



Islamabad POST

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Turkey's Fidan warns Cyprus to 'stay away' from Israel's wars

Detailed News On Page-07

Yousaf Gillani for enhancing coop with Australia

Detailed News On Page-08

Raducanu eases past Stephens at Eastbourne

Detailed News On Page-06



Shehbaz assures public safety Cabinet okays operation Azm-e-Istehkam

PM says people will not face trouble during operation and neither will their houses be raided: sources

DNA

ISLAMABAD: The federal cabinet on Tuesday approved the decisions taken by the National Action Plan's Central Apex Committee, including the Operation Azm-e-Istehkam, sources told Geo News. As per the sources, Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif said citizens would not face any trouble during the operation and neither would their houses be raided. "Only intelligence-based operations would be carried out against terrorists," PM was quoted by the sources as saying. The decision has come after the Apex Committee last Saturday gave the go-ahead to the military operation, which is a reinvigorated and re-energised national counter-terrorism drive, to turn up the heat on militants targeting Pakistan. The Prime Minister's Office (PMO) had said that the new counter-terrorism push was approved with the consensus of all stakeholders including provinces, Gilgit Baltistan (GB) and Azad Jammu and Kashmir (AJK). However, opposition parties including the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI), Jamiat-e-Ulema Islam Fazl (JUI-F), Awami National Party (ANP), and others have voiced concerns over the military operation, demanding that parliament must be taken into confidence before taking any such decision. To resolve the issue, Defence Minister Khawaja Asif has said the government would satisfy the PTI and other opposition parties over the military operation. Asif said that the federal government would ensure providing satisfactory answers to the concerns of the PTI over the anti-militancy operation. "We will create a consensus among the [parties]. The opposition parties and allies. We will give them ample time to discuss this issue. Whatever their questions or concerns, it will be responded to in a satisfying manner." Meanwhile, as per the Prime Minister's Office,

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Country can't afford military action: PTI

Former ruling party argues military operations would disproportionately impact K-P, Balochistan

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) lawmakers while maintaining their stance against Operation 'Azm-e-Istehkam,' argued that the country cannot sustain more military operations for stabilisation. Speaking outside the Election Commission Pakistan (ECP) on Tuesday, PTI leaders reiterated their opposition against the newly approved military operation. They argued that military operations would disproportionately impact Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa (K-P) and Balochistan. "Investment isn't coming because there's no rule of law," they claimed, challenging the necessity of military action. PTI Chairman Barrister Gohar Ali Khan called for immediate justice and the release of former premier Imran Khan and other party members. He condemned their re

Continued on Page 06



ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif chairs Federal Cabinet Meeting. – DNA

Pervez Elahi likely to leave PTI



DNA

GUJRAT: The PTI President Pervez Elahi is likely to leave PTI. Sources privy to this development confided to this news agency that Pervez and Ch. Shujaat have already held two meetings on this subject. Ch. Pervez Elahi was recently released on bail. There were rumours that his release may be part of a deal and he was released only after his solemn assurance that he will leave the PTI. Pervez Elahi resisted the pressure and refused to part ways with the PTI but he was told that PTI has not future, at least in the foreseeable future so you better reconcile with your cousin Ch. Shujaat and join him. Sources say after immense pressure from family circles, he has made up his mind to finally divorce the PTI. The decision is likely soon, the sources claim.

'Sans political input' Budget will be for babus, by babus, of babus: Bilawal

"If there is no political input, your budget will not work and relief you want to give won't be possible," he says

MEHTAB PIRZADA

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) Chairman Bilawal Bhutto-Zardari on Tuesday reiterated the taking political input in the budget 2024-25 proposals for it to achieve targets. "If there is no political input, your budget will not work. The relief you want to give to the people won't be possible. The ground realities that you [politicians across the board] know, none of the 'babu' in Islamabad know about them," he said while speaking during the National Assembly session. "Without political input, the budget will be for the babus and of the babus. And we want to end this tradition," said the PPP chairman. The PPP, which is the main ally of the Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N), continued to raise objections for not taking it to confidence regarding the federal budget for the upcoming fiscal year starting July 1.

