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Pakistan's Credible Daily Newspaper

Price Rs. 30

Kazakh envoy stresses SCO's role in regional economic cooperation

A sister publication of **CENTRELINE & DNA News Agency** 

**Detailed News On Page-08** 

Naqvi meets Canadian High Commissioner

**Detailed News On Page-08** 



**Bowler Amir's** 'unexpected training' in US **Detailed News On Page-06** 





ISLAMABAD: Female ambassadors/high commissioners in Islamabad including Ambassadors of Bulgaria, Italy, the Netherlands, European Union, High Commissioners of UK and Canada had a meeting with the first-ever Lt. General of Pakistan Army Nigar Johar. The participants exchanged views on a variety of issues. - DNA

## **US** supports Indo-Pak negotiations

Relations between India and Pakistan have deteriorated since August 5, 2019, when New Delhi unilaterally annexed the disputed Himalayan region of Jammu and Kashmir

#### Foreign Desk

WASHINGTON: The United States support "direct discussions" between India and Pakistan, saying the two neighbouring counmode for the talks themselves, State Department Spokesperson Matthew Miller has said. "We value our important relationships with both India and Pakistan," he said in response to a question from a Pakistani TV channel reporter at his daily news briefing on Thursday.

"As we have said, we support direct discussions between India and Pakistan, but the pace, scope and character should be determined by those two countries, not by us," Miller added. Relations between India and Pakistan have deteriorated since August 5, 2019, when New Delhi unilaterally annexed the disputed Himalayan region of Jammu and Kashmir, leading to heightened tensions between them. Official talks between the two countries have remained suspended since then.

Answering another ques tion, he stated, "US and Pakistan both have a common goal of addressing regional security threats.' "We partner with Pakistan on security through our high-level counter-terrorism dialogue, including several counter-terrorism capacity building programmes, and we support a series of US-Pakistan military-to-military gagements," Miller said.

## £190 million reference case

## Imran Khan claims talks may result in toppling of govt

Former PM says he wants to negotiate for the sake of Pakistan, not for himself or the government

#### KHAYAM ABBASI

RAWALPINDI: Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) founding chairman Imran Khan stated on Friday that any negotiations with the Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) could result in the downfall of their government. During an informal media chat at the hearing of the £190 million reference case, the incarcerated former PM expressed his desire to negotiate for Pakistan's benefit, not for personal or governmental interests. "I want to negotiate for Pakistan, not for myself or the government," he said. Imran reiterated his willingness to step back if it benefits the country, saying, "Convince me it benefits the country, and I will step back." He criticised the current government

#### Reduce loadshedding or things might get out of hand, **KP CM warns**

"..it is a pity that the federal government is not fulfilling its promises," says KP chief minister

### SHAMIM SHAHID

PESHAWAR: Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Chief Minister Ali Amin Gandapur Friday warned the Shehbaz Sharif-led federal government that things could get out of hand if it does not reduce

Continued on Page 06 Continued on Page 06

## Shazia Mari says 'Not blackmailing' PML-N on budget

Marri says nothing substantial came out of the talks between PPP chief and prime minister

### NAZIR SIYAL

KARACHI: Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) Central Information Secretary Shazia Marri said Friday that her party was not strong-arming the Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N), which is in power in the centre, over the federal budget. Finance Minister Muhammad Aurangzeb presented the budget LAHORE: The Punjab government on for the next fiscal year, starting July 1, earlier Friday imposed Section 144 across the this month, but the PPP - the main ally of the PML-N - had raised strong objections and order situation", thereby banning to the proposals. The party leaders had said protests and public gatherings. The imthat the PML-N had taken a solo flight in pre- position of Section 144 across Punjab paring the budget, while another had claimed comes as PTI plans to carry out nationthat the PPP was not consulted at all on the wide protests today demanding the re-

Continued on Page 06

## Punjab imposes Section 144 to

## BUREAU REPORT

province in light of "the prevailing law financial blueprint. With the differences lease of incarcerated leader Imran Khan.

Continued on Page 06

# stave off protests

# of CPEC projects: PM Shehbaz

Strategic ties with China to continue: COAS Chinese minister expressed satisfaction with the progress achieved on CPEC

Minister stressed the importance of enhanced exchanges between the political parties of the two countries for experience-sharing, capacity building and people-centered governance

**Govt to ensure timely completion** 



ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister receives Mr. Liu Jianchao, Minister of International Department of Communist Party of China Mr. Liu Jianchao, Minister of International Department of the Communist Party of China (IDCPC) called on Prime

Continued on Page 06

MAHNOOR ANSAR

RAWALPINDI: Chief of Army Staff Gen Asim Munir reaffirmed Pakistan's unwavering commitment to the strategic partnership with China and pledged full support for the successful implementation of the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC), a flagship project of China's Belt and Road Initiative (BRI). He expressed the resolve during a meeting with Liu Jianchao, Minister of the International Department of Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif in Islamabad earlier. the Central Committee of the Communist Party of

STAFF REPORT

Continued on Page 06

## Armenia recognizes State of **Palestine**

A series of countries have recognised the State of Palestine amid the war

#### News Desk

YEREVAN:Armenia announced Friday its recognition of the State of Palestine, the latest country to do so during the war in Gaza, saying it was against "violence towards civilian populations." A series of countries have recognised the State of Palestine amid the war between Israel and Hamas, drawing strong rebukes from Israeli officials. "Confirming its commitment to international law, equality of nations, sovereignty and peaceful coexistence, the Republic of Armenia recognises the State of Palestine," Yerevan said. Armenia added that it is "genuinely interested in establishing longterm peace and stability in the Middle-East."

#### **Holiday Notice**

The offices of daily Islamabad POST shall closed remain Saturday on account of weekly off therefore will newspaper on Sunday.

## Minister Jianchao says

## Pakistan security situation matter of concern for Chinese investors

Says Political stability vital for development of a country; all political parties to join hands for the political stability of the country; broad political consensus needed for CPEC success; security and business environment need to be improved

#### Ansar M Bhatti

ISLAMABAD: Visiting Chinese Development Minister Liu Jianchao has advised advised Pakistani political leadership to shun differences as "internal stability is imperative for any nation to develop". "In a turbulent world of rising uncertainties, stability within the country is essential for development. Faced with complex internal and external challenges, Pakistan is navigating carefully through turbulent rivers," Minister of the International Department of the Communist Party of China (IDCPC) Liu Jianchao said. Jianchao made the remarks as he co-chaired - along with Foreign Minister Ishaq Dar - the third meeting of the Pakistan-China Joint Consultative Mechanism (JCM) of the Political Parties on the CPEC. Leaders belonging to all major political parties, including the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI), Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N), Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP), were present during the event. PTI's Barrister Ali Zafar and Raoof Hasan, PML-N's Ahsan Iqbal, Jamiat

Continued on Page 06

Dar says foolproof security to be ensured for Chinese nationals

#### **DNA**

ISLAMABAD: Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Mohammad Ishaq Dar met Mr. Liu Jianchao, Minister of Central Committee of the International Department of Communist Party of China (IDCPC) today in Islamabad. THE Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister appreciated the positive contribution of CPEC to Pakistan's socio-economic development, and progress and prosperity. He underscored that as the flagship project of President China's Belt and Road Initiative, CPEC has

Continued on Page 06



## PRINT OR PERISH

## The 10% GST Threatens Free Press

- 1. The newspaper industry is facing an existential crisis due to the 10% GST proposed on newsprint in the recent
- 2. In an environment full of fake news and disinformation, newspapers are a vital source for credible and authentic news. They play an important role in promoting democratic values and shaping informed public opinions. The imposition of this GST will push many newspapers, particularly small and regional newspapers, towards closure.
- 3. Newspapers organisations are already subsidising the cost of their publications for their readers as they are not passing on the cost burden to the readers. Taxing the newspapers will further weaken the economies of the print media and impact the citizens' right to know.
- 4. This tax threatens the survival of an already struggling newspaper industry. While reducing the quality and quantity of news coverage, the tax will increases production costs, endanger jobs, restrict the ability for the industry to pay competitive and timely salaries and will make it impossible for print media organisations to implement the government mandated Wage Board for newspaper employees.

We urge the government to reconsider and withdraw this tax to ensure the survival and continued contribution of newspapers to an enlightened society.



## Tourism surge

## Over 400,000 visitors flock to KP over Eidul Azha

Naran Kaghan emerge as most popular spot, attracting over 174,000 tourists alone

SHAMIM SHAHID

PESHAWAR: During the recently concluded Eidul Azha holidays, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa witnessed a significant influx of tourists, with more than 400,000 visitors exploring various scenic destinations from June 17 to 19. Naran Kaghan emerged as the most popular spot, attracting over 174,000 tourists alone. The picturesque valleys and serene landscapes of Naran Kaghan continue to charm visitors seeking respite from urban life. In Galiyat, a total of 162,000 tourists enjoyed cultural sites and historical landmarks, highlighting the city's rich heritage. Additionally, Malam Jabba in Swat welcomed over 46,000 visitors, while Upper Dir saw 23,000 tourists exploring its natural beauty. The surge in tourist numbers under-

**SNGPL** 

disconnects

4 more

connections

MULTAN: The Sui Northern

Gas Pipeline Limited (SNG-

PL) disconnected four more

connections over different

charges here on Friday. The

Sui Gas Task Force con-

tinued its daily operations,

disconnecting four more me-

ters and removing five exten-

sions. Four consumers had

illegally transferred their me-

ters from the service to their

homes, causing leakage loss-

es to the department. After

thorough inspection, the task

force disconnected all four

connections. Additionally, a

meter of a non-billing con-

sumer was also disconnected

and sent to the laboratory for

further departmental action.

Five consumers who were il-

legally supplying gas to more

than one house had their

extensions removed. During

the inspection of commercial

consumers, one commercial

consumer who had not paid

the ad-hoc bill was made to

pay a bill of Rs 210,000. Fur-

thermore, five active com-

mercial consumers were also

inspected. In addition, the

task force teams inspected

the entire colony of Fatima

Town for the use of compres-

sors following a Situation

Rescue-1122

assists 1562

during Eidul

Azha

FAISALABAD :Rescue-1122

Faisalabad provided emergency service to 1562 people affected by various incidents/accidents in the district during the three days of Eidul Azha. District Emergency Officer Zafar Iqbal said here on Friday

that Punjab Emergency

Faisalabad received 1,684 emergency calls at its control room during the Eidul Azha holidays. He said that during the Eidul Azha days, 387 road accidents were reported, in which two people lost their lives. As many as 1107 cases of medical emergencies and 34 of fire

eruption were reported in

the district.-APP

Service

(Rescue-1122)

Room Complaint.-APP

scores Khyber Pakhtunkhwa's growing appeal as a top destination for domestic travelers, offering a blend of natural beauty, cultural heritage, and adventure opportunities. Local authorities and businesses have been working to ensure a memorable experience for visitors while managing the influx responsibly. Mean while, As per figures shared by the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Integrated Tourism Development Project (KITE), a provincial initiative by the provincial government to develop tourism in KP, 583,452 tourists in total visited on Eid-ul- Fitar. "Khyber Pakhtunkhwa's tourist spots remained tourists' first priority during Eid holidays," the KP Culture and Tourism Authority said in a statement. "During the five days [April 10-14], over 583,000 tourists visited the tourist spots of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa." According to a breakdown shared by KITE,

Galiyat saw the highest number of visitors with over 237,500 visiting the area during the five days while 151,900 visited Malam Jabba. As many as 92,470 tourists visited Kumrat Valley while 77,372 toured Naran and Kaghan areas, the data showed. Pakistan's inflation last year peaked at 36.4 percent during April 2023 while food inflation surged to 49.1 percent. The South Asian country's inflation outpaced price gains even in Sri Lanka as its currency depreciated and Pakistan hiked fuel and energy prices to comply with the International Monetary Fund (IMF). In March 2024, however, Pakistan's inflation rate measured by the Consumer Price Index (CPI) fell to 20.7 percent, its lowest in 23 months. However, the country continues to face significant financial challenges, with dwindling foreign exchange reserves and a weak

## District admin bans LPG shops due to security

The move aims to mitigate risks associated with the high traffic volume and sensitive movements on Adiala Road, ensuring the safety of all residents and travellers in the area, the officials further said

:Various filling agencies and shops, both legal and illegal, operating on Adiala Road have been banned with immediate effect due to security concerns.

According to the Rawalpindi district administration, the decision mandates the immediate sealing of illegal shops and agencies, with their goods confiscated. Licence holders are required to relocate their agencies to safer locations. Officials said this precautionary measure arises from the constant VVIP movement on Adiala Road, which is heavily trafficked due to the daily transportation of accused individuals from Adiala Iail to the courts

and back. Deputy Com-

missioner Cheema has instructed the Civil Defense Department to enforce these orders without delay. In response, the department has issued red notices to all licenced LPG cylinder gas agencies along the stretch from 502 Workshop on Adiala Road to Adiala Village, giving them a seven-day deadline to relocate. Meanwhile, illegal cylinder gas shops and agencies have been sealed imme-

District Officer Civil The move aims to mit-Defense Talib Hussain igate risks associated confirmed that following these orders, eight illegal cylinder gas filling shops have been sealed. The confiscated items include gas-filling devices and stored gas. Formal cases are

with the high traffic volume and sensitive movements on Adiala Road, ensuring the safety of all residents and travellers in the area, the officials further said.

these illegal operators at the police station. To ensure compliance with the deputy commissioner's two teams have been formed. Any licence holder failing to relocate their agency by June 25 will face further action, including the sealing of their agency. These sealed agencies will only be reopened once they have been safely transferred to new locations.



RAWALPINDI Mr. Liu Jianchao, Minister of the International Department of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of China (IDCPC), met General Syed Asim Munir, NI (M), Chief of Army Staff (COAS), at General Headquarters. - DNA

## One killed, incidents

KOTRI: One person lost his life while 15 people sustained injuries in various incidents including clash and accidents in Kotri and Jamshoro areas.

Rind communities on the

first day of the opening

of Water Park near check

post No.13 on M-9 Mo-

torway within the limit of

Jamshoro police station.

Police reached the park

but they were not allowed

to enter and intervene.

