Watery Diarrhea (Cholera). The Center for Diseases Control (CDC), National Institutes of Health (NIH) Islamabad issued this advisory urging healthcare providers and the public to be vigilant in preventing and controlling the spread of Acute Watery Diarrhea (cholera). Cholera is an acute diarrheal illness caused by infection of the intestine due to bacterium *Vibrio cholerae*. Pakistan like other Asian countries is endemic to cholera with cases being reported from different parts of the country. Poor personal hygiene and lack of safe drinking water provide more favorable conditions for the pathogen to cause outbreak in the vulnerable areas. Although the disease may present throughout the year but peak of cases may be observed from May to November, in hot, humid and rainy season. The NIH emphasized the individual preventive measures including washing hands frequently with soap and water, especially after using the toilet, changing diapers, and before preparing or eating food. The NIH also advised to drink only safe water (boiled, chlorinated, or bottled).—APP

## Charter of Prosperity is need of hour: Governor KPK

In budget steps must be taken to reduce the cost of production and for ease of doing business: Atif Ikram

FAISAL SHEIKH

ISLAMABAD: Governor Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Faisal Karim Kundi visited Federation of Pakistan Chamber of Commerce and Industry (FPCCI). While talking to the President FPCCI Atif Ikram Sheikh and other people from the business community, he said that Charter of Prosperity has been done, now there should be Charter of Prosperity. We have to pay a lot of attention to agriculture and industry. We are doing bad for agriculture. Then we say that societies are being constructed. Now Fata Pata is over. They are part of KPK. I will resolve the electricity related problems of Hattar Industrial Estate on priority basis. To overcome the current economic crisis, industry and agriculture will have to be facilitated by providing cheap electricity. Faisal Karim Kundi said that KPK is the most beautiful province of Pakistan, from KPK and Gilgit-Baltistan tourism can earn foreign exchange. The doors of the Governor House are open for the business community. The



business community should jointly develop an action plan to attract foreign tourists by developing the province's tourism destinations. Federation President Atif Ikram Sheikh said on this occasion that the government should

take measures on emergency basis for the restoration of businesses and industries. The business community is paying taxes but now steps should be taken to increase the tax base and avoid imposing more taxes on the taxpayers. The

highest cost of production in the region is in Pakistan, we cannot compete with anyone, we have to take measures to reduce the cost of production and ease of doing business to increase exports. President FPCCI Atif Ikram said that

Ahmed Waheed, Chairman Coordination Malik Sohail Hussain, Muzamil Saleem, Coordinator Administration and Police Committee Yahya Sheikh, Dr. Afshan Malik and others were present in the ceremony.

## Pakistani engineers participate in Craftsman Cup 2024

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Two professionals working at Sahiwal Power Plant have participated in the prestigious "Huaneng Craftsman Cup 2024" event held in China that records another milestone of success for Pakistani engineers. According to the details, Fahad Ahmed and Sohail Abbas, from the 2x660MW Sahiwal Power Plant were invited by the Huaneng Group Co. Ltd as it was the first time that international contestants were invited to participate, said a press release. It was told by the management that the presence of Fahad and Sohail at this event drew considerable attention to Sahiwal Power Plant, highlighting the participants' technical prowess

and earning admiration from all attendees. Their participation is a testament to the decade-long collaboration between China and Pakistan, which has paved the way for Pakistani engineers to compete alongside their Chinese counterparts. This achievement underscores the technical abilities of Pakistani engineers and strengthens the bonds of friendship and cooperation between the two nations. By promoting and enhancing the skills of its engineers, Huaneng Shandong Ruyi (Pakistan) Energy (Private) Limited (HSRE), the owner of Sahiwal Power Plant, is paving the way for a brighter future. This initiative not only promotes localization management but also exemplifies the fruitful collaboration between China and Pakistan, fostering a spirit of

mutual growth and development. The details also included that the latest batch of students from Huaneng Pakistan Vocational & Technical College successfully completed their vocational training programs. These programs have equipped local youth with practical employment skills in areas such as computer applications, electrical technician skills, and welding. "I am very happy to have had the opportunity to participate in the training course at Sahiwal Power Plant. Not only have I learned valuable skills, but I have also formed friendships with like-minded people and broadened my horizons," said Aqil, a recent graduate of the program. The completion of Sahiwal Power Plant in 2017 has significantly promoted Pakistan's economy.

## IRSA releases 302,900 cusecs water

ISLAMABAD: The Indus River System Authority (IRSA) on Thursday released 302,900 cusecs water from various rim stations with inflow of 299,500 cusecs. According to the data released by IRSA, the water level in River Indus at Tarbela Dam was 1463.50 feet and was 65.50 feet higher than its dead level of 1,398 feet. The water inflow and outflow in the dam was recorded as 111,600 cusecs and 115,000 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 55,000 cusecs each. The release of water at Kalabagh, Taunsa, Guddu and Sukkur was recorded as 184,300, 147,600, 124,300 and 84,100 cusecs respectively. Similarly, from River Kabul, a total of 88,600 cusecs of water released at Nowshera.—APP

## MoU inked between China and Pakistan

ISLAMABAD: A Memorandum of Understanding was signed for the development of sustainable and commercially viable aquaculture projects in Gwadar, China Economic Net (CEN) on Thursday. The MoU, signed between China Overseas Ports Holding Company, Guangdong HaiWei Aquaculture Group, Gwadar Seafood Company, and HKH-CAS Pvt. Ltd, at a B2B matchmaking session of the "Pakistan China Business Conference" inaugurated by PM Shehbaz Sharif in Shenzhen. It was aimed at to leverage the technological expertise, resources, and industry experience of the Chinese companies and the local knowledge and community connections of the Pakistani counterparts to support the growth of the aquaculture sector in Gwadar. For this purpose, advanced aquaculture technologies, including hatchery management, farming techniques, and processing capabilities, are expected to be transferred from China based on feasibility assessments and site selection for aquaculture projects in Gwadar. Contracting companies told CEN that investment will be made for the development of integrated aquaculture facilities and local personnel shall be trained in modern aquaculture practices. While the aquatic sector contributes greatly to the livelihood of coastal residents in Pakistan, a lack of advanced facilities and knowledge support has been hindering them from fully leveraging this promising industry, which currently accounts for only less than one percent of GDP but has the potential to play a much bigger role in the national economy. Apart from establishing sustainable and environmentally responsible aquaculture operations, the facilitation of market access and distribution channels for aquaculture products is also part of this joint endeavor. Out of Pakistan's total fishery exports, 60 percent are destined for China. Last year, China's import of seafood from Pakistan surged by 13%, offering Pakistani exporters a vast market. Under the China-Pakistan Free Trade Agreement, an increasing number of Pakistani aquatic product exporters enjoy zero tariffs. Through technology transfer, knowledge sharing, and facilities investment, the aquaculture collaboration in the pipeline is expected to reduce local fishermen's reliance on captured fish, which face constraints of primitive tools, uncertain weather, and absence of freezing equipment, and add value to the local industry through deep processing infrastructure.—DNA

## ANF recovers 373 kg drugs in seven operations

DNA

RAWALPINDI: Anti-Narcotics Force (ANF) while conducting seven operations across the country managed to recover 373 kg drugs and arrested 15 accused, said an ANF Headquarters spokesman here on Thursday. He informed that 117 kg hashish and 36 kg opium were recovered from three suspects arrested near M-1, Attock. 121.2 kg hashish and 26.4 kg opium were recovered from five accused netted in Faisalabad. In two operations near M-1 Islamabad, 31.2 kg hashish was recovered from five suspects. 18 kg ice was recovered from Panjgur and 15 kg hashish was recovered from an accused rounded up near Super Highway Karachi. 7.2 kg hashish and 1 kg ice were recovered from the possession of an accused arrested in Dera Ismail Khan. Cases under the Anti-Narcotics Act have been registered against the arrested accused and further investigations are under process.



Rawalpindi. Haji Chaudhry Muhammad Naeem CEO Savour Foods, Rawalpindi addressing in a awareness seminar on the occasion of International Environment Day on 5th June 2024 organized by Rawalpindi Restaurants Caters Sweets and Bakers Association.—DNA

## Summer camps: A call for adherence to govt orders

SABAHAT ALI



As temperatures reach unprecedented highs, educational institutions are closing for extended summer holidays, a crucial measure to safeguard the health and well-being of students and staff. However, many schools are increasingly organizing summer camps during these periods, raising concerns about compliance

with government directives aimed at protecting public health. This article addresses critical points for higher education authorities, urging a reassessment of current practices and policies.