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Budget aimed at narrowing fiscal deficit

Non-filers to have a personal hearing before SIM blockage and foreign travel bans

STAFF REPORT

ISLAMABAD: Finance Minister Senator Muhammad Aurangzeb has said that the budget for the next fiscal year was aimed at narrowing the fiscal deficit by expanding the government's revenues and cutting unnecessary expenditures. Concluding the discussion

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Briefs

TTP resettlement led to Azm-e-Istehkam

Says it is a national security issue, not any political move

BUREAU REPORT

LAHORE: Defence Minister Khawaja Asif on Tuesday asked for not comparing the planned Operation Azm-e-Istehkam with the military actions taken against terrorists in the past, saying there were no no-go areas in Pakistan unlike the previous state of affairs when the Taliban had complete control over regions like Swat and erstwhile Federally Administered Tribal Areas (Fata). The state writ is in place across the country, barring in some areas where the Taliban have control in night hours, minister told a press conference at the PML-N headquarters in Lahore.

PPP to vote for budget

If we do not vote for the budget, it would amount to dismantling the government: Naveed

ADIL SHAHEEN

ISLAMABAD: The Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) will vote for the budget to prevent instability in the country, senior parliamentarian Syed Naveed Qamar announced on Tuesday. The decision was made during a parliamentary party meeting chaired by PPP Chairman Bilawal Bhutto-Zardari, with Aseefa Bhutto Zardari also in attendance. PPP Secretary Information Shazia Marri stated that members had expressed concerns about their constituencies in previous meetings. The party leadership engaged the government to address these issues, with senior PPP parliamentarian Syed Naveed Qamar briefing members on the progress.

Reserved seats case

Supreme Court stresses on proportional representation

Justice Minallah says PML-N, PPP were also affected in past

KHAYAM ABBASI

ISLAMABAD: Supreme Court of Pakistan's Justice Ayesha A Malik on Tuesday said that the reserved seats cannot be allocated contrary to the principle of proportional representation. Justice Malik made these comments during the hearing on the petition filed by the Sunni Ittehad Council (SIC), the ally of Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI), against the denial of reserved seats for women and minorities. A 13-member full court, headed by Chief Justice of Pakistan (CJP) QaziFaez Isa, heard the matter. The bench comprises Justice Syed Mansoor Ali Shah, Justice Muneeb Akhtar, Justice YahyaAfriadi, Justice Amin-ud-Din Khan, Justice Jamal Khan Mandokhail, Justice Muhammad Ali Mazhar, Justice Malik, Justice Athar Minalah, Justice Syed Hassan Azhar Rizvi, Justice ShahidWahed, Justice Irfan Saadat Khan and Justice Naeem Akhtar Afghan. "Whether SIC wins or loses this case, what will other parties benefit from it?" questioned Justice Ayesha during the hearing today,

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Iddat case Court reserves verdict on sentence suspension

Both Khan and Bushra were handed seven-year sentences each by trial court in February this year

COURT REPORTER

ISLAMABAD: A district and sessions court Tuesday reserved its verdict on pleas filed by Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) founder Imran Khan and his wife Bushra Bibi seeking suspension of their sentence in the iddat case. The Islamabad High Court (IHC), earlier this month, had directed the district court to decide the pleas seeking the suspension of the sentence of former prime minister Khan and his wife

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PMD forecast rains across country

About the possible impacts, the PMD said that heavy rains may cause urban/flash flood

FAISAL SHEIKH

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan Meteorological Department (PMD) has forecast rain across the country from June 26 till July 01 which may cause urban flooding in the vulnerable areas and disrupt daily routines. The monsoon currents from

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Kenya's parliament burnt as protesters object to new taxes

Thousands of mostly young people demonstrated in Kenya's capital and across the country on Tuesday against new tax proposals in the government's annual budget legislation

NEWS DESK

NAIROBI: Part of Kenya's parliament building was burned Tuesday as thousands of protesters against a new finance bill entered and legislators fled, in the most direct assault on the government in decades. Journalists saw at least three bodies outside the complex where police had opened fire. Clashes spread to other cities. Protesters had demanded that legislators vote against the bill imposing new taxes on a country, East Africa's economic hub, where frustrations over the high cost of living have simmered for years. Youth who had voted President William Ruto into power with cheers for his promises of economic relief took to the streets to object to the pain of reforms. But lawmakers voted to pass the bill, then fled through a tunnel as protesters, many of them youth, outmaneuvered police to enter parliament. Protesters allowed opposition legislators who voted against the bill to walk out of the besieged building. The fire was later put out. One person shot dead was wrapped in a Kenyan flag and carried away.

