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Pakistan's Credible Daily Newspaper

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Unity government is South Africa's best option: Ramaphosa

Detailed News On Page-07

UN chief condemns Myanmar military attacks on civilians

A sister publication of CENTRELINE & DNA News Agency

Detailed News On Page-07



Williamson praises Afghan cricket team

Detailed News On Page-06



President Xi seeks 'safety'

Pakistan, China agree to upgrade economic corridor

The two leaders reaffirmed the time-honored 'All-Weather Strategic Cooperative Partnership' and expressed the resolve to further deepen cooperation

BEIJING: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif held a long and in-depth discussion in a meeting with the Chinese President Xi Jinping at the historic Great Hall of the People in Beijing, today. The two leaders were accompanied by the Federal Ministers and senior officials. This was Prime Minister's first meeting with the President of China since assuming office in 2024. The meeting was marked by traditional warmth reflective of the ironclad friendship and close strategic ties between the two countries. Prime Minister thanked President Xi Jinping for the warm and gracious welcome accorded to him and his delegation in China. He recalled the historic visit of the President Xi Jinping to Pakistan in 2015 where the China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) was formally operationalized marking a new chapter in the bilateral relationship.

The two leaders reaffirmed the time-honored 'All-Weather Strategic Cooperative Partnership' and expressed the resolve to further deepen cooperation across diverse domains ranging from political and security to economic, trade, and people-to- people exchanges. They also exchanged views on regional and global developments including Afghanistan, Palestine and South Asia including the serious human rights situation in the Indian Illegally Occupied Jammu and Kashmir (IIOJK). The two sides reiterated their longstanding support on each other's issues of core interest. Commending President Xi's visionary Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) and Global Development Initiative (GDI), the Prime Minister underscored that as the flagship project of BRI, China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) had significant-

Continued on Page 06

Briefs

Palestine

envoy greets

Pakistan on

UNSC seat

DNA

ISLAMABAD: The Ambas-

sador of Palestine Ahmed Rabei has Congratulated to

the Islamic Republic of Pa-

kistan on its election as a

non-permanent member of

the United Nations Security

Council for the period 2025-

2026! In his message the

Ambassador said, 'We trust

the ability of the Islamic

Republic of Pakistan and its

representatives to succeed

in this important position.

We also trust Pakistan in its

ability to support justice and

human rights and against

injustice and to stand by

the rights of the Palestinian people and support them in international communities'.

Senate devolves into

squabbling

Opposition protests

Palwasha Khan

presiding over session

MEHTAB PIRZADA

ISLAMABAD: The Senate

witnessed squabbling be-

tween the treasury and op-

position benches on Friday

as the PTI called out PPP

Senator Palwasha Khan for

chairing the session in the

presence of Senate Depu-

ty Chairman Syedal Khan

Nasir. Senate Chairman

Yousuf Raza Gilani presided

over the proceedings but

went away 40 minutes into

the session, upon which

Holiday Notice

The offices of daily Islamabad POST shall

Saturday on account

of weekly off therefore

will

newspaper on Sunday.

there

closed

be no

Editor

Senator Palwasha

chairing the session.

Pak-China agree to strengthen parliamentary ties

Foreign Desk

BEIJING: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Friday met Chairman of China's National People's Congress (NPC) Standing Committee Zhao Leji wherein they agreed to promote engagement and cooperation between NPC and the Parliament of Pakistan. The prime minister, who is on a fiveday official visit to China, proposed several initiatives to strengthen parliamentary exchanges, including enhancing interactions between the China-Pakistan Friendship Groups and exchanging delegations of young parliamentarians The prime minister paid rich tribute to Chairman Zhao for his contributions to Chinese politics and society and congratulated him on successfully convening the NPC's annual session. Prime Minister Shehbaz noted Zhao Leji's important position in the Communist Party of China (CPC) and NPC ly contributed to Pakistan's socio-economic development. which underlined the trust placed in him by the

President confers Nishan-i-Pakistan upon Prince Rahim Aga

The award was conferred in recognition of his leadership role in advancing path-breaking initiatives in Pakistan in commercial banking, microfinance, insurance, sustainable tourism

ISLAMABAD: President Asif Ali Zardari conferred the Award of Nishan-i-Pakistan upon Prince Rahim Aga Khan in recognition of his meritorious services and role in the development, progress, and betterment of Pakistan and its people, during a special investiture ceremony held at Aiwan-e-Sadr, today. The ceremony was attended by ministers, members of Parliament, diplomats, and government officials. The award was conferred on Prince Rahim Aga Khan in recognition of his leadership role in advancing path-breaking

Continued on Page 06



The two sides reaffirmed support to each other's core interests

STAFF REPORT



JCP recommends 3 judges' for **SC** elevation

Names of SHC, LHC chief justices among those recommended for elevation to apex court

COURT REPORTER

ISLAMABAD: The Judicial Commission of Pakistan (ICP) Friday sent the names of three high court judges to be considered for elevation to the Supreme Court for final approval by the Parliamentary Committee. The names, recommended for appointment to vacant SC seats, were recommended during a meeting of the Judicial Commission held under chairmanship of Chief Justice Qazi Faiz Isa, said the sources.

During the meeting, the names of Lahore High Court Chief Justice Malik Shahzad Ahmad, Sindh High Court Chief Justice Aqeel Abbasi, and LHC Justice Shahid Bilal have been proposed, the sources said. CJP Isa had, last month, convened the JCP meeting for deliberations over the appointment of three judges in the SC. The JCP was constituted under the 18th Constitutional Amendment mandated to appoint

Continued on Page 06

Pakistan to celebrate Eid ul Adha on June 17

Central Ruet-e-Hilal Committee announces moon sighting after meeting in Karachi

DNA

KARACHI: Muslims in Pakistan will celebrate Eid ul Adha on June 17, the Central Ruet-e-Hilal Committee announced on Friday after sighting the Zil Hajj moon. The moon sighting committee was chaired by Central Ruet-e-Hilal Committee Chairman Maulana Abdul Khabeer Azad, with central and zonal committees' members, and representatives of SUPARCO, Met Office and Ministry of Religious Affairs in attendance. Meanwhile, sub-committees in Lahore, Peshawar and other cities also convened in there respective areas to gather testimonies. Earlier, Peshawar and Quetta zonal committees also announced that the crescent was spotted in respective cities. Eid ul Adha falls on the tenth day of

Continued on Page 06

BEIJING: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif meets with President of People's Republic of China Xi Jinping. – DNA

Imran 'joins' FIA probe

Dialogue only with those who hold 'real power': Imran

PTI founder "joins" controversial X post probe after FIA team visits Adiala Jail for third time

KHAYAM ABBASI

RAWALPINDI: Imran Khan, the founder of Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI), stated on Friday that he would only engage in dialogue with those who hold "real power." "I have been kept in a death cell," he lamented, adding that he has not requested any favours or facilities in prison. "I cannot tweet from jail; I instruct my lawyers to tweet on my behalf." Speaking to the media after the hearing of the £190 million scam case in Rawalpindi's Adiala Jail, Khan criticised the government, saying, "The Hamoodur Rahman Commission was established for two purposes: to prevent the repetition of past mistakes and to identify those responsible.

Continued on Page 06

Institutions should work within their limits: Justice Kavani

IHC disposed of the petition for the recovery of missing poet Ahmed Farhad

FAISAL SHEIKH

ISLAMABAD: Justice Mohsin Akhtar Kayani of Islamabad High Court (IHC) on Friday says no one is above the law and all institutions should work within their constitutional jurisdiction.

Continued on Page 06

Pak calls for accountability over custodial deaths in IIOJK

Spokesperson says individuals wishing to enter Pakistan from Afghanistan must possess a visa and an Afghan passport

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan on Friday reiterated its call for India to be held accountable for its unabated human rights abuses in the Indian Illegally Occupied Jammu and Kashmir (IIOJK) where over 7,000 Kashmiris had so far died in the custody of Indian forces during the last three decades. Foreign Office spokesperson

a similar approach, eliminating the need for a separate selection committee

and allowing the coach to make team selections directly. This arrangement

will also do away with various pressure groups within the team 99

briefing, highlighted the reported death of a Kashmiri civilian at a police station in IIOJK's Pulwama district. "This is not the first incident of its kind as over the last three decades the number of custodial deaths in IIOJK has exceeded 7,000. The perpetrators of these crimes should be held accountable," she said reaffirming Pakistan's continuous political, diplomatic and moral support to Kashmiri people for the just and peaceful settlement of the Jammu and Kashmir dispute in accordance with the UN Security Council resolutions.

Mumtaz Zahra Baloch, at her weekly press

Continued on Page 06

Requiem for the Pakistan cricket team 66 Drawing from this experience, it might be beneficial for cricket to adopt



N ignominious de-feat at the hands of cricket minnows USA during the T20 World Cup match does not bode well for the future of the Pakistan cricket

stricting Pakistan to a modest total of 159, the USA managed to chase down the target on the last ball, forcing the match into a super over. In the super over, the USA scored 18 runs. The Pakistani openers then failed to reach this target, bringing disrepute to them-

Pakistan's middle order. However, he betests at the Pakistan Military Academy PMA, it was expected that fitness issues

would not trouble the players. Another player, Muhammad Amir, who had announced his retirement and was in betting, was also called back to the squad. He was chosen to bowl the super over, during which he conceded 18 runs, including 8 runs from extras. This proved to be a poor decision, especially with regular bowler Shaheen Afridi available. We witnessed yet another disappointing performance from Azam Khan, both as a wicketkeeper and a batsman. It remains a mystery who is behind his selection for the team. I cannot recall any player in any sport with a physical structure like Azam Khan's

performing well. His physique appears

unfit for any kind of sport, yet he con-

tinues to be part of the team.

The frequent changes in management at the Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) are a significant factor contributing to the team's lackluster performance. Often, PCB Chairmen lack a cricketing background, leading to the captain and senior team members dominating the selection process. Currently, Captain Babar Azam is believed to have formed a strong group of like-minded players within the team, thereby exerting considerable influence over team management decisions. The incumbent PCB Chairman, Mohsin Naqvi, appears to be

inexperienced and easily influenced due to his lack of cricketing knowledge and administrative skills. Consequently, the team seems to be in disarray.

Taking a cue from the past and considering the current system at the PCB, it is evident that everyone aspires to be the PCB chairman due to the substantial perks and privileges associated with the position. Beyond the monetary benefits, the PCB chairman enjoys free travel, fivestar accommodations, and other luxurious amenities while accompanying the team. The opportunity to grant favors to close associates further enhances the appeal of this role. Amidst this indulgence, little attention is given to team performance and discipline. To move in the right direction, this trend must be reversed.

The overall political system of a country undeniably has a direct impact on sports. In Pakistan, the political landscape is fluid, uncertain, and fraught with anomalies, which has disrupted the country's systems, including sports. Appointments to key positions often ignore the merit principle, leading to poor performances in various sports disciplines. The state of affairs at the Pakistan Hockey Federation is deeply troubling. Hockey, the national game of Pakistan, has been treated with neglect, undermining its very foundations. Hockey players, despite their dedication and contributions, are among the most neglected members of society, receiving meager compensation.

A recent example of their resilience was seen at the Azlan Shah Cup, where Pakistan finished second purely due to the personal efforts of the players. However, this success is overshadowed by the ongoing leadership crisis within the federation. Two factions are currently vying for control, a situation exacerbated by the government and the Ministry of Inter-Provincial Coordination's failure to resolve this contentious issue. This prolonged dispute has had a severely adverse effect on Pakistan hockey, hindering its progress and development at all levels. Pakistan will now face India in their next match. If the green shirts are to repeat the USA performance, then for sure match against India is going to be a one-sided affair. Defeat against USA on one hand shall put extra pressure on Pakistan in the match against India while the Indian on the other hand shall feel relaxed as they will be taking on a team that was humiliated by cricket minnows.

Recently, Pakistan hired South African star player Gary Kirsten as the head coach of their cricket team. However, he cannot be blamed for the recent defeat as he did not have sufficient time to coach the team. Additionally, he likely had minimal influence over team selection, which is unfortunate.

In contrast, the Pakistan hockey team performed well in the Azlan Shah Cup and the National Cup in Poland, largely due to the influence of Dutch coach Roelant Oltmans, who was given the authority to select the team. This situation arose because of disagreements between two parallel selection committees within the hockey federation. The government intervened and empowered Oltmans to make team selections until the federations resolved their issues. This arrangement proved successful, as Oltmans selected the team based purely on merit. Drawing from this experience, it might be beneficial for cricket to adopt a similar approach, eliminating the need for a separate selection committee and allowing the coach to make team selections directly. This arrangement will also do away with various pressure groups within the team.

COMMENT

Ansar M Bhatti



team. After reselves and their country. Let's delve into the various factors that

led to this debacle, starting with team fitness. Key player Imad Wasim was brought back into the team to strengthen came unfit before the crucial match. The team had undergone numerous fitness in Kakul before departing for Ireland and England. After the rigorous sessions at

previously sentenced for involvement

Romina stresses collective action against global warming

Romina Khurshid emphasized on collective approach among the federal government and all the provinces to deal with global warming and heat wave effects in the country

ADIL SHAHEEN

ISLAMABAD: PM's Coordinator on Climate Change & Environmental Coordination Romina Khurshid Alam emphasized on strong coordination and collective approach among the federal government and all the provinces to deal with global warming and heat wave effects in the country. She was chairing the first meeting of the task force constituted by the prime minister to propose measures to address the effects of global warming and heat wave and stressed upon the sensitivity of the issue adding that actions need to be initiated on war footing, a news release said. High-level Inter-departmental Working Group on forest fires apprised the meeting that from May 17 to June 5 2024, total 13 fires erupted in Margalla Hills National Park and adjoining areas which affected 77.58 Hectare area. The vegetation affected in that area include small trees, scrubs, shrubs and chir pine. It was apprised to the forum that well-coordinated response

Maldives

NU, CUI

strengthen

higher

education

sector

ISLAMABAD : Maldives

National University and

COMSATS University Is-

lamabad (CUI) on Friday

For future collaborations,

Dr. Omer suggested that

MNU can avail various

scholarship opportunities

available for post-graduate

students from Maldives as

well as learn from CUI's

experience in hybrid

mode of education. Dr. Ta-

hir Naeem, Director P&D

and HRD briefed on the

training need assessment

carried out by CUI in 2018

at MNU, highlighted the

various areas of capacity

building and institutional

development where CUI

could provide technical

assistance. Dr. Aishath ex-

pressed keen interest in

upgrading MNU's learning

management system with CUI's expertise. She invit-

ed CUI's technical team to

visit Maldives and review

MNU's existing system,

provide recommendations,

and train university staff

members. Dr. Bilal Zaka.