\*The Health Imperative Health Risks: Extreme heat poses severe health risks, including dehydration, heat exhaustion, and heat stroke. Children are particularly vulnerable, and exposing them to these conditions contradicts the rationale behind summer holidays. Government Directives: Government orders to close schools during the hottest months are based on public health guidelines and expert advice. These directives aim to prevent health crises among children, a priority that should not be undermined by financial motives. The Role of Higher Education Authorities Policy Enforcement: Higher education authorities must ensure that schools adhere strictly to government orders. This includes prohibiting any form of organized activity,

such as summer camps, that could expose students to dangerous heat conditions. Monitoring and Accountability: Regular monitoring and strict enforcement mechanisms should be implemented. Schools found violating the closure orders should face appropriate penalties to deter non-compliance. \*Ethical Considerations, Equity and Access: The commercialization of education through summer camps can exacerbate inequalities. Affluent families can afford these programs, while less privileged students miss out, widening the socio-economic gap in educational opportunities. Commercial vs. Educational Interests: Schools should prioritize the health and safety of their students over financial gains. The primary mission of educational institutions is to foster safe and conducive learning environments, a mandate that extends to adhering to public health guidelines. \*Practical Solutions Alternative Engagement\* Authorities should encourage schools to offer alternative

engagement methods that do not require physical presence. Online enrichment programs can provide valuable learning opportunities without the associated health risks of physical camps. Community Collaboration: Schools can collaborate with community organizations to provide safe and cool spaces for children whose parents need childcare. These collaborations can ensure that children are not left unsupervised while also adhering to government health directives. In light of severe heat conditions and government orders to close schools during summer, it is imperative that higher education authorities enforce strict compliance. Schools should be closed for all kinds of activities to protect the health and safety of students. By prioritizing public health over financial incentives, and exploring alternative engagement methods, schools can continue to fulfill their educational mission while adhering to essential safety guidelines.

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## Expanded Brics in changing world

On June 10 and 11, Brics foreign ministers will gather in the Russian city of Nizhny Novgorod for an annual meeting. This event is hosted by Russia, which in January assumed chairmanship of the grouping, with over 250 events scheduled. Since the beginning of the year, Brics has included five new countries: Egypt, Ethiopia, Iran, Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates, which have joined Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa. This showcases the rising international profile of the format. The expanded group will undoubtedly play a more prominent role in global affairs and allow the voice of the developing world to be heard loud and clear. Nizhny Novgorod will also welcome at the event the foreign ministers of several Global South and Eastern states, as well as countries chairing regional cooperation forums invited for a separate session under Brics auspices. Tectonic shifts are leading to the emergence of a more just multipolar world order. The unipolar model, which for centuries served the interests of the so-called "collective West" and fuelled their excessive consumption at the expense of other nations, is receding. New centres of power are rising in Asia, Latin America, Africa and the Middle East that strive to see their countries independent and self-reliant while exercising the sovereign right to choose their development path. Countries in the West are doing everything to preserve their domination, including imposing self-invented "rules" for the rest of the world to follow, creating divides in the logic of a bloc-based confrontation. Brics' combined gross domestic product in purchasing power parity terms amounts to about one-third of world GDP, exceeding that of the Group of Seven, and will increase further. The collective share of member states in the global economy is US\$58.9 trillion. Brics nations account for 36 per cent of the Earth's land mass, 45 per cent of the world's population, over 40 per cent of oil production, significant volumes of other resources' production, and about a quarter of the world's exports. As Brics chair, Russia seeks to ensure continuity by carrying on the efforts of its predecessor, South Africa, and other partners to promote cooperation in three key areas: politics and security, economy and finance, and cultural and humanitarian contact. No explanation as China's Xi Jinping unexpectedly skips speech at Brics business forum. We are taking steps to preserve Brics traditions and guarantee the integration of new participants. There are about 30 countries wanting to join the Brics family, so we are elaborating on the modalities of a new Brics partner country category and actively using outreach and the Brics-plus dialogue mechanism to interact with non-Brics partners. Brics members are strengthening coordination on key global issues, including in multilateral forums like the United Nations, G20 and World Trade Organization. Cooperation on anti-terrorism, anti-corruption, anti-drug trafficking and international information security is also being enhanced. The implementation of the Strategy for Brics Economic Partnership 2025 is being advanced by reinforcing supply chains, developing the digital economy, supporting small and medium-sized businesses, stimulating tourist flows and cooperating in transport and logistics, etc.



## What Zionist entity is headed toward

Israeli Prime Minister, Benjamin Netanyahu, has set the invasion of Rafah as the route to a comprehensive victory against the Palestinian Resistance in Gaza. This is a lie, and the Zionist regime will not achieve its war goals, so what comes next when the Israeli public is faced with the truth? The Zionist entity launched its genocidal military campaign against the Gaza Strip, claiming that it sought to both dismantle Hamas and retrieve its captives by force. Neither was achieved in around 8 months of confrontations, despite having inflicted massive death and destruction on a scale that hasn't been seen since the Vietnam War. Before the Israelis launched their ground incursion into the Gaza Strip, the line of propaganda was to pretend as if their unprecedented bombing campaign was going to dismantle the Palestinian Resistance's complex web of tunnels underneath the besieged coastal territory. We heard about all the various munitions that were supposedly going to penetrate the tunnel systems and destroy the majority of them, prior to any face-to-face fighting. When "Israel" did invade the Gaza Strip, it soon became clear that they were not even trying to penetrate the majority of the tunnels, despite their propaganda. The Zionist army came in on the ground, choosing to set up positions in open areas, before packing their soldiers in armored personnel carriers, tanks, and militarized bulldozers, refraining from using infantry to clear areas prior to penetrating them. They were subsequently met with tough resistance from the Palestinian armed factions. As for the tunnels and the attempts to recapture their captives, the rescue missions were all foiled, and the Israelis seemed to only be sealing off tunnel entrances they found, instead of sending forces underground to fight face-to-face. All this was going on as their leadership claimed that the "Hamas headquarters" was situated under the Al-Shifa Hospital, for which they released a CGI video depicting a multi-layered tunnel system. After finally invading the Shifa medical complex, the Zionist regime was outed as a bunch of liars as no headquarters was found there. Nonetheless, their evidence-free conspiracy theories about Hamas using hospitals as military headquarters' and bases continued to drive the invasion of the north. Suddenly, after being pointed out as having fabricated evidence in the north of the alleged "Hamas bases" and "Hamas headquarters" underneath hospitals, they began to pivot to Khan Younis. Khan Younis is the "real Hamas headquarters" they told their own settler population and the international community, deciding to invade the city in December, after the conclusion of a brief cessation of hostilities and prisoner exchange. In early January, they had already besieged the city of Khan Younis completely, finding no "Hamas headquarters", and then began to obsess over the southernmost city of Rafah. Then came the announcement last Saturday from Abu Obeida, the spokesperson for the al-Qassam Brigades, the armed wing of Hamas, who informed the world that an ambush had taken place in which the Resistance group managed to capture, kill, and injure the members of a force that they lured into a tunnel.

## The electric vehicles (EVs) & public policy of Pakistan

Khalid Mahmood



Companies like General Motors and Toyota introduced modern electric cars in the 1990s, such as the GM EV1 and the Toyota RAV4 EV. The real breakthrough came with the founding of Tesla Motors by Elon Musk, Martin Eberhard, and others in 2003. Tesla's Roadster, introduced in 2008, demonstrated that electric cars could be sleek, high-performance vehicles with significant range. Since then, Tesla has become synonymous with electric cars

The concept of electric vehicles (EVs) has been around for a long time, with early experiments and prototypes dating back to the 19th century. In the early 19th century, inventors like Robert Anderson and Thomas Davenport created some of the earliest electric vehicles. These were usually small-scale models or prototypes. In the late 19th and early 20th centuries, electric cars actually enjoyed a period of popularity, particularly among urban dwellers. They were quiet, clean, and easy to operate compared to early internal combustion engine vehicles. Companies like Baker, Detroit Electric, and Columbia produced electric cars during this time. Interest in electric vehicles began to revive in the late 20th century due to concerns about pollution and dependence on fossil fuels. Companies like General Motors and Toyota introduced modern electric cars in the 1990s, such as the GM EV1 and the Toyota RAV4 EV. The real breakthrough came with the founding of Tesla Motors by Elon Musk, Martin Eberhard, and others in 2003. Tesla's Roadster, introduced in 2008, demonstrated that electric cars could be sleek, high-performance vehicles with significant range. Since then, Tesla has become synonymous with electric cars and has spurred other automakers to invest heavily in electric vehicle technology. The Governments of European, American and Chinese incentives, stricter emissions regulations, and growing environmental awareness have also played significant roles in the rise of electric vehicles. Many countries now offer subsidies or tax incentives to encourage the adoption of EVs, while others have announced plans to ban the sale of new gasoline and diesel cars in the coming years. In short, the origin of electric vehicles is a story of innovation, competition, and evolving societal priorities, with early experiments paving the way for the modern electric car revolution. The future of electric vehicles (EVs) holds significant promise, with several potential effects on human life such as: Environmental Impact, Energy Independence: Health Benefits: Technological Advancements: Economic Opportunities and Urban Planning and Mobility: In summary, the importance of electric vehicles in modern times cannot be overstated. They represent a sustainable, efficient, and technologically advanced solution to address pressing environmental, energy, and transportation challenges facing society today. By embracing EVs, individuals, businesses, and governments can contribute to a cleaner, healthier, and more sustainable future for all. Different countries like Norway, China, Germany, United States and Netherlands took different initiatives to promote Electrical Vehicles in the present time. A few initiatives taken by these