The park is stated to be

built by the cousin of an

influential officer in the

Sindh Police.-APP

ABID RAZA A resident of Shahdad Kot. LAHORE: The Lahore High Court has taken deciidentified as 40-year-old Ali Bakhsh was crushed by a sive action to address envispeeding car while he was ronmental and public health crossing the road at M9 concerns by ordering a ban Motorway Nooriabad main on vehicles emitting smoke. stop. He died on the spot. This decision came dur-Driver of the car managed ing a hearing on petitions to escape. Police shifted the filed for the eradication of body to Thana Bola Khan smog. During the proceed-Hospital. The deceased ings, Justice Shahid Karim worked in a factory in Nooissued directives for immediate measures against veriabad Industrial Zone. In Jamshoro RBB Colony, the hicles emitting smoke. The Solangi community got into court instructed the traffic a fight over a trivial matter, police to take strict action in which around 10 people against such vehicles and to were injured by being hit promptly report violations to the relevant authorities. with sticks and bricks. A "Traffic police should take case was registered against five people at Jamshoro police station on the complaint of Advocate Amir Hazoor Solangi. In a road accident on Indus Highway two women and three children were injured when a van heading to Sehwan collided with a car. Mean-NAZIR SIYAL while, a clash took place between Khaskheli and

ing cases of lighting fires and enhancing control over fire incidents in the motorway environs. "There are a lot of fires in the motorway environs, which should be controlled," the court said. The court emphasized the motorway inspector general (IG) to ensure the orders are implemented, failing which could result in contempt of court actions. In a related development, the Provincial Disaster

Lahore High Court bans

smoke-emitting vehicles

Lahore High Court says there are a lot of fires

action against smoke-emit-

ting vehicles and inform the

department concerned,"

the court ruled. Addition-

ally, the motorway police

were tasked with address-

Authority Management (PDMA) of Punjab sub-

along motorway, which should be controlled mitted a detailed report on heat stroke incidents, highlighting ongoing efforts to mitigate the impact of extreme heat. According to the report, a heat stroke awareness campaign has been launched to educate the public on preventive measures. Moreover, the PDMA reported that 20 water bowsers, each containing 12,500 liters of water, have been dispatched to Cholistan to provide relief to residents affected by water scarcity. he hearing, presided over by Justice Shahid Karim, was conducted on petitions of citizen Haroon Farooq and others. It was adjourned, with further deliberations scheduled for next Friday.

## Hospitals witness surge in diarrhoea cases post Eid

KARACHI :Following the Eidul Azha celebrations, hospitals in the city have witnessed a rise in diarrhea cases.The excessive consumption of meat and disregard for dietary precautions contributed to an increase in stomach-related illnesses among city Meanwhile, residents. medical experts cautioned that overindulgence of meat can lead to severe digestive problems. Despite repeated warnings from nutritionists, many citizens ignored guidelines during the three-day festivities, opting instead for lavish feasts and barbeque parties. As a conse-

quence, hospitals are now

om No.14 815, 3rd Floor, Kats

grappling with a surge in gastrointestinal cases. Jinnah Postgraduate Medical Centre (JPMC) Emergency Ward in-charge, Dr Irfan Siddiqui, said that the hospital's emergency department treated 70 patients exhibiting choiera symptoms on the first day of Eid, followed by 50-66 cases on the subsequent days. Similarly, Civil Hospital Accident Ward Head, Dr Imran Sarwar, said that 1000-1200 patients with complains of nausea. severe stomach pain and diarrhea, sought treatment at the hospital's ER service during the three day of the festivity. Abbasi Shaheed Hospital Superintendent (ASH). Dr Javed. stated that over 600 pa-

tients with symptoms like

indigestion, nausea, stomach pain, and diarrhea during the same period had visited hospital while 20 of them were admitted for observation.

Medical Experts say that a healthy person should not consume more than 70 grams of meat per day if eating meat daily. Otherwise, 700 grams per week is suitable for healthy adults. They advise those with pre-existing conditions such as heart disease, diabetes, high blood pressure, and high cholesterol to exercise greater caution and opt for leaner alternatives like fish or mutton. It is also crucial to balance meat intake with healthy accompaniments such as salads, lemon water, vegetables, and fruits.

The Smooth Moving Connection

PACKING, SHIPPING & FREIGHT FORWARDING



LARKANA: President Asif Ali Zardari cutting cake on the 71st birth anniversary of Shaheed Mohtarma Benazir Bhutto at Garhi Khuda Baksh Bhutto.-DNA

## IG Punjab prioritizes police family welfare

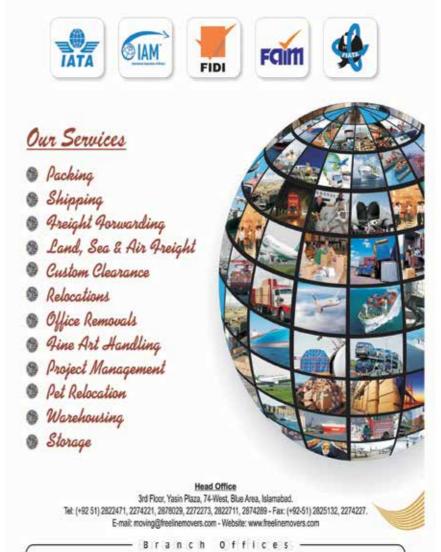
**DNA** 

LAHORE: Inspector General Police Punjab Dr. Usman Anwar has said that Punjab Police is like a family, and resolution of issues faced by its members and their families is a top priority. He said this during a meeting with police employees and their families at the Central Police Office here on Thursday. He listened to the employee's applications and issued orders for relief. The IG Punjab said that all supervisory officers should maintain close contact with their subordinate staff and leave no stone unturned in addressing their applications and concerns. According to the details, the IG Punjab directed the DIG Elite to provide relief on the request of Asmat Shehzadi, who is serving as an assistant, for her transfer from Telecommunications to PHP. Dr. Usman Anwar forwarded the Sub-Inspector Raees Shehzad Khan's departmental promotion request to the Additional IG Punjab

for relief on merit. He instructed the AIG Admin to provide relief on the family claim recruitment request by the widow of late ASI Irshad Khan for her son's job. He forwarded the ASI Ehsan Ali's transfer request from Lahore to Narowal to the DIG Establishment One for relief. On the request of Constable Saqib Mahmood for recruitment as a junior clerk on a family claim, IG Punjab directed the AIG Admin to proceed on merit. The IG Punjab also instructed the Additional IG Welfare and Finance to provide relief on leave encashment requests from retired Sub-Inspector Sai Khan and six other officers. He issued immediate relief orders for other welfare, recruitment, and promotion-related applications. He directed that all officers should take action on the forwarded requests and send compliance performance reports to the Central Police Office. Meanwhile, Inspector General of Police Punjab, Dr. Usman Anwar, praised the performance of the Special Branch for their ef-

fective reporting on cleanliness arrangements during Eid al-Adha. IG Punjab Dr. Usman Anwar while appreciating the performance of Special Branch officers and personnel across the province, said that due to the objective reporting by the Special Branch, significant success was achieved in the Eid cleanliness operation. He further mentioned that the Special Branch provided timely information that greatly contributed to achieving the zero waste target. Special Branch's effective reporting helped in timely collection and proper disposal of animal remains in the cities. IG Punjab congratulated the entire Special Branch team for their outstanding performance. Punjab police department, on the direction of IG Police Punjab Dr Usman Anwar, released more funds for monthly health stipends for 582 children of employees affected by cerebral palsy, who are stationed across the province, including Lahore. Spokesperson for Punjab Police

said that a payment of 10,000 rupees per child per month has been made, and for medical expenses from April to June, 30,000 rupees per child has been released. In total, more than 17.4 million rupees have been released. IG Punjab Dr. Usman Anwar mentioned that each child affected by cerebral palsy is being given 10,000 rupees monthly, amounting to 120,000 rupees annually. Over 70 million rupees will be spent on the treatment of cerebral palsy affected children this year. He further said that the police department is providing the best free treatment for children affected by cerebral palsy. Meanwhile, Dr Usman Anwar paid great tribute to the sacrifice of police officer Tanveer Abbas, who was martyred in the line of duty while fighting the robbers in Rajanpur. IG Punjab said that the sacrifices of martyred police officers and officials for the protection of lives and properties of the citizens will not go in vain and Punjab police will not hesitate to protect the lives and properties of the citizens.



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

## JUNE

June 02/Itlay National/Independence Day

June 04/Finland

**Armed Forces Day** June 06/Sweden

**National Day** June 10/Portugal

Portugal Day (National

June 10/Jordan **Arab Revolution& Army Day** 

June 11/United king-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 .....0334-5421812



Turkish Airlines.....8494949



#### **Emergency** Rescue (Police).....15

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



Edhi Ambulance	115
PIA Flight Info	114
PIA Cargo	.9280979
Railway Inquiry	117
Railway Exchange	270831-5
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 Internation	nal 4603666



### Denartments

Departments		
CDA	9221334-43	
CDA	9208301-04	
Met Office	9250360-6	
RDA	5555864	
TMA	5770886	
Cantonment B	oard 9270151-3	

### **Water Tank**

Islamabad.....0321-5744480



ISLAMABAD A Federal Minister for Interior Mohsin Naqvi presenting souvenir to Canadian High Commissioner Leslie Scanlon.—DNA

## Ahsan Bakhtawari takes pride in enhancing ICCI performance

Says ICCI is trying its level best to establish a new industrial estate in the outskirts of the twin cities for the promotion of businesses and investments and in this connection is in touch with the concerned authorities

FAISAL SHEIKH

ISLAMABAD: Ahsan Zafar Bakhtawari, President Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry has said that he has gone all out to enhance the performance of this prestigious body and that it is because of his and his team's tireless efforts that today its membership tally has crossed eight thousand. Speaking to a media group, here on Friday, he said that for ease of doing businesses by addressing the grievances of the community, meetings with relevant government functionaries like CDA, Police, IESCO, IMC highups' are a routine matter, that's why the traders are getting enrolment in large number which is a crystal clear proof that they are placing their confidence in

it. To a question he said that to attract the foreign investment in the country, meetings with Ambassadors of friendly countries in the Chamber and in the Embassies are traits of the ICCI. Moreover, ICCI delegations' visits to other countries and meetings with the relevant Chambers have also proved beneficial for the country. Answering a question about promotion of industry-academia linkages, Ahsan Zafar Bakhtawari said that ICCI has inked MoUs with almost all the leading Universities to enable the educated vouth to emerge as job providers instead of job seekers. To another query he replied that it is for the first time during his Presidency that traders belonging to remote areas of the capital city like Tarnol, Bara Kohu etc.

have also obtained the membership in large numbers because of the outclass performance of the Chamber. He said that by acknowledging his Corporate Social Responsibilities, he has launched a campaign to install water filtration plants and water coolers in different commercial hubs of the capital city to ensure the provision of clean and cold drinking water to traders, customers as well as the residents. Moreover weekly medical camps, provision of computers, laboratory equipment etc. to different educational institutions are also part of the same drive. He further said that ICCI is trying its level best to establish a new industrial estate in the outskirts of the twin cities for the promotion of businesses and investments and in this

connection is in touch with the concerned authorities. He proudly mentioned that ICCI has also inked a MoU with the Gulberg Greens Management for the construction of a state of the art expo centre to boost commercial activities in the twin cities, adding that the forthcoming 2nd All Pakistan **Chambers Presidents Conclave** on June 25, 26 will also go a long way in highlighting and addressing the business community's problems for the economic wellbeing of the country. Ahsan Zafar Bakhtawari went on to say that because of the commitment and hard work of his team under his command a Mediation Council Office has been established in the ICCI premises to amicably settle the rent matters. Moreover, a NADRA facilitation centre and

a Police Service Centre are about to commence their working within a couple of weeks. He further said that traders are availing discount from top-class hospitals and Diagnostic Centres owing to the endeavors of the ICCI, added that he and his team is working hard to materialize the dream of the business community to have its own hospital, a School, a College and a University and a is also utilizing all options to resolve the residential problems of the business community. Ahsan Zafar Bakhtawari added that ICCI also works shoulder to shoulder with the government for the promotion of education, awareness about IPRs, promulgation of religious values, creating awareness about climate change, sustainable development of the country etc. by holding seminars and confer-

# **HEC** cautions

FAISAL SHEIKH

ISLAMABAD: The Higher Education Commission (HEC), Pakistan has once again alerted students and parents to avoid taking admission in the two-year BA. BSc and MA, MSc degree programmes. HEC had phased out two-year BA/BSc and MA/MSc programmes with extended deadlines of the academic years 2019 and June 30, 2022, respectively. Despite gradual phasing out of these two-year degree programmes, some higher education institutions admitted students in these programmes after the specified deadlines. Consequently,

students HEC has clearly cautioned students, parents as well as higher education institutions that degrees obtained from such programmes will not be recognized and attested by HEC. It is pertinent to mention that as per its Ordinance. HEC has the authority to establish conditions for opening and operation of higher education institutions, including those that are not affiliated with the State educational system, nationwide. HEC is also responsible for formulating policies, setting standards, and determining priorities in various areas related to institutional regulations, guidelines, and rules to improve the quality of education.