Continued on Page 06

Assange released from prison after US plea deal

Assange to plead guilty to one charge of espionage and return home to Australia after years fighting US extradition

FOREIGN DESK

LONDON: WikiLeaks founder Julian Assange has been freed from prison in the United Kingdom and is expected to travel home to Australia after he agreed to plead guilty to a single charge of breaching the espionage law in the United States. Assange, 52, will plead guilty to one count of conspiracy to obtain and disclose classified US national defence documents, according to a filing in the US District Court for the Northern Mariana Islands. He was freed from

Continued on Page 06

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President focuses on combating drug abuse efforts

President Asif Ali Zardari said that we need to take steps to eliminate the scourge of drugs from the society by intensifying efforts to prevent drug abuse and trafficking in Pakistan

ADIL SHAHEEN

ISLAMABAD: President Asif Ali Zardari has stressed that eliminating the scourge of drug abuse required creation of awareness, strengthening of anti-narcotics laws, investing in prevention and treatment and engaging communities. "We also need to educate our youth about the harmful impacts of drug abuse to save them from this menace. Additionally, we should divert the energies of our youth into healthy and productive activities. The future of our young generation lies in our hands," the president said in a message on the occasion of 'International Day Against Drug Abuse and Illicit Trafficking' being

observed on June 26. Today, the president said they commemorated the international day against drug abuse and illicit trafficking under the theme "The evidence is clear: invest in prevention." The day highlighted the urgency of taking concrete steps to eliminate the scourge of drugs from the society by intensifying efforts to prevent drug abuse and trafficking in Pakistan, he added. "Drug production and illicit trafficking not only immensely harm our youth and their families, but are also a potential source of financing for criminal and terrorist elements," he observed. The president also called upon every citizen to support the government in its fight to eradicate drugs from our society. "I urge each one of you to raise awareness about the harmful effects of drug

abuse at the individual, family, and community levels, prioritizing prevention and treatment," President Secretariat Press Wing, in a press release, quoted the president as saying. President Zardari further said that addressing the root causes of drug abuse required an integrated approach involving all stakeholders, including law enforcement agencies (LEAs), media, civil society, parents and teachers. "We must curb the flow of drugs into our society, especially within educational institutions, by targeting drug suppliers and peddlers. LEAs should adopt proactive measures and take strict actions against persons involved in drug trafficking," he maintained. The president expressed the hope that through their collective efforts, they could achieve a drug-free Pakistan.

Tax net to be broadened for revenue generation: Hussain

FAISALABAD: The tax net will be broadened with the active cooperation of the Faisalabad Chamber of Commerce & Industry (FCCI) so that much-needed revenue could be generated without adding more burden on the existing taxpayers, said Irshad Hussain, Chief Commissioner Inland Revenue (Operation) Faisalabad. Talking to a delegation of the business community, the Chief Commissioner said that he had already served in Faisalabad and had intimacy with business leaders. "I also understand the tax related problems confronted by the business community," he said and added that he would try his best to facilitate them within the given circumstances. Dr Sajjad Arshad, Senior Vice President FCCI, led the delegation and met the Chief Commissioner Inland Revenue (Operation) in his office. The delegation comprised Vice President FCCI, Hajji Muhammad Aslam Bhalli, Chaudhary Talat Mahmood, Abaidullah Sheikh, Idrees Sadiq Sheikh, Rehan Ashfaq, Chaudhary Taimoor Talat, Muhammad Qasim, Muhammad Shahzad and Iftikhar Hussain Ansari. Speaking on the occasion, Senior Vice President FCCI, Dr Sajjad Arshad, congratulated Irshad Hussain on assuming the office of the chief commissioner inland revenue and assured him of his full cooperation. He said that the proposed budget had fomented serious apprehensions, however, they could resolve the issues in close collaboration. He also extended an invitation to Irshad Hussain to visit the FCCI at a time and date convenient to him. It would provide a chance to FCCI members to directly interact with the chief commissioner and explain their unresolved issues, he added. Vice President FCCI, Hajji Muhammad Aslam Bhalli, said that traders were patriotic Pakistani and ready to contribute their role but they must be taken into confidence about the "Tajir Dost Scheme". The chief commissioner accepted the invitation to visit the FCCI and assured to extend maximum facilitation to the business community.—APP