government are as under: Exempt from import duties, exempted one-time registration tax, Reduced or waived tolls on many roads and bridges. Granted the privilege of using bus lanes, allowing them to bypass traffic in congested areas. Many public charging stations in Norway offer free electricity, encouraging the use of electric vehicles. Free or discounted parking in city centers. Credit system for automakers, where they earn credits based on the production and sales of new energy vehicles, Imposed sales quotas for NEVs on automakers. These quotas mandate that a certain percentage of an automaker's total annual vehicle sales must be new energy vehicles, introduced regulations related to the recycling of batteries used in electric vehicles. These regulations aim to address environmental concerns associated with battery disposal and promote sustainable practices in the electric vehicle industry., Chinese authorities have established product certification and safety standards for electric vehicles to ensure their reliability, safety, and compliance with technical specifications, China has extended its tax exemption policy for new energy vehicles (NEVs) until 2027, Reduced or waived vehicle taxes, Some cities government in Germany announced financial incentives, Access to carpool lanes, and preferential parking for electric vehicles, Partnerships between the government, private sector, and local authorities for EV charging infrastructures. The German government has allocated funds to support the deployment of charging infrastructure. Financial incentives and grants are provided to businesses, municipalities, and organizations to install public charging stations. The German Government is committed to have 1 million public charging points across the country by 2030. In different European countries, the tax credit ranges from \$2,500 to \$7,500 per vehicle at Federal Level. Some states in Europe provide their own tax credits for electric vehicle purchases, which can be applied in addition to the federal tax credit. The states also offer special license plates for electric vehicles, often providing additional benefits such as free parking or reduced tolls. Educational programs to raise awareness about the benefits of electric vehicles. These programs may include outreach events, workshops, and informational resources for consumers. Public & private collaborations to install public charging stations in strategic locations such as urban areas, shopping centers, parking lots, and along highways. The U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP) announced rates of Auto: 2.5%, Trucks: 25%, Motorcycles: 2.4% including exempt from the BPM (import tax) & Registration. The Pakistani government started offering various incentives a few years

ago in an effort to encourage the use of electric vehicles in the country. Without a doubt, these actions will boost the nation's economy and generate new employment opportunities. Nevertheless, Pakistan's government hasn't taken the necessary action to encourage more electric vehicles, unlike those in Europe and East Asia. Promoting electrical vehicles in the nation is hampered greatly by the established automakers in the nation. In the upcoming budget for Fiscal Year 2024-2025, the government ought to take into account and declare the following practical measures to encourage electrical vehicles. To import CBUs units: Sale tax (18%), Income tax (12%), additional custom duty (7%) be exempted for at least 2 years. Such measures will help to decrease import of gasoline products and save the foreign currency. Engineering Development Board - Provincial Assembling / OEM-SKD/CKD certificate be issued under a specific time framework. No lead acid batteries are allowed to be used in any category of EVs. (Lithium iron phosphate battery (LiFePO4) be used). The vendors must give specific guaranty of batteries. (for 2 & 3 Wheelers minimum 2 years and for 4 Wheelers Upto 5 Years or 120,000KM) Special incentives and grants are given for R&D to different universities/ organizations to develop new EVs projects. Grants are provided to different educational institutions to train human resources development for local and international markets including Scholarship to deserving students. Only certified human resource should allow to work with industry. The Higher Education Commission should prepare a curriculum for BS & MS level including the needs of future technology, vehicle design and soft skills. EV/ Battery & Motor Quality Standards: According to Pakistani culture and requirement quality & safety standards be adopted. Standards required for the construction and operation of charging stations, as well as technical specifications for charging connectors. Special Financial loans policy is required from States Bank, incentives from city governments for charging stations network. All new filling stations must have EV charging facilities. All present oil marketing companies are directed to provide the EV charging facilities on priority basis (PSO, Shell, Total, etc.) NEPRA should announce a special discounted rate for EV charging companies. Special Green plates are provided to all EVs to promote the EVs industry.

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## The enigma of China's global role

Dr. Muhammad Akram Zaheer



The elusive nature of China's strategy can be attributed to several factors, including the country's historical and cultural context, its complex domestic politics, and its rapidly evolving economic and military power. China's emphasis on non-interference and sovereignty combined with its assertive actions in the South China Sea and elsewhere, has created a paradoxical image of a country that is simultaneously defensive

China's rise as a global superpower has been accompanied by a perceived sense of ambiguity and uncertainty surrounding its foreign policy strategy. China has articulated its foreign policy objectives through official channels its actual intentions and methods have been subject to speculation and debate among policymakers and scholars. This has led to concerns about China's long-term goals and the potential implications for global security and stability. The elusive nature of China's strategy can be attributed to several factors, including the country's historical and cultural context, its complex domestic politics, and its rapidly evolving economic and military power. China's emphasis on non-interference and sovereignty combined with its assertive actions in the South China Sea and elsewhere, has created a paradoxical image of a country that is simultaneously defensive and expansionist. Economic development: China has been pursuing a policy of economic growth and modernization for several decades, and this remains a key component of its strategy. The country has become a major player in the global economy, with a focus on exports, foreign investment, and technology development. China is also working to modernize its military, investing heavily in new technologies and capabilities such as cyber warfare, space technology, and artificial intelligence. This is seen as part of China's broader effort to assert itself as a major global power. China's Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) is a massive infrastructure development project that aims to connect China with countries in Asia, Europe, and Africa through a network of roads, railways, ports, and other infrastructure. The BRI is seen as a way for China to extend its economic and political influence beyond its borders. China is also engaged in a range of diplomatic efforts, including building alliances and partnerships with other countries, promoting its own version of international law and order, and using soft power to influence public opinion and perceptions of China. China's strategy is also shaped by its Communist ideology and its view of itself as a major power with a distinct political and cultural identity. This is reflected in China's domestic policies, such as its strict controls on the media and the internet, as well as its efforts to promote its own version of international human rights and democracy. China's foreign policy has also become more ambitious under Xi Jinping. The country's growing belligerence marks a break with its earlier passivity, shaped by Deng Xiaoping's proverb "Hide your strength, seize your time". The military buildup in particular, shows that China is pursuing a long-term plan. Deng advised other Chinese leaders to wait and see in the 1990s, the country was impoverished with a weak economy. This economy has grown by 800% and now has a large population. China has bided its time and expanded its power, and today it has aspired to a broader regional and global role, as do all great powers with escalation of wealth and power. Since 1945, the great states that

have risen to prosperity and prominence have been Washington's closest allies, if not quasi-protectors: Germany, Japan, and South Korea. A typically disruptive feature of international politics the rise of new powers was therefore unusually benign for the United States. Not only is the People's Republic of China much larger than the rising powers of its predecessors it has always been outside the US alliance structure and sphere of influence. American foreign policy from both parties has become adapted to a world in which America is the undisputed leader. Secretary of State, Madeleine Albright has explained "We are America; we are the indispensable nation," she said. "We stand tall and look further into the future than other countries." In 2019, Secretary of State Mike Pompeo claimed in a statement that would surely infuriate any Chinese citizen that the United States and its allies needed to put China "in its rightful place." China's sin, according to Pompeo, is that it spends more on its military than it needs on its defenses. The same, of course, applies to the United States and France, Russia, Great Britain and other large countries. In fact, a useful definition of a great power is a country that cares about more than its own immediate security. The political climate in Washington always pushes policymakers to be "hard" rather than "soft" a dangerous way of conducting international affairs. The real question is, can they be smart instead of stupid? America's new hawkish consensus on China is awkward, without any discussion of how its target will respond. Beijing has its own hawks who have warned for years that the US wants to hold China down and even seek regime change in Beijing. More importantly, the Trump administration's stance has validated these voices, giving them the leverage to encourage the very kind of aggressive and destabilizing behavior in China that US policy seeks to prevent. This dynamic, with each side arm reinforcing the other, increases tension and increases the risk of collision. It's important to note that Trump's tough tactics have achieved none of his goals from closing the US trade deficit to winning Beijing's support in dealing with North Korea and Iran. In the result China is being more aggressive on the outside and more repressive at home. American determination is rooted in the fear that China might one day take over the entire world. This is a dangerous fear because in the history, when a prominent power perceives that it is losing ground, it often anticipates and exploits the "window of danger" that its rise does not fall. It was this kind of rationality that drove European politicians to war in 1914. During its rise Washington neither succeeded in conquering the world, the Soviet Union, Japan or Afghanistan despite of some horrible events. On the other hand, China with all its successes and strengths is facing of internal challenges from a shrinking population to a mountain of debt. The Communist Party also faces an uncertain political future. Despite a decade of political repression on the mainland, it is true that the rise of the middle class is fueling aspirations. Most importantly, China's rise has unsettled nearly all of its neighbors, from Japan to India to Australia. Xi's foreign policy has

dramatically increased these countries' fears, prompting many of them to fundamentally reconsider their foreign policies. Ever since the June 2020 border skirmish that left dozens dead, India appears to be pursuing a long-term strategy to balance China. Despite its heavy reliance on the Chinese market, Australia now views China as its main adversary, particularly given Beijing's many cyberattacks on Australian targets, and has called for a global probe into how Beijing mishandled the first Covid-19 outbreak. Japan revived the Trans-Pacific Partnership, bringing other countries on board and ensuring implementation of the agreement. Even Vietnam, wary of its larger neighbor, has embarked on what was once unthinkable: if not an alliance but a military partnership with its old enemy the United States. Taiwan's people have re-elected an anti-China president and are turning more hostile to the mainland, making military options more difficult and expensive for Beijing. China's greatest geostrategic weakness has always been its abundance of neighboring countries who oppose his rise. Far from addressing this deficiency, Xi's policies have exacerbated it. China is emerging today but embedded in a vast continent with hostile neighbors who are becoming more hostile. China has been pursuing a strategy of economic expansion to become a global economic power. Its emphasis on infrastructure development, technological advancement, and industrial upgrading has enabled it to achieve impressive economic growth over the past few decades. The outcome of this strategy is that China has become the world's second-largest economy, and its economic influence is felt globally. China has been actively promoting its cultural and political values through soft power projection. Its focus on cultural diplomacy, education, and media has helped to increase its influence in the world. The outcome of this strategy is that China is increasingly seen as a global leader in certain areas, such as climate change, technology, and development. China has been increasing its military capabilities in recent years, including the modernization of its armed forces and the expansion of its naval presence. The outcome of this strategy is that China is becoming a more assertive player in regional and global security issues, which has raised concerns among its neighbors and other countries. China has been expanding its geopolitical influence by developing close relationships with other countries through its Belt and Road Initiative and other economic and diplomatic initiatives. The outcome of this strategy is that China is becoming an increasingly important player in global politics, challenging the traditional dominance of Western powers. The outcome of China's elusive strategy is complex and multifaceted, and its long-term effects are difficult to predict. While China has achieved significant success in some areas, such as economic expansion and soft power projection, its increasing assertiveness and geopolitical ambitions have also raised concerns among other countries.