## **IRSA releases** 338,600 **cusecs water**

ISLAMABAD: Indus River System Authority (IRSA) on Friday released 338,600 cusecs water from various rim stations with inflow of 298,100 cusecs. According to the data released by IRSA, water level in River Indus at Tarbela Dam was 1457.18 feet and was 59.18 feet higher than its dead level of 1,398 feet. Water inflow and outflow in the dam was recorded as 190,000 cusecs and 195,000 cusecs respectively. The water level in River Jhelum at Mangla Dam was 1180.55 feet, which was 132.55 feet higher than its dead level of 1,050 feet. The inflow and outflow of water was recorded 42,200 cusecs and 45,000 cusecs respectively. The release of water at Kalabagh, Taunsa Guddu and Sukkur was recorded as 157,800, 173,600, 103,300 and 101,700 cusecs respectively. Similarly, from River Kabul, a total of 87,200 cusecs of water released at Nowshera and 21,100 cusecs released from River Chenab at Marala.-APP

## Primary schools to introduce child-friendly policy in ICT

ISLAMABAD, Jun 21 (AP-P):In a bid to alleviate the burden on young students, government primary schools have decided to introduce Child-Friendly Policy in Islamabad Capital Territory. According to a source of the Ministry of Federal Education and Professional, Training, the federal government primary schools in the ICT are set to introduce a new policy from August 1. As per the policy, students will no longer be required to carry their school books back and forth between home and school. Instead, the schools will provide pigeon holes and book racks in the classrooms to store the books, making it a child-friendly and conven-

#### AIOU announces schedule for online workshops

ISLAMABAD: Allama Igbal Open University (AIOU) has announced workshop schedule for M.A/M.Sc, BS, and B.Ed (ODL programs) offered in semester spring 2024. According to the AIOU, the workshops for the first batch will be held from June 24 to June 29. Each course workshop will be held for 6 days. It should be noted that workshops will be conducted online on Microsoft teams through AIOU's Aaghi Learning Management System (LMS) portal. According to the Director General Regional Services, Dr. Malik Tauqir Ahmed Khan, login information (username & password) has been shared with the students and they are instructed to participate in these workshops through Aaghi portal. –APP

#### **CPEC** significantly contributed to Pakistan development: Ayaz Parties Forum and the 3rd reminded that on that very cal cooperation." He said

**DNA** 

ISLAMABAD: Speaker of National Assembly Sardar Ayaz Sadiq said on Friday that the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) had not only transformed Pakistan's infrastructure landscape but had also significantly contributed to its socio-economic development. "All political parties of Pakistan speak with one voice in complete solidarity with CPEC as a 'Game Changer'. The bond between the people of the two nations has successfully withstood the test of time' he expressed these views while addressing the event "Pakistan-China Political

Meeting of CPEC Political Parties Joint Consultation Mechanism". He said, "China and Pakistan have always held each other's hands and shown the world that both nations stand together as one in peace and prosperity, and tragedy and turmoil." Ayaz Sadiq said, "This "all-weather friendship" bears testimony to the age-old Chinese saying: A friend - one soul, two bodies." While reflecting on the historic visit of President Xi Jinping to Pakistan in 2015, he said it was a defining moment for this Region as agreements worth 46 billion dollars were signed on the occasion. He also

occasion President Xi and Muhammad Nawaz Sharif, the then Prime Minister of Pakistan, jointly inaugurated the first-ever complete "GREEN PAR-LIAMENT" of the world, converting the energy needs of the Parliament of Pakistan to solar ener-"The unique project symbolizes the sincere desire of our two nations to work jointly for a brighter, cleaner, and safer future," he added. Mentioning continuous collaboration between the parliaments of two countries, he said, "Parliaments of Pakistan and China enjoy an all-weather partnership, mutual trust, and practi-

that during his last tenure as Speaker of the National Assembly, he had the privilege of leading parliamentary delegations to China twice on the invitation of the Chairman of the National People's Congress. "These exchanges paved the way for deeper bilateral ties and facilitated the implementation of CPEC projects through parliamentary oversight as both nations have actively stood by each other on every international and regional parliamentary forum such as the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU) and Speakers' Conference, promoting shared interests, sovereignty, and

## Rana Sanaullah meets Faisal Karim Kundi

**DNA** 

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Inter-Provincial Coordination Rana Sanaullah on Friday met with the Governor of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP) Faisal Karim Kundi to discuss matters related to KP provinces. The minister said that the federal government will provide full support to the KP provincial government, adding that all issues can be resolved amicably through dialogue and mutual consultation. He said that protest is a fundamental and constitutional right of every citizen, but no political agenda can be allowed to be pursued under its cover. The writ of state will not be allowed to diminish anywhere in the country. The anarchy and chaos will prevail if crime of challenging state writ goes unpunished. "Action should be taken against those who are trying to stand against the state". Faisal Karim Kundi said that the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP) province has lagged behind all other provinces due to mismanagement over the past decade. He said that the present provincial government is challenging the writ of the state for nefarious purposes. He urged to support the provincial government for the welfare of the people. He further said that there is a need to introduce youth games in KP universities and to revive firstclass cricket, which has been dormant for the last 15 years. Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Cricket League will be launched as soon as possible, he added.

## **JUNE 2024**

stability," he added.

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## **Briefs**

# ANF recovers 210 kg charras

cotics Force (ANF) while conducting a raid managed to recover 210 kg charras and arrested an accused. According to an ANF Headquarters spokesman, in an operation conducted in Karachi, ANF recovered 210 kg hashish from a vehicle intercepted near service road in Sohrab Goth area. During the operation, the accused resident of Quetta was also netted, he said and informed that a case has been registered against the arrested accused under Anti Narcotics Act and further investigation is under process.—APP

#### Randhawa commends CDA staffers for their services on Eid-ul-Azha

ISLAMABAD: Chairman Capital Development Authority (CDA) Muhammad Ali Randhawa Friday commended the officers and staff who sacrificed their own celebrations to serve the community during Eidul-Azha acknowledging their dedication and commendable services. During the meeting to review the emergency services provided during Eid days, Muhammad Ali emphasized that serving the citizens is the top priority. The Capital Emergency Services, Rescue 1122 played a crucial role in delivering professional services throughout the three days of Eid.

The teams from Capital Emergency Services were on high alert, ensuring swift responses to any incidents. During the meeting, it was informed that a total of 154 emergency calls were received in Eid days. These included 55 fire incidents, 24 medical emergencies, 71 traffic accidents and other incidents. The briefing highlighted the prompt response by the emergency services to all complaints. Director General Capital Emergency Services said the deceased and severely injured individuals from accidents were quickly transported to nearby hospitals. The fire incidents reported comprised 37 in green areas, five house fires, and two due to short circuits, among other incidents, it was informed.-APP

#### Pakistani internet influencer showcases talent

ISLAMABAD: In a global showcase of linguistic prowess and cultural understanding, Usman, a Pakistani internet influencer and a student at Beijing Language and Culture University, participated in the "Chinese Bridge" Chinese Proficiency Competition for Foreigners Around the Globe - Storytelling Contest, held here in Hunan province. The contest, which gathered 49 contestants from 37 countries, provided a platform for participants to showcase their proficiency in the Chinese language and share their unique stories of connections with China.-APP

## Sri Lanka resumes eye ornea donations to Pakistan

Sri Lanka has a rich history of eye donations, having donated more than 88,000 eye corneas worldwide through the Eye Donation Society of Sri Lanka, established in 1964 by the late Deshamannya Dr. Hudson Silva.

#### **DNA**

ISLAMABAD: A remarkable act of generosity and friendship marked a new chapter in the longstanding relationship between Sri Lanka and Pakistan. Five eye corneas, donated by Sri Lankan donors, arrived in Lahore today aboard a Sri Lankan Airlines flight. These invaluable gifts were received by Pakistan Military Medical personnel and will soon be transferred to the Pakistan Army Hospital in Rawalpindi.

Sri Lanka has a rich history of eye donations, having donated more than 88,000 eye corneas worldwide through the Eye Donation Society of Sri Lanka, established in 1964 by the late Deshamannya Dr. Hudson Silva. Of these, over 36,000 corneas have been donated to Pakistan. This noble initiative, however, came to a halt two and a half years ago due to the COVID-19 pandemic and a subsequent shortage of the fluid required for the safe transfer of eye corneas.

Today's arrival of corneas signi-

fies the restart of this humanitarian project, rekindling people-to-people contacts between these two brotherly nations that have stood by each other through challenging times. The corneas will be implanted by Pakistan Military Eye Surgeons, bringing the gift of sight to patients in need. Currently, more than 300 patients in hospitals around Lahore are awaiting these vital transplants. The successful coordination for the resumption of these donations was led by Mr. Idris Admani, President of the Pakistan-Sri Lan-

ka Friendship Association. Mr. Admani, who visited Pakistan last month with a Buddhist delegation for the Wesak Festival and the Gandhara Buddhist Conference sponsored by Pakistan's Ministry of Foreign Affairs, played a pivotal role. He generously provided personal funds and raised additional support from well-wishers to cover the costs of transferring the eye corneas from Colombo to

In a world often overshadowed by death, destruction, and sadness, this act of kindness during the Poson week-a time commemorating the spread of Gautama Buddha's teachings in ancient Sri Lankashines as a beacon of ultimate compassion. The selflessness of the deceased donors of these five eye corneas sets a profound example for the world.

The Military Eye Hospital in Rawalpindi, which will utilize these corneas, holds a special place of gratitude for Major General (R) Burki, former Pakistan High Commissioner to Colombo, for his contributions to fostering this enduring partnership.

## **IFA seals** 3 outlets; discards **15.000 ltrs** adulterated

ISLAMABAD: The Islamabad Food Authority (IFA) has intensified its campaign against unsafe food, disposing of 15,000 liters of adulterated milk in the Federal Capital. Talking to APP, Deputy Director Operations (DDO) of IFA said that the IFA, along with its food safety teams (FSTs), inspected a total of 25,000 liters of milk. During the inspection, the teams identified 15,000 liters as unhygienic and immediately disposed of it. Additionally, the IFA took strict action against violators. Three shops were sealed, and heavy fines were imposed for non-compliance with food safety standards. In another operation, the IFA conducted raids in the G-11, F-11, and I-10 areas of Islamabad. During these inspections, the FSTs examined over 60 food outlets. They discovered and discarded more than 80 kilograms of expired food items-APP

## Lawmakers urge govt to provide relief to IT sector

ISLAMABAD: Lawmakers in the National Assembly on

Friday urged the government to focus on people-oriented policies and provide more relief to the agriculture and Information Technology sectors. Muttahida Qaumi Movement (Pakistan) leader Muhammad Farooq Sattar, while participating in the budget debate, termed the budget for 2024-25 as traditional, reflecting a continuity of policies from the past 77 years. 'The country's current debt servicing issues, noting that most budget allocations are used for this purpose," he highlighted. He said, "It is the government's responsibility to prepare the budget with the public's issues in mind." He said, "Unfortunately, every budget seems to favor the wealthy." Sattar urged the government to focus on the agriculture sector and criticized the imposition of more taxes on salaried individuals. He called for relief measures for the poor in the budget and asked the government to revise the National Finance Commission (NFC) Award. He stressed the need to resolve Karachi's water issues and to allocate more funds to improve the city's drain system. He also advocated for more incentives to attract Foreign Direct Investment and for policies that encourage a growth-oriented economy. Sunni Ittehad Council's Rana Atif thanked his party for giving him the opportunity to contest the elections and promote the party's vision. He highlighted the issues of his constituency and asked the government to solve these issues of every district without discrimination. He called for the government to address the issue of IPP capacity payments and to take steps to further enhance the country's import. Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz's Asia Naz Tanoli said that in 2018, the government solved the issue of load-shedding and that during the PML-N tenure. more funds were allocated.



ISLAMABAD: Governor KP Faisal Karim Kundi calls on Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif.- DNA

## Engro completes largest-ever EnVen plant turnaround

ISLAMABAD: Engro Fertilizers has invested approximately USD 50 million in a plant turnaround to enhance its reliability and operational efficiency and the company successfully completed the largest-ever scheduled maintenance activity for the En-Ven Plant, spanning 55 days, as planned on June 18, 2024. Established in 2011 with an investment of USD 1.1 billion, the EnVen Plant has an annual production capacity of 1.3 million tons and is the most energy efficient fertilizer plant in Pakistan, with the lowest consumption of gas per ton of urea, said a news release. The project scope of the turnaround included over 5,000 technical activities, including the first-ever replacement of the waste heat boiler, overhaul of the furnace convection section, ammonia storage tank inspection and a comprehensive overhaul of six major turbo trains and gas turbines. At peak, more than 6,000 people were engaged round-the-clock at the Plant site for these turnaround activities. According to Ali Rathore - CEO of Engro Fertilizers, "The safe and successful completion of this major turnaround, despite extreme weather conditions, showcases the engineering excellence of the Engro Fertilizers team in executing largescale projects within planned schedules and budgets, while prioritizing the safety of everyone involved in the activity. These critical projects were executed in-house by our talented engineers using innovative techniques and global best practices of safety and quality." He added that, "The meticulous planning and execution ensured that the availability of urea to our hardworking farmers was not impacted, demonstrating the entire Engro Fertilizers team's firm commitment to our purpose of enabling the food security of Pakistan. We would like to thank our employees, contractors, global technical partners, local administration, and all other key stakeholders for their seamless support and guidance that contributed to the success of this major turnaround."-APP

Pakistan facing critical period since its founding

ISLAMABAD Murtaza Mughal, President of Pakistan Economy Watch (PEW), said on Saturday that the country has been going through a critical period for the masses since its creation. Since the 1970s, families ruling Pakistan have claimed to serve the masses but have become billionaires, while the people began to crave bread, he said. For the last 25 years, Pakistan has been adjusting its budget according to the terms and conditions of the IMF. Still, he added that the country's conditions continued to deteriorate instead of improving. Dr Murtaza Mughal said in a statement issued today that we have been facing problems like reduced net tax, uncontrolled expenditure, and unnecessary incentives and subsidies for the last 25 years because their resolution is limited to announcements. He said that in the last twenty-five years, the neighbouring countries have made fantastic progress, while Pakistan has seen three short periods of artificial growth during which hefty

## Senators demand broader economic dialogue

ISLAMABAD: The Senators on Friday demanded the government and the opposition to initiate broader economic dialogue and embrace people's centric approach to provide relief to the masses battered by economic crunch and inflation in the Budget 2024-25. The members of the Upper House of the Parliament were presenting recommendations to the National Assembly on the Finance Bill, 2024. The session commenced 22 minutes late from the scheduled time with the verses of the Holy Quran's Surah Al-Furgan that detailed the characteristics of the virtuous and the followers of Rehman (The Almighty Allah) who walk politely on the earth and bear the best virtues of starting conversation with Salam (Salutation), seekers of the Almighty's forgiveness from the Hell and are not extravagant nor thrifty but main-