FESCO issue Power shutdown notice

DNA

FAISALABAD: Faisalabad Electric Supply Company (FESCO) has issued shutdown programme for Wednesday due to necessary repair, maintenance and expansion of electricity lines. According to the schedule, power supply from CTM, Usman Town, 7JB, Sargodha Spinning, Dawood, Sitara, Rasheed Usman, Ali Town, Sargodha Cloth Processing and Usman Block feeders linked with 132-KV Chiniot Road grid station, will remain suspended from 6 a.m. to 10 a.m.—APP

Political stability is vital for country's development, says: Ahsan Iqbal

Minister for Planning Ahsan stressed that economic progress hinges on improving the law and order situation, which requires the collective efforts of all stakeholders

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Minister for Planning Development & Special Initiatives Ahsan Iqbal on Tuesday said that the key prerequisites for moving forward include policy continuity, political stability, and peace in the country. Without these basics, the country's progress will be stunted, he said

while talking to a private news channel. In response to a question about CPEC, he said that from 2013 to 2018, work on the project progressed speedily, but government changes later slowed down progress in Gwadar and the Special Economic Zones (SEZ). The current administration has since reignited these efforts, working at full speed, he added. The second

phase of China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) is going to start, which will focus on five key corridors, Growth, Livelihood, Innovation, Green, and Open corridor, he added. These corridors were designed to foster regional cooperation and ensure comprehensive development, he further added. Recent terrorist attacks aim to cast a shadow over the development.



KARACHI: Ambassador of the Philippines Maria Agnes, Consul General of the Philippines in Karachi and others cutting cake to celebrate the national day of the Philippines. — DNA

PGGA organizing National Youth Forum from 25-28 June

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan Girl Guides Association (PGGA) National Headquarters is organizing the National Youth Forum from 25th to 28th June 2024, with the theme "Empowering Youth for Leadership and Governance". More than 50 young leaders from all regions of the country are participating in the forum. The opening ceremony of the Youth Forum was held on Tuesday in which Senator Ayesha Raza Farooq Chairperson National Commission on Rights of the Child was the chief guest. Maria Maud Sabri, National Commissioner of the Pakistan Girl Guides Association welcomed them and other guests. She informed them about Guiding in Pakistan. She briefed the guests that in Guiding we start working on our mission of leadership development as soon as a girl joins in. Each working group of 6-8 girls elects their leader. This is the first step in learning democracy and leadership. Leaders change regularly so that everyone gets a chance to lead. Activities are selected by the girls themselves. The entire program of Guiding aims to give skills and develop confidence to take initiative. The girls learn to take action to solve their problems and learn to love their community and country. They are encouraged to think about social issues and take steps, however small to tackle them. — APP

Rana meets with HEC Chairman; discusses strategies to empower youth

ISLAMABAD: Chairman of the Prime Minister Youth Programme, (PMYP) Rana Mashhood Ahmed Khan has said that empowering youth with required resources and development opportunities is the need of the hour as today's youth, are leaders of tomorrow. He said this during a meeting with the Chairman of the Higher Education Commission (HEC) Dr Mukhtar Ahmed here on Tuesday. The meeting discussed various ways to promote positive engagement and develop-

ment opportunities for the country's youth. During the meeting, Chairman Rana Mashhood Ahmed Khan and Dr Mukhtar Ahmed both emphasized the importance of collective efforts for skills, education and overall empowerment of the youth population across the country. They discussed various initiatives and programs namely the Prime Minister's National Innovation Award, Prime Minister's Youth Laptop Scheme, National Volunteer Corps and several

other schemes that could be implemented to effectively engage and empower the youth. They said that the joint efforts of the Prime Minister Youth Program and HEC will enable to utilize resources and expertise to effectively maximize the impact on youth development. The Chairman PMYP and HEC expressed optimism about the future of youth development in Pakistan and reiterated their commitment to work together towards the common goal.