## Briefs

## Pakistan taking steps to improve...

FROM PAGE 01 killed in Becham in April, the premier condemned the incident and conveyed his deepest condolences to the families of those who were killed. He said the incident, which sent a shockwave across Pakistan, was the nefarious plot of enemies of China-Pakistan friendship and CPEC as well as those who did not want to see bilateral ties rising to the apex of glory. Meanwhile, Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif witnessed the signing ceremony of MoUs aimed at enhancing cooperation between Pakistan and China in diverse fields in Beijing today.

## Govt forms SIFC cabinet committee

FROM PAGE 01 that seven desks have been established under Special Investment Facilitation Council (SIFC) to attract foreign investment. Addressing a press conference, the information minister said that the seven desks, established for China, Qatar, UAE, Saudi Arabia, European Union, United States and the Far East, would focus on bringing foreign investment to Pakistan.

## Children among 40 killed...

FROM PAGE 01 the allegation, saying, "The occupation uses lying to the public opinion through false fabricated stories to justify the brutal crime it conducted against dozens of displaced people." UNRWA is the primary source of humanitarian aid not only to Gaza but also to Palestinian refugees throughout the region. Hours before the deadly aggression, Israel also attacked the Maghazi refugee camp in central Gaza, killing and wounding scores of Palestinians.

## Spain joins South Africa's...

FROM PAGE 01 "This recognition strengthens our resolve to continue our struggle for a just and lasting peace." Ireland, Norway and Slovenia have also joined Spain in the push that has been roundly condemned by Israel. Israeli Foreign Minister Israel Katz sent a furious direct message addressed to Sanchez on X, writing: "Hamas thanks you for your service," along with a 17-second video that flipped between images of flamenco dancers and apparent scenes of the Palestinian group's incursion into southern Israel on Oct 7.

## Sh. Rashid urges COAS..

FROM PAGE 01 the importance of the army's honour and dignity to every Pakistani, but voiced apprehension about the release of people arrested over suspicion in connection with the May 9 events after serving a year in prison. The former minister warned that time was slipping away, noting that Pakistani investors were leaving the country. He also expressed regret that investment agreements signed with China during his tenure as minister in the Pervez Musharraf era were stalled.

## SBP's forex reserves...

FROM PAGE 01 "During the week ended on 31-May-2024, SBP reserves increased by US\$ 16 million to US\$ 9,109.5 million." This follows a decrease of \$63 million in the SBP's reserves the previous week. Notably, last month saw a significant jump in the central bank's reserves by \$1.114 billion, pushing the total above the \$9 billion mark for the first time in nearly two years. This substantial increase was attributed to the receipt of the final \$1.1 billion tranche from IMF under its \$3 billion Stand-By Arrangement.

## Swiatek sees off Gauff to reach French open final

The world number one is just one match away from becoming the first woman to win the tournament in three straight years since Justine Henin in 2007

OUR CORRESPONDENTS

PARIS : Iga Swiatek continued her bid for a fourth French Open title on Thursday with a dominant victory over Coco Gauff to reach another final at Roland Garros. The world number one is just one match away from becoming the first woman to win the tournament in three straight years since Justine Henin in 2007 after a 6-2, 6-4 victory. "It was intense, in the second set, it was kind of tight because we were breaking each other, but I'm glad I was consistent in my tactics and just went for it in the end," she said. Swiatek saved a match point against Naomi Osaka in the second round last week but has barely broken sweat since, losing just 14 games across the next four rounds. "Something changed, I just adjusted better to the court and it's not easy to play the first matches at a Grand Slam because the atmosphere is much different to other tournaments," she added. "And against Naomi it was difficult to get into it because she just went for it... I've improved my feel and gained confidence." The Pole's career win-loss record at Roland Gar-



ros now stands at a staggering 34-2, while she is on a 20-match winning streak at the event. The 23-year-old has won all four of her previous Grand Slam finals and will bid to extend that run against either 17-year-old sensation Mirra Andreeva or Jasmine Paolini on Saturday. Russian Andreeva and Italian 12th seed Paolini meet in the other semi-fi-

nal later Thursday. Swiatek hit only 10 winners in an unspectacular display by her high standards, but US Open champion Gauff made 39 unforced errors and was left holding back tears following an argument with the chair umpire. Top seed Swiatek could become only the fourth woman to win four Roland Garros titles in the Open era - af-

ter Henin, Chris Evert and Steffi Graf. She is also on track to join Serena Williams as the only woman to complete the treble of French, Madrid and Rome Open titles in the same year. Gauff, who will rise to world number two next week, has now lost 11 of her 12 matches against Swiatek, all in straight sets. That includes three successive defeats at Roland Gar-

ros, after last year's quarter-finals and the 2022 final. Tearful Gauff Swiatek, who had three bagel sets across her previous two matches, quickly struck first blood with a break in the opening game. Gauff had plenty of chances, but was erratic from the baseline, missing both break points she created and hitting 18 unforced errors to effectively hand Swiatek the first set. The youngster found some consistency early in the second set, moving 2-1 ahead on serve. Gauff then became embroiled in a heated exchange with the chair umpire over the timing of a line call, exclaiming "it's a Grand Slam semi-final, know the rules of the game", while almost moved to tears. That perceived injustice helped the American briefly raise her game, snatching her first break of the match after a long rally to lead 3-1, only to be pegged back immediately. There was only going to be one outcome from then on as Swiatek reeled off four games in a row to take complete control. Gauff dug deep, saving two match points to force Swiatek to serve it out. Swiatek sealed a place in her fourth French Open final in five years on her fourth match point as another wild Gauff forehand flew well off target.

## ICC is 'unbothered' by India's concerns about NY Pitch

The pitch at Nassau County International Cricket Stadium has witnessed low-scoring matches

WASHINGTON : The International Cricket Council (ICC) is not bothered by India's concerns about the Nassau County International Cricket Stadium pitch fears as well as indicated no plans to move any T20 World Cup 2024 matches, reported Thursday. Among many teams, the unpredictable drop-in wicket in New York has become a matter of concern. At the venue, two matches have been played so far. Moreover, a total of 350 runs have been scored. South Africa and Sri Lanka played the first match at the

venue, where the Islanders batted first and bundled out for just 77 runs. This was their lowest score in T20Is. Whereas, India managed to bowl out Ireland for 96 runs in the second match. Pundits and experts criticised the New York as they raised serious concerns on the surface, however, the ICC has no contingency plans to shift the matches from New York to Florida or Texas, as per news report. In New York, the most anticipated Pakistan vs India match of the T20 World Cup will also be played. This match is expected to host a crowd

of 32,000 or more to fill the ground. As it is the biggest rivalry in cricket, a low-scoring encounter would not fit the stature of the match. Due to the unpredictable bounce of the pitch, it is worth mentioning that India expressed concerns over the safety of their batters. Dinesh Karthik, a former Indian cricketer, expressed his dissatisfaction with the New York earlier. Karthik told Cricbuzz: "It's not the best of pitches. T20 cricket as a format is generally tilted in favour of the batters. This one is tilted in favour of the bowl-

ers but not for the right reasons. It is spongy and the odd one bounces over the head. Then it stays low too. Does not make for good viewing. This pitch hasn't settled. It was made in Adelaide, kept at Miami because the weather is better there and then re-laid in New York two weeks back." "Drop-in pitches are new, and has done well, especially in Australia. But here it hasn't settled. It will be a point people will be talking about ahead of the big match (India vs Pakistan) in a few days," he said.

## PBBF forms committee to oversee KBBA affairs

AFZAL JAVED

ISLAMABAD: The Pakistan Basketball Federation (PBBF) has announced a three-member committee tasked with overseeing the affairs of the Karachi Basketball Association (KBBA). This step follows the decision taken during the recent General Council meeting held in May 2024 in Islamabad, where the long overdue elections of KBBA were discussed at length. The newly formed committee is composed of distinguished former basketball players Mahfooz Ul Haq, Ashfaq Ahmed, and Waseem ur Rehman. These well-regarded indi-

viduals have been recognized for their significant contributions to basketball and are expected to bring their wealth of experience to the administration of the KBBA. The committee's mandate includes conducting a thorough scrutiny of the clubs associated with the KBBA and organizing elections within the next 90 to 100 days. This move aims to ensure a transparent and fair electoral process, fostering a more organized and efficient basketball framework in Karachi. The PBBF's decision to form this committee underscores its commitment to revitalizing basketball at the grassroots level and promoting fair governance within the sport.