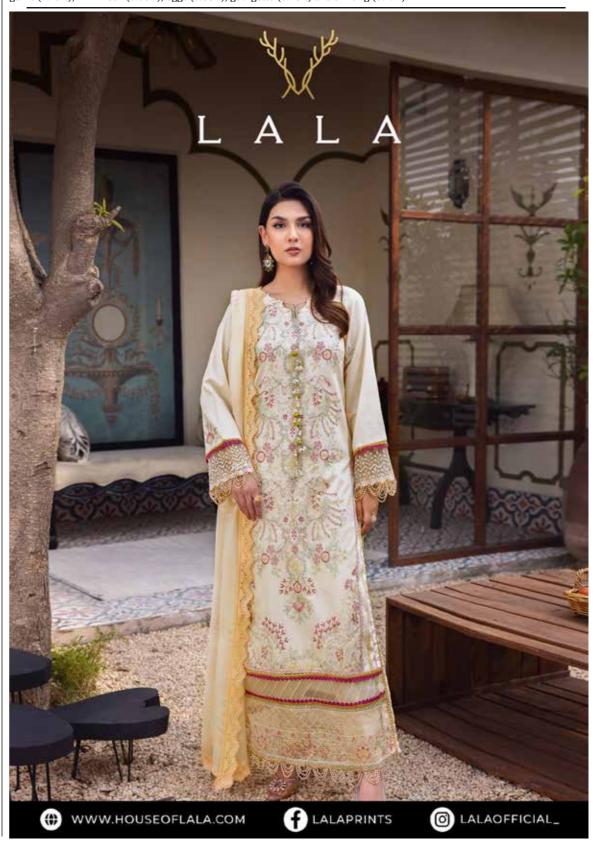
tain balance in their spend-Deputy Chairman Senate Svedaal Khan Nasar while initiating the House business allowed Senator Poonjo Bheel to raise a matter of importance. Pakistan Peoples Party Parliamentarians (PPPP), Senator Poonjo Bheel urged the House to allocate some time to pay tribute to former prime minister Shaheed Mohtarma Benazir Bhutto on her birthday. Deputy Chairman, Sedaal Khan Nasar on behalf of the House paid tribute to Mohtarma Benazir Bhutto on her 71st birth anniversary and directed Senator Sagid Mir to hold fateha for the departed soul. Senator Bilal Ahmed Khan of PPPP also paid tribute to his leader Mohtarma Benazir Bhutto. He hoped that the government would consider the recommendations of the House on the Finance Bill, 2024 to provide relief to the masses. "The cur-

rent budget of Rs18 trillion was tabled before the House whereas the government had established its stance that the people did not pay taxes," he informed. "One and a half decade back the taxes collection was Rs1500 billion that improved over the time but the tax net was not enhanced and the already taxed were further burdened by every successive government," Khan said. Senator, Muhammad Qasim of Balochistan National Party said it was a very heavy budget that was beyond Rs18 trillion that only included Rs 1400 billion development budget. He alleged that there was no rational approach in the political history of the country. He urged the government to pay heed to the industrial sector and the factory owners who were leaving the country due to poor economic policies and fiscal constraint. Senator, Amir Waliuddin Chishti of Muthahida Qaumi

Movement-Pakistan said the budget was not favourable for the masses as it was going to further burden the people due to the system's criminal negligence in economic affairs. A healthy and educated society could only lead the country but this time health and education sectors were also taxed including every stationery item and medicines whereas the middle class was also impacted in the prevailing economic turmoil and rising inflation. he added. "Salaried class has been taxed every time, whereas the Finance Bill, 2024 when compared to the neighbouring countries revealed that the country's inflation is in double digit but that of India, Bangladesh and others is in single digit. Our foreign exchange reserves are of \$1.9 billion whereas Bangladesh has \$24 billion exports and over \$14 billion reserves," Senator Chishti said.  $-\mathbf{APP}$ 

## Weekly inflation up by 0.94 pc

ISLAMABAD: The weekly inflation measured by the Sensitive Price Indicator (SPI), witnessed an increase of 0.94 percent for the combined consumption groups during the week ended on June 20, 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 316.88 points as compared to 313.93 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 23.78 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 1.58 per cent and went up to 309.10 points from the last week's 304.28 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 1.44 percent, 1.20 percent, 1.11 and 0.69 percent respectively. During the week, out of 51 items, prices of 25 (49.02%) items increased, 5 (9.80%) items decreased and 21 (41.18%) items remained stable. The items, which recorded a decrease in their average prices on a week-on-week basis included petrol (3.76%), diesel (0.84%), rice basmati broken (0.08%) pulse masoor (0.08%) and chicken (0.05%). The commodities which recorded an increase in their average prices on week-on-week basis included tomatoes (65.84%), potatoes (5.61%), onions (3.78%), bananas (3.29%), LPG (2.44%), cigarettes (1.67%), pulse moong (1.53%), garlic (1.29%), milk fresh (0.95%), eggs (0.83%), georgette (0.28%) and shirting (0.17%).—APP



# Humans' relationship with fire

N recent months, we have watched wildfires blazing across northern California, Alberta and British Columbia in Canada and New Mexico as the northern hemisphere's summer wildfire season has barely begun. This is a reminder of an increasingly aggressive fire-climate feedback loop that is threatening communities across the world. It reminds us almost daily of the urgent need to restrain global warming, and the reality that we are at present failing. Wildfires have generated an average of more than 6 billion tonnes of carbon dioxide per year during the last decade, with emissions from wildfires rising to almost 6.7 billion tonnes last year. Estimates suggest this means wildfires account for 20 per cent of total global greenhouse gas emissions, making them a troubling contributor to global warming which must be restrained. Reactions to this news should be tempered with the knowledge that wildfires have been around for millions of years and have survived every ice age the planet threw at them. For most of that time, wildfires have been important contributors to climate stability, not just global warming. What is different today is that so much of the wildfire we see is "bad fire" - the kind that kills people and destroys communities and landscapes. As we try to distinguish between good and bad types of fire, the troubling reality is that we are the key contributor. Arizona State University emeritus professor Stephen Pyne, a historian whose research focuses on fire, wrote in Scientific American that humans "became unique fire creatures. We used fire to remake ourselves, and then we and fire remade Earth".

From his point of view, our Anthropocene age could as easily and accurately be called the Pyrocene age. "We went to the top of the food web because we learned to cook landscapes for hunting, foraging, farming and herding. And we have become a geological force because we've begun to cook the planet. Becoming the keystone species for fire made us the keystone species for Earth." Pyne identifies three ages of fire. The first, "nature's fire", was driven almost exclusively by lightning. Humans shaped the second age, in which we tamed and domesticated fire to create a more comfortable world for us to thrive. The third began with Joseph Priestley's discovery of oxygen in 1774, when for the first time humans were able to deconstruct fire into a chemical process and turn it into "a subdiscipline of physics, chemistry and mechanical engineering". We learned to control this fire to turn mud into bricks and pottery, limestone into cement, sand into glass, coal into electric power and ores into metals. This significant shift to the third age only really became noticeable to ordinary people in the middle of the last century, when fire as we had known it began to disappear from our lives. As a child in England in the 1950s, we had candles and coal fires with monthly deliveries from the coalman and exciting visits from the chimney sweep every six months. My father burned garden rubbish on fires at the bottom of the garden. Ahead of Bonfire Night on November 5 every year, I and other local kids scoured the local woodlands to build the bonfire and saved up for fireworks. Every year at harvest time, farmers set alight wheat fields which burned for days and filled the countryside with smoke.

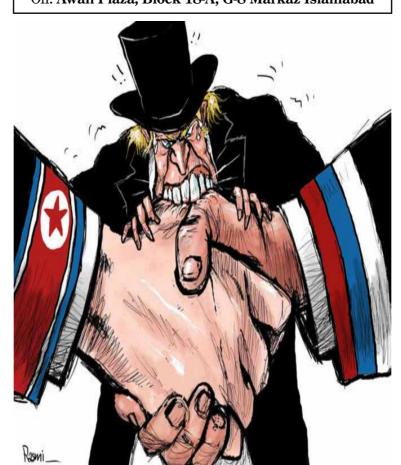
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# Will dollar hold up against the BRICS currency?

NTERNATIONAL financial institutions, including the US-funded monetary watchdogs, have begun to predict a bleak future for the US dollar in the backdrop of Russian President Vladimir Putin's disclosures that the BRICS+ may introduce its currency unit at its upcoming summit meeting this year. Institutions such as the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and JPMorgan have noted that numerous countries, including members of the BRICS, are reassessing their substantial dependence on the dollar for reserves and international transactions in response to recent geopolitical developments. Foreign capital has consequently shifted towards developing countries. The US dollar took a serious hit on Wednesday, November 12, as the Moscow Stock Exchange abruptly halted all trading in dollars and euros. This happened hours after the US Treasury Department imposed additional sanctions on Russia, banning over 300 entities and individuals to cut off Russia's access to products and services needed for military production. This development coincides with the end of the US petrodollar contract with Saudi Arabia. Additionally, there is no obligation now for Riyadh to sell oil in US dollars because the 50-year-old petrodollar deal between the Kingdom and the US has already expired and no new agreement has been signed between the two. Instead of selling oil only in US dollars, it can now offer it in a variety of currencies, such as the Chinese RMB, Euros, Yen, and Yuan. This will deal serious damage to the already collapsing US economy.

Putin confirmed that BRICS is in the process of developing an independent payment system that will be "unaffected by political pressure, abuse, and external sanctions" while addressing an impressive gathering of over 100 countries at the 27th annual St. Petersburg International Economic Forum (SPIEF) last week from June 5-8. Interestingly, the major economies of the BRICS have been steadily increasing their gold reserves over the past few years. As of the first quarter of 2024, the combined gold holdings of the founding BRICS countries and their five new acquisitions accounted for nearly 17% of the total gold held in central banks globally. China, India, and Russia are among the countries with the highest central bank gold holdings. During her speech at a Stanford Institute for Economic Policy Research event on the Future of the International Monetary System (IMS), Gita Gopinath, the first Deputy Managing Director of the IMF, noted that China's total foreign exchange reserves include 4.3% gold, up from less than 2% in 2015. At the same time, China's foreign exchange reserves have decreased from 44% to approximately 30% of their original value due to its holdings of U.S. Treasury and Agency bonds. This accounts for the impact of both valuations and net purchases. Gita emphasized the importance of following existing legal frameworks to maintain trust among nations and the international monetary system. This was about speculation that the EU, along with the United States, could potentially use Russia's frozen foreign currency assets for reconstruction. "Several countries are closely monitoring the current discussion about the possible use of Russian public assets, such as the Bank of Russia reserves, to support Ukraine.

## Is China's gamble in the Middle East paying off?

Gedaliah Afterman

Despite China's efforts to position itself as a regional mediator, its initial response to the Hamas attack was muted. Beijing, which only months earlier proposed itself as a mediator in the conflict, refrained from directly condemning Hamas for the atrocities committed, leading to disappointment and anger in Israel. As the conflict has progressed, Beijing has adopted an increasingly one-sided approach, critical of Israel and the US. For China, the conflict is less about the Palestinians or the Israelis and more about its standing in the region, interests vis-vis Arab countries and Iran, and its position regarding the US

THINA'S engagement in the Middle East has surged over the past decade, particularly following the Arab spring and amid the perceived withdrawal of the United States from the region. Traditionally, Beijing has worked to develop balanced relationships with all sides while avoiding the region's many conflicts. As China's global standing has strengthened, however, it has adopted a more proactive approach, positioning itself as a potential alternative to the US. At the same time, superpower competition has begun to spill over into the region. As the Biden administration increased pressure on China in the Asia-Pacific, Beijing has responded by becoming more active in the Middle East. This dynamic has been especially evident since the outbreak of the Gaza war last October 7. The Belt and Road Initiative, launched in 2013, significantly increased China's regional involvement, making Beijing the primary foreign investor in the Middle East since 2016. Initially focused on the energy sector, China has expanded its engagement to include infrastructu jects, smart city initiatives, innovation hubs and 5G mobile networks, not only in Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates (UAE) but also into Qatar, Iran and Israel.

Middle East leaders, increasingly disillusioned with US policies – including the 2003 Iraq invasion, Arab spring, withdrawal from Afghanistan, stalled Iran nuclear agreement and Gaza war – have turned to China as a more reliable partner for infrastructure and technology projects, if not for military protection. For Gulf Cooperation Council countries in particular, the relationship with China is now of strategic importance. This can be seen in China's trade with the six-member bloc, which surged from US\$10 billion in 2000 to US\$230 billion in 2021. China's ability to provide infrastructure, technology and trade without political or human rights demands is particularly attractive.

technological prowess has been evident across the region, especially in the Gulf. The UAE and Saudi Arabia, in particular, align with China's technological advancements through its "digital silk road", and aspire to become global leaders in technology and innovation. China has also developed a partnership with Israel, another key US ally. Bilateral trade reached a record US\$21 billion in 2022 and Chinese companies have been engaged in around 500 investment deals with Israel over the past decade, predominantly in the technology sector. But evolving US perceptions of China have led Washington to pressure Israel to limit its interactions. In response, Israel established a foreign investments advisory committee and rejected a Chinese bid for a security-sensitive infrastructure project. Outside the economic domain, the re-establishment of diplomatic ties between Iran and Saudi Arabia in Beijing in March last year seemed to have marked a significant milestone in China's expanding position in the region. This development, along with the Gaza war, reignited discussions about China's growing political influence and role in the Middle East. Despite China's efforts to position itself as a regional mediator, its initial response to the Hamas attack was muted. Beijing, which only months earlier proposed itself as a mediator in the conflict, refrained from directly condemning Hamas for the atrocities committed, leading to disappointment and anger in Israel. As the conflict has progressed, Beijing has adopted an increasingly one-sided approach, critical of Israel and the US. For China, the conflict is less about the Palestinians or the Israelis and more about its standing in the region, interests vis-vis Arab countries and Iran, and its position regarding the US. China aims to discredit the US in the Middle East and the developing world while

securing Arab and Muslim support for its poli-

Furthermore, in recent years, China's increasing technological prowess has been evident across the region, especially in the Gulf. The UAE and Saudi Arabia, in particular, align with China's technological advancements through its "digital silk road", and aspire to become global leaders in technology and innovation. China has also develuate in the control of the co

Indeed, establishing itself as the leader of the Global South among the five veto powers on the UN Security Council is another goal of its positioning. This was on display recently when senior Arab officials visited Beijing for the China-Arab States Cooperation Forum. For Israel, this dynamic creates a new challenge as it will need to manage a more complicated relationship with a less friendly China not only in Tel Aviv but increasingly also in Abu Dhabi and Riyadh.