PMD forecast rains across country from 26 June 26

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan Meteorological Department (PMD) has forecast rain across the country from June 26 till July 01 which may cause urban flooding in the vulnerable areas and disrupt daily routines. The monsoon currents from Arabian sea and Bay of Bengal are likely to penetrate eastern parts of the country from June 26 and a low pressure was also lying over south of Indian Gujarat. Rain wind/thundershower with isolated heavyfall/hailstorm is expected in Islamabad, Rawalpindi, Murree, Galliat, Attock, Chakwal, Jhelum, Mandi Bahauddin, Gujrat, Gujranwala, Hafizabad, Wazirabad, Lahore, Sheikhpura, Sialkot, Narawal, Sahiwal, Jhang, Toba Tek Singh, Nankana Sahib, Chiniot, Faisalabad, Okara, Kasur, Khushab, Sargodha,

Bhakkar and Mianwali from June 27 to July 01 with occasional gaps. In Sindh, rain wind/thundershower with isolated heavyfall is expected in Mithi, Umartkot, Mirpur Khas, Sanghar, Tando Allahyar, Badin, Thatta, Karachi, Hyderabad, Jamshoro, Shaheed Benazirabad, Nausheroferoze, Khairpur, Dadu, Sukkur, Jacobabad, Kashmir and Larkana from June 26 to July 01 with occasional gaps. Rain/thundershower is expected in Bahawalpur, Bahawalnagar, Dera Ghazi Khan, Multan, Khanewal, Lodhran, Muzaffargarh, Rajanpur, Rahimyar Khan and Layyah from June 26-30. In Gilgit-Baltistan, rain wind/thundershower is expected in Diamir, Astore, Ghizer, Skardu, Hunza, Gilgit, Ghanche, Shigar while in Kashmir, rain wind/thunderstorm is likely

Empowered girls can boost country's development: Ayesha

FAISAL SHEIKH

ISLAMABAD: The young girls can play a key role in development of the country if they are empowered, given proper guidance and confidence, said Chairperson National Commission on Rights of the Child Senator Ayesha Raza Farooq. She was addressing as the chief guest to the opening ceremony of the Youth Forum organized by Pakistan Girl Guides Association National Headquarters from 25th to 28th June

2024. More than 50 Young Leaders from all regions of the country are participating. The theme of the Youth Forum is "Empowering Youth for Leadership and Governance," said a press release. Speaking on the occasion, Senator Ayesha Raza Farooq appreciated the Pakistan Girl Guides Association for its efforts to empower young girls and said it is a unique program offered to girls which helps them develop into confident and responsible citizens. She also highlighted the role

youth can play for the betterment of the country. She said that in a world that is constantly evolving, the skills and principles instilled through Girl Guiding are more important than ever. Guides' ability to adapt, lead with empathy, and embrace diversity that will serve girls not only today but throughout their lives. She hoped that during the coming days of the Youth Forum, the participants would discover their potential and polish their leadership skills.

Government of Pakistan
PAKISTAN PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT
No.CEMD-1/AB/939 Dated 21/06/2024
CORRIGENDUM
Tender for the work "EXTENSION OF DISPLAY EXHIBITS, COLLECTION REPOSITORIES IMPROVEMENT AND RESEARCH FACILITIES ENHANCEMENT AT PAKISTAN MUSEUM OF NATURAL HISTORY (PMNH) (SH NO. I NETWORKING SYSTEM, SH NO. II CCTV, SURVEILLANCE SYSTEM SH NO. III TELEPHONE SYSTEM AND PUBLIC ADDRESS SYSTEM OF BLOCK NO. 3,4,5)" Published in daily Express and Daily Nation 02.6.2024 and uploaded on PPRA website "TS540898E" dated 31.5.2024 vide this office NO. CEMD-1/AB/695 dated 30.5.2024 is hereby extended. Therefore, tenders can be purchased from the office of the undersigned up to 22.7.2024 and will be received on 23.7.2024 at 02.30 PM and will be opened on the same day at 03.00 PM.
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S&P Global Pakistan completes 19 years of excellence

Managing Director of S&P Global Pakistan said that Pakistan is a testament to our shared commitment to accelerate growth, innovation, partnership and integrity