Head Directorate of IT Ser-

vices and Dr. Muhammad

Asim Noor Head CU Online

were also present in the

meeting. Dr. Zaka assured

full support in upgrading

MNU's student manage-

ment systems and other

technical aspects.-APP

was launched to control these fires by the Ministry of Climate Change, NDMA, Pakistan Army, PAF and CDA. However, the Chairperson raised concerns on the lack of fire beaters availability to firefighters. The Member Operations NDMA presented their strategy to combat heat wave effects adding that they have completed simulation exercise to combat upcoming moon soon spell. While highlighting the unprecedentedly longer duration heat wave in country, Pakistan Meteorological Department apprised the meeting that except GB all provinces would receive above normal rainfall in upcoming moon soon. Probability of urban flooding can't be ruled out, he said in response of a question. It was also apprised that besides above normal rainfall, temperatures this year would also be higher which would cause more snow melting that on one hand fulfill the water shortage need and on the other hand rise the threats of lake outbursts in northern areas. Ministry of Water Resources apprised the chairper-

son, there is zero shortage of water and every province taking its share according to index. Members of Task Force from AJK and GB while sharing their concerns and recommendations appreciated the formation of Task Force and invaluable ideas received during the meeting. The chairperson, while highlighting the issues of women in disaster-hit areas, stressed on setting up local community's committees wherein inclusion of women should be ensured who could approach needy women inside their homes to meet their hygienic needs. She directed Ministry of Information Broadcasting to ensure effective awareness in collaboration with PEMRA before any disaster. She also advised to establish a dashboard with the cooperation of ministry of information technology where all data would be readily available for all stakeholders to take timely action. While concluding the meeting, the Chairperson directed all stakeholders to submit their recommendations in writing before next meeting.

BISP plays crucial role in women empowerment: Rubina

Ayaz Sadiq extended his heartfelt congratulations to Rubina Khalid on assuming her new role as Chairperson of BISP

FAISAL SHEIKH

joined hands to strengthen cooperation in higher ed-ISLAMABAD: Chairperson ucation sector. This was Benazir Income Support agreed during a visit of a Programme (BISP), Rudelegation from Maldives bina Khalid Friday said led by Dr. Aishath Shethat BISP was playing henaz Adam, Vice Chancrucial role in the ecocellor, Maldives National nomic empowerment of University (MNU) and Dr women. Speaking dur-Raheema Abdul Raheem, ing a meeting with the Deputy Vice Chancellor, Speaker National Assemwhich called on Rector bly, Sardar Ayaz Sadiq, CUI, Prof. Dr. Sajid Qathe chairperson reitermar. In a presentation ated her commitment to held on the occasion, serve the marginalized Head of CUI Internationsegments of society al Office, Dr. Hammad through the programme. Omer informed that the Ayaz Sadiq extended his collaboration between the heartfelt congratulations two universities had been to Rubina Khalid on asflourishing since 2016, suming her new role as which was inked in a mem-Chairperson of BISP. orandum of understanding "BISP is dedicated to for scientific and educaprovide essential support tional cooperation and has to the most vulnerable furthered with exchange visits in 2016 and 2018.

ly focusing on the economic empowerment of women", she said. She said that steps were being taken to enhance the programme's outreach and impact to ensure that no one was left behind. Rubina Khalid briefed the speaker about the ongoing and recently launched initiatives of BISP. The speaker expressed his support for the programme and wished Rubina Khalid success in her endeavors. "The BISP is vital for the socio-economic uplift of marginalized communities and I wish for its continued success under the leadership of Rubina Khalid" he stated. Later, Central

communities, particular- Additional General Secretary of Pakistan Peoples Party, Engineer Mohammad Humayun Khan met Rubina Khalid at the BISP headquarters. The discussion was held with focus on the issues faced by women beneficiaries of BISP in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa related to the stipend disbursement and the provision of necessary facilities. Rubina Khalid assured General Secretary PPP that all problems faced by the beneficiaries would be addressed. promptly "Our priority is to ensure that every woman in need receives the support she deserves without any delays," she

Petroleum dealers association announces support to SBA

PESHAWAR: Patron-in-chief of Sarhad Business Alliance (SBA) and former Governor KP, Haji Ghulam Ali has said that the Alliance was formed with sole objective of naming Sarhad Chamber as real representative of business community and to open way for economic development through promotion of trade and commerce in the province. "The intention is clear, Allah will make the goal easy, I see a clear success of SBA in the upcoming Chamber's elections," he remarked. He expressed these views at a dinner hosted by Shahrukh Khan Duranpur and Sartaj Khan, office bearers of Petroleum Association, in honour of SBA members here Friday. In the event, Petroleum Association along with all its Chamber members announced their support to the SBA. Group Chairman Syed Zahir Ali Shah, Mohammad Ishaq, Sharaft Ali Mubarak, Malik Mehr Elahi, Adnan Jalil, Abidullah Ghulam Javed Bilal Mamor Khan Haji Abdul Hameed Gowwara and other officials including the corporate and associate members of Sarhad Chamber were present at the ceremony. Host Shahrukh Khan welcomed the new group and said that the current situation of the Sarhad Chamber and the plight of the business community was in front of everyone which Sarhad Business Alliance had to solve. Chairman of the group, Syed Zahir Ali Shah, Chairman PCDA Mubeen Khan, Behzad Rehman Khan of Oil Tanker Association, officials of People's Party Labor Wing and Trade Wing, Provincial President of Car Dealer Association Bakht Mir Khan, Tajran Association were present at the event. Khyber Pakhtunkhwa President Malik Maher Elahi, Muhammad Ishaq, Abdul Hamid Gowada, Khawaja Yawar, Haji Umar, Adnan Jalil and others clarified in their address that this group was established purely to restore the lost dignity of the Chamber of Commerce. Zahir Shah said that the entire manifesto was being prepared to run all the affairs of the border chamber honestly, which will be put into practice. He said that this group would play the role of the first force to break the status quo. The speakers said that the group of certain people occupying the Sarhad Chamber had been rejected by the business community. Addressing the ceremony, Haji Ghulam Ali said that he was determined to restore the reputation of the Sarhad Chamber like a challenge. If the Sarhad Chamber of Commerce and Industry elections are won, the world will see how the problems of the business community of Peshawar are solved, he claimed.-APP



ISLAMABAD: People visiting an exhibition held jointly under the auspices of Islamabad Club, Islamabad Camera Club, and PNCA, National Art \Gallery Islamabad titled "ANNUAL MEMBERS PHOTOGRAPHIC COMPETITION & EXHIBITION" at PNCA.— ONLINE

Cleanliness arrangements for Eidul Azha reviewed

FAISALABAD: Faisalabad Waste Management Company (FWMC) Chief Executive Officer Rauf Ahmad said on Friday that cleanliness arrangements on Eidul Adha were being made exemplary in the district. He said that all wings of the company had been put on alert and they had been directed to develop coordination with other relevant departments for better results. Presiding over a meeting, the CEO directed that all arrangements be completed before Eid and plan-B should also be a priority in case of rain, in addition to necessary repairing of vehicles and waste containers. All service delivery camps should be active. He stressed for a comprehensive strategy to distribute degradable waste bags among citizens a day before Eidul Azha. The cleanliness of cattle markets could not be compromised, he said and urged for the distribution of pamphlets among citizens for their awareness. He also directed for mechanical sweeping of roads, sprinkling limestone and water at entry paths of Masajid and Eidgahs. The officers of operation, HR, IT, Transport, Workshop and Communication departments were present in the meeting.-APP

Submit sales tax returns till June 18

LAHORE : Lahore Chamber of Commerce & Industry President Kashif Anwar, in a meeting with Focal Person of the Punjab Revenue Authority (PRA) Omer Faroog Khan, urged the LCCI members to submit their pending Sales Tax Returns and Workers Welfare Fund (WWF) payments as the financial year 2023-24 draws to a close. With the deadline set for June 18, 2024, the LCCI president highlighted the critical importance of compliance. He urged all LCCI members to ensure that their PRA Sales Tax Returns and any due taxes are submitted promptly. "Timely submission of these returns not only facilitates smooth business operations but also upholds our collective commitment to regulatory compliance," Kashif Anwar stated. In addition to stressing the importance of meeting tax deadlines, He advocated for a more supportive approach towards taxpavers. He emphasized that entering the tax net should be incentivized with benefits rather than penalties and punishment for those not yet registered. -APP

Commissioner for setting up 24/7 control room during Eid

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Chief Commissioner Islamabad Muhammad Ali Randhawa on Friday chaired a meeting regarding the preparation for Eid ul Azha arrangements in the federal capital.

The meeting aimed to streamline the operation of cattle markets and maintain cleanliness across the city, said the spokesman of Chief Commissioner Office, Nouman Nazim. The meeting was attended by the representatives from various sectors, focused on man-

that hygiene standards remain high during the festive period. To address these challenges, Randhawa outlined several key initiatives.

A 24/7 control room will be set up to handle any complaints and issues that arise. This service aims to provide immediate assistance and solutions to residents during the busy days of Eid. Additionally, biodegradable bags will be distributed to help manage waste more effectively.

An awareness campaign will be launched to inform citizens about the importance of using aging the expected influx designated facilities and following guidelines to keep the city clean. This campaign will emphasize community cooperation and the collective effort needed to maintain a safe and hygienic environment. Chief Commissioner Randhawa stressed the importance of community participation. He urged the residents to take advantage of the facilities provided and to follow the guidelines to ensure that everyone can enjoy a clean and safe Eid ul Azha.By implementing these measures, the city administration aimed to create a smoother, cleaner experience for all during the festivities, the spokesman added.

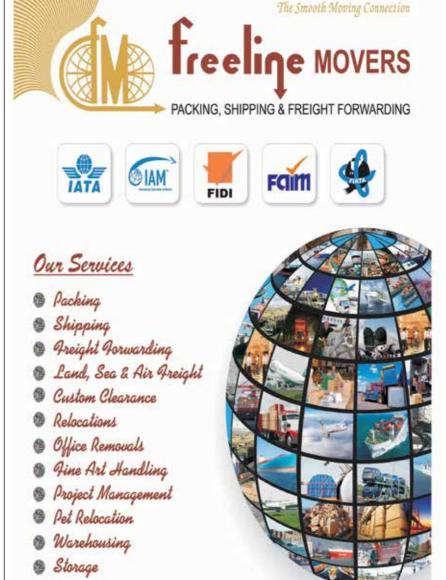
AIOU's academic council approves new degree programmes

ISLAMABAD: The Academic Council of Allama Igbal Open University has approved to introduce news programmes including BS programs, PGD programs, certificate and short courses in a meeting attended by the department heads, principal officers, and external members attended the meeting. It was the meeting of 67th Academic Council and 51st Academic Planning and Development/ Research and Educational Technology Committee (APD/RET) of Allama Igbal

Open University (AIOU). Vice Chancellor, AIOU, Prof. Dr Nasir Mahmood chaired the meeting, and Registrar, Raja Umer Younis organised the meeting.

The minutes of the previous meeting were unanimously approved during the council meeting. The council also approved changes in the title and content of several courses offered by the Faculty of Social Sciences and Humanities, Faculty of Education, Faculty of Arabic and Islamic Studies and Faculty of Sciences. The meeting also approved to launch of various courses, including BS in Political Science, International Relations, Data Science, Artificial Intelligence and Environmental Studies as well as a short course of IELTS and PGD in Clinical Nutrition. Agenda items of services departments including the

Examination Department. Directorate of Regional Services, and Directorate of Academic Planning and Course Production were also approved. Vice Chancellor AIOU, Prof. Dr Nasir Mahmood directed the faculty members and deans to keep in mind the policy of the University and Higher Education Commission in designing the courses and preparing the teaching materials. While introducing the new members, he assured to make all possible efforts for better and quality education. The Supreme Body of the University (Executive Council) will approve these decisions in the next meeting.-APP



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Salik commends ILO's efforts for Gaza workers

The minister highlighted the recent attack on Rafah mentioned in the Director-General's report, where more than 35,000 Palestinians have been killed and 77,000 injured, including 14,000 children

DNA

ISLAMABAD Resource Hussain Friday appreciated the efforts and important the crises being faced by Gaza and the West Bank. The minister made these

Federal Minister for Overseas Development (OPHRD), Chaudhary Salik initiatives taken by the ILO to support workers and mitigate the adverse effects of remarks during the 112th International Labour Con-

ference being held on 3rd June to 14th June 2024 featured significant engagement from Pakistan. Chaudhry Salik Hussain led the Pakistani delegation, which also included Zulfiqar Ahmad, Secretary, Workers Welfare Fund. The conference served as a vital platform for global labor discussions, covering topics such as labor standards. employment strategies for fostering decent work, and inclusive economic growth, a news release said. Pakistan's active participation

emphasized its commitment to addressing key labor issues and contributing to the global dialogue on work-related challenges and solutions. This involvement highlights Pakistan's dedication to improving labor conditions and aligning with international labor standards. While addressing the conference, Chaudhary Salik Hussain delivered a statement on behalf of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC). He acknowledged the collective failure to uphold the

ideals of the Declaration of Philadelphia on its 80th anniversary despite the commitment to social justice. The minister emphasized the dire situation in the occupied Arab territories. particularly in Palestine, and stressed the failure of the multilateral system. He further elaborated that the initial task was to improve working conditions in occupied Palestine, but the current focus has shifted to saving lives, especially those of women and children, due to the worsen-

ing situation. The minister highlighted the recent attack on Rafah mentioned in the Director-General's report, where more than 35,000 Palestinians have been killed and 77,000 injured, including 14,000 children. He noted the severe impact on employment, with the unemployment rate reaching 45% and a significant plunge in GDP. The OIC stressed the need for an immediate ceasefire and the unobstructed delivery of humanitarian aid to Gaza.

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

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 Fed-

eration 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



Turkish Airlines.....8494949



Emergency



Enquiry

Edhi Ambulance	115
PIA Flight Info	114
PIA Cargo	9280979
Railway Inquiry	117
Railway Exchange	9270831-5
WASA Rawalpindi	5555489
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 Internati	onal 4603666



Departments

- cpai (iii (iii		
CDA	9221334-43	
CDA	9208301-04	
Met Office	9250360-6	
RDA	5555864	
TMA	5770886	
Contonment B	oard 0270151-3	

Water Tank

Islamabad.....0321-5744480

Pak, Portugal economic relations need to be boosted

Embassy of Portugal in Pakistan and Sanober Institute host Seminar on "PAKISTAN AND PORTUGAL RELATIONS — Past Experiences, Vision for the Future"

DNA

ISLAMABAD: The Embassy of Portugal in Pakistan, in collaboration with the Sanober Institute, hosted a seminar on "PA-KISTAN AND PORTUGAL RELATIONS - Past Experiences, Vision for the Future' at the Serena Hotel Islamabad. The event was moderated by Executive Director of the Sanober Institute, and featured a distinguished panel of speakers, including Ambassador of Portugal Frederico Silva, Ambassador Aizaz Chaudhary (Chairman of Sanober Institute), Ambassador Shafqat Ali Khan (Additional Secretary for Europe), five former Pakistan's Ambassadors to Portugal (Shireen Safdar, Fauzia Sana, Naela Choan, Javed Khattak, and Ahmad Warraich), Khurram Dastgir (former Federal Minister), Ambassador Naghmana Hashmi, Raja Amer Iqbal (former President of the Rawalpindi Chamber of Commerce and Industry (RCCI)), Razi Ahmad, (Chairman of Lahore Art Council), Agha Imran Khan, Nadeem Maksoon, Ambassador Navqi, the honorary consuls of Portugal in Lahore and Karachi, and Vice Admiral (Retired) Khan Hasham Bin Saddique HI(M). The seminar focused on the past experiences and future potential of Pakistan-Portugal relations. Ambassador Frederico Silva, in his opening remarks, highlighted the main goal of the seminar: to compile informed feelings and impressions about the current status quo and advice for the future enhancement of Pakistan-Portugal relations.