## Djokovic undergoes successful knee surgery

PARIS : Novak Djokovic underwent surgery on his knee, the world number one said on Thursday, after he was forced to pull out of the French Open with an injury that could threaten his Wimbledon and Olympic chances. The injury, sustained in his fourth-round win over Francisco Cerundolo, ended the Serb's quest to win a record-extending 25th Grand Slam trophy and will result in him losing his top ranking to Italian Jannik Sinner on Monday. The French Open said MRI results revealed that Djokovic, who played on with pain-killers, had suffered a torn medial meniscus that prompted him to take the decision. "In the past day, I had to make some tough decisions after sustaining a meniscus tear during my last match. I'm still processing it all but I am happy to update you that the surgery went well," Djokovic said in a post on Instagram. "I am so appreciative of the team of doctors who have been by my side, as well as the overwhelming support I have received from my fans. Advertisement • Scroll to continue "I'm going to do my best to be healthy and fit to return to the court as soon as possible. My love for this sport is strong and the desire to compete at the highest level is what keeps me going." Wimbledon, which Djokovic has won seven times, will take place from July 1-14, while the men's singles tennis tournament at the Paris Olympics is scheduled for July 27-Aug. 4. Djokovic's injury was the latest in a series of unfortunate events for the 37-year-old—APP

## Amir eyes to lead Pakistan's pace attack in T20 WC

DALLAS: Left-arm experienced pacer Mohammad Amir on Thursday, revealed his goals to lead Pakistan's star-studded pace attack at the ICC Men's T20 World Cup 2024. Amir, who reversed his retirement earlier this year, lauded Shaheen Shah Afridi, Haris Rauf and Naseem Shah for carrying the national team's pace attack in his absence while stating that he always strives to lead from the front being the senior of them all. "I am looking forward to playing here and perform well as a cricketer, whether it's league cricket or international cricket, at the end of the day you have to perform. As a senior bowler, I will always try to lead from the front," stated Amir.—APP

## Zverev to play Ruud in French open semi-finals

PARIS : Alexander Zverev advanced to his fourth successive French Open semi-final with a 6-4, 7-6 (7/5), 6-4 win over Australian 11th seed Alex de Minaur. Fourth seed Zverev will play Casper Ruud for a place in Sunday's final after the Norwegian received a walk-over following Novak Djokovic's injury-enforced withdrawal. Germany's Zverev is on an 11-match winning streak after clinching the Rome title last month, but he has never reached the final at Roland Garros. "I'm happy to be in another semi-final. Hopefully I can win one," said Zverev, who defeated 14-time champion Rafael Nadal in the first round of this year's tournament. Zverev was defeated by Ruud in straight sets in the semi-finals of the French Open in 2023. After needing five sets in each of his previous two rounds, Zverev polished off De Minaur inside three hours. He saved a set point on his serve at 5-6 in the second set and then won a 39-shot rally to bring up one of his own in the tie-break, which he sealed at the first opportunity. "Everybody in the press keeps asking me what I do for recovery and the answer is very simple - you don't recover after matches, you recover in the off-season," said Zverev. "I have the mindset you have to work harder than everyone else to be the best player. I like to work to my absolute limit. If I do that then playing five sets all of a sudden is not that difficult." A serious ankle injury dashed Zverev's hopes in his 2022 semi-final against Nadal as he was forced to retire. The year before he lost at the same stage in five sets to Stefanos Tsitsipas. Zverev is playing under the shadow of an ongoing trial in Berlin over allegations of assaulting an ex-girlfriend. De Minaur's bid to make a first Grand Slam semi-final ended with an eighth defeat in 10 meetings with Zverev. "I'm extremely proud of my efforts through the two weeks. Even today I think I put up a hell of a fight in difficult conditions against a quality opponent," said De Minaur, playing just his second quarter-final at a major. De Minaur raved letting slip a 4-0 lead in the tie-break in the second set as his hopes of becoming the first Australian man to make the last four in Paris since Pat Rafter in 1997 fizzled out. "I had my opportunities. —DNA

## T20 WC 2024: Australia ease past Oman by 39 runs

Marcus Stoinis played a key role in Australia's victory

SPORTS DESK

BARBADOS: Marcus Stoinis shone with bat and ball as Australia launched their bid for a grand slam of major cricket titles with a 39-run victory over Oman at the T20 World Cup in Barbados. Stoinis smashed a game-changing 67 not out off just 36 balls to power Australia to 164-5 and then took three wickets for 19 runs as Oman were restricted to 125-9 in reply at Kensington Oval. "It was a nice start," player of the match Stoinis said afterwards. "Maybe a few cobwebs for us but we're better for it, and nice that we got the win. "And nice that I got to spend some time in the middle and have a bit of a bowl." Stoinis hammered six sixes and two fours during a swashbuckling batting performance that led Australia's recovery after they had slumped to 50-3 earlier in the innings. David Warner helped provide some stability with a half century as Australia eventually got going after captain Mitchell Marsh and Glenn Maxwell fell off successive balls to seamer Mehran Khan in the 11th over. After a steady couple of overs, Stoinis went on the attack, dominating a 102-run fourth-wicket partnership

which effectively wrested the initiative away from the Omanis. Warner, in his final tournament before international retirement, compiled 56 off 51 balls, including six fours

and one six, before falling in the penultimate over. Warner's innings propelled him beyond former captain Aaron Finch as Australia's top run-getter in T20 Internationals

with a tally of 3,155. Four of Stoinis' six sixes meanwhile came in the 15th over of the innings, bowled by Mehran, and triggered such a pace of acceleration that the 2021

champions were able to more than double their total over the last six overs of the innings. "Davey (Warner) and I talked about (tactics) before that over," Stoinis added in explaining the sudden batting onslaught. "And then you know how it is when you get the first couple balls away for boundaries, you just think you might as well try to turn it into a big over." Beaten by Namibia in a thrilling super over finale in their opening game on Sunday, Oman had seemed in the mood for a fight with the early dismissal of Travis Head followed by the Marsh-Maxwell double-blow. However Australia's competitive know-how saw them through that tricky period as they made a winning start to their campaign to become the first nation to hold all three global cricket titles - Test, One-Day and T20 - simultaneously. Mitchell Starc, who left the field before the end of his spell with cramp, made his trademark early strike in defence of Australia's total and finished with two wickets, as did fellow pacer Nathan Ellis and leg-spinner Adam Zampa. Oman captain Agib Ilyas meanwhile took encouragement from the performance of Oman's bowlers after a solid start.



## 'Unannounced martial...

FROM PAGE 01 plea requesting the live streaming of the case. "You wrote [in the judgment] that I did political point scoring during the last hearing. I did not get it, what political scoring did I resort to," the PTI founder asked the CJP. At this, the CJP said a judge does not owe an explanation to anyone over the verdict. "You can file a review petition," the top judge said in response to Khan's question. The CJP also asked the former premier to speak only about the matter currently pending before the court. The PTI founder lamented that he was sentenced to 14 years in the Toshakhana case, claiming that prosecution falsely estimated the value of the watch he received from a foreign dignitary as prime minister at Rs3 billion. Lamenting political victimisation, the PTI founder said the Supreme Court should appoint a NAB chairman. "When opposition and government fail to evolve consensus on the name of NAB chairman appointment then a 'third umpire' makes the decision," he said, adding that the anti-graft body is working under the "third umpire".

## SC reserves verdict on NAB...

FROM PAGE 01 government made amendments to the National Accountability Ordinance, with Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) founder Imran Khan challenging it in the court as it would "virtually eliminate any white-collar crime committed by a public office holder". In its judgment on Khan's appeal, the top court ruled on Sept 15 that the public officials whose cases had ended due to the amendments made by the PDM-led government would have to once again face corruption references. The government then filed a petition in October 2023, saying that the majority judgement suffers from procedural impropriety and is, therefore, liable to be set aside. During the hearings, PTI founder Khan appeared before the five-member bench via video link and also expressed issues that he's been facing during imprisonment.

## Pakistan wins non-permanent..

FROM PAGE 01 make its contribution in meeting the grave challenges facing the world. Pakistan, which was unopposed, garnered 182 votes in the 193-member General Assembly - far more than the required 124 votes representing two-third majority. Loud applause rang out in the iconic hall of the General Assembly when its president, Dennis Francis, announced the winners of the five non-permanent seats - Pakistan, Denmark, Greece, Panama and Somalia - to replace Japan, Ecuador, Malta, Mozambique and Switzerland whose terms end on December 31. He congratulated them on their victory. Pakistan will replace Japan, which currently occupies the Asian seat, on January 1, 2012, to begin a two-year term, its eighth. Munir Akram, Pakistan's permanent representative to the UN, while talking to media said, Pakistan's election "represents the confidence of the international community in Pakistan's ability to promote the purposes and principles of the UN Charter."