MEHTAB PIERZADA

ISLAMABAD: S&P Global, a provider of credit ratings, benchmarks, analytics and workflow solutions to the global capital, commodity and automotive markets, is celebrating its 19th anniversary of operations in Pakistan this month. Since its inception in 2005, S&P Global Pakistan has been at the forefront of providing essential intelligence that enables governments, businesses and individuals to create new opportunities, solve problems and grow at the pace of the world. S&P Global Pakistan has consolidated its position in "Powering Global Markets" over the last 19 years and has impacted people, consumers and communities through its services. Speaking on the occasion, Mujeeb Zahoor, Managing Director, S&P Global Pakistan, said that the continuous growth of S&P Global Pakistan is a testament to our shared commitment to accelerate growth, innovation, partnership and integrity. Be able to act on values. On this special day, we want to pay tribute to each and every team



member in Pakistan who strives to live our mission and values and helps us make us a more diverse, equitable and inclusive organization.

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National Days and Armed Forces Days

JUNE

June 02/Italy National/Independence Day

June 04/Finland Armed Forces Day

June 06/Sweden National Day

June 10/Portugal Portugal Day (National Day)

June 10/Jordan Arab Revolution & Army Day

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

June 12/Philippines Independence Day

June 12/Russian Federation Day of Sovereignty of the Russian Federation (National Day)

June 13/Zambia Armed Forces Day

June 17/Iceland National Day

June 18/Seychells National Day

June 25/Croatia National Day

June 25/Mozambique National Day

June 26/Azerbaijan Army Day

Hotels & Restaurants



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



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



Enquiry

Edhi Ambulance.....115
PIA Flight Info.....114
PIA Cargo.....9280979
Railway Inquiry.....117
Railway Exchange 9270831-5
WASA Rawalpindi.5555489
CAA.....9281092



Hospitals

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

CDA.....9221334-43
CDA.....9208301-04
Met Office.....9250360-6
RDA.....5555864
TMA.....5770886
Cantonment Board 9270151-3

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Indonesian Embassy, COMSTECH host Int'l seminar

Sustainability of Palm Oil Industry and its Derivative Products

MAHNOOR ANSAR

ISLAMABAD: The Embassy of the Republic of Indonesia in Islamabad in collaboration with COMSTECH jointly organize the international seminar on "Sustainability of Palm Oil Industry and its Derivative Products" at COMSTECH Auditorium, Islamabad (25/6). The international seminar aims to raise more awareness of the sustainability of the palm oil from Indonesia to the Pakistani public and maintain the awareness that the palm oil and its derivative products are not harmful to the health even beneficial for the well-being. By this seminar, more potentials are expected to explore the untapped potential of palm oil derivatives beyond culinary application. In his remarks, COMSTECH Adviser Prof. Dr. Syed Khurshid Hasnain mentioned that COMSTECH have strong commitment to support the natural products coming from the OIC member countries and expect more applied research on more application of the natural products for the industrial purposes that could benefits to the OIC member countries. He believed that science and technology should be applicable and give economic benefits to the people. On his turn, the Indonesian Chargé D'Affaires (CDA), Mr. Rahmat Hindiarta Kusuma underlined the importance of palm oil for Indonesia as it contributes to 4.5 percent to the Country's GDP, which absorbs more than 17 million direct and indirect workers. Given its significance, the Government of Indonesia successfully improved the approaches on palm oil production to be more eco-and-labour-friendly. "Please keep up with the Indonesian palm oil in our bilateral trade relations, and let us make it as milestone to improve more



ISLAMABAD: Ambassadors and High Commissioners of Brunei, Indonesia, Morocco, Kyrgyzstan and others posing for a group photo on the occasion of Seminar on The Sustainability of The Palm Oil Industry And its Derivative Product held under the aegis of the Indonesia embassy at the Comstech. DNA

trade volumes between the two countries," CDA said, inviting the Pakistani business community to participate Trade Expo Indonesia 2024 this October. The seminar discloses the minerals contained in the palm oil are very beneficial for the industry, compared with another vegetable oils and could be used for raw material of cosmetics, daily appliances, pharmaceuticals, paints, plastics and even biofuel. Palm oil is also considered very efficient in cost since it provides a high yield at a very affordable cost. The seminar also showcases the scientific and academic research about the health benefits for the palm oil consumers and