Eight months after the Gaza war started, China's clear and calculated shift towards a more assertive pro-Palestinian, anti-American and anti-Israeli stance reflects its evolving priorities and strategic interests in the Middle East, in which Israel has become less important. Those in Beijing are likely to be pleased with the outcome of China's approach so far. But the future is less certain. While China's strategic manoeuvres in the Middle East since the outbreak of the Gaza war have garnered public support and challenged America's influence in the region, the long-term impact remains uncertain. The region's complex dynamics and the US' political and military power suggest that while China's economic power will grow, its political influence may remain limited. That said, given its growing presence, China's economic influence may be sufficient to achieve its strategic goals at the expense of the US, and at minimal cost. As the geopolitical landscape evolves and the Middle East becomes more important globally, the interplay between Chinese ambitions and American responses will continue to shape the region and beyond.

# A History of Political Instability country suffers from domestic and foreign-backed terror- crucial for fostering peace and stability. In the Middle East, the count

Abu Zar Ghafari

The rise of military powers like China has further changed the global landscape. The rapid expansion of the People's Liberation Army, especially in the Asia-Pacific region, has challenged traditional power structures, creating new geopolitical tensions

HE conflict in Pakistan signifies uncertainty and chaos in its political life. This is problematic because numerous challenges hinder the proper functioning of the government, leading to widespread distrust among the populace. A constant source of conflict in Pakistan is the frequent changes in government leadership. Political instability has resulted in various forms and styles of government, with leaders being overthrown by rebellion, judicial intervention, or loss of trust. The lack of continuity in government adversely affects the administrative process, preventing the implementation of longterm policies. A major cause of this political conflict is the imbalance of power between the civilian government and the military. Pakistan's energy sector has traditionally been under military control, with military authorities exerting indirect influence on civilian governance. This power dynamic undermines democratic principles and institutions, exacerbating instability. Additionally, Pakistan is home to many ethnic and religious groups that often conflict with each other. Politicians sometimes exploit these divisions for electoral gain, leading to further strife. Armed groups within these communities frequently engage in violence and influence politics. Economic issues such as poverty, inflation, and unemployment contribute to Pakistan's instability. High levels of poverty and inequality generate social tensions, resulting in protests and civil unrest. Economic instability undermines the government's ability to address complex problems and develop long-term development plans. Terrorism and militancy are also significant challenges to Pakistan's security. The country suffers from domestic and foreign-backed terrorists who disrupt stability and security. Militant groups often oppose the state and disrupt daily life through violence. Moreover, Pakistan's geographical location makes it vulnerable to foreign influences, adding complexity to its political system. External attempts to influence na-

tional politics increase tension and instability. The partition of India and Pakistan led to unprecedented chaos and violence, displacing millions and causing countless deaths. This historical event fostered hatred and conflict between religious and ethnic groups. Despite the passage of decades, these divisive tensions persist, with ethnic strife and conflict still prevalent in Pakistan. For instance, in Balochistan, low-level separatist movements have persisted for decades. Baloch separatists claim that the central government exploits the state's resources, leading to violence and instability. Similarly, in Sindh province, tensions between indigenous Sindhis and Urdu-speaking Mohajirs highlight the deep divides within Pakistani society. Pakistan's historical problems have disproportionately affected ethnic minorities. Although Pakistan is predominantly Muslim, minorities often face discrimination and violence. The treatment of Hindus, Sikhs, and other religious groups is a stark reminder of the challenges in promoting inclusivity and tolerance in a country rooted in religious identity. Additionally, Pakistan's early years were marked by political instability and power struggles. The frequent changes in leadership and the threat of military intervention have cast a long shadow over the country. The assassination of Prime Minister Liaquat Ali Khan in 1951 highlighted the mismanagement and despair of the young democratic nation. Globally, overt and covert influences shape the destinies of nations, often determining power dynamics. For example, the United States, with its extensive military hegemony, has influenced global politics significantly. Military interventions in regions like the Middle East and Asia have led to regime changes and the re-establishment of alliances. The 2003 overthrow of Saddam Hussein's regime in Iraq is a clear example. However, such control often breeds resentment and rebellion. America's interventionist policies have fueled anti-American sentiment, rebellion, and conflict, as seen in the long conflicts in Afghanistan and Iraq. The rise of military powers like China has further changed the global landscape. The rapid expansion of the People's Liberation Army, especially in the Asia-Pacific region, has challenged traditional power structures, creating new geopolitical tensions. Conflicts in the South China Sea and tensions with neighboring countries exemplify consequences of military expansion. Additionally, advancements in military technology, such as cyberwarfare and drones, have blurred the lines between war and conflict, increasing risk of unintended consequences Understanding and resolving these complex fault lines is

for example, the Sunni-Shia divide, represented by the rivalry between Saudi Arabia and Iran, has fueled wars in Syria and Yemen, causing immense civilian suffering. Similarly, Africa's ethnic differences, tied to historical grievances and power struggles, pose significant security and development challenges. The Rwandan genocide, driven by long-standing conflict between Hutus and Tutsis, is a chilling reminder of the consequences of unchecked racism. One of the most significant obstacles to prosperity and international security is weak civil society. Ineffective, corrupt, or incompetent institutions can undermine the rule of law and hinder economic growth. In sub-Saharan Africa, weak governance structures exacerbate social problems, worsen corruption, and impede development. Corruption in countries like Nigeria and the Democratic Republic of Congo diverts resources from essential services, deepening poverty. In conflict-torn nations like Afghanistan and Iraq, weak civil society institutions hinder reconstruction efforts, perpetuating corruption and violence. Even established democracies like the United States are not immune to weak civil society. Public trust in government institutions is eroding due to increased polarization and misinformation. Addressing these challenges requires innovative and integrated solutions. Economic globalization, conflict, and other global issues necessitate collaborative efforts to protect human health and promote sustainable development. For instance, the COVID-19 pandemic exposed fundamental societal conflicts and highlighted the need for economic resilience. Climate change also poses serious economic challenges, especially for vulnerable countries like the Maldives and Tuvalu. Inequality in income distribution remains a global problem, impeding social cohesion and economic success. Technological disruptions present both opportunities and challenges, necessitating proactive measures to address workforce changes and skills development. Political conflict has been a recurring theme in Pakistan's narrative, significantly affecting its economic and geographical landscape. With a history marked by coups, weak governments, and tensions between civil and military authorities, Pakistan has struggled to achieve stability and prosperity. This comprehensive review explores the various impacts of political conflict in Pakistan on governance, markets, and social and regional issues. Changes in government, whether through democratic processes or military interventions, have affected the populace's desire for enduring authority and a stable governance framework. This instability has eroded public trust in the government, leading to further conflicts. Political conflict has also created anxiety and discontent among Pakistan's youth. Reduced employment and mobility opportunities make young people more susceptible to negative influences, posing a serious security challenge for

the country. The erosion of democracy and restriction of civil liberties have severely impacted human rights and the rule of law. Freedom of expression, press freedom, and minority rights are often compromised in the name of national security, fostering repression and extremism. Pakistan's strategic location adjacent to Afghanistan, India, China, and Iran positions it as a key player in regional geopolitics. During periods of conflict, tensions with neighboring India, particularly over territorial disputes, escalate, affecting regional peace and stability and potentially impacting international security. Domestic political dynamics also influence Pakistan's relationships with the United States and China, its largest donors and strategic partners. Changes in Pakistan's governance, whether through democratic transitions or military coups, can alter regional integration and the balance of power in South Asia and beyond.

The military coup led by General Pervez Musharraf in 1999, which overthrew Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif, exemplifies the direct impact of military intervention on political and economic stability. Musharraf justified the coup by citing the government's ineffectiveness in addressing the crisis, and he ruled the country until 2008. The assassination of former Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto in December 2007 further highlighted Pakistan's enduring political and security challenges, sparking violent protests and increased political unrest. The Panama Papers revelations in 2016 implicated several Pakistani leaders, including Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif, in corruption, leading to widespread public outrage and legal actions. In 2017, the Supreme Court disqualified Sharif from holding public office due to undeclared assets, intensifying the political crisis. Imran Khan's subsequent election victory in 2018 marked a new era, but his tenure was marred by economic challenges, regulatory issues, and political infighting.

Khan's government faced criticism for using anti-corruption measures as a tool for political persecution and for the military's excessive involvement in civilian affairs. Opposition coalitions like the Pakistan Democratic Movement (PDM) challenged his administration, leading to frequent protests and accusations of election fraud. Khan's ousting in April 2022, an unprecedented event in Pakistan's history, resulted from political maneuvering and loss of party support, bringing Shehbaz Sharif to power. However, the post-Khan period remained unstable, with ongoing economic problems and continued civil-military tensions. At the end I thank to Dr. Muhammad Akram Zaheer who dedicates his time to guide students, driven by a genuine passion for enhancing their writing skills and helping them complete assignments. His expertise is particularly prominent in ideology and Constitution of Pakistan where he enlightens students about the captivating history of Pakistan. Dr. Zaheer truly embodies the essence of an inspiring educator and leaving an indelible mark on all his students.

## WORLD / SPORTS



## Briefs

## **Dar says** fool Proof security...

From Page 01 transformed energy security. Lauding the unanimous political consensus on CPEC in the two countries, the Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister expressed Pakistan's firm resolve to building upon the achievements of CPEC and for its high quality development in its Phase-II. Minister Liu Jianchao stated that as iron brother and time-tested friend, China accords a special place to Pakistan in its foreign policy and desires to further strengthen the All-weather Strategic Cooperative Part nership with Pakistan.

### Govt to ensure...

From Page 01 While welcoming the Chinese dignitary and members of his delegation to Pakistan, the Prime Minister congratulated him as well as political leaders of Pakistan on the successful organization of Pakistan-China Political Parties Forum and the 3rd round of Joint Consultative Mechanism (JCM) of Political Parties on CPEC. He said it was a matter of great satisfaction that there was complete political consensus in both countries on the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC). Emphasizing on historic and unique significance of bilateral relations between the two countries, the Prime Minister reaffirmed that the Pakistan-China friendship was time-tested and enduring. He termed it as indispensable for peace and development of both the countries as well as the region and beyond.

#### Strategic ties with...

From Page 01 China (IDCPC), who called on him at General Headquarters on Friday During the meeting, both discussed matters of mutual interest including regional peace and stability, and reviewed progress on the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC). Mr. Liu Jianchao highlighted that he is visiting Pakistan as a follow up of the successful meetings between the leadership of the two countries in China. He emphasised the significance of the longstanding brotherly relations between the two nations and expressed satisfaction with the progress achieved on CPEC, reiterating China's commitment to its timely completion.

### Imran Khan claims...

From Page 01 for not reducing expenses and failing to create an investment-friendly environment. "The country is in crisis," the ex-PM said. "The government has not reduced its expenses, which is troubling. The current government has failed to create an environment for investment." Imran argued that Pakistan needs a mandate-driven government for necessary reforms, pointing out that the current budget highlights the limitations of a non-mandated government. He condemned heavy taxation on professionals and the public, predicting severe impacts from the upcoming electricity bills. Imran lamented the broken promises on load-shedding in KP, where power cuts are extensive.

## Punjab imposes...

From Page 01 According to an order issued by the Home Department, which Dawn.com has seen, Section 144 has been imposed with immediate effect and will be in place for seven days. The Punjab Police says Section 144 empowers authorities to issue orders in public interest that may place a ban on an activity for a specific period of time. The order states: "It has been observed that in view of the prevailing law and order situation and security threats, any gathering/ assembly is likely to provide soft targets to terrorists and miscreants, which not only pose serious security threats but is also likely to cause threat to public at peace and order as well as inconvenience to public at large.'

# Australia defeat BD in rainaffected T20 WC match

Cummins bags hat-trick as Australia kicked off their Super Eight campaign with 28-run win over Bangladesh

SPORTS DESK

BARBADOS: Fast bowler Pat Cummins took a hat-trick and David Warner smashed a half-century as undefeated Australia kicked off their Super Eight campaign at the T20 World Cup with a rain-hit 28-run win over Bangladesh.

Recalled with fellow quick Josh Hazlewood after being rested against Scotland, Cummins's three-wicket burst helped restrict the South Asians to 140 for eight before rain cut short Australia's chase. Victory was secured by the Duckworth-Lewis method. Australia were 100 for two after

11.2 overs before the match was abandoned, with Warner unbeaten on 53 and Glenn Maxwell 14 not out at the Sir Vivian Richards Stadium. Test and one-day skipper Cummins bowled Mahmudullah for two, had Mahedi Hasan caught for a duck by Adam Zampa at deep third man and then dismissed Towhid Hridoy for 40 when the



batter scooped to Hazlewood. Cummins's third victim came in the over after his first two wickets, and his hat-trick celebration

was conspicuously understated. "I had no idea ... I totally forgot about it," Cummins said of his first hat-trick in international

cricket and the first at the tournament. "It's a good club to be a part of." He finished with 3-29 from his four overs while spinner

brakes on Bangladesh in the middle overs. Australia captain Mitchell Marsh had declared himself fit to bowl on the eve of the match after recovering from a hamstring strain but the all-rounder left the spare overs to Maxwell and Marcus Stoinis. His poor form with the bat continued, though, with Marsh dismissed lbw for one by Rishad Hossain, who took both the Australian wickets, bowling Travis Head for 31. SQUADS: Bangladesh (Play-

ing XI): Tanzid Hasan, Litton Das (wk), Najmul Hossain Shanto (c), Shakib Al Hasan, Towhid Hridoy, Mahmudullah, Mahedi Hasan, Rishad Hossain, Taskin Ahmed, Tanzim Hasan Sakib, Mustafizur Rahman,

Australia (Playing XI): Travis Head, David Warner, Mitchell Marsh (c), Glenn Maxwell, Marcus Stoinis, Tim David, Matthew Wade (wk), Pat Cummins, Mitchell Starc, Adam Zampa, Josh Hazlewood.