This event was part of a cycle of celebrations for the national day of Portugal, which coincides with the day of death of the national literary icon Luís de Camões, on 10th June 1580. Ambassador Aizaz Chaudhary thanked the Portuguese team for projecting a positive image of Pakistan-Portugal relations. Ambassador Shafqat Ali Khan emphasized that Portugal is a trusted friend and partner of Pakistan, with relations continuing to prosper despite global conflicts. He also acknowledged Portugal's



role in Pakistan's GSP Plus status in the EU market and the increasing demand for textiles and apparel in the Portuguese market. Panelists advocated for increased cultural, people-to-people, and economic ties between the two nations. The panelists unanimously advocated for promoting culture, people-to-people contact, tourism in both sides, and art exchange, citing a lot of scope for the development of these relations and a positive forecast. They also highlighted the potential for expanding trade, with the current trade volume of 300 million dollars being seen as a starting point for growth. Suggestions for trade expansion included textiles, fruits, vegetables, olive cultivation, himalayan salt, industrial machinery, and renewable energy technologies and expertise. Ambassador Naghmana Hashmi emphasized the need

for more bilateral sessions for open talk and cooperation on several issues, including textiles and tiles instead of competition. She also suggested that Pakistan could learn from Portugal's textile and tile industries, as they follow EU quality control and policies, which could increase Pakistan's exports. Khurram Dastgir, a former Federal Minister for Commerce, Defence, and Foreign Affairs, highlighted the need for more cultural exchanges, art, literature, and learning the Portuguese language, as well as proactive diplomacy by Pakistan's ambassadors. Panelists also emphasized the need for increased cultural exchanges, including art exhibitions, literary translations, and music and food festivals. The panelists also highlighted the vibrant and dynamic entrepreneur community of Paki-

stanis in Portugal and the potential for col-

laboration in the IT sector, where Portugal presents a dynamic technological hub and Pakistan has a strong talent pool. They emphasized the need for increased cultural exchanges, including art exhibitions, literary translations, and music and food festivals. The panelists highlighted the potential for Pakistan to benefit from Portugal's rich culture, art, history, music, textiles, and pottery, and for Portugal to benefit from Pakistan's rich culture and cuisine. Ambassador Frederico Silva and Ambassador Aizaz Chaudhary provided closing remarks, emphasizing the need for action and continued dialogue In his closing remarks. Ambassador Frederico Silva welcomed the feedback and discussions from the seminar and emphasized the need to focus on areas of concern, such as increasing official visits, improving the implementation of agreements, reinforcing academic.

IRSA releases 295,600 cusecs water

ISLAMABAD:Indus River System Authority (IRSA) on Friday released 295,600 cusecs water from various rim stations with inflow of 279,500 cusecs. According to the data released by IRSA, water level in River Indus at Tarbela Dam was 1462.87 feet and was 64.87 feet higher than its dead level of 1,398 feet. Water inflow and outflow in the dam was recorded as 188,600 cusecs and 185,000 cusecs respectively. The water level in River Jhelum at Mangla Dam was 1188.45 feet, which was 138.45 feet higher than its dead level of 1,050 feet. The inflow and outflow of water was recorded 55,800 cusecs and 55,000 cusecs respectively. The release of water at Kalabagh, Taunsa , Guddu and Sukkur was recorded as 189,200, 151,300, 124,300 and 66,700 cusecs respectively. Similarly, from River Kabul, a total of 85,100 cusecs of water released at Nowshera and 10,400 cusecs released from River Chenab at Marala.-APP

Artificial Intelligence and Job Automation

FATIMA ANJUM

ISLAMABAD: According to a recent report by the International Monetary Fund (IMF), artificial intelligence (AI) is expected to have a significant influence on approximately 40% of professions in Pakistan. IMF Managing Director Kristalina Georgieva voiced worries that the nation's inequality may grow if artificial intelligence is used unrestrained. She issued a warning, stating that the wealthy and well-educated portions of society will probably gain more from AI. The innovations of AI based systems in the

workplace has been rising concerns of massive job losses and the widening of the economic divides. When the technology was not so highly developed that it could perform predictable and repetitive tasks. human labor was more in demand to perform such tasks and thus there was more employment and less economic recessions. Due to this the firms were able to afford the salaries to fulfill the demands of the employees. However, as the sophisticated technology and robotics innovates in the workplace, it is raising concerns of job automation as human labor will no longer be a requirement for performing tasks which are predictable and repetitive since the latest robotics and machinery now has the ability to perform such tasks. This therefore, will leave people in various sectors jobless and without the means to earn a living. According to a recent Brookings Institution study 36 million people work in jobs with "high exposure" to automation, which means that most of their tasks, ranging from retail sales and market analysis to hospitality and warehouse labor, will be done using AI. AI is predicted by experts to automate 60% of occupations in developed nations but just 26% in low-income countries like Pakistan. Although AI can increase productivity, it also has the potential to replace some human employment, which would result in job losses and a drop in wages. The accelerated rate of unemployment will further lead to an economic crisis. The

Unmanned aerial vehicle industry, heralding new frontiers

DNA

ISLAMABAD: "The year 2024 marks the start of a soaring UAV (unmanned aerial vehicle) industry, heralding new frontiers for Pakistan-China cooperation", Sun Yang, Vice President of Shenzhen UAV Industry Association told CEN at the Pakistan China Business Forum held in Shenzhen. In response to agricultural disruptions caused by climate change, Pakistan and China are bolstering cooperation in applying UAVs to mitigate impacts in the agricultural sector. Ghulam Qadir, Commercial Counsellor of the Pakistani Embassy in China, has revealed a plan to invite 50 to 60 Chinese technology

including those in the UAV and AI sectors. According to Mr. Dong, CEO of Baina Zhihang, a UAV startup in Shenzhen, South Asia and South America are the most promising markets for low-altitude economic development and cooperation. "The vast rice paddies in South Asian countries provide boundless opportunities for UAV usage, from weed control to fertilizer and pesticide distribution", he said, adding that close people-to-people connections and exchanges also facilitate communication and technical training. "As an emerging industry, drone-related laws and regulations are often similar among various Asian countries, laying the foundation for interna-

the "low-altitude economy" represented by UAVs has been termed as a strategic emerging industry and a new growth engine. Low-altitude" refers to an airspace range below 1000 meters vertically, extending as needed to not more than 3000 meters. Last year, China's civilian drone industry registered a yearon-year increase of 32%. It is forecasted the market size of China's low-altitude economy is expected to reach RMB 1.5 trillion by 2025 and RMB 3.5 trillion by 2035. In Shenzhen, a special economic zone in southern China, consumption-level UAVs take up 70% of the global market, and the figure for industry-level usage is around 50%. Last year, over 400,000 trips were

companies to visit Pakistan this and next month, including those in the UAV and AI sectors. According to Mr. Dong, CEO of Baina Zhihang, a UAV startup in Shenzhen, South Asia and South America are the most promising markets for low-altitude economic development and cooperation. "The vast rice paddies in South Asia rice paddies in South Asia and vast rice paddies in South Asia and South Asia and Cooperation", Dong told CEN reporter. In China, the "low-altitude economy" represented by UAVs has been termed as a strategic emerging industry and a new growth engine. Low-altitude" refers to an airspace range below 1000 meters vertically, extending as needed to not more than 3000 meters. Last year, China's civilian drone told CEN reporter. In China, the "low-altitude economy" represented by UAVs has been termed as a strategic emerging industry and a new growth engine. Low-altitude" refers to an airspace range below 1000 meters vertically, extending as needed to not more than 3000 meters. Last year, China's civilian drone told CEN reporter. In China, the "low-altitude economy" represented by UAVs has been termed as a strategic emerging industry and a new growth engine. Low-altitude" refers to an airspace range below 1000 meters vertically, extending as needed to not more than 3000 meters. Last year, China's civilian drone told CEN reporter. In China, the "low-altitude economy" represented by UAVs has been termed as a strategic emerging industry and a new growth engine. Low-altitude" stable UAVs with passengers on board", Sun Yang poninted out that, to fully leverage this

cutting-edge technology, Pakistan requires the establishment of physical infrastructure, communication and sensing networks, digital operations, as well as regulatory and service mechanisms. "Besides farmlands, more application scenarios can be explored, such as package delivery, mid-air sightseeing, first aid, urban patrol, etc.",

PIA flights to Europe to be restored soon: Minister

ISLAMABAD: The Minister of State for Finance and Revenue informed the National Assembly (NA) on Friday that Pakistan International Airlines (PIA) flights to Europe were expected to be restored soon. Responding to a calling attention notice regarding the ban on PIA flights by the UK and the European Union, he said,"A detailed action plan from Pakistan has been dispatched to the European Union Aviation Safety Agency (EASA) and the verification process is currently underway." "We hope that the verification process will be completed within two to three months and flights to Europe will be restored," he added. The minister said that the European Commission Air Safety Commission delisted Pakistan from its concern list on May 14, describing this as a positive development.—APP

Cultivation of traditional Chinese medicines

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Tianjin Modern Vocational Technology College (TMVTC) and MNS University of Agriculture Multan collaborated on a project to establish a Herbal Medicine Planting, Testing, and Processing Base under Pakistani Luban Workshop. The project, in collaboration with Tianjin Pharmaceutical Darentang Co., Ltd. and Tianjin Tailai Import and

Export Co., Ltd, is dedicated to promoting the cultivation and processing of Traditional Chinese Medicines in Multan, Gwadar Pro reported on Friday.

This initiative integrates industry and vocational ed-



ucation, aims to spread the culture of Chinese medicine, trains overseas technical talents, and supports the international development of TCM. The project was officially launched at the 11th Conference on Chinese Herbal Medicine Base Collaboration for Shared Benefits held last week. The project focuses on integrating China's TCM brands with foreign cultural exchange brands, merging innovation with engineering practice, and combining TCM international trade with the training of local technicians. This forms a "three-combination" vocational education model to support the global expansion of TCM. The model received high attention from industry experts and pharmaceutical enterprises attending the conference. The Pakistani Luban Workshop project selected and cultivated high-quality licorice.



healthy and in good physical condition is at the heart of everything we do.

Our aim is to establish long-term trusting relationships with our patients and their families, offering them easy accessibility to health and continuity of care.



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Saturday, June 08 , 2024

Briefs

Protest leads to adjournment of Senate

ISLAMABAD: The continuous protest by the Opposition members in the Senate on Friday led to adjournment of the session till Monday at 05:00

Soon after calling attentions business, Palwasha Mohammad Zai Khan from panel of presiding officers assumed the chair as the Chairman, requested leave from the House to witness oath taking of his newly elected son as member National Assembly. However, Leader of the Opposition Syed Shibli Faraz along with other opposition members, started protest and pointed out that in the presence of Deputy Chairman, the presiding officer cannot chair the session.

The Presiding Officer while quoting the Rule 14 of procedure and conduct in Senate. observed that she could preside the House. She went on to say that it was the prerogative of the Chairman Senate to nominate any member of the House as presiding officer.

Senator Farooq H Naek also observed that no rule was violated and it was the prerogative of the Chairman. He said that Palwasha Khan could preside over the session. Maulana Atta ur Rehman of JUI-F said that the Chairman announced the panel of presiding officers for the session as per the rules, but any presiding officer could not chair the session in the presence of Chairman and Deputy Chairman.—APP

Weekly inflation up by $0.45 \,\mathrm{pc}$

ISLAMABAD: The weekly inflation measured by the Sensitive Price Indicator (SPI), witnessed an increase of 0.45 percent for the combined consumption groups during the week ended on June 06, the Pakistan Bureau of Statistics (PBS) reported on Friday. According to the PBS data, the SPI for the week under review in the above-mentioned group was recorded at 309.91 points as compared to 308.52 points during the past week. As compared to the corresponding week of last year, the SPI for the combined consumption group in the week under review witnessed an increase of 21.69 per cent.

The weekly SPI with the base year 2015-16 =100 covers 17 urban centres and 51 essential items for all expenditure groups. The SPI for the lowest consumption group of up to Rs 17,732, increased by 0.81 per cent and went up to 301.25 points from the last week's 298.82 points. The SPI for consumption groups of Rs 17,732-22,888, Rs 22,889-29,517; Rs 29,518-44,175 and above Rs 44,175, increased by 0.70 percent, 0.56 percent, 0.51 and 0.33 percent respectively. During the week, out of 51 items, prices of 19 (37.26%) items increased, 14 (27.45%) items decreased and 18 (35.29%) items remained stable. The items, which recorded a decrease in their average prices on a week-on-week basis included bread (3.02%), garlic (2.00%), petrol (1.74%), pulse masoor (1.43%), diesel (1.42%), rice basmati broken (1.32%), chilies powder (1.31%), eggs (0.94 %), wheat flour (0.77%) and mustard oil (0.46%). The commodities which recorded an increase in their average prices on week-on-week basis included onions (33.21%), tomatoes (15.34%), bananas (4.93%), pulse gram (3.69%), potatoes (2.62%), chicken (1.84%)./-APP



ISLAMABAD: Senior politician Raja Zafarul Haq visited the PNCA and witnessed ongoing photo exhibition. He lauded efforts of the NCA for the promotion of art and culture. -DNA

Section 7E of income tax Ord should be abolished, says Atif

FPCCI Chief also highlighted that the Sindh government collects infrastructure cess on import stage at 1.25 percent; which translates into PKR. 225 billion per year. Logically, the better part of that cess should be spent on the infrastructural development and maintenance of Karachi; and, if that happens, the real estate of Karachi will be in a much better shape and its market will also pick up

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Mr. Atif Ikram Sheikh, President FPCCI, has echoed the collective demand of the business, industry and trade community that the section 7E of the income tax ordinance (ITO) 2001 should be abolished for being unproductive and unfair for levying deemed or imaginary income on immovable properties. 7E has produced no significant increase in the tax collection; instead, it has created chaos and discontentment in the otherwise very vibrant real estate sector,

he added. Mr. Atif Ikram Sheikh stressed that a real estate regulatory authority (RERA) should be established in Pakistan like other regional countries as no sector can perform at its optimum and contribute to the national economy in absence of a regulatory authority. However, he added, that this should be done in consultation with the sector's stakeholders.