discloses the palm oil from Indonesia as having sustainable farming standards by putting human rights, deforestation, and environment as the core of the production process, even contributes to the fulfilment of the Sustainable Development Goals. The speakers of the seminar are Prof. Dedi Budiman Hakim, Bogor Agricultural Institute; Mr. Rashed Jan Muhammad, President BQATI; Prof. Muhammad Asim Shabir, University of Faisalabad; Mr. Djon Albar Burhan, Indonesia Palm Oil Association; Dr. Humaira Fatima, Quaid-e-Azam University; and Mr. Shahid Pervez, Secretary General of PVMA. The event was attended by a significant number of

participants from entrepreneurs, scholars, students, and journalists in Pakistan. All participants received goodie bags from Indomie Pakistan, the world largest instant noodle brand based in Faisalabad, which is also a palm oil-based product. The government of Indonesia and COMSTECH have a successful history of collaboration in advancing science and technology among the OIC member countries. The COMSTECH research fellowship program in virology and vaccine technologies has been annually held since 2022. Both parties are also expected to co-organize an exhibition focusing on nutraceuticals and cosmetics made with natural and halal ingredients later this year.

ICCI: a trusted voice for business community, residents

According to details in 2019, when the Municipal Corporation Islamabad hiked the property tax up to 300 percent, the Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry moved Islamabad High Court, hence Mr. Justice Mohsin Akhtar Kiyani while declaring the hike as illegal directed the MCI to receive the tax on old rates and that CDA must stay away from any kind of interference in MCI affairs

DNA

ISLAMABAD: The Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry since its inception, has tirelessly advocated for its members rights and the general public interests. The ICCI under the leadership of its President Ahsan Zafar Bakhtawari wasted no time in moving the court when the MCI by resorting to misuse of its powers exorbitantly revised the property taxes. Thereby, the Islamabad High Court suspended the notification meant for almost 400 percent hike in the property tax. According to details in 2019, when the Municipal Corporation Islamabad hiked the property tax up to 300 percent, the Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry moved Islamabad High Court, hence Mr. Justice Mohsin Akhtar Kiyani while declaring the hike as illegal directed the

MCI to receive the tax on old rates and that CDA must stay away from any kind of interference in MCI affairs. On this, both CDA and MCI opted for intra-court appeal, which is still pending. In 2023 when once again the MCI enhanced the property tax up to 400 percent, the ICCI initiated consultations with the relevant quarters to convince them for exercising a rationale in the matter but after 5 months long deliberations the MCI abruptly issued a notification regarding the tax increase. Subsequently, the ICCI had no option but to once again move the court. In its petition, it challenged the notification dated 23.01.2024 issued by the respondent, the MCI, whereby property tax had been revised and applied to the entire Islamabad Capital Territory. The ICCI Council contended that his client representing the business community of

ICT Islamabad is aggrieved by the above-referred notification which is disproportionate to the certain rights as well as principles settled in Section 88 of the Islamabad Local Government Act, 2015. He argued that the Municipal Corporation of Islamabad (MCI) had misused its powers while implementing the tax increase. The IHC directed the MCI and the Capital Development Authority (CDA) to suspend the new property and other enhanced tax collection until the final verdict is issued and continue to collect the same on old rates. The court observed that MCI has authority to issue such orders. The court also directed the Election Commission of Pakistan to announce the election date because only the elected body can impose the tax. The court also ordered for the audit of the MCI accounts and deferred the case till July 10.

Chinese scientists cures a patient of diabetes using cell therapy

ISLAMABAD: In a groundbreaking achievement, Chinese scientists have cured a patient of diabetes using cell therapy for the first time. This medical breakthrough offers hope to diabetes sufferers worldwide. The collaboration and knowledge-sharing on this advancement across borders can accelerate scientific advancements, Gwadar Pro reported on Tuesday. "By learning from each other's successes, Pakistani and Chinese scientists can collectively contribute to diabetes research and patient care", says Dr. Nauman Niaz, Diabetologist and Endocrinologist in Islamabad. "We can learn from this breakthrough as they can explore stem cell research to develop therapies for diabetes. Stem cells can be converted into various tissues, including pancreatic cells, which play a crucial role in insulin production", he said. They have used islet-like cells from human stem cells to create new pancreas islet tissue. We can study similar approaches to improve islet transplants for diabetes patients. The Chinese study also tested a chemical cocktail that transformed stem cells into brain, muscle, kidney, and pancreatic tissue. Pakistani scientists can investigate similar chemical combinations for effective diabetes treatment", Dr. Niaz added. Pakistan is faced with an alarming surge in diabetes cases. According to recent statistics, over 33 million people, or over 26% of the adult population in Pakistan, are living with diabetes. Obesity and sugar intake are the major causes of diabetes. Moreover, an additional 11 million adults in Pakistan have Impaired Glucose Tolerance (IGT), putting them at a high risk of developing type 2 diabetes. Experts believe that the situation calls for urgent attention and measures to address this growing health concern.—DNA