## **Stadium (07:30pm) Pakistan** security...

Saturday June 22

Kensington

**Oval (05:30am)** 

India vs Bangladesh

Sir Vivian Richards

From Page 01 Ulema-e-Islam's Emir Fazlur Rehman, Muttahida Qaumi Movement-Pakistan's Khalid Maqbool Siddiqui, and other top leaders were in attendance. Pakistan and China enjoy close relations with Bejing also investing billions of dollars in CPEC and working in various sectors to boost Islamabad's capabilities. However, the works on the flagship proiect have been hindered in recent years due to the security situation with China informing the Pakistani side of its reservations. The Chinese official said that there can be sustainable development only when all political parties in a country join hands to ensure political and social stability. "And for all these years, China has always been striving hard to maintain a good balance of reform, development, and stability - each of the three fundamentals is indispensable." The minister noted that over the years, CPEC has boosted Pakistan's economic and social development. However, he said that more efforts need to be made, especially when it comes to security. "We are ready to build the upgraded version of CPEC [...] we need to improve security and business environment. Security threats

ment cannot really improve, which can undermine devel opment in the long run." At the same time, he also appreciated the Pakistani security forces for their services in this regard. Moving on, the senior official said that due to the wholehearted support of the people of both nations, Pakistan and China have become "iron friends". "Public support is the bedrock of the China-Pa-

are the main hazards dis-

turbing CPEC coopera-

tion," he highlighted. In the

case of Pakistan, he said,

the primary factor shaking

the confidence of Chinese

investors is the security

situation. "Without secu-

rity, the business environ-

kistan relationship." However, voicing fears, he said that the mutual affinity between the people of the countries is still not commensurate with the ironclad friendship of the countries. "In particular, there's a rising risk of Western social media which has a huge impact on the younger generation, eroding the foundation of the China-Pakistan friendship," Jianchao said. He said the Chinese government was ready to promote exchanges between the youth, media, think tanks, academics, and local governments, and help the public understand the friendship better. In his remarks, Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Dar reaffirmed Pakistan's commitment to enhance people-to-people linkages with China to deepen the sentiments of mutual respect, trust and understanding between the two countries. Dar said Pakistan-China friendship is a relationship of the past, the present, and the future. He said the strategic trust between the nations is unshakeable and nothing can undo it. The deputy prime minister said this meeting is a manifestation of a shared commitment to preserve and protect this relationship from the vagaries of national, regional, and

## Misbah calls Bumrah India's 'X' factor

ISLAMABAD: Misbah stated that India was known for their batting lineup and would win games due to the strength the batters provided the team with. "Now they have one of the best bowling attacks currently." "If we look at the Cricket World Cup 2023, India had quality bowlers. Jasprit Bumrah is an outstanding bowler in any condition whether it is white-ball or red-ball cricket he plays. He swings the new ball and his defensive bowling skills - yorker or slower ones – and the most important thing he has is his control. He is an amazing reader of the game," Misbah said while talking on a local sports channel. The former captain called Bumrah an X-factor for the Indian team as he always takes wickets for his team. "He gives India an edge and when you have an X-factor like him in your bowling, it adds to the pressure on the other team and it adds an element of confidence in your team. "Previously, India's opponents would win the toss and call India to bat first and the panic would be visible on them that we are now out of a position of strength but now India is a team who believes that we can now defend a small total and they did that against Pakistan. They are now a complete bowling attack." India had posted a target of 120 while playing against Pakistan in the ongoing T20 World Cup 2024. Their bowlers defended the total as the Men in Green fell seven runs short of the target. Bumrah took three wickets at the loss of 13 runs in the match including the wickets of Pakistan's captain Babar Azam and wicketkeeper-batter Mohammad Rizwan. His third dismissal was of Iftikhar Ahmed. - DNA

## T20 WC: Mohammad Amir's 'unexpected training' in U

Amir got special permission from the Pakistan Cricket Board and paid trainer himself, say sources

WASHINGTON: Despite a foreign trainer arranged by the Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB), left-arm fast bowler Mohammad Amir hired a personal trainer for the T20 World Cup 2024, sources told Geo News.

He got special permission from the PCB and used to bear all the expenses of the trainer himself. However, the cricket body made the required arrangements in this regard, they said. The bowler did not take the trainer to just the US, but also during the Ireland and England tours as well.

The rest of the team, nevertheless, were trained separately. This is a very surprising situation because one player of the team was trained separately. The sources said that the Pakistani side did not seem to be united as a team throughout the tournament which led to their early exit from the mega T20 event.

One of the reasons is that all the players were accompanied by their families. Apart from players and support staff, a group of 26-28 people comprising the cricketers' wives and family members travelled.

Other than Amir, Mohammad Rizwan, Fakhar Zaman, Imad Wasim, and Wahab Riaz were also accompanied by their wives and children, while skipper Babar Azam's parents and brother toured the US with the Men in Green. Haris Rauf, on the other hand, travelled with his spouse.

The team players and their family members reportedly held parties and gatherings after matches.

The 32-year-old pacer was really excited for the tournament and mentioned his personal trainer earlier.

"I know T20 cricket has evolved as well. But the good thing is that I have been active on the T20 circuit even after I decided to retire in 2020 from international cricket." Amir also confirmed that he had hired a personal trainer, whose job is to ensure that his body remained fit and ready to endure the rigours of modern-day cricket.

"I have invested in a personal trainer because cricket is my bread and butter, and if I want to continue earning from it, I have to remain match-fit and ready," he said. The Pakistan cricket team didn't qualify for the Super Eight, which led to its elimination from the tournament. The team is facing criticism over their poor performance in the group stage matches. Pakistan were defeated by debutants USA by five runs in a Super Over tie and against India by six runs. - Agencies



LAHORE: Ambassador of Iran Called on President PML-N Nawaz Sharif and Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz and discussed cooperation in different fields. They also reviewed opportunities to boost cooperation in agriculture, livestock and other sectors.- DNA

## No Shaheen in Desert Vipers' retentions for ILT20 2025

**DNA** 

ISLAMABAD: A total of 69 players were retained by six franchises for the International League T20 (ILT20) 2025, scheduled to commence in January, with ace Pakistan pacer Shaheen Shah Afridi absent. According to the league, the window for retaining players was opened on 1 June with the teams given two weeks to submit the list of the retained players. Each franchise had the option of

retaining a maximum of two United Arab Emirates (UAE) players. However, there was no limit on the retention of international players.

Following the completion of the players' retention window, the teams can now sign new players in the ongoing Player Acquisition Window which will stay open till 15 September.

Notably, amongst the 69 players retained for ILT20 2025, 26 were part of various ICC Men's T20 World Cup 2024 squads including the likes of Mohammad Amir, David Warner, Nicholas Pooran, Sherfane Rutherford and

Wanindu Hasaranga. However, Shaheen Shah Afridi, who was an integral part of Desert Vipers, was not named in the retention list of the franchise while compatriots Azam Khan and Mohammad Amir retained their spots. Abu Dhabi Knight Riders: Aditya Shetty, Ali Khan, Alishan Sharafu, Andre Russell, Andries Gous, Charith Asalanka, David Willey, Joe Clarke, Laurie Evans, Micheal Pepper and Sunil Narine.

Desert Vipers: Adam Hose, Alex Hales, Ali Naseer, Azam Khan, Bas de Leede, Luke Wood, Micheal Jones, Mohammad Amir, Nathan Sowter, Sherfane Rutherford, Tanish Suri and Wanindu Hasaranga.

## **Mohammad Hafeez** exposes fitness crises of Pak cricket team

ISLAMABAD: Former all-rounder Mohammad Hafeez recently discussed the fitness standards of the current Pakistan cricket team. Hafeez, who previously served as Director of Pakistan cricket team; during a podcast with Michael Vaughan and Adam Gilchrist expressed concerns about the team's physical condition under past management, including coaches Mickey Arthur and Grant Bradburn, and current captain Babar Azam. He highlighted that inadequate focus on player fitness affected the team's performance in recent Test series in Australia. Hafeez also mentioned a conversation with the team's trainer where he was disappointed with the trainer's adherence to directives from previous management regarding fitness standards.

"When I retired from this team, I ticked all the boxes of fitness. If I could do it at the age of 41, then why can't the others? As I joined the team as Director, I noticed the fat percentage of the players had gone up, and the running ability went down. I asked the trainer what had happened. Why the players aren't able to go through the tests?" Hafeez questioned. "He revealed a very shocking fact that the last management asked him to put the fitness equation out and let the players play how wanted to play till the World Cup 2023," he continued.

"I was like, why didn't you resign straight away if you feel like someone is asking you not to do your job? Just say that this is not the way to deal with international cricketers, so he said, I can't do anything because at that time, whatever management said to me, I followed their directions. That was why we were struggling in the final innings of the Test series against Australia. We looked fatigued because we were missing that fitness level," he concluded.

Earlier, Hafeez disclosed that fitness was not given priority and expressed concern over the neglect of fitness within the team, citing discussions with then-captain Babar Azam and the coaching staff. Hafeez noted a concerning trend regarding the players' body fat levels, which are crucial indicators of fitness and performance. - DNA

## Ukraine fight back to beat Slovakia 2-1 at Euro 2024

The win got Ukraine back on track after losing 3-0 to Romania in its opening game

OUR CORRESPONDENTS

DUESSELDORF: Roman Yaremchuk scored as Ukraine came back from a goal down to beat Slovakia 2-1 on Friday and strengthen its hopes of reaching the Euro 2024 knockout stages. The win got Ukraine back on track after losing 3-0 to Romania in its opening game. Slovakia took the lead in the 17th minute with a header from Ivan Schranz, who also scored the only goal in its surprise 1-0 win over Belgium four days earlier. Oleksandr Zinchenko crossed low for Mykola Shaparenko to score Ukraine's first goal of the tournament in the 54th. Shaparenko played his part in the second goal, too, sending a long pass over the top for Yaremchuk, who controlled the ball with his first touch and then prodded it past goalkeeper Martin Dubravka. Earlier on , Spain outclassed defending champions Italy and booked a place in the knockout stages of Euro 2024 with a 1-0 win on Thursday that was settled by Riccardo Calafiori's own goal but could have easily ended with a much more emphatic margin of victory. La Roja, seeking revenge for their elim-

ination from Euro 2020 by the Italians, pinned the Azzurri back from the kickoff and their 20 attempts on goal contrasted with Italy's four, their fewest in a Euro or World Cup match since at least 1980. Spain coach Luis de la Fuente has encouraged his young side to play with an attacking freedom that even the all-con-Spanish sides of 2008-2012

World Cup - did not dare tp embrace. After beating Croatia 3-0 in their opening game in Germany, they drove forward at every opportunity against Italy, principally through their irrepressible wingers Nico Williams and 16-year-old Lamine Yamal. Pedri's second-minute header from a Williams cross was tipped over by Gianluigi



when they won the Euros twice and the Donnarumma and eight minutes later Williams flashed a header wide, setting the tone for a contest which only Donnarumma's agility, the woodwork and errant finishing stopped from turning into a rout. "It's three points and we're through to the next round," Spain forward Alvaro Morata said. "We had a lot of clear chances but we are very happy because we showed we are a great team and we suffocate anyone. It's

very difficult to play against us." Italy's usually rock-steady defence was unable to stop the red tide and Donnarumma had to stretch his long frame to tip over a 30-metre rocket from Fabian Ruiz in the 25th minute. The first Italian attempt did not come until first-half stoppage time and the almost unending pressure on coach Luciano Spalletti's team resumed immediately after the interval. The deadlock was broken in the 55th minute when Williams fired in a cross from the left which glanced off Morata's head and Donnarumma's outstretched fingers before hitting Calafiori on the knee and going in. Spain poured forward again with Yamal flashing a shot just wide before Williams curled another effort on to the bar.



Turkey vs Portugal ,

Dortmund (9pm)

Belgium vs Romania

**Cologne (12:00)** 

# Business / World



## Briefs

## **Over 200** injured in Kenya antitax protests

NAIROBI: At least 200 peo ple were injured and more than 100 arrested across Kenya in Thursday's nationwide protests against government plans to raise \$2.7 billion in additional taxes, an alliance of rights groups has said. Police fired tear gas and water cannons to disperse protesters in the capital Nairobi, the five rights groups, which include Amnesty International and the Kenya Medical Association, said in a joint statement late on Thursday. They said that the presence of spent cartridges implied the use of live rounds. One person died from a gunshot wound sustained in the Nairobi protest, the Daily Nation newspaper reported. The Nairobi county police commander, Adamson Bungei, did not answer his phone to respond to the reported killing, injuries, and arrests. "We commend the several thousands of protesters, many of whom are youthful, for picketing peacefully (and) exhibiting restraint and decorum despite provocation by police," the group said. Contested tax proposals Protesters want the government to completely abandon the finance bill, saying it will choke the economy and raise the cost of living for Kenyans who are already struggling to make ends meet.

The International Monetary Fund says, however, that the government needs to increase revenues to reduce the budget deficit and state borrowing. Earlier this week the government softened its position a little, with President William Ruto endorsing recommendations to scrap some of the new levies, including on car ownership, bread, cooking oil and financial transactions. -APP

#### S. Korea fires warning shots after incursion

SEOUL: Seoul's military said Friday it had fired warning shots after North soldiers briefly crossed the heavily fortified border in the third such incursion this month. The nuclear-armed North has been reinforcing the border in recent months, adding tac tical roads and laying more landmines, which has led to "casualties" among its troops due to accidental explosions, South Korea has said. On Thursday morning, "several North Korean soldiers who were working inside the DMZ on the central front line crossed the Military Demarcation Line." Seoul's Joint Chiefs of Staff said. "After our military's warning broadcasts and warning shots, the North Korean soldiers retreated back northward,' they added. Similar inci dents took place on June 9 and Tuesday this week, with Seoul's military saying both incursions appeared to be accidental. Relations between the two Koreas are at one of their lowest points in years, with Kim Jong Un hosting Russian leader Vladimir Putin this week, and signing a mutual defence agreement that has raised hackles in Seoul.