FPCCI Chief also highlighted that the Sindh government collects infrastructure cess on import stage at 1.25 percent: which translates into PKR. 225 billion per year. Logically, the

better part of that cess should be spent on the infrastructural development and maintenance of Karachi; and, if that happens, the real estate of Karachi will be in a much better shape and its market will also pick up, he added. Mr. Saquib Fayyaz Magoon, SVP FPCCI, maintained that real estate can help bring more foreign exchange to the country in the form of remittances. The sector should make it as their top agenda to attract investment from the overseas Pakistanis as it will also help the economy through stabilizing rupee-dollar parity and shore up the foreign

exchange reserves (FER). Mr. Magoon added that, for the sake of policy advocacy in the national interest, any sector that can contribute to inward remittances should be facilitated and encouraged. Instead of investing in the real estate of other countries, the government should enable and welcome overseas Pakistanis to invest back in their home country, he added. Syed Saquib Shah, Convener of FPCCI's Central Standing Committee on Real Estate Property and Builders, said the systemic shortcomings and lack of facilitation for the real estate sector

can only be addressed through digitalization of the registration system; in order to bring transparency, fairness and validity in the documentation of the properties. Karachi should also get e-stamp system at the earliest like Punjab has implemented, he added. Syed Saquib Shah added that taxes are being unfairly imposed; and, the phenomenon is bringing disenchantment and stagnation in the industry. He also emphasized that taxes should be imposed on the property owners; instead of the real estate agents - who simply provide their services to buyers and sellers.

Pakistan's exports to **UK increase** by 2.31% in 10 months

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan's export of goods and services to the United Kingdom (UK) witnessed an increase of 2.31 percent during the first ten months of the current fiscal year (2023-24) as compared to the exports of the corresponding period of last year, State Bank of Pakistan (SBP) reported. The overall exports to the UK were recorded at US \$1.683 billion during July-April (2023-24) against exports of US \$1.645 billion during July-April (2022-23), SBP data revealed. On a yearto-year basis, the exports to the UK also surged to \$154.613 million in April 2024 against the export of \$151.111 million in April 2023. Meanwhile, on a month-on-month basis, the exports to the UK decreased by 13.39 percent during April 2024 as compared to the exports of \$178.517 million in March 2024, the SBP data revealed. Overall Pakistan's exports to other countries witnessed an increase of 10.64 percent in the first ten months, from US \$23.199 billion to US \$25.669 billion, the SBP data revealed. On the other hand, the imports from the UK into the country during the months under review were recorded at US \$695.909 million against US \$512.171 million last year, showing an increase of 35.87 percent in July-April (2023-24). On a year-on-year basis, the imports for the UK also increased to US \$43.003 million in April 2024, against the export of US \$31.875 million in April 2023. On a month-on-month basis, the imports from the UK into the country witnessed a nominal decrease of 2.21 percent during April 2024, as compared to the imports of US \$43.976 million during March 2024, according to the data. The overall imports into the country witnessed a decrease of 5.27 per cent, from \$45.766 billion to US \$43.353 billion, according to the data.-APP

Expert on WFS day stresses awareness

The WFS day reminds us of the need to strengthen food safety regulations and standards that govern the production, processing, and distribution of food

ISLAMABAD : Member of Pakistan Agricultural Research Council (PARC), Sadiq Afridi stressed media awareness for stepping up efforts to ensure food safety and to fight malnutrition with the adoption of a healthy lifestyle. Talking to the PTV news in connection with World Food Safety Day (WFS), he explained the theme for WFS Day 2024 is "Safe Food Now for a Healthy Tomorrow," adding, this theme emphasises the critical role that safe food plays in ensuring a healthy future for individuals and communities. It underscores the need for sustainable food production systems that can prevent food-borne illnesses and contribute to long-term health and well-being, he add-He said, "The responsibility of each of us to preserve safe food along the supply chain", adding, changing lifestyles, junk food, unphysical activities, over-eating and obesity were the root causes of the many diseases. By promoting awareness, encouraging best practices, and fostering global collaboration, this observance plays a crucial role in reducing food-borne illnesses and promoting a healthier, safer world, he added. Unsafe food should be minimised, he said, adding, food unsafe for consumption causes millions of cases of food-borne diseases and deaths every year. Furthermore, he said that the burden of

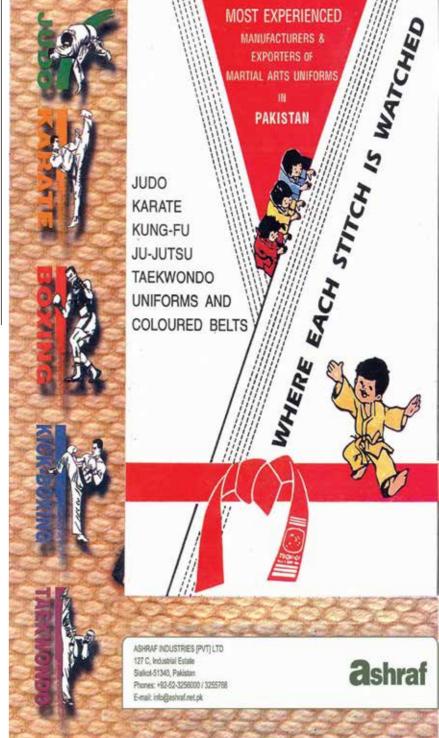
food-borne diseases are borne by individuals of all ages, but particularly by children under five years of age and by persons living in low-income regions of the world. He said that the provision of safe and healthy food was a collective responsibility that demanded the contribution of all stakeholders. adding, food insecurity and food-borne disease are closely linked: unsafe foodstuff is consumed when safe food is not accessible. Food-borne illnesses have become a major public health concern in recent years, he said, adding that safe food is the responsibility of all those involved in food production until consumption", he maintained. He said that the campaign will focus on engaging the youth and committing them to making food safety a part of their culture, adding, "We cannot compromise on food safety in any way". "We always try to create awareness about food safety among our customers to practice good habits at their homes and offices," he added. "We can minimise the risk of food contamination and adulteration and ensure food safety by ensuring strict compliance with these standards", he highlighted. The WFS day reminds us of the need to strengthen food safety regulations and standards that govern the production, processing, and distribution

National Dialogue on World Food Safety Day held

ISLAMABAD: The National Alliance for Safe Food (NAFS) on Friday hosted a National Dialogue on Food Safety to enhance awareness and understanding of food safety issues among producers, consumers, industry and other stakeholders. The day's dialogue themed: "Food safety: prepare for the unexpected" was organized with the collaboration with the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO-UN) Islamabad. Riphah Institute of Public Policy and the Islamabad Food Authority (IFA) and Shafaq Cooking Oil (A&Z Agro Industries). This vear's theme underscored the importance of being prepared for food safety incidents, no matter how mild or severe they may be. The event aimed to commemorate World Food Safety Day, for enhancing awareness and understanding of food safety issues among producers, consumers, and industry stakeholders.-APP

Inflation-stricken masses terrified of upcoming budget

ISLAMABAD: Former President of the Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry (ICCI), Dr. Shahid Rasheed Butt, said on Friday that people reeling under inflation for years are afraid of the coming budget. He added that the business community is experiencing sleepless nights because of the expected measures being adopted under pressure from the IMF. Talking to the business community, Shahid Rasheed Butt said that the public is not expected to get any relief in the budget, and they are bracing for a huge increase in inflation. He said that no budget in Pakistan has ever brought good news to the people. Still, the upcoming budget will be very painful. He added that the budget will make electricity, gas, medicines, and many other necessities of life more expensive, which will make people worse off. The business leader said that Pakistani people are still buying electricity and gas at very high costs compared to neighbouring countries, and the burden on them will be further increased after the budget. The masses will pay the price of politicians' inefficiency and mismanagement, while no burden will be placed on the elite; rather, efforts will be made to give them all possible relief.-DNA



ICCI to have 'police centre of services'

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Deputy Inspector General of Police Islamabad Syed Ali Raza Nagvi has applauded the hard work of the traders' community for the development of the country by saying that all out efforts will be made to provide them a peaceful environment for the growth of businesses. He said that security will be beefed in all the shopping centers by ensuring the functioning of the safe city cameras and that issues like beggary, snatching, drug trafficking etc. will also be curbed with the cooperation of the business community. He said this during his interaction with traders' leaders of different markets of the capital city at Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry along with SSP Taffic Sarfraz Virk. On this occasion, he announced that a 24/7 Police Centre of Services' will be established at Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry from where the traders' will be able to



obtain Character Certificates, verifications and other required documents under one roof. He added that as per the demand of the ICCI President a 'Police Reconciliation Centre will also be established in the ICCI premises for the quick and amicable resolution of traders' disputes by their own representatives. He added that ICC has to constitute a Police-Corporate Liaison Committee for the purpose and assured that there will be no police intervention in the matter as long as the disputes will be settled on merit. In his address, Ahsan Zafar Bakhtawari, President Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry said that ICCI has been playing the role of a bridge between the government and business community for ensuring the viable atmosphere for ease of doing business and that resolution of community's problem on priority basis is need of the hour. Highlighting his achievements as President ICCI, Ahsan Zafar Bakhtwari termed maintenance of law and order as pre-requisite for the development of the country and affirmed business community's fullest cooperation to police for traders' representatives must be taken on board vis--vis the matters pertaining to the community. He also apprised the DIG about some of the issues being faced by the community that need immediate action like dysfunctional safe city cameras, traffic problems, beggars' influx, drugs peddling etc. Secretary General United Business Group Zafar Bakhtawari by terming the posting of visionary IG and DIG Police in Islamabad as the blessing for the inhabitants said that availability of peaceful, congenial and business friendly environment will surely bear fruit and go a long way in strengthening the economy of the country. SSP traffic Sarfraz Virk said that six driving test centres have been established in different localities of the capital city and a state of the art Police Facilitation Centre will be established at the ICCI from where business community will be able to get renewed its driving licenses.

the objective, by asserting that

Biden's peace bluff

THE Biden administration last week proposed a "ceasefire" deal which it claimed had originated from "Israel", seeking a pathway to ending the war on Gaza by guaranteeing the release of hostages, arguing that the military capability of Hamas had been destroyed. Although swiftly dismissed by Tel Aviv, Washington quickly rallied its allies and other Arab states to support the measure. This, however, is wishful thinking, given that the US was clearly being disingenuous with the idea that "Israel proposed it." First, the Biden administration has a well-established political strategy of effectively lying on behalf of "Israel". The White House effectively sets red lines, but moves the goalposts when Netanyahu subsequently violates them anyway. The administration claimed that it opposed an IOF invasion of Rafah, but when that happened, they claimed the "red line had been crossed," among numerous other things. Every action the US has taken in regards to the conflict has been merely symbolic, if not outright disingenuous, while nonetheless keeping support for Tel Aviv unconditional. However, domestic politics comes first in the United States, and the Biden administration is now seeking to bring the war to an end, or to at least given the appearance of such, because the growing backlash against it will undermine Biden's re-election interests, as well as his attempt to claim a massive political scalp by upgrading ties with Saudi Arabia and pushing normalisation with "Israel". In doing so, the real intention of this ceasefire proposal has been to comprehensively isolate Benjamin Netanyahu and back him into a corner, as toothless as this may be. As Reuters noted, "The decision to announce unilaterally - an unusual step for the United States to take with a close ally - was deliberate, officials say, and narrowed the room for Israel or Hamas to back away from the deal."

However, it is politically untenable for Netanyahu to possibly consider ceasing the fighting at this stage, for he is aware this will certainly mean the end of his tenure in office. Already, hardliners in his cabinet have threatened to resign over it and jeopardise the ruling coalition. For his administration, agreeing to a ceasefire now is an effective return to a pre-October 7th status quo that amounts to "co-existence" between "Israel" and Hamas in Gaza, and this is impossible because Netanyahu has repeatedly and publicly affirmed that the goal of his invasion has been to change the political status quo in the Strip. This means first. the destruction of Hamas, and second, what he has described as a "new security regime" in the strip, which should be described as a full military occupation in all but name. The ceasefire proposal, however, requires that "Israel" withdraw from the populated areas of the Gaza Strip. This means ceding political control, and therefore contravenes his maximalist objectives. Already, "Israel" has seized control of Gaza's entire border area and therefore is preparing to establish de-facto sovereignty over it. It is precisely for this reason that the most hardline Zionists will not agree to it, because their broader objective is to effectively incorporate and settle the territory. Therefore, a retreat from this would be nothing less than a huge political defeat for him, a loss of legitimacy, and an upheaval of the political regime he has built. All in pursuit of these goals, Netanyahu has overseen the global ruination of "Israel's" reputation. To turn round and say, "Let's go back to square one" means that all of that would have been absolutely in vain.

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Malaysia's big chip dreams

ALAYSIA has big semiconductor ambitions. The Southeast Asian nation is already a major cog in the global supply chain, feeding about 13 per cent of demand in the packaging and testing space. But it wants to be more. Global semiconductor firms have been shopping around the region for suitable locations to either expand or shift their operations out of China, to "de-risk" from sanctions imposed by the US in an increasingly testy tech war. This involves tens of billions of dollars in investments and the building of highly coveted wafer fabrication plants, or fabs, which developing nations believe will help fast track their growth towards becoming hi-tech economies. Malaysia much like Vietnam, Indonesia and India - wants in on the fab action. Southeast Asia has already seen a flurry of fresh investments, amounting to billions of US dollars. But these have mostly focused on back end processes, as Washington looks to keep the more lucrative, and highly sensitive, front end wafer manufacturing among its closest allies in Europe and Japan. Last week, in his strongest pitch yet, Prime Minister Anwar Ibrahim told a regional semiconductor industry conference in Kuala Lumpur that Malaysia was their best bet to avoid getting caught in the US-China crush, leveraging the country's long-held policy of neutrality and non-alignment. It's arguably an attractive proposition. Anyone who sets up shop in "friend to all" Malaysia can conceivably claim that they are not acting for or trying to undermine any side. This stance theoretically enables companies to engage with and sell to any party seeking to do business in the country - barring those entities or nations facing multilateral sanctions allowing Malaysia to maximise the opportunities and profit.

For Malaysia, a surge in semiconductor investments would help speed up its transition to developed nation status, as more plants mean more jobs, including high-skilled roles that will boost per capita income. But nations, like people, tend to have different motivations. Malaysia is heavily reliant on external trade, which was a key driver of its rapid industrialisation from the 1980s to 1990s and remains an important contributor to economic growth. Its often stated position of neutrality has been useful in paving the way for establishing bilateral ties, especially economic links, with numerous nations across the globe. But what happens when one of your biggest partners starts pressuring you to pick a side? Just last year, the US and EU envoys to Malaysia sent a letter to the government warning of national security risks associated with allowing Chinese tech giant Huawei to develop 5G infrastructure. Analysts only expect such pressure from the US to intensify, especially if it escalates its sanctions and policy responses against China's access to high-end chips that can be used to run supercomputers and develop sophisticated artificial intelligence. The US began unilaterally imposing sanctions on China in the form of export controls under the 2022 Chips Act, which bars chip makers that have interests in the US from expanding semiconductor manufacturing in China or any country deemed by the Americans as posing a national security risk. Malaysia has made it clear that it will not recognise any sanctions unless approved by multilateral bodies such as the United Nations. Prime Minister Anwar himself has repeatedly said that Malaysia will not allow itself to be pressured into taking a position for or against any country.

Why aren't more European countries recognising Palestinian statehood?