## Tunisian ambassador to Pakistan..

FROM PAGE 01 Ambassador El Kamel had been struggling with health issues since his arrival in Pakistan, necessitating frequent trips to Tunisia for medical checkups. The diplomatic community has expressed deep grief and shock over his passing, offering prayers for his soul and extending their condolences to the bereaved family. They hope for Almighty's peace upon his soul and strength for his family to endure this irreparable loss. Nabil Amar, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Tunisia said.

## Briefs

## UNRWA warns of cholera outbreak in Gaza Strip

LONDON : The UN agency for Palestinian refugees (UNRWA) warned Thursday of a cholera outbreak in the Gaza Strip amid severe water shortages due to Israeli bombardment. "With minimal access to clean water in the Gaza Strip and harsh summer heat continuing, there's a risk of disease outbreaks and dehydration," UNRWA said in a statement. "There is a real concern that cholera may become prevalent, further deteriorating inhumane living conditions." The UN agency renewed its call for an immediate cease-fire in the Palestinian enclave. Several UN agencies, especially the World Health Organization, have warned about a high risk of infectious diseases in Gaza amid crowdedness in refugee camps and a lack of proper sanitation. Israel has continued its brutal offensive on Gaza since an Oct. 7 Hamas attack despite a UN Security Council resolution demanding an immediate cease-fire. Nearly 36,600 Palestinians have since been killed in Gaza, the vast majority being women and children, and over 83,000 others injured, according to local health authorities. Eight months into the Israeli war, vast swathes of Gaza lay in ruins amid a crippling blockade of food, clean water, and medicine. Israel stands accused of genocide at the International Court of Justice (ICJ), which in its latest ruling has ordered Tel Aviv to immediately halt its operation in the southern city of Rafah, where over a million Palestinians had sought refuge from the war before it was invaded on May 6.—DNA

## 1 in 4 children face severe food poverty

UNITED NATIONS: More than one in four children under the age of five globally live in "severe" food poverty, UNICEF has warned — meaning more than 180 million are at risk of experiencing adverse impacts on their growth and development. "Severe child food poverty describes children who are surviving on severely deprived diets so they're only consuming two or less food groups," Harriet Torlesse, a lead writer of a new UNICEF report published late Wednesday, told AFP. "It is shocking in this day and age where we know what needs to be done." UNICEF recommends that young children eat foods daily from five of eight main groups — breast milk; grains, roots, tubers and plantains; pulses, nuts and seeds; dairy; meat, poultry and fish; eggs; vitamin A-rich fruits and vegetables; and other fruits and vegetables. But 440 million children under the age of five living in about 100 low- and middle-income countries are living in food poverty, meaning they do not have access to five food groups each day.—APP

## YouTube tightens policies on firearm videos

WASHINGTON : YouTube decided to change its policies regarding certain videos featuring firearms to prevent access by underage users to potentially dangerous content. The online video platform said in a statement that videos showing how to remove firearm safety devices, homemade guns, automatic weapons and certain accessories will be banned to users under 18. The platform said that livestreams showing people holding, handling or transporting firearms, regardless of whether they are firing them, will be prohibited, noting that this definition does not include video game content. It said that these changes will take effect on June 18 and called on content creators and users to pay attention to the points.—APP

## Gazan journalist honors with freedom prize award

Palestinian journalist Motaz Azaiza risked his life for his profession and love for Palestinians and now working as a global ambassador

## NEWS DESK

LONDON : Twenty-year-old Palestinian journalist Motaz Azaiza, who has become Gaza's voice, has been awarded with Freedom Prize 2024 for his fearless efforts in Gaza war coverage, Media reported on Thursday. Photojournalist Motaz Azaiza was named one of the '100 Most Influential People of 2024' by Time magazine for acting as the "world's eyes and ears". Motaz risked his life for his profession and love for Palestinians and now working as a global ambassador. While sharing about his achievement on social media, Azaiza wrote: "I wished to be bestowed with this Freedom Prize the moment my country is free from the Israeli occupation. 'Keep in mind that no one is free until Palestine is free."

"I evacuated my beloved country Gaza, but I promised myself to make our message reach the world that we are people looking for our freedom and we are not terrorists. 'Please do not stop talking and reporting about Gaza. Thank you

all very much."

"I promised myself to make our message reach the world that we are people looking for our freedom and we are not terrorists. Today I received the 2024 Freedom Prize awarded by the Normandy region. 'Thank you Freedom Prize and Thank you to everyone who voted for me, I am only fulfilling my duty



to convey the unbearable atrocities by the Israeli occupation against my people. 'I appreciate this opportunity and to free press especially at this time when Palestinians are under in Gaza, but about is to opportunity in my Jan- vest," Azaiza said in the heartfelt clip on his social media. Taking to 'X' formerly Twitter he wrote, "I had to evacuate for a lot of reasons you all know some of it but not all of it." "Thank you all. Pray for Gaza", he added. Azaiza has been one of the key media forces in the besieged Gaza Strip, bringing live updates of the Israel-Hamas war to his more than 18 million followers on Instagram and over a million on X. Azaiza's Instagram posts are often flooded with comments asking about his well-being, especially when he hasn't posted on his social media for a while. He has often posted videos and gone live on his Instagram documenting Israeli airstrikes in Gaza, where he can be seen sheltering amid the rubble of demolished homes. Azaiza's work initially focused on photographing everyday life in Gaza, before he began covering Israel's wars in Gaza in 2014 and 2021. His Instagram following has grown exponentially from 25,000 to 18 million in just over 100 days since Israel began its military campaign in response to Hamas' October 7 attack.



ISLAMABAD: H.E. Ambassador Ali bin Mubarak Al Khater welcomed in his office, H.E. Dr. Ihab Abdel Hamid, Ambassador of the Arab Republic of Egypt in Pakistan. They engaged in fruitful discussions on matters of mutual interest.—DNA

## WHO confirms first fatal H5N2 bird flu case

GENEVA: A person died of bird flu in Mexico in the first confirmed case of a human infected with the H5N2 variant, the World Health Organization said Wednesday. The 59-year old, who died on April 24 after developing fever, shortness of breath, diarrhea and nausea, had "no history of exposure to poultry or other animals" and "multiple underlying medical conditions," the WHO said in a statement. The resident of the State of Mexico was hospitalized in Mexico City and died the same day, the statement said. It was the "first laboratory-confirmed human case of infection with an influenza A(H5N2) virus reported globally," the WHO added. Mexican health authorities reported the confirmed case to the UN health body on May 23 after conducting laboratory tests. The source of exposure to the virus was unknown, the WHO said, although cases of H5N2 have been reported in poultry in Mexico. H5N2 cases were detected in a backyard poultry farm in Michoacan state in March, with other outbreaks identified in the State of Mexico, according to the UN health body. But it said establishing a link between the human case and the poultry infections was so far impossible, estimating the risk to people as "low." Mexico's health ministry said in a statement that the person who died was "a 59-year-old man with a history of chronic kidney disease, type 2 diabetes, (and) long-standing systemic arterial hypertension." "There is no risk of contagion for the population," the statement said, adding that "all samples from identified contacts (of the patient) have been negative." Authorities are monitoring farms near the victim's home and have established a permanent monitoring system to detect other cases in wildlife in the area, the statement added. A different variant of bird flu, H5N1, has been spreading for weeks among dairy cow herds in the United States, with a small number of cases reported among humans. But none of the cases are human-to-human infections, with the disease instead jumping from cattle to people, authorities have said.—APP

## 'We are the danger, but we are also the solution' for climate

## WEB DESK

HAMILTON :The head of the UN warned about the ongoing climate crisis Wednesday and said humans are the danger but also the solution. "Like the meteor that wiped out the dinosaurs, we're having an outsized impact. In the case of climate, we are not the dinosaurs. We are the meteor. We are not only in danger. We are the danger. But we are also the solution," said Antonio Guterres. Guterres delivered a major speech at the American Museum of Natural History in New York for World Environment Day. Saying that the planet is trying to send a message to people but the message is not being heard, and global warming is increasing, Guterres said: "We are at a moment of truth." Emphasizing the urgent

need for immediate and decisive action to combat climate change, Guterres said to keep the global warming limit at 1.5 degrees, global emissions need to be reduced by 9% each year.