#### Turkish forces eliminate 8 PKK terrorists

ANKARA: Türkiye has eliminated a total of eight PKK terrorists in its southeastern region and northern Iraq, authorities said Friday. Turkish security forces eliminated four PKK terrorists in northern Iraq, the Defense Ministry said. The terrorists, detected in the Qa ndil region in northern Iraq, were eliminated in an air strike, the ministry said, vow ing that the Turkish army's counterterrorism operations will continue "unabated." "There is no escape for the terrorists; nowhere is safe for them," it said. Separately, security forces took out four PKK terrorists in the rural areas of Beytüşşebap district in the Şırnak province during operations code-named "Bozdoğan-44," Minister Ali Yerlikaya said. The terrorists included one wanted in the orange category and two wanted in the gray category, Yerlikaya said on X.-DNA

# Kremlin: Putin's N.Korea, Vietnam visits productive

Spokesman Dmitry Peskov says Western reaction to president's visits to Asian countries 'puzzling'

#### **News Desk**

MOSCOW: Russian President Vladimir Putin's state visits to North Korea and Vietnam were "very intense and productive," Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov said on Friday. Speaking at a press briefing in Moscow, Peskov called the Western reaction to Putin's visits to the Asian countries "puzzling," noting that Moscow's partnerships with other states have never been directed against third countries. "Any foreign policy activity of Russia, even in regions directly adjacent to our country, is perceived with hostility and viewed through the lens of Western aspirations to suppress Russia," he said. Peskov said Russia's interactions with its partners aim solely at enhancing the well-being of the peoples involved. He acknowledged that Moscow understands Washington will continue to exert pressure on all its partners, including Vietnam. "We have no doubt that the US will pressure

all our partners. But the cooperation we offer is devoid of any confrontational attitude towards third countries. It is mutually beneficial and absolutely aligns with the interests of our partners, including Vietnam," he stressed. Peskov explained that the bilateral talks in Vietnam aimed to give a new impetus to the development of Russian-Vietnamese cooperation. "The potential is great in various fields. The negotiations were substantive and specific. Now, much work needs to be done at the expert and business levels to implement these initiatives," he added. When asked about Putin's statement in Hanoi that Russia would "go to the end" in case of Western escalation, Peskov clarified that it referred to achieving the goals of the "special military operation" in Ukraine. The spokesman said Russia is ready to conduct dialogue with the US on strategic stability issues, but only in conjunction with the Ukrainian issue. "We are open to dialogue, but to a



broad, comprehensive dialogue that covers all dimensions, including the dimension related to the conflict around Ukraine and the involvement of the United States in this conflict." Commenting on US sanctions against Russia's Kaspersky Lab, Peskov called them Washington's "favorite ploy of unjust, unfair competition.' "They resort to such techniques every time," he said. Putin visited North Korea and Vietnam from Tuesday till Thursday. The trip to the Asia-Pacific region was preceded by a day-long working

trip to Russia's Yakutia region. Mean while, Russia sees a pressing need for security talks with the United States but they must be "comprehensive" and include the subject of Ukraine, the Kremlin said on Friday. "It is impossible to rip out any individual segments from the general complex of accumulated problems, and we will not do this," Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov said when asked if Moscow was ready to talk to Washington about nuclear risks. "So we are open to dialogue, but to a broad comprehensive dialogue that covers all dimensions, including the current dimension related to the conflict around Ukraine, related to the direct involvement of the USA in this conflict," Peskov told reporters. The United States rejects Russia's contention that by arming Ukraine it has become a direct protagonist in a war aimed at inflicting a crushing "strategic defeat" on Moscow. The U.S. says any negotiations over the war are a matter for Ukraine. Russian air attack damages Ukraine's energy infra-

structure The Russian stance, as

the United States can deploy is due to expire in 2026.

outlined by Peskov, is not new. But he told reporters that the list of topics that Russia and the United States needed to discuss was growing. "Overall, this dialogue is very much required," Peskov said. "It is needed because problems are piling up, and there are a lot of problems associated with the global security architecture." From Washington's point of view, it is Putin who, in the third year of the war in Ukraine, is adding to the list of security concerns. This week he visited nuclear-armed North Korea, signed a mutual defence agreement with its leader Kim Jong Un and said he might supply Russian weapons to North Korea in response to the Western arming of Ukraine. Putin also reiterated on Thursday that he was considering reviewing Russia's doctrine on the use of nuclear weapons. The last remaining arms control treaty that limits the number of strategic nuclear warheads that Russia and

## **US urges EU** to delay antideforestation law

BRUSSELS: Belgium, June 20 (AFP/APP):The United States has called on the European Union to delay a ban on imports of products driving deforestation, saying it would harm American producers unable to comply, the European Commission said Thursday. The EU law, set to take effect at the end of December, will bar a vast range of goods - from coffee to cocoa, soy, timber, palm oil, cattle, printing paper and rubber - if produced using land that was deforested after December 2020. The US call adds to concerns voiced by Latin American, Asian and African countries, and from within the EU itself, about the administrative burden the new law places on farmers and the forestry sector. The EU is the second-biggest market for consumption of the targeted products after China. Firms importing the merchandise in question to the 27-nation EU will be responsible for tracking up their supply chains to prove goods did not originate from deforested zones, relying on geolocation and satellite data. According to the Financial Times, US Commerce Secretary Gina Raimondo, Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack, and Trade Representative Katherine Tai wrote to the European Commission in late May to request a delay. They argued that the law, adopted in late 2022, posed "critical challenges" for US producers, and asked for implementation to be postponed "until these substantial challenges have been addressed."—APP

## Sunak 'incredibly angry' over alleged election betting

LONDON: Prime Minister Rishi Sunak said that he was "incredibly angry" after more Conservative Party figures were put under investigation over alleged bets placed on the UK general election date. Facing questions on the growing scandal from an audience of voters on live television, the beleaguered leader said any election candidates or officials found to have broken rules would be kicked out of the party. His comments came hours after the Conservatives' campaign director stepped aside following reports that he and his wife, a Tory candidate in the July 4 election, were under investigation by betting regulators. Last week, another would-be MP, Craig Williams, who was a Sunak ministerial aide, was also being probed for staking £100 (\$127) on the date before it was called. London police said Wednesday that one of the prime minister's police security detail had been arrested for allegedly placing a bet on the date. "I was incredibly angry... to learn of these allegations," Sunak said of the cases involving his party officials. "If anyone is found to have broken the rules, not only should they face the full consequences of the law, I will make sure that they are booted out of the Conservative Party," he added. The Conservatives confirmed earlier that campaign director Tony Lee had started "a leave of absence" and that the Gambling Commission was looking into "a number of individuals". The regulator did not name individuals but the BBC reported that Lee and his election candidate wife Laura Saunders were under investigation. Her lawyers said she would "be co-operating with the G ambling Commission" and claimed the report infringed her privacy rights.-APP

## EU to open membership talks with Ukraine, Moldova next week

European Union ministers will start negotiations first with Ukraine and then with Moldova in Luxembourg

Foreign Desk

BRUSSELS: EU countries have formally approved launching accession talks with Ukraine and Moldova next week, a landmark event for the two countries at the start of their long path towards joining the bloc. European Union ministers will start negotiations first with Ukraine and then with Moldova in Luxembourg on Tuesday afternoon, officials said on Friday. Ukraine - followed by its neighbour Moldova - lodged its application to join the 27-nation EU in the wake of Russia's 2022 war. Starting the negotiations will still only put the two ex-Soviet states at the beginning of what

is likely to be a yearslong process of reforms before they can finally become members. EU leaders took the key step in December of agreeing to open talks on war-torn Ukraine - and Moldova joining the club.

But to actually begin the negotiations bloc's members still had to sign off on a formal framework for the process. The EU's executive told member states this month that Ukraine and Moldova had met all the criteria needed to launch the talks. Moldovan President Maia Sandu, on the other hand, announced on Friday that she had signed a decree to start negotiations on the republic's accession to the European Union. "Today

WHO announces

global resurgence

of cholera

UNITED NATIONS: The UN World Health Organization

(WHO) has announced a spike in cholera in several re-

gions of the world, with almost 195,000 cases and over

1,900 deaths reported in 24 countries since the start of

this year. The agency's Eastern Mediterranean Region

reported the highest number of cases, followed by the

African Region, the Region of the Americas, the South-

east Asia Region, and the European Region. There were no

reported cases in the Western Pacific Region, it said in a

bulletin. The UN health agency said it exhausted its global

stockpile of Oral Cholera Vaccines (OCV) by March but was

able to exceed "the emergency target of five million doses

in early June for the first time in 2024."Yet, the supply of

the vaccine does not equate to its demand. WHO reported

that since January last year, 16 countries requested 92 mil-

lion doses of OCV - almost double the 49 million produced

during that time. WHO, the UN Children's Fund (UNICEF)

and other partners are working together to use resources

to find long-term solutions for cholera. On the positive side

of health news, WHO announced on Thursday that Chad

successfully eradicated "sleeping sickness" as a public

health problem. The agency applauded the Government

and people of Chad for eradicating the gambiense form of

human African trypanosomiasis, (also known as sleeping

sickness). "I congratulate the government and the people of Chad for this achievement. It is great to see Chad join the

growing group of countries that have eliminated at least one

neglected tropical disease (NTD)," said Tedros Adhanom

Ghebreyesus, WHO Director-General. In eliminating the

disease, Chad joining some 50 others globally that have suc-

ceeded in this endeavour. "The 100-country target is nearer

and within reach," Tedros added, referring to the target set

out in the road map for address neglected tropical diseases

by 2030. "Sleeping sickness can cause flu-like symptoms in-

itially but eventually causing behaviour change, confusion,

sleep cycle disturbances or even coma, often leading to

I signed a decree on the start of negotiations on Moldova's accession to the European Union. Moldova has implemented all the recommendations of the European Commission," Sandu wrote on Facebook following a meeting of the National Commission for European Integration. Sandu noted that the negotiations on the accession

will start on June 25 at the first Moldova-EU intergovernmental conference, two years after Chisinau received candidate status. Deputy Prime Minister for European Integration Kristina Gerasimov has been appointed chief negotiator from Moldova, she said Sandu said she expects Moldova to become an EU member state by 2030.

# BERLIN: German Foreign Minister Annalena Baerbock

**German FM to** 

travel

to Middle East

next week

will visit the Middle East next week, Berlin said Friday, as the Gaza war grinds on and fears grow of a wider regional conflict. Baerbock will travel to Israel Monday immediately after a meeting of European Union foreign ministers in Luxembourg, a foreign ministry spokeswoman said. On arrival in Israel, Baerbock - who has visited the region several times since the start of the Israel-Hamas war - will give a speech at the Herzliya Security Conference. On Tuesday, she will hold talks with Palestinian prime minister Mohammed Mustafa in Ramallah, in the occupied West Bank. Baerbock will also meet with the Israeli Foreign Minister Israel Katz in Jerusalem. Subsequently, Baerbock will travel to Lebanon for talks with officials in Beirut, including the migration minister. Baerbock's discussions with officials would focus on "the war in Gaza and the continuing catastrophic humanitarian situation." as well as "the question of what a future could look like.—APP



Mexico City: Ambassador Shozab presented his letters of credentials to Andres Manuel Lopez Obrador, President of Mexico at the National Palace in Mexico City. The Ambassador highlighted the significance of Pakistan-Mexico relations.-DNA

## **Jordan calls for punitive measures against Israel**

Jordanian FM Safadi urged the international community "to act immediately to halt the war crimes committed by Israel against the Palestinian people

WEB DESK

death," it was pointed out.-DNA

AMMAN: Jordan called on the international community to act without delay to stop Israel from committing more war crimes in the Gaza Strip and to lift its "inhumane blockade" on the enclave. Jordanian Foreign Minister Ayman Safadi made the remarks during a phone call with European Union foreign policy chief Josep Borrell, according to a statement by the Jordanian Foreign Ministry. The statement said that Safadi urged the international com-

munity "to act immediately to halt the war crimes committed by Israel against the Palestinian people and to lift its inhumane blockade on Gaza." He stressed that these actions are necessary "to protect the Palestinian people from massacres and starvation and to uphold international law and humanitarian values that Israel continues to violate with impunity." Safadi noted that the international response to these crimes has been "insufficient to curb the extremism of the Israeli government and stop the massacres it commits." The Jordanian minister urged the EU to take "punitive measures" against Israel to pressure it into respecting international law and its agreements with the bloc and "to immediately cease its aggression in Gaza." He pointed out that all these illegal actions violate international humanitarian law and EU laws and values, necessitating a comprehensive European response to halt them. The two diplomats also discussed efforts to reach a permanent cease-fire in Gaza and emphasized the need for all parties to agree on US President Joe Biden's initiative in this regard. They also expressed their support for the efforts of Egypt, Qatar and the US to broker a prisoner exchange deal. Israel, flouting a UN Security Council resolution demanding an immediate cease-fire, has faced international condemnation amid its continued brutal offensive on Gaza since an Oct. 7, 2023 attack by the Palestinian group Hamas. The Palestinian death toll from relentless Israeli attacks on the Gaza Strip since last October has reached 37,431, according to the Health Ministry

in the besieged enclave. At least 85,653 people have also been injured in the onslaught, the ministry added. Over eight months into the Israeli war, vast tracts of Gaza lay in ruins amid a crippling blockade of food, clean water and medicine.Israel stands accused of genocide at the International Court of Justice, which in its latest ruling ordered it to immediately halt its military operation in the southern city of Rafah, where over a million Palestinians had sought refuge from the war before it was invaded on May 6.

## Reduce loadshedding or things...

From Page 01 loadshedding to a maximum

of 12 hours. With temperatures rising across the country as climate change shows its effects, power cuts have become frequent and longer in some areas, leading to back-to-back protests. Since the power supply is a matter which the federal government deals with, PTI lawmakers have forcefully restored electricity supply to several areas by storming grid stations. Gandapur, a firebrand PTI leader, had resorted to the same move on the third day of Eid ul Adha himself, following the footsteps of his party's lawmakers. As the CM chaired a meeting on loadshedding today, he was informed about the latest situation of power cuts, recovery of power distribution companies, and other matters related to the energy sector. In the briefing, the chief minister was informed that Rs1 billion was recovered in one month with the support of the KP government, while security was provided to the Peshawar Electric Supply Company (Pesco) staffers and its facilities. The meeting was informed that the distribution company had promised that no power cuts would take place during Eid ul Adha, however, it fell short of its commitment. During the Eid holidays, 12 to 18 hours of loadshedding was carried out in most areas.