Hamzah Rifaat

Today, the mindset of the far right remains pretty much the same. Islamophobia, anti-immigration and pro-Zionism all continue to go hand-in-hand. Last month, Dutch politician Geert Wilder's Party for Freedom, which campaigns on an anti-Muslim, anti-immigrant and populist platform in the Netherlands, signed a coalition agreement with several other political parties on controlling asylum and migration. They included the conservative liberal People's Party for Freedom and Democracy, the centre-right New Social Contract and the agrarian, right-wing, populist, Farmer Citizen Movement. Within this agreement, Wilders inserted an "examination" into moving the Dutch embassy to Jerusalem from Tel Aviv

ESS than a week after Spain, Norway and Ireland officially recognised Palestine, UN experts including the Special Rapporteur on Human Rights in the Palestinian territories, urged the rest of the world to follow suit to ensure peace and stability in the Middle East. Currently, 10 EU member states recognise Palestine (including three in the last month), while 17 have not. Universal recognition of Palestine in the continent remains elusive in large part due to the presence and efforts of far-right entities and conservative political parties that tout nativist, ultranationalist and pro-Zionist views. These parties' positions on Palestine are likely in keeping with their already established anti-Muslim and anti-migrant platforms. This perspective stems in part from an unfair association between the growing influx of Muslim migrants into Europe and rising terrorism concerns. Such fear has been stoked by far-right parties themselves for political gain and relevance. As protests against Israel's war in Gaza grow, many EU states are continuing to crack down on Palestine solidarity. We spoke with Yanis Varoufakis about the West's complicity in the war and the prospect of building a different kind of Europe. It has also spurred ultranationalist parties such as Vox in Spain and Alternative for Germany to call for a curb on Muslim immigration. Far-right groups have also weaponised rising unemployment in Europe, blaming migrants for that issue as well.

Hence, the commencement of Israel's genocide in Gaza aligned perfectly with the European farright's Islamophobic orientation. It has allowed groups such as the Alternative for Germany to call for funding cuts to Palestinians and submit parliamentary proposals to halt financial donations to UNRWA. Both proposals were rejected; however, their anti- Muslim/Palestine rhetoric remains. In Denmark, Israel's campaign against Palestinians prompted the Danish People's Party to step up its anti-immigrant rhetoric while also appealing to the safety of Jews living in the country. The link between conservative parties, far-right entities and support for Israel in Europe runs deep. Two decades ago, an assessment of voting in the European Parliament's ninth term by the European Council of Israel in 2004 found that the 20 political parties voted in favour of Israel on the Palestine issue and

all of them belonged to far-right, Eurosceptic, conservative and reformist schools of thought.

Today, the mindset of the far right remains pretty much the same. Islamophobia, anti-immigration and pro-Zionism all continue to go handin-hand. Last month, Dutch politician Geert Wilder's Party for Freedom, which campaigns on an anti-Muslim, anti-immigrant and populist platform in the Netherlands, signed a coalition agreement with several other political parties on controlling asylum and migration. They included the conservative liberal People's Party for Freedom and Democracy, the centre-right New Social Contract and the agrarian, right-wing, populist, Farmer Citizen Movement. Within this agreement, Wilders inserted an "examination" into moving the Dutch embassy to Jerusalem from Tel Aviv. This is a break from the long-standing European position that the status of Jerusalem must be decided through negotiations between Israel and Palestine. Wilder's pro-Israel stance is echoed by the Vox party in Spain, which campaigns on a Spanish unionist and Roman Catholic platform. Vox voiced opposition to Pedro Sanchez government's decision to recognise Palestine, with party leader Santiago Abascal expressing his disapproval at a meeting with Benjamin Netanyahu. Farright support for Israel also comes from lead candidates for European Parliament in the upcoming 2024 elections. Marion Marechal of the far-right French Reconquete Party is one such politician who is campaigning on an anti-Islam platform.

At a recent debate, Marechal stated that France recognising a Palestinian state would be tantamount to creating an Islamist entity that could prove dangerous for Western civilisation, morals, principles and political systems. Notably, many of these far-right parties do not have seats in the government and find themselves to be part of coalitions or oppositions in countries such as Spain, France and the Netherlands. However, they still remain a potent force. As disruptors, far-right parties often form a coalition or in Italy's case form a government at the centre. Regardless of their position, they have an inherent ability to scuttle, pressurise and disrupt any attempt by socialist governments or left-wing governments to introduce resolutions and bills calling for Palestinian statehood. The farright's pro-Israel orientation is also championed by conservative governments which are either in power or in a coalition. Denmark is a prime example, where the parliament's decision to vote down a bill for Palestinian recognition was due to conservative parties in the ruling coalition voicing their opposition to Palestinian statehood.

Foreign Minister Lars Lokke Rasmussen said that Denmark would not recognise an independent Palestine as preconditions of statehood have not been met. Recently, an effort by four left-wing parties to push recognition through failed, in part because of Rasmussen's Moderates Party. Danish parliament rejects proposal to recognise Palestinian state Similarly, in France, Prime Minister Emmanuel Macron mulled over Palestinian recognition at a suitable time, but is threatened by potential losses for his Renaissance Party in the upcoming European Parliament elections. French candidates from centrist, conservative, far-right and right-wing parties seek to capitalise on Macron's softer stance on Palestine by using this against him and touting their own support for Israel. This has been the case for Marine Le Pen's National Party, which is expected to trounce Macron in the 2024 ballot as it campaigns on a nativist, anti-immigrant and Islamophobic platform.

Another important player in Europe is Italy. The promise of a two-state solution by the far-right Giorgia Meloni government cannot detract from the fact that Rome might not recognise Palestine anytime soon. Her opposition, the Five Star movement, has called out Meloni for intransigence and an inherent inability to follow in the footsteps of Norway, Ireland and Spain. Despite Meloni's support for a two-state solution, no policy change from her far-right Brothers of Italy party is expected. The far-right, conservative parties in Europe are hence a major roadblock for Palestinian recognition. As disruptors and policy makers, nativist, Christian, white supremacist and anti-Islam parties and their sympathy for Israel's genocide clearly suggests that the UN's calls for universal recognition of Palestinian statehood may not materialise in the near future. As long as Europe's far right continues to demonise Muslims, there is little hope on the horizon for universal acceptance of Palestinian statehood.

Be wary of Washington setting trap in Asia

Hu Xijin

Marcos is trying, with the support of the US, to scare China off with sensational behaviors over the territorial dispute. They have fabricated a false sense of victimhood for themselves. Marcos' keynote speech at the Shangri-La Dialogue on Friday and US Defense Secretary Lloyd Austin's speech on Saturday are both aimed at cajoling Asian countries. Austin denied on Saturday that NATO's expansion has caused the Ukraine crisis. and trumpeted that the US was secure "only if Asia is" SIAN countries should be wary that a similar trap to the one Ukraine fell into is being set in Asia, and they must be smarter than Europe. No country in Asia would willingly want to be dragged into the conflict in Ukraine. However, the US is employing similar tactics in certain Asian countries as it did in Ukraine, causing them to be cautious of China and even harbor animosity toward it. Philippine President Ferdinand Marcos Jr has clearly fallen into this trap. In fact, the situation in Asia is much more complicated than in Europe, as there are numerous disputes over territorial claims as well as maritime rights and interests. Fortunately, there is no NATO in Asia and no geopolitical conflicts between blocs have been formed. Previously, territorial disputes mostly occurred between countries on a case-by-case basis. Suddenly, however, certain countries' disputes and controversies with China have come to the forefront due to the strategic involvement of the US. In the past, the US generally took a "hands-off" approach when it came to territorial disputes in Asia. However, now whenever a dispute involves China, the US always supports the country that opposes China. It tries to portray China

tries in the region to confront China.

Nevertheless, the situation between China Asia, to serve its global hegemonic strategy and the Philippines has been in a deadlock for many years. The Philippine warship that ran aground on Ren'ai Jiao in 1999, the day after the NATO bombing of the Chinese Embassy in Yugoslavia, is still there. China has shown restraint in its dealings with the Philippines, with the friction between the two countries focusing on the details of how the Philippines resupplied the ship. Where in the world can you find such a good-tempered "bully"? Today, the Philippines is even more shameless.

Marcos is trying, with the support of the US, to scare China off with sensational behaviors over the territorial dispute. They have fabricated a false sense of victimhood for themselves. Marcos' keynote speech at the Shangri-La Dialogue on Friday and US Defense Secretary Lloyd Austin's speech on Saturday are both aimed at cajoling Asian countries. Austin denied on Saturday that NATO's expansion has caused the Ukraine crisis, and trumpeted that the US was secure "only if Asia is." He touted the importance of the extensive network of partnerships under the US Indo-Pacific Strategy, claiming that the US would do its utmost to fulfill

SIAN countries should be wary as a regional "bully" and encourages counits commitments to the Indo-Pacific region. Obviously, although there is no NATO in of containing China, the US wants regional countries to be hostile to China following the model of NATO allies or partner countries. As a Chinese media professional who has been observing geopolitics for a long time, I really hope that Asian countries will not be dazzled by the US and will maintain their strategic sobriety. Territorial disputes are left over from history. We have never made use of our vast national resources to solve these disputes, so China is not a "bully," not to mention an "aggressor."

However, if countries like the Philippines try to intimidate China with the backing of other powers, they will definitely suffer a setback and face consequences, and at that time the US will not be there to support them. When Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky arrived at the Shangri-La Dialogue, Asian countries should have seen a nation influenced by the US and NATO, leading to the tragedy of war. Although the US and NATO express support and offer assistance, it is Ukraine and its people who suffer. We must not allow external forces such as the US to set the similar trap in Asia, nor should we fall into the trap ourselves.

World / Sports



Briefs

Pakistan, China agree to upgrade...

From Page 01 The two leaders reaffirmed the consensus to high-quality development of CPEC and timely completion of major ongoing projects. The two leaders affirmed consensus on upgradation of CPEC and advancing high quality development of CPEC in the second phase. The Prime Minister reaffirmed Pakistan's commitment to high-quality development of CPEC and to foster synergy between the development strategies of the two countries through close coordination. He underlined Pakistan's commitment and full support for safety and security of Chinese nationals, projects and institutions in Pakistan.

Pak-China agree to strengthen..

From Page 01 Chinese leadership and people. He stated that the relations with China were the cornerstone of Pakistan's foreign policy. The prime minister noted that the unique and special relationship between the two countries was based on strategic trust, commonality of views, and practical cooperation. Chairman Zhao Leji echoed the prime minister's warm sentiments and noted that under the strategic guidance of President Xi Jinping, China was also committed to further solidifying the 'All-Weather Strategic Cooperative Partnership' with Pakistan. The two sides reaffirmed support to each other's core interests.

President confers Nishan...

From Page 01 initiatives in Pakistan in commercial banking, microfinance, insurance, sustainable tourism, and the renewable energy sector through the Aga Khan Development Network (AKDN). He has spearheaded the establishment of environmental stewardship policies and best practices to address climate change. The Network has also enabled access to financial services for nearly 50 million people in Pakistan. Later, Prince Rahim Aga Khan called on President Asif Ali Zardari, in which the two discussed the role of the Aga Khan Development Network in Pakistans socio-economic development, Chairman HBL, Sultan Ali Allana, and senior government officials also attended the meeting.

Pak calls for accountability over...

From Page 01 Highlighting Pakistan's election as a non-permanent member of the UN Security Council for the term 2025-2026 with the overwhelming support of 182 members of the UN General Assembly, she thanked the members, particularly Asia Pacific Group for their confidence. She told the media that at the Council, Pakistan would play its role in the peaceful resolution of disputes, opposing the resort to unilateral force, combating terrorism in all forms and manifestations, supporting UN peacekeeping efforts, resolution for regional and international crises, and promoting democracy, transpar

JCP recommends...

ency, and accountability.

From Page 01 judges in the superior judiciary. It was tasked to consider names of nine judges, including LHC chief justice and SHC chief justice, for filling the three vacant posts in the apex court. Chaired by the CJP, the meeting was to be attended JCP members -Justice Syed Mansoor Ali Shah, Justice Munib Akhtar, Justice Yahaya Afridi, Justice Amin-ud-Din Khan, Justice (retd) Manzoor Ahmed Malik, Federal Minister for Law Azam Nazir Tarar, Attorney General Mansoor Usman Awan and Pakistan Bar Council representative

advocate Akhtar Hussain.

Ex-cricketers criticize Pakistan over USA upset

Pakistan endured a five-run defeat against the co-hosts in the Super Over as they failed to chase down the 19-run target

OUR CORRESPONDENTS

ISLAMABAD: Legendary Pakistan cricketers Inzamam-ul-Haq, Waqar Younis and Shahid Afridi lashed out at the national team following their upset defeat against the United States of America (USA) in the ICC Men's T20 World Cup 2024. Pakistan endured a five-run defeat against the co-hosts in the Super Over as they

failed to chase down the 19-run target. Senior pacer Mohammad Amir bowled the Super Over for Pakistan and conceded 18 runs. In response, the Green Shirts only managed 13/1. Reacting to the defeat on his YouTube channel, former captain Inzamam-ul-Haq stated the team is heading towards a "downfall". "Babar Azam and company should sit down and think about the kind of cricket they are playing. But, looking at our cricket and selection, I think our cricket is headed towards downfall." the former right-hander said.



Legendary all-rounder Shahid Afridi, on the other hand, raised questions over the team's strategies in crucial situations.

nade a huge mistake by opting for If-

"They made a huge mistake by opting for Iftikhar instead of Fakhar to play the first ball of the super over. The left-arm fast bowler

would have suited Fakhar because of the angle of the bowling. I don't know who told Iftikhar to face the left-armer," Afridi said on his YouTube channel.

Follow us on our Official WhatsApp channel Afridi also questioned Mohammad Amir's

performance in the Super Over. "Mohammad Amir bowled really well during the match and I thought that they will go with in the super over as well. But he conceded a lot of extras in the super over which also didn't help Pakistan's cause,' stated Afridi. "He is experienced and knows how to bowl yorkers. The ball was reversing as well which is why I think he shouldn't have given away so many runs," he added. On the other hand, legendary pacer Wagar Younis termed the USA's victory over Pakistan historic and asserted that the national team looked "helpless". "USA grounded Pakistan in their opening game. History's been registered. Pakistan looked exhausted and helpless in the field. Congrats USA for a thumping victory," Waqar tweeted.

ICC MEN'S T20 WORLD CUP WEST INDIES & USA 2024 THOSDAY JUNG 18

Tuesday June 08

New Zealand vs Afghanistan Providence, Guyana (4.30am)

Sri Lanka vs Bangladesh Grand Prairie, Texas (5.30am) Netherlands vs South Africa Long Island,

Australia vs England Bridgelown, Barbados (10 pm)

New York (7.30pm)

Dialogue only with those...

From Page 01 The commission held General Yahya Khan accountable for prioritising his power, and today, the same mistakes are being repeated, leading to economic collapse." Khan highlighted the achievements of his government, stating, "During our three and a half years in power, NAB collected Rs450 billion. An additional Rs1,100 billion was expected, but due to amendments in NAB laws, only Rs300,000 was collected once, and Rs1.5 million another time. These amendments have cost the country Rs 1,100 billion, a loss it cannot afford." Khan praised PTI's social media activists as heroes and demanded an apology from FIA for fabricating a false cypher case against him. "Political vendetta is ongoing in the country,' he said. "I will respond to FIA only in the presence of my lawyers. Mohsin Naqvi is orchestrating all this." When asked about the Supreme Court's recommendation to negotiate with political par-ties, Khan said, "Even during Musharraf's era, I did not negotiate with Shaukat Aziz but

with those who had power." Institutions should work

within...