"We are playing Russian roulette with our planet. We need an exit ramp off the highway to climate hell. And the truth is we have control of the wheel," he said. The UN chief said the 1.5-degree limit is not just a target but a physical boundary, stressing that a much stronger fight is needed to preserve it. "All depends on the decisions those leaders take, or fail to take, especially in the next 18 months," he said. Guterres pointed out that steps to be taken on climate change should not be subjected to geopolitical divisions, stating that poor communities, which contribute the least to the climate crisis, are the ones most affected by the crisis. "The richest 1% emit

## NATO won't deploy forces to Ukraine: Stoltenberg

KYIV : NATO chief Jens Stoltenberg on Thursday said that the alliance had no plans to deploy forces to Ukraine, despite many of its members supplying Kyiv with weapons since Russia's invasion. "NATO has no plans to deploy forces to Ukraine," Stoltenberg said during a visit to Finland, adding that the alliance was seeking "long term financial commitment to ensure that we stand by Ukraine for as long as it takes". "Over the last months, we have seen some gaps, some delays in the provision of military support to Ukraine," Stoltenberg said, adding: "we need to ensure that that doesn't happen again." The visit marked Stoltenberg's first to Finland since the country joined NATO in April 2023, prompted by Russia's invasion of Ukraine, thereby leaving decades of military non-alignment behind. Stoltenberg's visit came as Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky on Thursday joined Western leaders in France to commemorate D-Day. While there, Zelensky is due to meet US President Joe Biden for talks on how Ukraine can gain back ground after recent Russian advances. Asked to comment on the risk of a Russian attack against a Nato member, Stoltenberg replied: "We don't see an imminent military threat against any NATO ally.—DNA

## Turkiye ensures Hajj journey for thousands of pilgrims

ANKARA : The Turkish Presidency of Religious Affairs has emphasised the excellent cooperation with the Saudi Ministry of Hajj. The majority of Turkish pilgrims have already arrived in Mecca and Medina, with the remaining expected to reach the holy cities in the coming days. / Photo: AA  
AA The majority of Turkish pilgrims have already arrived in Mecca and Medina, with the remaining expected to reach the holy cities in the coming days. / Photo: AA  
AA Turkiye's Presidency of Religious Affairs has mobilised a substantial team to provide comprehensive services for Turkish pilgrims during the Hajj missions for Muslims. The directorate's head Ali Erbas announced the deployment of a professional team, 4,128 members in Mecca and Medina, to assist almost 85,000 Turkish citizens performing the Hajj pilgrimage this year. The team includes 503 healthcare professionals to address any medical needs that would arise during the pilgrimage.

"This year, 84,942 of our citizens are coming to the holy lands for Hajj," said Erbas. "Of this number, 53% are women and 47% are men." The majority of Turkish pilgrims have already arrived in Mecca and Medina, with the remaining expected to reach the holy cities in the coming days. The average age of Turkish pilgrims is 60 years, reflecting a mature demographic participating in this spiritual journey. Erbas highlighted that, similar to last year, a special group of children is also included in the pilgrimage, showcasing the inclusive nature of the event. Seven Turkish pilgrims have passed away since arriving in the holy land. "We pray for Allah's mercy on those who have died and extend our heartfelt condolences to their families," Erbas said.—APP

## RSF kills 100 in Sudanese village attack

At least 100 people were killed Wednesday when the Sudanese paramilitary Rapid Support Forces attacked a village in Gezira State, according to local activists. If confirmed, the attack would be the latest in a string of dozens of attacks by RSF soldiers on small villages across the farming state after it took control of the capital Wad Madani in December. Wad Alnoura village ... witnessed a genocide on Wednesday after the RSF attacked twice, killing up to 100 people," the pro-democracy Wad Madani Resistance Committee said in a statement on social media late Wednesday. Later, it put the number of dead in the hundreds and said the Sudanese army had not heeded a request for help. The RSF began fighting the army in April 2023 after disputes over the integration of the two forces and has since taken over the capital Khartoum and most of western Sudan. It is now seeking to advance into the center, as United Nations agencies say the people of Sudan are at "imminent risk of famine." In a statement Wednesday, the RSF said it had attacked army and allied militia bases around Wad Alnoura but did not acknowledge any civilian casualties. But the Wad Madani Resistance Committee accused it of using heavy artillery against civilians, looting, and driving women and children to seek refuge in the nearby town of Managil.—APP

## Tokyo shares close higher

TOKYO: Tokyo markets closed higher on Thursday, supported by semiconductor shares following US tech rallies. The benchmark Nikkei 225 index climbed 0.55 percent, or 213.34 points, to end at 38,703.51, while the broader Topix index added 0.33 percent, or 9.01 points, to 2,757.23. The dollar stood at 155.96 yen, against 156.12 yen on Wednesday in New York. Japanese semiconductor-related shares rose after US chip designer Nvidia surged 5.2 percent in New York, topping \$3 trillion in market capitalisation, making it the third US firm to reach that level after Apple and Microsoft.—APP

## Erdoğan, Mirziyoyev meet in golden Turkish-Uzbek era

President Erdogan on Thursday welcomed his Uzbek counterpart Shavkat Mirziyoyev in a visit marked by new deals and steps for further cooperation

## FOREIGN DESK

ANKARA : Two countries at the heart of the region between East and West, Uzbekistan and Turkiye, seek closer relations. This was evident in a warm welcome to visiting Uzbek President Shavkat Mirziyoyev by President Recep Tayyip Erdo an on Thursday in the capital, Ankara. Mirziyoyev was scheduled to attend the seventh meeting of the Turkiye-Uzbekistan High-Level Strategic Cooperation Council on the first day of his visit. Experts say the visit is an affirmation of the historic rise of relations at a strategic level. The council meeting aims to establish a solid foundation for cooperation two years after countries elevated their relations to a "comprehensive strategic partnership" during Erdo an's visit to the Asian country. Erdo an and Mirziyoyev's meetings on several



occasions expanded the scope of relations, especially in trade and investments. Professor Mehmet Seyfettin Erol, chair of the Ankara

Center for Crisis and Policy Studies (ANKASAM), told the Sabah newspaper on Thursday that Uzbekistan made significant progress in eco-

nomie and political fields. "New Uzbekistan, aiming to build the future based on the values it has inherited from its past, is on its way to becoming an important player in the global arena," he said. "The Third Renaissance, envisaged under the leadership of President Mirziyoyev, will be a significant step in realizing the great historical mission of reviving the spirit of Samarkand, making it a global center of knowledge, culture and innovation once again," Erol said. Turkiye and Uzbekistan are scheduled to sign more than 20 deals during the council meeting. The cultural kinship between the two countries, which are part of the Organization of Turkic States (OTS), was the major driving force of relations. Turkiye was the first country to recognize Uzbekistan's independence in 1991, following the dissolution of the Soviet Union. As part of then-President Turgut Özal's plan to deepen relations with Turkic-speaking Central Asian

countries, Ankara sought to reach out to Tashkent further under the Islam Karimov administration. Yet, ties deteriorated over political differences in the following decades. President Erdo an's 2016 visit to Uzbekistan, a key country in the region with its location, history, rich cultural values and economic potential, changed the course of relations. Mirziyoyev's visit to Turkiye in 2017, as the first sitting Uzbek president to make such a visit in 21 years, further reanimated the relations. Speaking at the Turkiye-Uzbekistan Business Forum in Ankara on Wednesday, Vice President Cevdet Ylmaz said that they were working to reach a \$5 billion (TL 162 billion) bilateral trade volume. Ylmaz said their ties were based on a common history and Turkiye and Uzbekistan contributed to maintaining peace and stability by cooperating on regional and global issues.

## Briefs

### PTI leader Aliya Hamza rearrested

DNA

SARGODHA: Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) leader Aliya Hamza was rearrested moments after being released from Sargodha jail on Thursday. The PTI leader was released from Sargodha jail after her bail was confirmed by the Anti-Terrorism Court (ATC) yesterday in connection with May 9 cases. She was rearrested by the Gujranwala police after her release from Sargodha jail. Police said that the PTI leader was wanted by the Gujranwala Cantonment Police in connection with a May 9 case. A day earlier, another PTI leader Sanam Javed was arrested again outside Sargodha Jail in the same case moments after her release.

### Punjab CM's discretionary funds enhanced

BUREAU REPORT

LAHORE: An increase of Rs2 billion in discretionary funds for Punjab Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz has been approved. According to sources, the Punjab government has granted approval to increase in the Punjab CM's discretionary funds. The finance department has allotted the funds for new fiscal year budget. Government sources disclosed that Rs5 billion in budget had been allotted for the Punjab CM's discretionary funds. The chief minister can allot funds from discretionary funds to anyone. Discretionary funds are development grants routed through politicians to their constituencies at the discretion of the prime minister or chief minister. It is pertinent to note that during the tenure of the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) government in 2018, the cabinet took a decision to ban the use of all discretionary funds of president, prime minister and MNAs while calling it an insult to taxpayers.

### PTI leaders granted extension in interim bails

COURT REPORTER

ISLAMABAD: Islamabad anti-terrorism court (ATC) has extended interim bail of Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) leaders in vandalism case. ATC's Judge Abul-Hasnat Muhammad Zulqarnain heard the vandalism case against PTI leaders, Omar Ayub, Shibli Sarfaraz, Ali Nawaz Awan and others. Judge Abul-Hasnat granted extension to interim bail of PTI leaders in vandalism case. Judge Abul-Hasnat heard the case due to unavailability of the Judge Tahir Abbas Sipra.