#### 'Not blackmailing' PML-N...

From Page 01 out in the public and the days running out, Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif and PPP Chairman Bilawal Bhutto-Zardari held a meeting in Islamabad over the budget. Citing sources a private news channel claim that the PPP chairman raised concerns but assured the prime minister of providing help to pass the budget, while PM Shehbaz also said that he would address his ally's reservations. During her conversation on a private news channel Marri said that nothing substantial came out of the talks between the PPP chief and the prime minister. "PPP believes in negotiations and we will hold meetings moving forward. We are not blackmailing anyone, we're politely conveying our concerns, the member of the National Assembly said, stressing that her party has concerns over the federal budget. In response, PM's Adviser on Political Affairs Rana Sanaullah said that the meeting between the two leaders was held in a "pleasant environment" and that discussions were held on all government-related



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## Briefs

## German FM to travel to Middle East next week

BERLIN: German Foreign Minister AnnalenaBaerbock will visit the Middle East next week, Berlin said Friday, as the Gaza war grinds on and fears grow of a wider regional conflict.

Baerbock will travel to Israel Monday immediately after a meeting of European Union foreign ministers in Luxembourg, a foreign ministry spokeswoman said.

On arrival in Israel, Baerbock — who has visited the region several times since the start of the Israel-Hamas war — will give a speech at the Herzliya Security Conference.

On Tuesday, she will hold talks with Palestinian prime minister Mohammed Mustafa in Ramallah, in the occupied West Bank. Baerbock will also meet with the Israeli Foreign Minister Israel Katz in Jerusalem.

Subsequently, Baerbock will travel to Lebanon for talks with officials in Beirut, including the migration minister. Baerbock's discussions with officials would focus on "the war in Gaza and the continuing catastrophic humanitarian situation," as well as "the question of what a future could look like that allows Israelis and Palestinians to live together in safety," the ministry spokeswoman said. - Agencies

#### Court blocks Kejriwal's release from prison

NEW DELHI: An Indian court stopped on Friday the release from jail of one of Prime Minister Narendra-Modi's chief opponents, a day after he was granted bail in a long-running corruption case, reports said. ArvindKejriwal, the chief minister of Delhi and the leader of the opposition AamAadmi party, denies the charges as a "political conspiracy" by Modi and his Hindu-nationalist BJP. He was released from detention to campaign partway through India's weekslong general election but returned to jail after voting ended this month. A trial court ordered his release late Thursday, but before he could walk out of jail on Friday the country's top economic crimes investigative agency, the Enforcement Directorate (ED), appealed to the Delhi High Court.

to the Delhi High Court. It suspended his release until it could decide on the appeal, local media reported. The decision could come in "two-three days," legal news portal Live Law posted on social media platform X. Kejriwal is one of several opposition leaders in India under criminal investigation over various corruption-related probes, which Modi's opponents say are being used by the premier to weaken any potential challengers. – Agencies

# China warns EU of potential 'trade war'

BEIJING: China's Ministry of Commerce has expressed concerns that the European Union's ongoing intensification of trade disputes could potentially lead to a "trade war." The European Commission recently suggested imposing tariffs as high as 38.1% on electric vehicle (EV) imports from China, a move that has sparked objections from Beijing. The decision has strained trade relations, raising the prospect of of retaliatory measures from China, the world's second-largest economy.

"Responsibility lies entirely with the EU side," a Chinese ministry spokesperson said in a statement on Friday. The spokesperson expressed Beijing's desire for the EU to engage in dialogue and find a middle ground to address differences, to prevent trade friction from escalating or spiraling out of control. The tariffs are a response to concerns from Brussels regarding Beijing's subsidies, which are believed to be negatively impacting European automakers. The tariffs will apply to EVs exported to Europe by both Chinese and foreign brands, including Tesla. - **Agencies** 

## ISSI's roundtable on "Astana Summit 2024

# Kazakh envoy stresses SCO's role in regional economic coop

Experts emphasized the significant role of cooperation within SCO member states, stressing also the importance of people-to-people connections and media engagement



#### STAFF REPORT

ISLAMABAD: China Pakistan Study Centre (CPSC) at Institute of Strategic Studies Islamabad (ISSI) hosted a roundtable discussion titled, "Astana Summit 2024: Solidifying SCO's Partnerships". The event was moderated by Dr Talat Shabbir, Director CPSC. The speakers at the roundtable included Ambassador SohailMahmood, Director General ISSI; Ambassador Khalid Mahmood, Chairman BoG, ISSI; HE Yerzhan Kistafin, Ambassador of Republic of Kazakhstan to Pakistan; Ambassador Babar Amin, Pakistan's first National Coordinator of Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO); Dr. Syed HussainShaheedSoherwordi, Professor, University of Peshawar; and Mr. MarghoobSaleem Butt, Pakistan's National Coordinator for SCO, MOFA.

DG ISSI Ambassador SohailMahmood stressed the significance of the upcoming Astana Summit within the SCO framework, underscoring SCO's role as a pivotal trans-regional platform committed to stability, economic development, and cooperative multilateralism. Emphasizing SCO's expansive reach covering 60% of Eurasia, encompassing 40% of the global population, and a significant portion of the world's GDP,

he underscored its evolution into a vital platform for stability and multilateral cooperation. Ambassador SohailMahmood highlighted SCO's commitment to non-alignment, non-confrontation and inclusivity, offering an alternative perspective in international relations and a different cooperation model in a polarized world. He also acknowledged the internal and external challenges facing SCO, urging coordinated efforts amidst complex regional and global realities. Pakistan's active engagement with SCO, he noted, aligned closely with its national development goals and aspirations for regional peace and prosperity, reflecting its proactive role in advancing SCO's objectives.

Earlier, Dr. TalatShabbir highlighted the pivotal role of the SCO in fostering regional stability and prosperity through robust security mechanisms, enhanced economic collaboration, and cultural exchanges. Emphasizing the significance of the Astana Summit 2024, he highlighted the SCO's commitment to promoting peace and cooperation on a global scale.

Ambassador YerzhanKistafin highlighted Kazakhstan's role in the SCO's development, emphasizing its contributions to regional stability through robust counterterrorism mechanisms and economic cooperation. He underscored Kazakhstan's

commitment to fostering deep ties with SCO countries, promoting global peace, and enhancing regional connectivity. Additionally, he discussed bilateral efforts with Pakistan in geopolitical dimensions, digital development, economic collaboration and connectivity, affirming a shared vision for peace, prosperity, and environmental security in the region.

Ambassador Babar Amin emphasized the significant role of cooperation within SCO member states, stressing also the importance of people-to-people connections and media engagement. He highlighted SCO's evolving visibility and potential for enhancing development dynamics, suggesting it could surpass BRICS in certain aspects. Addressing challenges such as terrorism and security, he stressed the imperative of collaborative efforts to foster connectivity and mitigate obstacles, including the involvement of groups like TTP.

Professor Dr. Syed HussainShaheedSoherwordi underscored the interconnectedness of security and economics in global affairs, emphasizing the recent Gaza and Ukraine conflicts as examples. Prof. Dr. Soherwordi proposed key measures including diversifying regional ties, establishing mutual non-aggression agreements among powers, and jointly combating ter-

rorism to ensure regional stability and resilience against foreign intervention. His remarks emphasized the urgent need for collective action to safeguard the region's

economic and security interests. In his address, Dr. MarghoobSaleem Butt, Pakistan's National Coordinator for SCO, underscored the significant contributions of the SCO in various domains, including food security, climate change, and counter-terrorism. He emphasized the expanding scope of cooperation within the SCO, highlighting initiatives such as joint border operations and enhanced cyber cooperation. Dr. Butt also outlined Pakistan's priorities during its chairmanship, focusing on connectivity, poverty alleviation, and youth empowerment through digital initiatives. He also noted that Pakistan would be hosting the meeting of SCO Ministers of Trade/Commerce in September 2024 and the Council of Heads of Government (CHG) in October 2024. Looking forward to Astana Summit, he expressed Pakistan's commitment to adopt the documents which would reflect shared values of good neighbourliness, trust, and partnership, alongside commitments to initiatives such as safe drinking water, sanitation, and strategies for development, anti-drug efforts, and energy cooperation.

## Interior Minister meets Canadian HC

KHAYAM ABBASI

ISLAMABAD:Federal Interior Minister MohsinNaqvi met with Canadian High Commissioner Leslie Scanlon at the Ministry of Interior today. During the meeting, issues of mutual interest and bilateral relations were discussed in detail. Discussion revolved around Border security, immigration and curbing illegal human trafficking and drugs trafficking.

While talking to the Canadian High Commissioner, Interior Minister MohsinNaqvi said that Pakistan is making every possible effort to secure its border, stop illegal border crossing and human trafficking. He stated that all necessary measures are being taken to increase the capability of the relevant institutions in this regard. He added that immigration system was also being upgraded.

PICTURE ON PAGE 03

He highlighted that further improvements are also being made in the electronic travel authorization system and visas would be issued within 24 hours. Interior Minister pointed out that Pakistan can provide skilled manpower to Canada in various fields. He also said that migration of skilled manpower will also help in reducing the incidences of illegal human trafficking. He emphasized that Constitution of Pakistan ensures equal rights to all minorities and protection of their rights is the responsibility of the Government of Pakistan. He stated that Pakistan is providing all possible facilitation for the transfer of Afghan refugees to Canada. The High Commissioner thanked Interior Minister for his cooperation in various fields. Federal Interior Secretary Khurram Ali Agha, representative of Canadian High Commission and senior officials were also present during the meeting.

# Putin warns South Korea against arming Ukraine

**Five soldiers martyred in** 

**KP's Kurram attack: ISPR** 

Sepoy Haroon William

21-06-2024

### Foreign Desk

MOSCOW: Vladimir Putin has warned South Korea it would be making "a big mistake" if it arms Ukraine in the war against Russia. His comments come after Seoul said it was considering such a possibility, in response to Russia and North Korea's new pact to help each other in the event of "aggression" against either country. Moscow "will... [make] decisions which are unlikely to please the current leadership of South Korea" if Seoul decides to supply arms to Kyiv, Mr Putin told reporters on Thursday.

The Russian leader was speaking in Vietnam, shortly after a lavish visit to Pyongyang where he signed a mutual defence agreement with North Korean leader Kim Jong Un. Mr Putin also warned that Moscow is willing to arm Pyongyang if the US and its allies continue supplying Ukraine with weapons. "Those who supply these weapons believe that they are not at war with us. I said, including in Pyongyang, that we then reserve the right to supply weapons to other regions of the world," Mr Putin said.

Seoul had earlier condemned the Russian-North Korean agreement as a threat to its national security, and national security adviser Chang Ho-jin had said his country planned to "reconsider the issue of arms support to Ukraine".

Following Mr Putin's remarks, South Korea's presidential office said on Friday it would consider "various options" in supplying arms to Ukraine and its stance will "depend on how Russia approaches this issue". It also summoned the Russian ambassador Georgy Zinoviev to protest the pact, demanding that Moscow "immediately ceases" military cooperation with Pyongyang. While South Korea has giv-

en humanitarian aid and military equipment to Ukraine, it has so far refused to provide lethal weapons as it has an official policy not to arm countries at war.

Some in Ukraine have been hoping that the deepening military collaboration between Moscow and Pyongyang would cause Seoul to rethink its approach. Analysts had earlier said that Kyiv would use Mr Putin's visit to Pyongyang to up the pressure. During the visit, Mr Kim had also pledged "full support" for Russia's invasion of Ukraine. There is growing evidence that Russia has already been deploying North Korean missiles in Ukraine.

Early on Friday the US national security council's spokesman John Kirby weighed in on the Russian-North Korean agreement, saying it should "be of concern to any country that cares about maintaining peace and stability" in the region. He added that the agreement was "no surprise", saying that the US had been warning about the two countries' "burgeoning defence relationship" for many months.

Tokyo said it was "seriously concerned that President Putin did not rule out military technology co-operation with North Korea", Japan's government spokesman Yoshimasa Hayashi said, adding that the agreement was "unacceptable". Analysts have said that the treaty could have significant implications for the world as well as the region. Besides the possibility of North Korean openly arming Russia, it could also potentially see Russia intervening in any fresh conflict on the Korean peninsula. The two Koreas are still technically at war and maintain a heavily guarded border, where tensions have worsened in recent weeks. In a separate incident on Thursday, North Korean troops "briefly crossed" the border and retreated after the South fired warning shots, Seoul authorities said on Friday.

## Israel bombs tents in Rafah humanitarian zone

RAFAH:Another indiscriminate attack by the Israeli regime on a "humanitarian zone" in the besieged Gaza Strip has killed at least 25 Palestinians and injured 50 others. Media reports say the casualties were caused by Israeli shelling of tents in the Al-Mawasi area, which the regime had designated as a "humanitarian safe zone." The Palestinian Red Crescent Society said in a statement that, "Our crews are dealing with a large number of martyrs and injuries after an Israeli bombing of the tents

of displaced persons in the Al-Mawasi area, west of the city of Rafah." After launching sound bombs to attract people around one of the local makeshift hospitals in al-Mawasi, near Rafah, Israeli forces fired an explosive shell at the area, killing at least eight Palestinians, media quoted eyewitnesses as saying. There are between 60,000 and 75,000 Palestinians in the Al-Mawasi area, where many Palestinians have taken refuge since the start of the Israeli invasion of Rafah. – Agencies



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### Staff Report

ice Naik Muhammad Ta

21-06-2024

Muhammad Azan

21-06-2024

RAWALPINDI: On 21 June 24, an improvised explosive device exploded on a vehicle of Security Forces in general area Sadda, Kurram District. Resultantly, five brave sons of soil; Havildar Aqeel Ahmed (age: 33 years, resident of District Okara), Lance Naik Muhammad Tafeer (age: 30 years, resident of District Poonch), Sepoy Anosh Rufun (age: 24 years, resident

of District Attock), Sepoy Muhammad Azam Khan (age: 26 years, resident of District Haripur) and Sepoy Haroon William (age: 29 years, resident of Islamabad Capital Territory), made the ultimate sacrifice and embraced Shahadat. Sanitization of the area is being carried out to eliminate any terrorists present in the area and perpetrators of this henious act will be brought to justice. Security forces of Pakistan are determined to eliminate the menace of terrorism and such sacrifices of our brave soldiers further strengthen our resolve.

Sepoy Anosh Rufun

21-06-2024

Havildar Aceel Ahmed

21-06-2024

Adeel Butt

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