From Page 01 He gave these remarks while hearing the petition for the recovery of poet Ahmed Farhad Shah. Advocate Iman Mazari appeared on behalf of the petitioner while senior journalist Hamid Mir assisted the court as amicus curiae. Additional Attorney General Munawar Igbal and Assistant Attorney General Barrister Usman Ghuman were also present in the court. Advocate Iman Mazari said that the bail petition of Ahmed Farhad had been reiected by a local court of Muzaffarabad, Advocate Riasat Azad said that the court shouldn't dispose of the case as it is a matter of basic human rights. The additional attorney general said that the FIR had been launched and Ahmed Farhad had been recovered. The court cannot proceed its hearing further when the missing person is recovered, he said. "I am writing to chief justice to constitute a larger bench over the issue of missing persons," Justice Mohsin Akhtar Kayani said. The larger bench is required to have a diversified viewpoint, he added. Also Read: IHC orders live streaming of missing persons cases

Portugal's SL Benfica, PFL boost Pakistan sports economy

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Portugal's national football club SL Benfica has announced partnership with the Pakistan Football League (PFL) Pearl Project to develop professional football and boost the sports economy in Pakistan.

SL Benfica, as the official partner of PFL, a pioneering initiative to develop professional football in Pakistan and stimulate the country's football economy, will impart technical expertise to coaches and players, significantly advancing football in the region. With support from government officials, this initiative aims to inspire a new generation of footballers and fans in the region.

Benfica representatives are currently in Pakistan for prominent events in Islamabad, Lahore, and Karachi. SL Benfica stated that this partnership places the club at the forefront of football expansion in a nation with a population of approximately 250 million. They attended the formal launch of PFL in Lahore on 4th June – attended by the likes of Michael Owen, Emile Heskey, Pascal Chimbonda and Raúl Rodríguez. The global delegation held meetings with the senior government ministers who offered full support to the football initiative.

"June marks the launch of the Pakistan Football League, a project with the potential of 250 million inhabitants committed to launching a football league. Benfica has been invited to present itself as the league's technical partner to support its teams, coaches

and players. As leaders in identifying and developing players, we had to accept this challenge. This project is another historic moment for Benfica, as we will be collaborating with an international league for the first time", said Miguel Reis, SL Benfica's Operations Coordinator for Global Expansion.

'For Benfica, this represents another great project with a huge responsibility, igniting a passion for sport in children and guiding them towards clubs to commence playing in a more structured and professional manner. Our goal is to facilitate the simultaneous development of young athletes and coaches, fundamentally transforming the football landscape in the country. Our distinct methodological approach will be harnessed for the benefit of the league and the clubs, with Benfica potentially becoming the driving force in shaping the future of football in Pakistan. We are also excited about the upcoming global campaign 'One Ball One Smile, which will bring smiles to the faces of countless children by providing them with footballs. This initiative will not only empower them to play football in their communities but will also nurture the grassroots of football worldwide", explained Davide Gomes, technical coordinator for international projects at SL Benfica.

ternational projects at SL Benfica. This partnership not only recognizes Benfica's global reach and expertise but also marks a significant milestone in the evolution of football in Pakistan. With SL Benfica's support, the Pakistan Football League aims to inspire a new generation of footballers and fans, taking the game to new heights in the

region. The Portuguese club will be the central incubator of the league and the entity that will ensure that standards in football development are maintained. Benfica will lay the foundations for success by training local coaching staff and offering annual training master-classes in Lisbon for local players, with the possibility of joining the academy if they prove to be exceptional talents. As part of this collaboration, Benfica has organized a special exhibition to showcase the club's history, featuring

If they prove to be exceptional talents. As part of this collaboration, Benfica has organized a special exhibition to showcase the club's history, featuring selected items from the Benfica Museum. This exhibition is being displayed during the launch events, underlining the club's commitment to fostering a deep connection with Pakistan's growing football community.

"I'm proud to be Pakistan's Global

Football Ambassador. I visited Paki-

stan two years ago and was impressed

by the passion and interest people have in football here. I am very excited about the future and am fully available to contribute to the development of football in Pakistan", said Michael Owen during the PFL launch event. "We are here to discover the best talent. Football has millions of fans around the world, and we want to provide opportunities for our players to showcase their talent. From the northern areas of Pakistan, Chaman and Karachi, there is raw talent everywhere. I'm grateful to the international delegations who came here. Together with the international delegates and world football stars involved, we will work out strategies to improve football", said Ahmar Kanwar, president and CEO of PFL.

Ronaldo eyes history at EURO 2024 in Germany

LONDON: Portugal's football superstar Cristiano Ronaldo looks set to go down in history as the first player to participate in six European championships as he prepares to light up the UEFA EURO 2024 stage in Germany. The 39-year-old Al-Nassr forward previously donned the colors of Portugal in EURO 2004, 2008, 2012, 2016, and 2020, while clinching the 2016 title in France. Playing for his nation since 2003, Ronaldo will be Portugal's most experienced footballer as he was named in the star-studded squad for the EURO 2024 that will kick off on June 14 in Germany. Former champions Portugal will play their EURO 2024 Group F opener against the Czech Republic on June 18, before meeting Türkiye on June 22. They will face Georgia on June 26 in their last group stages match.

Most appearances, most goals Ronaldo has scored 14 goals in the past five European championships, also picking up the record for the most appearances by playing in 25 matches. In securing the record for most goals, he's overtaken football greats like France's Michel Platini and England forward Alan Shearer. The only active player who comes close is France star Antoine Griezmann. Platini scored nine goals and Shearer had seven to his name in the EUROs. Griezmann, the 33-year-old Atletico Madrid forward, has scored seven goals in the European championships and will feature in this year's tournament, as well. Ronaldo has also scored 41 goals in the European qualifiers, putting him far ahead of his rivals Robbie Keane (23) and Zlatan Ibrahimovic (19). Including the European Championship qualifiers, Ronaldo has made 64 appearances, ahead of Italian Gianluigi Buffon (58) and Croatian Luka Modric (53). New records ahead If Ronaldo scores at EURO 2024, he will overtake Austria's Ivica Vastic, who at 38 years and 257 days is the oldest player to score in the tournament's history. On the other hand, if Portugal reach the final, Ronaldo could break Italian defender Leonardo Bonucci's record for the oldest player to score in a final (34 years 71 days) and German Jens Lehmann's record for the oldest player to play in a final (38 years 232 days). If Portugal clinches the EURO 2024 title, Cristiano could also overtake Dutchman Arnold Muhren (37 years and 23 days) as the oldest player to win a European title. - Agencies

PBBF announce trails for Asian Indoor Games

AFZAL JAVED

ISLAMABAD: The Pakistan Basketball Federation (PBBF) is excited to announce one day trials for the selection of the Pakistan basketball team to compete in the 6th Asian Indoor and Martial Arts Games-2024 in the 3x3 format (Men). The trials will be held on June 28, 2024, at 4:00 PM at the Government College University Basketball Courts in Lahore. The affiliated units of PBBF have been directed to nominate budding, talented and upcoming players for the trials. The nominated sportsperson must be below the age of 23 years on Dec 31, 2024. The National Basketball Training Camp will be sponsored by the Pakistan Sports Board. The qualified coaches will impart training to the players. PBBF is also exploring possibilities that selected team also undertake training cum competitions tour of neighbouring countries before participation in the Indoor Games. Additionally, PBBF is also in process that this team must have international exposure and match temperament to get benefit of home ground and crowd to clinch Gold in the next South Asian Games being hosted by Pakistan in 2025.

Williamson heaps praise on Aighanistan cricket team

AUCKLAND: New Zealand's captain Kane Williamson heaped praise on the Afghanistan cricket team during a press conference on June 7 ahead of their T20 World Cup 2024 opener against Afghanistan at the Providence Stadium on Friday. Williamson believes that the team always had a strong spin department but they have grown as a team and become well-balanced.

"They're a team that have just grown and grown every year and certainly players that have been involved in some of the franchise cricket are well aware of the capabilities of the talent and the world-class skills that they have within their side. "They've always had really strong spin options, but now they're a very well-balanced side with the seamers that they have and the batting as well. So, a tough challenge and a team that's playing well and growing a lot," the New Zea-

there are any certain players in the Afghanistan side the Kiwis are keeping their eyes on, Williamson said that "certainly a number of players in the side" and called the Afghani bowling attack "one of the better bowling attacks, I think, in the competition.' As for the preparations of the New Zealand cricket team, Williamson stated that the team knows there are tough teams in the tournament and they all have roles within the team. "For us, we know that there are strong teams throughout this competition and often [it] comes back to our cricket. We say that often it's about the cricket we want to play and focusing on our plans and roles that we have within our side." Williamson was adamant that it all comes down to the focus the team has on their roles and goals, "as a team, it comes back

and how we want to skin it, I suppose, which can look different every day. But that commitment to those roles is important." The New Zealand cricket team has had an unlucky run in ICC events including the T20 World Cups. They have failed to win a single title but the team has come close to grabbing the trophy and taking it home several times. They were the semi-finalists of the 2007, 2016 and 2022 T20 World Cups and the runners-up of the 2021 T20 World Cup which was won by Australia. Williamson was the captain in the 2016, 2021 and 2022 campaigns of the New Zealand team. Williamson has been captain of New Zealand for the last six T20 World Cups. He has also unsuccessfully led the team to a Cricket World Cup defeat in 2019 at the hands of Eoin Morgan's English team. - Agencies

of J.P. Kotze at the top of the order for this

match during the toss, but the captain was

well aware of his role when coming to the

crease in the fourth over with his side in

trouble at 19 for two following the decision

to bat first. "It's nice to contribute all-round

but obviously feels better when you've won,

Berrington anchors Scotland to T20 WC win over Namibia

This was Scotland's first-ever victory over Namibia in a T20 International

SPORTS DESK

BARBADOS: Captain Richie Berrington upstaged his Namibian counterpart in leading Scotland to a table-topping, five-wicket victory in Group B at the T20 World Cup on Thursday at Kensington Oval in Barbados. Thwarted by the weather in their opening fixture against England two days earlier at the same venue, Berrington's composed unbeaten 47 off 36 balls (two fours, three sixes) and the timely support of the aggressive Michael Leask (35 off 17 balls, four sixes) paced the Scots to a winning total of 157 for five with nine balls to spare.

Their combined effort in a fifth-wicket partnership of 74 rendered Gerhard Erasmus' all-round contribution in vain after the Namibian captain had topscored with 52 out of a total of 155 for nine, followed by figures of two for 29 off four overs as Scotland wobbled at 73 for four in the 11th over.

This was Scotland's first-ever victory over Namibia in a T20 International and lifts them to the head of the standings on three points from two games in a group that also includes the defending champions England and 2021 winners Australia.

"I don't think we'll get over this for a while. It's a hell of a feeling," said an elated Leask after receiving the 'Player of the Match' award. "Given the last time we played them they had us three down in the first over, this feels special." Leask's task in providing the necessary spark to the Scotland scoring

rate is something he has become used to. "My role is simple: hit the ball hard, try and find gaps, and if it's in the slot, try and hit it out of the ground," he said.

For Erasmus it was a particularly bitter pill

For Erasmus it was a particularly bitter pill to swallow given his overall contribution. He may have forgotten about the inclusion

so we have to regroup from this and come back again stronger," Erasmus said. Erasmus' innings off 31 balls (five fours, two sixes) got his team back on course for a competitive total over the next ten overs before he fell stumped off the bowling of Leask. Scotland though were indebted to the two seam-bowling Brads - Wheal and Currie - for pulling Namibia back from a total that looked as if it would get closer to 170, especially with David Wiese, their super over hero from the opening match victory over Oman, at the crease. Wheal, who dispensed with Kotze in the first over of the match, returned to dismiss Wiese and wicketkeeper-batsman

Wheal, who dispensed with Kotze in the first over of the match, returned to dismiss Wiese and wicketkeeper-batsman Zane Green (28), finishing with the best figures of three for 33. Currie (two for 16), who opened the bowling with Wheal, was also back on at the end to ensure the Namibians were kept in check as four wickets tumbled in the final two overs.

Pakistan to celebrate...

From Page 01

Zil Hajj, which also marks

the Hajj pilgrimmage, and Muslims in Pakistan are expected to celebrate the occassion on June 17, as the moon will likely be sighted today. Saudi Arabia and other Gulf countries marked the beginning of lunar month, which is the last month in Muslim calender yesterday (June 6). As per Chief Meteorologist Sardar Sarfaraz, Zil Hajj new moon was born on Thursday evening and there are "strong chances" of the crescent being sighted today evening. With Eid ul Adha just around the corner, cattle markets have been set up in different areas for people to purchase cows, goats, sheep,

or camels for sacrifice.



Saturday, June 08 , 2024

Briefs

Ukraine has right to strike targets in Russia

BERGA: Ukraine has the right according to international law to attack legitimate military targets in Russia to defend itself, NATO Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg said during a visit to new alliance member Sweden on Friday. "Ukraine has the right to self defence," Stoltenberg told a news conference with Swedish Prime Minister Ulf Kristersson at a military base near Stockholm. "The right to self defence also includes the right to hit legitimate, military targets on the territory of the attacking party, the aggressor, in this case Russia." The Kremlin said this week that Western nations supplying Ukraine with weapons to strike Russian territory will have to reckon with Russia, after President Vladimir Putin said he was considering arming the West's enemies in retaliation. "This is a war of attack that Russia has begun against a peaceful, democratic neighbouring country, Ukraine, that at no point has been a threat to Russia," Stoltenberg said. "There is no question that Ukraine has the right to hit targets on Russian territory." S.Korea's seasonal

worker scheme criticized Seoul: Vulnerable, lowpaid Filipinos have been exploited, tricked and abused under a migrant worker scheme launched by South Korea to plug its severe labour shortage, an investigation by the Thomson Reuters Foundation has found.-APP

First human case of H5N2 died from multiple factors

GENEVA: A man infected with H5N2 bird flu, the first confirmed human infection with the strain, died from multiple factors, the WHO said on Friday, adding that investigations were ongoing. The World Health Organization announced on Wednesday that the first laboratory-confirmed human case of infection with H5N2 avian influenza virus had been reported from Mexico. Mexico's health ministry said the 59-year-old man had "a history of chronic kidney disease, type 2 diabetes (and) long-standing systemic arterial hypertension." He had been bedridden for three weeks prior to the onset of acute symptoms, developing fever, shortness of breath, diarrhea, nausea and general malaise on April 17. The man was taken to hospital in Mexico City on April 24 and died later that day.

"The death is a multi-factorial death, not a death attributable to H5N2," WHO spokesman Christian Lindmeier told a media briefing in Geneva on Friday.