## World Environment Day

# Documentary 'When the Floods Come' screened

Ministry of Climate Change, Aga Khan Foundation and United Nations mark World Environment Day



MAHNOOR ANSAR

ISLAMABAD: Today the United Nations, the Aga Khan Foundation and the Ministry of Climate Change & Environmental Coordination celebrated World Environment Day in Islamabad with an event raising awareness on how climate change, biodiversity loss and pollution are affecting Pakistan, and how people are taking action. "Pakistan is among the countries most adversely impacted by climate change, but it is leading the way with its climate diplomacy," said Ms. Romina Khurshid Alam, Coordinator to the Prime Minister on Climate Change. "We

are educating our youth on this crucial subject. We will leave no stone unturned to slow environmental degradation down and increase our ability to deal with the fallout of global warming and its impacts on clean water, health, agriculture, food systems, and energy." During the ceremony, Pakistan's 'Living Indus' initiative officially received the World Restoration Flagship award which the UN Environment Programme (UNEP) announced in March; UNEP supports Pakistan's National Adaptation Plan for building resilience to climate change. Living Indus is a Government-led initiative, which the UN supports, to restore the ecological health of the Indus River Basin. Moreover, the event

paid tribute to 30 'Climate Heroes' - women and men who take action against the climate crisis across the country. "Just last week, temperatures in Pakistan crossed 52 degree Celsius. We cannot turn back time, but we can take collective action to adapt to this new age of global warming," said Mr. Mohamed Yahya, the UN Resident Coordinator in Pakistan. "Across the country, communities are already trying to cope with the impact of climate change; they combat pollution, deforestation, rapid glacial melt, floods, droughts and heatwaves. By supporting 'Living Indus' and a range of innovative programmes, UN agencies aim to help them protect and restore nature, bi-

odiversity, water sources, as well as their lives and livelihoods." The event marked the premiere of 'When the Floods Come', a new documentary by Nyal Mueenuddin. This young Pakistani filmmaker went on a 3000km odyssey down the Indus River to capture the most intimate stories of how people's lives are inextricably bound to climate change. The film will be screened again during a public event at PNCA this Friday. "Communities have been experiencing first-hand the impacts of climate change and environmental degradation. It is already transforming landscapes, habitats, livelihoods, and local aspirations," said Mr. Akhtar Iqbal, CEO, Aga Khan Foundation. "That said, we have witnessed how our collective actions can make a difference. We, at the Aga Khan Foundation and agencies of the Aga Khan Development Network, have been fully committed to doing our part for over 55 years and we will continue to support Pakistan to cope with the challenges ahead. We want to ensure that communities are empowered to be more resilient, have access to clean energy, adopt more sustainable natural resources management practices and contribute to large reforestation efforts. We also want to place women and young people at the centre of climate leadership and invest in their future through boosting green businesses and jobs." In Pakistan and all over the world, ecosystems are threatened. From forests and drylands to farmlands and lakes, natural spaces on which humanity's existence depends are reaching a tipping point. This year, World Environment Day focuses on land restoration, halting desertification and building drought resilience under the slogan "Our Land. Our Future. We are #GenerationRestoration." Led by the UNEP, and held annually since 1973, World Environment Day has grown to be the largest global platform for environmental outreach. It is celebrated by millions of people across the world.

## 1,25,000 houses prepared for flood victims

NAZIR SIYAL

KARACHI: Chief Minister of Sindh Murad Ali Shah has said that 1,25,000 houses have been prepared for flood affectees. The chief minister visited the office of the Sindh People's Housing for Flood Affectees here. The CM was given briefing with regard to construction of houses for flood affected people. Chief Minister said that the flood in year 2022 caused huge losses in Sindh. "We are working on the world's biggest project and constructing 2.1 million housing units for flood victims," chief minister said. "We were lacking funds for housing project but determined to implement it. The project was presented in Geneva conference, and they helped us," Murad Ali Shah said. Chief Minister said that the affected people also being given ownership rights. The process with regard to ownership that was earlier suspended, has been resumed again, he said. Murad Ali Shah said that 2.1 million housing units' project has been launched and it is the world's biggest construction project for flood affectees. He said the federal government didn't yet constitute the ECNEC, which is delaying release of development funds as approval of projects from the ECNEC has been compulsory. CM Shah said that the housing project has also won award. "There are eight lac women beneficiaries in 2.1 million housing units project," he said. Around eight lac houses of the project have been under construction". Murad Ali Shah said that the federal and provincial governments had allocated Rs25 billion each, but the funds were not released from the government.



LAHORE: The United Arab Emirates (UAE) Ambassador to Pakistan Hamad Obaid Ibrahim Al Zaabi calls on Punjab Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz and PML-N President Nawaz Sharif. - DNA

## Egypt gets 'positive signs' from Hamas on Gaza truce

Last week US President Joe Biden unveiled a "roadmap to an enduring ceasefire" that would see Israel withdraw from Gaza's population centers and Hamas release hostages

NEWS DESK

CAIRO: Egypt has received encouraging signals from Hamas over a potential Gaza truce and hostage-prisoner swap with Israel, state-linked Al-Qahera News said on Thursday, citing a high-level source.

Cairo has been engaged along with fellow mediators Doha and Washington in months of negotiations for a ceasefire aimed at ending the Israel-Hamas war in the Gaza Strip. "Hamas leaders have informed us that they are studying the truce proposal seriously and positively," Al-Qahera quoted the source as saying. The source, who was not named, said the Palestinian militant group was expected to respond to the proposal in the coming days. Egypt, which invited Hamas leaders to negotiations in Cairo, had "received positive signs from the Palestinian movement signalling its aspiration for a ceasefire," the source added. The comments came a day after Hamas representatives met in Doha with Qatari Prime Minister Mohammed bin Abdulrahman Al-Thani and Egypt's intelligence chief Abbas Kamel. Apart from a seven-day ceasefire in November, during which more than 100 hostages were released in exchange for 240 Palestinian prisoners held in Israeli jails, mediation efforts have failed to stop the conflict. Last week US President Joe Biden unveiled a "roadmap to an enduring ceasefire" that would see Israel withdraw from Gaza's population centers and Hamas release hostages. On Thursday, Biden and 16 other world leaders urged Hamas to accept the proposal.

## Sindh HC allows journalists to report court proceedings

Sindh High Court's decision comes on petition filed by PFUJ

NAZIR SIYAL

KARACHI: After the Islamabad High Court (IHC), the Sindh High Court (SHC) also allowed journalists to report on court proceedings, but asked them to ensure following "the guidelines and law". The SHC's decision came as it heard a petition of the Pakistan Federal Union of Journalists (PFUJ) challenging the Pakistan Electronic Media Regulatory Authority (Pemra)'s restriction on airing of court proceedings on news channels. The high court said the apex court's guidelines should be adopted while reporting as the Pemra could take action upon violation of the rules and guidelines established by the SC. Meanwhile, on a similar plea by the Press Association and PFUJ, the Islamabad High Court (IHC) had Wednesday assured journalists that there was no ban on court reporting but "irresponsible" court reporting. IHC Chief Justice Aamer Farooq said: "There is no ban on court reporting. The media can report the court proceedings." The chief justice, however, maintained that the ban was, in fact, on "irresponsible reporting". "The problem is only with running sensational tickers," said Justice Farooq. The petitions were filed in the high courts after the electronic media watchdog issued two notifications ordering TV channels to not run reporting of court proceedings and for reporters to only report courts' written orders. In a notification issued on May 21, the media watchdog directed all satellite news channel licensees that no content, including commentary, opinions, or suggestions about the potential fate of such sub-judice matter which tends to prejudice the determination by a court shall be aired. "Further, TV Channels are directed to refrain from airing tickers/headlines with regard to court proceedings till the final order," it added. All satellite TV channel licensees were also directed to ensure strict compliance to the Pemra laws in line with the judgment of the Supreme Court "in Suo Moto Case No. 28 of 2018 (reported as 2019 PLD SC 1) in letter and spirit". The media watchdog also warned of legal action in case of any violation.

## World leaders mark D-Day's 80th anniversary in France

As Western allies gather for D-Day anniversary, Zelensky calls for "true unity" to prevail

PARIS: Veterans and world leaders have gathered in Normandy, France, to mark the 80th anniversary of the June 6, 1944 D-Day landings, when more than 150,000 Allied soldiers arrived in the country by sea and air to drive out the forces of Nazi Germany. With war raging in Ukraine, this year's commemoration of this key turning point in World War II carries special resonance. Russia, which launched a full-scale invasion of Ukraine in 2022, was not invited. "This event and day serve as a reminder of the courage and determination demonstrated in the pursuit of freedom and democracy," Ukraine's President Volodymyr Zelensky said in a post on X, announcing his arrival to Thursday's ceremonies in France. "Allies defended Europe's freedom then, and Ukrainians do so now. Unity prevailed then, and true unity can prevail today," he added. US President Joe Biden, French President Emmanuel Macron, German Chancellor Olaf Scholz, Britain's King Charles and Prime Minister Rishi Sunak, and many other political figures are taking part in the day of tributes, which started at about 08:30 GMT with a British ceremony in Ver-sur-Mer. Speaking at a commemoration service marking the 80th anniversary

of the D-Day landings, US President Joe Biden warned "the price of unchecked tyranny is the blood of the young and the brave." His comments come on a day that Ukraine's fight against Russia's invasion has been a major theme and frequent parallels have been drawn by numerous leaders. In his speech, the president drew direct parallels between Nazi Germany and the threats facing Western democracies today. US President Joe Biden acknowledged that this year's commemoration of D-Day may be the last to involve living veterans, a fact that he said must push Americans to continue the fight against tyranny. Ukraine's President Volodymyr Zelensky has called for "true unity" to prevail as it did when allied forces rallied together to defend "Europe's freedoms," as D-Day anniversary commemorations took place Thursday. Ukraine's fight against Russia's invasion has been a major theme of the D-Day commemorations on Thursday and frequent parallels have been drawn by numerous leaders. "Allies defended Europe's freedom then, and Ukrainians do so now. Unity prevailed then, and true unity can prevail today," he posted on X Thursday. - Agencies

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