"The patient came to the hospital after weeks of multi-factorial background of

multi other diseases. His body was subsequently routinely tested for flu and other viruses, and H5N2 was detected, Lindmeier said. Seventeen contacts of the case in the hospital were identified. All tested negative for influenza. In the man's place of residence, 12 contacts in the weeks beforehand were identified. All likewise tested negative. "Investigations are ongoing. Serology is ongoing. That means the blood testing of contacts to see if there was any possible earlier infection," said Lindmeier. "At this point in time, as its multi-factorial, it's a multi-factorial death. "But the infection of H5N2 is being investigated to see whether he was infected by somebody visiting or by any contact with any animals before." The WHO said on Wednesday the source of exposure to the virus was currently unknown, though H5N2 viruses have been reported in poultry in Mexico.Based on available information, the United Nations' health agency assesses the current risk to the general population posed by the virus as low. Markus Lipp, senior food safety officer at the UN's Food and Ag-Organization. riculture explained why the risk of contracting avian influenza though eating poultry was

"negligibly low."-APP

Unity govt is South Africa's best option: Ramaphosa

Ramaphosa called for a national dialogue to help rebuild social cohesion, after a "toxic and divisive" election campaign

News Desk

JOHANNESBURG: South Africa's African National Congress (ANC) will invite other political parties to form a government of national unity, its leader President Cyril Ramaphosa

It comes after last week's election in

which the ANC lost its majority for the first time since the end of the racist system of apartheid 30 years ago. Mr Ramaphosa called for a national dialogue to help rebuild social cohesion, after a "toxic and divisive" election campaign. Political parties have just over a week to form a government before parliament convenes to elect the president. Under South Africa's proportional representation system, for a government to have a guaranteed majority it would need to be formed of parties which together got more than 50% of the vote. The ANC took a 40% share, with the centre-right Democratic Alliance (DA) getting 22%, the MK party of former President Jacob Zuma won 15% and the radical Economic Freedom Fighters (EFF) 9%. Behind the 'Zuma tsunami' in South Africa

Can South Africa's ANC reinvent itself? Who's up, who's down - and

why Mr Ramaphosa spoke late on Thursday after the ANC's National Executive Committee (NEC) held a marathon meeting in Johannesburg, saying the party acknowledged people's complaints. "We agreed to invite political parties to form a government of national unity as the best option to move our country forward," Mr Ramaphosa said. His announcement came after days of speculation about the ANC's options, such as pursuing a minority government or a coalition with one or two parties. In the end the president invited all the ANC's political opponents to engage in talks on co-governing the country. This is a looser arrangement than a coalition, which is a formal agreement among participating parties to work together and usually involves trade-offs in policies and positions.

A national unity government, on the other hand, would include any party that agreed to a broad set of principles. The idea is that they would support the ANC on key votes such as the budget, but retain their own political and ideological agendas. Analysts say taking this broad approach could allow the ANC to avoid choosing a coalition partner that may be unpopular with its base. This is particularly true



of the white-led DA. Its free-market agenda makes it the preferred option of the private sector and investors, and is seen as an important signal of stability to the markets. But its policies are at odds with the ANC's social welfare programmes and especially anathema to the party's left-wing base, "A government of national unity creates this impression that it is a collective working group coming together," political analyst Sanusha Naidu told the BBC. It could also "look at how you bring in the DA without necessarily saying we're working directly with the DA". Mr Ramaphosa framed the proposal for a national unity government in the historical precedent

of South Africa's first democracy. That saw the ANC's Nelson Mandela as president working with his former enemies in the National Party, which had implemented apartheid. It also included the Inkatha Freedom Party, a conservative party with an ethnic Zulu base, whose supporters had frequently clashed with ANC activists, leading to thousands of deaths. "In establishing a government of national unity, we will be drawing on an experience with which South Africans are familiar and which served our country well at a time of great difficulty," he said. But the challenges are different. The ANC is no longer in the majority, and the untested hope of three decades ago has been replaced by splits within the party and starkly different visions of the country between the main parties. Mr Ramaphosa said negotiators had already held "constructive discussions" with the DA and the IFP, as well as the EFF, an ANC breakaway party that advocates seizing white-owned land and nationalising banks and mines. The DA has said it will not participate in any government that includes the EFF. But Mr Ramaphosa said ideological and political differences would not "preclude the possibility of working with

any party so long as it is in the public interest" and in keeping with a set of basic principles, such as respecting the constitution and rule of law, shared values of national building and social cohesion and a focus on building an inclusive economy. The ANC's five-member negotiating team will now be meeting with a "broad range of parties" to discuss the proposal. That will include Mr Zuma's uMkhonto weSizwe (MK) party. He has refused to accept the election result or join a coalition as long as Mr Ramaphosa remains president. But the MK issued a statement late on Thursday saying it had held an initial engagement with the ANC and a meeting would follow shortly. Mr Ramaphosa has a reputation as a skilled negotiator and is one of the architects of the historic settlement that led to the 1994 election and the government of national unity that followed. His counterpart at the time, National Party negotiator Roelf Mever, told the South African news channel eNCA that Mr Ramaphosa "has all the ability to handle this situation".

The next week will prove to be one of the biggest tests of those

Trans-Afghan

corridor sees first

multi-modal transit

ASTANA: KTZ Express and JSC QazTrade in partner-

ship with Pakistan's National Logistics Corporation

carried out the first multimodal transportation of

cargo through the Trans-Afghan Corridor, Kazin-

form News Agency reports citing the press service of Kazakhstan Temir Zholy. "The multimodal trans-

portation route through Afghanistan and Pakistan

to the UAE's Jebel Ali port was piloted as part of

cooperation in development of export potential, by

JSC KTZ Express and JSC QazTrade in partnership

with Pakistan's logistics operator National Logistics

Corporation," the Kazakh company said. Two trucks

21 tons each departed from the Pavlodar Special

Economic Zone on April 27, towards Zhetygen Trade

and Logistics Center, where cargo was transferred

into two FEU containers. The containers were load-

ed onto the trucks with a container trailer and sent

to Pakistan's Karachi Port. The cargo arrived in Ka-

rachi within 20 days having covered the distance of

4,900 kilometers. On June 1, the containers were

loaded onto a feeder vessel and arrived at the Jebel

Ali Port on June 3. The overall delivery time made

38 days. 60 containers are planned to be transported

by the route in June-July, KTZ adds. – DNA

Sunak apologizes after leaving **D-Day**

LONDON: The British prime minister on Friday apologized for skipping international D-Day ceremony in France and traveling back to the UK for a TV interview. "The last thing I want is for the commemorations to be overshadowed by politics," Rishi Sunak wrote on X, referring to his early leaving from the 80th anniversary of the Normandy landings ceremony in France. Sunak had sparked backlash after skipping a major international ceremony in order for an ITV interview on the forthcoming general elections on July 4. The British premier said he cared "deeply" about veterans and was honored to represent the UK at a number of events in Portsmouth and France over the past two days and to meet those who fought so bravely. "After the conclusion of the British event in Normandy, I returned back to the UK. On reflection, it was a mistake not to stay in France longer - and I apologise," Sunak said. A series of events took place on Wednesday in the UK and France to mark the 80th anniversary of D-Day.-

Ex-Meta engineer sues over Gaza content handling

ISTANBUL: A Palestinian-American software engineer filed a lawsuit this week against social media giant Meta, claiming the company dismissed him unlawfully. Ferras Hamad says Meta, the parent company of Facebook and Instagram, discriminated against him and fired him after he investigated claims by users that the social media company was censoring Palestinian creators and activists. NBC news in a report Thursday cited the lawsuit Hamad filed which said he "was scrutinized, interrogated and terminated because he was of Palestinian national origin and/or Muslim" and because he was investigating the censorship allegations. According to the suit, he was fired even though the investigation was part of his job. The lawsuit says Hamad "is simply the latest victim of Meta's callus, chronic, and consistent anti-Palestinian bias.' Meta released a statement arguing that Hamad was dismissed for violating its "data access policies, which we make clear to employees will result in immediate termination." The company said the dismissal did not take place due to bias. Hamad's lawyers said he did not

the violate policies.-APP

Global food prices jump for 3rd straight month

LONDON: Global food

prices rose for a third con-

secutive month in May, as

higher cereals and dairy product prices outweighed decreases in prices for sugar and vegetable oils, the United Nations food agency said on Friday. The U.N. Food and Agriculture Organization's (FAO) price index, which tracks the most globally traded food commodities, averaged 120.4 points in May, up 0.9% from its revised April level. The May reading was nonetheless 3.4% below the level seen a year earlier. The FAO index hit a three-year low in February as food prices continued to ease off from a record peak set in March 2022, following Russia's invasion of fellow crop export major Ukraine. The uptick in May was supported by cereal prices rising 6.3% monthover-month amid growing concerns about unfavorable crop conditions curbing 2024 harvests in key producing areas like northern America, Europe and the Black Sea region. Dairy prices increased 1.8% in May from April, the FAO said, underpinned by increased product demand ahead of the summer holidays amid worries that milk production in western Europe may fall. The FAO's May sugar index fell sharply, decreasing 7.5% on a monthly basis, as a good start to the new harvest in top producer Brazil got underway. Vegetable oil prices declined 2.4% for the month, as palm oil quotations fell amid rising seasonal output-APP.

Pakistan & Russia sign accord on Cooperation in Railways

DNA

On the sidelines of 27th St. Petersburg International Economic Forum (SPIEF), Pakistan and Russia signed a Memorandum of Understanding on Cooperation in Railway Sector on 7 June 2024. Through this MoU, the two sides aim to look for opportunities to implement railways up-gradation projects and other initiatives of this vital sector. The MoU also sets the tone for potential future collaboration between the relevant companies operating in this sector, and aims to promote and facilitate international cargo



ISLAMABAD: An MoU on Railways signed by H.E. Ambassador Muhammad Khalid Jamali from Pakistan side and Deputy Transport Minister Mr. D.S. Zverev from the Russian side at Saint Petersburg Russia.—DNA

dor Muhammad Khalid Ja- Deputy Transport Minister Russian side.

signed by H.E. Ambassa- mali from Pakistan side and Mr. D.S. Zverev from the

Iran: US, Europe must halt support food for Israel

TEHRAN: Iran's Foreign Ministry spokesman Nasser Kan'ani has deplored the unwavering support of the United States and Europe for Israel, saying a complete end to such an approach is the sole way to stop the ongoing horrific tragedy in the occupied Palestinian territories. "Reports coming from #Gaza time and again show that violence and suffering are still the only reality for hundreds of thousands of innocent civilians. This appalling news must be independently investigated, in line with the last International Court of Justice order," Kan'ani wrote in a post published on the social platform X on Friday. He added that the crimes of the apartheid Israeli regime against Palestinian civilians, particularly women and children, are "clear to everyone in the world, and of course, they are harrowing and deadly." "Not mere words, but only a complete and practical halt to US and European support to the racist Israeli regime can put an end to the painful tragedy and reckless and brutal violence against the people in #Palestine," he concluded. According to Palestinian sources, at least 15 people have been killed in Israeli bombing targeting several areas in central Gaza since early hours of Friday. Also on Thursday, at least 40 Palestinians were killed and dozens wounded when the Israeli military bombed a school of the UN agency for Palestinian refugees (UNRWA) in Nuseirat refugee camp. The UN says 6,000 displaced people were sheltering inside the building when it was hit without warning. "I woke up to the screams of women and saw torn body parts. One woman lost two or three children," Om Mohammed Wasi, a displaced Palestinian, said. The vast majority of casualties and victims are reportedly children, women and elderly people. "This is state terrorism," Naiem Khalil, another displaced Palestinian, said. "Israel is targeting UN institutions. Israel violated all international laws, crossed all the red lines. For 76 years, the Palestinians have been appealing to the whole world with no response. -APP

WHO: 1.6m fall ill daily from unsafe

GENEVA: The World Health Organization on Friday said that every day, an estimated 1.6 million people become sick from eating un-

safe food. Children under the age of 5 carry 40% of the foodborne disease burden, Francesco Branca, head of nutrition and food safety at the WHO, told a UN press briefing in Geneva on World Food Safety Day. Stressing that food safety hazards do not recognize borders, Branca said that in "increasingly interconnected global food supply," risks posed by unsafe food can rapidly evolve from a local problem into an international emergency. Humanitarian crises in many parts of the world drive food insecurity and compromise food safety. The official urged governments to ensure that food safety is clear in their national action plans for health security and that the risk communication plans are updated and move towards integrated surveillance systems for animal, environmental, and human health. -DNA

UN chief condemns Myanmar military attacks on civilians

WEB DESK

WASHINGTON: UN chief Antonio Guterres demned recent attacks by Myanmar's military that reportedly killed scores of civilians in western Rakhine state. The Arakan Army (AA), an ethnic minority armed group, attacked junta forces in Rakhine in November, ending a ceasefire that had largely held since a military coup in 2021. Guterres "strongly condemns the recent attacks by the Myanmar military that have reportedly killed scores of civilians, including in Rakhine State," his spokesman Stephane Dujarric said in a statement. The AA says it is fighting for more autonomy for the ethnic Rakhine population in the western state, which is also home to around 600,000 members of the persecuted Rohingya Muslim minority. This week the AA said junta troops had killed more than 70 civilians in a raid on Byain

Phyu village, north of the state capital Sittwe. The junta said the claim was "propaganda". Phone and internet services have been all but cut off across Rakhine state, making it difficult to verify reports of violence. Guterres also called for an end to the "ongoing persecution" of the Rohingya minority who find themselves trapped between the fighting between the junta and the AA. Rohingya activists have accused the AA of forcibly displacing tens of thousands of members of their community, and burning and looting their homes. They have also accused the junta of forcibly recruiting thousands of Rohingya to fight against the AA, as the military loses ground.

Hundreds of thousands of Rohingya fled Rakhine for neighbouring Bangladesh in 2017 during a crackdown by the military that is now the subject of a United Nations genocide court case. - Reports of 'indiscrimi-

nate' bombing - Guterres

ported that an air strike on Ma Thaw village in Sagaing had killed around a dozen people gathered to celebrate a wedding. The junta has not responded to request for comment on the incident. "Indiscriminate aerial bombings" continued to be reported across the country, Guterres said, calling for those responsible to be held to The junta has lost swathes of territory to established ethnic minority

also condemned attacks by

the junta that reportedly

killed civilians in northern

Sagaing region, a hotspot

for resistance to the mili-

tary's 2021 coup. Earlier

this week local media re-

armed groups and newer pro-democracy "People's Defence Forces" in recent months. Rights groups accuse the junta of using the strikes to punish communities suspected of opposing

Russia, Turkiye seek to evade Western pressure

Kremlin also says the US and its allies will support Volodymyr Zelensky until he completes his objectives

News Desk

MOSCOW: The Kremlin on Friday said it was exploring ways with Türkiye to protect bilateral cooperation from Western pressure. Speaking at a press briefing in St. Petersburg, Spokesperson Dmitry Peskov said the U.S. and U.K. are exerting "unprecedented pressure" on countries through "pseudo intelligence agencies" established to monitor violations of anti-Russian sanctions. "These representatives come to Ankara, gather officials and business leaders and rudely threaten them," he said. Peskov acknowledged that Russia and Türkiye are experiencing difficulties in their economic ties, with sanctions negatively impacting the Russian-Turkish business dialogue. "We are looking for

ways to circumvent this Western pressure. We will definitely find them," he said. Regarding President Vladimir Putin's visit to Türkiye, Peskov explained that it has been delayed due to difficulties in coordinating the schedules of the two leaders. "It was not possible to align the presidents' schedules, but high-level contacts will continue in the very near future. Preparation for such contacts is ongoing," he said. Earlier on , Kremlin's press secretary Dmitry Peskov says the US and its allies will support Volodymyr Zelensky until he completes his objectives, following which he will be replaced. On the sidelines of the St. Petersburg International Economic Forum (SPIEF), Peskov spoke in an interview with the outlet Izvestia, during which he discussed President Vladimir Putin's recent comments on the future of Ukraine's leader.



The remark came after Putin recently noted that the West has already identified several potential candidates to become the president of Ukraine. Putin also accused Zelensky of carrying out a coup by extending his presidential term beyond the legally mandated date of May 20. Zelensky contended that Ukrailaw prohibits holding elec-

tions during a state of emergency, necessitating his remaining in office until the resolution of the conflict with Russia. However, the Ukrainian constitution doesn't provide a clear definition on the continuity of power during martial law and does not include such restrictions. The former Kremlin aide and special presidential envoy to Ukraine, Vladislav Surkov, said on Thursday that by rejecting the Minsk agreements, Zelensky has escalated the situation dangerously close to a world war, making a peaceful resolution of the conflict unattainable as long as he remains in power. "By rejecting the Minsk agreements, Zelensky has removed the fuse from the mechanism for starting a global war," Surkov said. "The peace formula is simple, here it is, write it down: minus Zelensky." "Only by the method of subtracting this imag-

In his interview, Peskov also provided further explanation regarding Putin's Wednesday remarks, where he mentioned US pressure on Ukraine to mobilize younger men in the war. "Obviously, reducing the mobilization age will cause an increasing wave of negativity in Ukrainian society," he said. Putin has said that Washington has enticed Kiev to decrease the draft age from 27 to 25, aiming to further reduce it to 23, and eventually to 20 or even directly to 18. "The law has to be passed and certain steps have to be taken," Putin explained. "It is now June 2024, and in order to do this. I feel, it will take a year. He (Zelensky) will be tolerated until the spring, until the beginning of next year at the very

least. When it is done, they

will say goodbye.

inary value can we get a result,"

the former Kremlin aide opined.



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Briefs

PNS Aslat conducts drills in **Indian Ocean**

The purpose of these exercises was to strengthen mutual relations and enhance mutual cooperation between navies in the region. "Pakistan Navy believes in joint efforts to maintain law and order at sea

STAFF REPORT

RAWALPINDI:Pakistan Navy Ship (PNS), Asalt on Friday conducted exercises with ships from Japan and Spain in the Indian Ocean during the regional maritime security patrol. The PNS Aslat conducted naval exercise with Japan Maritime Defense Force Naval Ship, Onami during the regional maritime security patrol, the Inter Services Public Relations (ISPR) said in a press release.

PNS Aslat also held naval exercise with Spanish ship SPS, Canarias. The purpose of these exercises was to strengthen mutual relations and enhance mu tual cooperation between navies in the region. "Pakistan Navy believes in joint efforts to maintain law and order at sea. Joint exercises of Pakistan Navy with international naval forces is a manifestation of Pakistan's determination for regional peace," the ISPR said.

Japan contribution enhances food security in Pakistan

Wada, Ambassador of Japan to Pakistan, appreciated WFPs Pakistan work and reaffirmed Japans commitment by noting Food security and nutrition are among the priorities for Japanese Official Development Assistance



STAFF REPORT

ISLAMABAD: The United Nations World Food Programme (WFP) acknowledges the Government of Japans generous contributions under three projects that provided emergency assistance for the stabilization of food-insecure people in the flood-affected areas of Pakistan, implemented in Sindh, Balochistan, Punjab and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. WFP organised a Project Completion cere-

mony to recognize the vital contributions of USD 7.2 million (USD 3.7 million, USD 2.5 million and USD 1 million) from the Government of Japan to address the critical needs of 246,000 people affected by the unprecedented 2022 floods in Pakistan. The USD 2.5 million enabled WFP to provide emergency food assistance to flood-affected communities, ensuring their immediate food security and nutrition needs in 2022, while the USD 3.7 million and USD 1 million contributions helped WFP to deliver nutritionally balanced

food every month to those actively involved in community rehabilitation, livelihood and resilience building initiatives and identified through district-level consultations in 2023. The USD 3.7 million grant also supported conditional cash assistance during the early recovery phase. Furthermore, tailored capacity-building activities were implemented to enhance local skills in disaster risk reduction, climate-smart agriculture, food production and storage, and other marketable

Country office in Islamabad in the presence of Ms. Coco Ushiyama, WFP Country Director in Pakistan, H.E. Wada Mitsuhiro, Ambassador of Japan to Pakistan, along with senior Japan Embassy and National Disaster Management Authority officials. Speaking at the occasion, H.E. Mr Wada, Ambassador of Japan to Pakistan, appreciated WFPs Pakistan work and reaffirmed Japans commitment by noting Food security and nutrition are among the priorities for Japanese Official Development Assistance, and we consider them to be the fundamental requirements for achieving sustainable development.

We greatly appreciate the unwavering support provided by the Government of Japan, which enabled us to address food insecurity and rebuild livelihoods in flood-affected areas at a critical time, said Ms. Coco Ushiyama, Country Director of WFP Pakistan. In 2023, Pakistan continued to grapple with the compounding impact of the devastating 2022 floods that affected more than one-third of the country. WFP played a pivotal role in supporting nearly 4.4 million people following the flood crisis through a variety of complementary interventions to address both critical and immediate humanitarian needs through unconditional cash support to approximately 1.7 million people in 2023 and longer-term needs to build resilience, enhance livelihoods opportunities, and address malnutrition. Overall, with generous and timely support from donors and partners including this USD 7.2 million from Japan, WFP successfully mobilized over USD 150 million for its emergency flood response by December 2023.

inal Court prosecutor to issue a warrant for the arrest

Attitudes in the Conservative Party have also shifted since

the start of the Israeli offensive, with Foreign Secretary

David Cameron saying in January that the Palestinian peo-

ple would have to be shown "irreversible progress" toward

The Labour move is likely to fray ties with the Israeli govern-

ment, which recently reacted with anger after Ireland, Spain

and Norway recognized a Palestinian state. Despite the sof-

tening of Labour's stance on Palestine, that has not healed

a two-state solution "as (the peace process) happens."

of Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu.

Opp accuses Narendra Modi of 'stock market scam

NEW DELHI: Indian National Congress stock market scam Indian National Congress Mr Gandhi has accused top BJP leaders of giving misleading financial advice Indian opposition leader Rahul Gandhi has demanded an investigation into a stock market crash that hit investors at the end of the general election.

He accused top Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) leaders of making misleading predictions about stock prices surging after 4 June, the day the results were announced. Mr Gandhi, from the Congress party, claimed that Prime Minister Narendra Modi encouraged people to buy stocks before this, which led to them losing money when the market crashed.

Mr Modi's party, the BJP, has denied the allegations. Mr Gandhi has demanded that a Joint Parliamentary Committee (JPC) investigate the alleged scam and the role of Mr Modi and senior ministers. He alleged that weeks before election results, Mr Modi, ex-Home Minister Amit Shah, and former Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman advised people to "buy stocks before 4 June", suggesting that the market would surge after, anticipating a BJP victory. In May, Mr Shah told NDTV news channel in an interview: "Stock market crashes should not be linked with elections, but even if such a rumour has been spread, I suggest that you buy (shares) before 4 June. It will shoot up." – **Agencies**

SC orders issuance of ad to summon Suri

DNA

ISLAMABAD: The Supreme Court has ordered to issue an advertisement to summon Qasim Suri in the electoral irregularities case. A hearing was held in the Supreme Court on the appeal against the de-seating of former deputy speaker National Assembly Qasim Suri, Suri, once again, did not appear before the court despite summons issued for him. The court ordered to issue an advertisement to summon Suri and asked to paste the notice outside Suri's house. Chief Justice Qazi Faiz Isa remarked that according to record, Suri's brother Bilal had refused to receive the notice. "Suri is deliberately not appearing in the Supreme Court. The former deputy speaker's refusal to receive the notice is unfortunate," said the CJP. The chief justice, while talking to Suri's lawyer Naeem Bukhari, said, "Your client is very active on media and social media. Naeem Bukhari replied, "I don't watch TV." The chief justice remarked, "You are a TV personality yourself and do not watch television. Are you familiar with X or Twitter?," the CJP asked. Bukhari replied, "I do not use social media nor do I know how to use it." The chief justice asked, "Why are you considering yourself old, stay young and up-to-date."

Empowering Change Serena Hotels partners with Behbud association for fundraising gala



ISLAMABAD: Serena Hotels proudly partnered with the Behbud Association to host a memorable fundraising event under the banner of cultural diplomacy. The event's proceeds went directly to the Behbud Maternal and Children's Hospital, a vital institution providing comprehensive healthcare services to mothers and children, enhancing the quality of care within the community. The evening featured a spectacular fashion show featuring apparel by artisans from Behbud and a mesmerizing musical performance by Saakin, blending entertainment with philanthropy to make a significant impact. Fashion enthusiasts and music lovers were treated to an unforgettable experience, showcasing the stunning dresses and creations of Behbud Association's skilled artisans. This event highlighted their exceptional craftsmanship, traditional techniques, and unique designs, supporting community development and empowerment. Models on the runway helped bridge the gap between artisans and a broader audience, promoting the preservation of traditional crafts and supporting sustainable livelihoods for the workers involved.

Abida Malik, President of the Behbud Association, expressed, "Our artisans create stunning apparel that illustrates their exceptional craftsmanship and dedication to a brighter future for all. - DNA



traditional techniques. These pieces are not just fashion statements but symbols of our cultural heritage. With Serena's invaluable support for our fundraising efforts, we can channel proceeds towards our hospital project, providing better healthcare facilities and supporting the overall development of our community." Serena Hotels recognizes the importance of community development and is committed to playing its part in creating positive change. Supporting initiatives that uplift and empower communities is fundamental to our values. Serena Hotels is proud to stand behind such endeavors, working together towards

UK's Labour to promise Palestine recognition in manifesto: Report

Monitoring Desk

LONDON: The Labour Party plans to recognize a Palestinian state if it wins the UK general election on July 4. The pledge is set to be announced as part of Labour's election manifesto, which is expected to be published next Thursday if it can be agreed upon with the UK's trade unions. It comes as the party tries to unify itself ahead of an expected victory, with the issue having caused deep divisions between members and with many voters choosing not to back it at recent local elections due to a perceived lack of support for a ceasefire in Gaza

Labour leader Keir Starmer is thought to favor recognition of Palestinian statehood "as part of a peace process," according to party insiders quoted by The Guardian, having previously stuck to the official line of the current Conservative government, which supports Israel. The manifesto will lay out a plan to recognize Palestine before a peace process is concluded, and will include a promise not to allow the move to be vetoed by neighboring countries. Starmer prompted criticism after suggesting last year that he believed Israel had the right to cut off water and electricity supplies to Gaza, but the party has subsequently

all internal rifts, with the party set to contest the election against numerous candidates campaigning on the issue of Gaza, including former Labour candidate Faiza Shaheen in the London constituency of Chingford and Woodford Green. The party has identified two other constituencies, Bristol Central and Sheffield Hallam, which it fears it might not win due to local support for the Palestinians, having lost the recent Rochdale by-election to former Labour MP George Galloway who ran on a similar platform. The selection of pro-Israel activist Luke Akehurst to stand as a candidate in North Durham has also worried Labour supporters. expect our European partners to take the next step - to

start negotiations on European Union membership already this month," Shmyhal said on the Telegram messaging app. "Every day, the Ukrainian people fight for the right to be part of the European family in the war against the Russian aggressor." The Commission assessment will now be discussed by experts in working groups and then by ambassadors of EU governments next week. The 27 EU member states have to unanimously agree to start the negotiations, which take years to conclude, by adopting the so-called negotiating framework. Belgium, which holds the rotating EU presidency until the end of June, is making arrangements for intergovernmental conferences with Ukraine and Moldova to be held on June 25 in Luxembourg if there is unanimous backing. But such backing is not guaranteed because Hungary, which maintains warm ties with Russia and has criticized Ukraine's membership bid, has doubts about the Commission's assessment that Ukraine is ready and wants to see some more items added to the negotiating frameworks, diplomats said. Belgium and the Commission are keen to get agreement in June, before Hungary takes over the rotating presidency from July 1 for six months, because EU diplomats expect Budapest will put the whole process on ice until 2025. Kyiv applied for EU membership in the weeks after Russia launched its full-scale invasion in Feb 2022 and it was granted candidate status four months later. - Agencies

Ukraine, Moldova ready to start EU accession talks

BRUSSELS/KYIV: Ukraine and Moldova meet all the criteria needed to formally start negotiations on EU membership, the European Commission said on Friday, as Ukrainian Prime Minister Denys Shmyhal expressed hope that the talks could start later this month. "We confirm that on the Commission side we consider that all the steps have been met by the two countries," Commission spokeswoman on enlargement Ana Pisonero said. "The decision is now in the hands of the member states – it is for them to adopt the negotiating framework," she said. "Once this step is done it is the prerogative of the EU Presidency to convene an intergovernmental conference to formally mark the start of the negotiations," she added. Opening talks with the European Union would be a morale boost for Ukraine as the war with Russia enters its third year and Moscow's forces are advancing in the eastern Donetsk region and opening a new front in the northeastern Kharkiv region. "Now we

Australia celebrates achievements of Australia **Awards scholars**

DNA

ISLAMABAD: The Australian High Commission in Pakistan proudly acknowledges the achievements of the 60 Pakistani scholars who have successfully completed their studies in Australia this year under the prestigious Australia Awards scholarship program. The scholars, including 21 men and 39 women, are being recognized for their dedication and academic excellence. It is with great pride that we celebrate the achievements of the Pakistan scholars who have successfully completed their studies under the Australia Awards scholarship program, Australian High Commissioner to Pakistan, Neil Hawkins said. We commend them on their hard work and are confident that they have gained valuable knowledge and skills that will contribute significantly to the development of Pakistan.

The Australia Awards scholarship program is a key component of the Australian Government's development assistance to Pakistan. The program aims to equip scholars with the expertise needed to drive progress and development in their home country, and it particularly supports the empowerment of women, aligning with Australias foreign policy priority to promote gender equality. High-

High Commissioner Hawkins welcomed the number of women scholars noting that the Australia Awards program underscored Australias commitment to gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls. The High Commissioner however expressed concern over a growing trend of scholarship recipients choosing to remain in Australia post-graduation, which contravened the terms of the scholarship agreement. Such a practice undermines the very purpose of this initiative, which is to contribute to Pakistans development. If this trend continues, it will jeopardise the future of the program in Pakistan and deprive aspiring Pakistani scholars of an opportunity to benefit from an Australian education and contribute to Pakistans development, he cautioned. The High Commissioner urged all Australia

Awards recipients to honour their commitment to return to Pakistan and contribute to its growth and development. By fulfilling your obligations, you will play a pivotal role in strengthening the ties between our two nations through sustainable development and mutual progress, he said. The Australia Awards Recognition Ceremony celebrates the successful completion of Australia Awards Scholarships and Short Course Awards from the FY 2023-24.

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