PPAF disburses 274,730 interest-free loans

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan Poverty Alleviation Programme (PPAF) disbursed 274,730 interest-free loans (65% loans to women) amounting to Rs 12.20 billion (including re-flows) to borrowers from July 2023 to March 2024. From July 2019 to March 2024, 2,677,227 loans (53% loans to women) with a value of Rs 101.71 billion (including re-flows) have been disbursed. According to an official source, the programme was being executed nationwide by 26 partner organizations (POs) through 736 Loan Centers/Branches in around 81 districts. During the period of July-March FY 2024, a total of 1,139 loans worth Rs. 73.72 million has been disbursed among beneficiaries in Azad Jammu and Kashmir, 3,689 loans worth Rs 241.51 million in Balochistan, 995 loans worth Rs 57.57 million in Gilgit-Baltistan and 15,892 loans worth Rs 790.23 million in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. Around 232,070 loans worth Rs 10,058.35 million has been disbursed to the beneficiaries in Punjab and 20,945 loans worth Rs 977.47 million in Sindh province.

Govt urged to reconsider 25% SAP expense policy

ISLAMABAD: The government has disallowed 25% Sales Promotion, Advertising and Publicity (SAP) expense creating a significant marketing cost especially to multinationals that rely on advertising to sell fast moving consumer goods (FMCG). This means a higher tax liability for foreign companies, already struggling with current macroeconomic conditions. It also means an anti-competitive and discriminatory landscape targeting foreign investors. A delegation from the American Business Council held meetings in Islamabad today on this matter with Federal Minister for Investments, Aleem Khan; Chairperson of Senate Standing Committee, Finance, Saleem Mandviwala; Members of the Special Investment Facilitation Council (SIFC); and Secretary Finance, Imdad Ullah Bosal. As the apex American chamber of Commerce in Pakistan they shared their urgent concerns. Speaking about the issue, Sami Wahid, Managing Director of Mondalez Pakistan and a Member of American Business Council said, "In the eventuality that such SAP expenses are disallowed, MNCs will have no option but to reduce outlays made on advertising and publicity to keep their balance sheets out of the red. It will put them at a disadvantage in comparison to local competitors. Significant presence of MNCs in advertising has a far-reaching impact on the economy and such punitive fiscal measures will not only jeopardize the already fraying advertising and media industry but also stifle innovation in media practices." The delegation of American Business Council also included, John Letvin, Economics Counselor, US Embassy; Aisha Sarwari, Senior Director Public Affairs Coca-Cola Pak-Afg; Jamil Mughal, COO, McDonalds; Khurram Qamar, Director External Affairs Philip Morris (Pakistan) Limited; and Basit Pirzada, Head of Public Policy, PepsiCo. They represent about 60 American companies' membership in Pakistan that have invested billions of dollars in the past few decades. When a global brand expands into a new market, it requires a substantial investment in marketing and advertising, typically accounting for almost 25-30% of net revenue in the first three years to establish its presence. Retroactive applications, after the financial year has closed, will damage the country's credibility as a favorable investment hub.—DNA

ICT admin cracks down on overpricing; arrests vendors

ISLAMABAD: Deputy Commissioner (DC) Islamabad, Irfan Nawaz Memon, has directed the Assistant Commissioners and Magistrates for intensifying their efforts to control overpricing of vegetables, fruits, and bread in the Federal Capital. During the inspection, the Islamabad Capital Territory Administration teams found several shopkeepers and vendors violating government-set rates. Immediate legal action was taken against those not adhering to the official prices, said the ICT Administration's spokesman.—APP

LOST & FOUND

NIMRA SHAHID WIFE OF MUHAMMAD HAMAD RESIDENCE 1001 STREET NO. 24 BAHRIA TOWN PHASE 4 HEREBY CERTIFY THAT MY ORIGINAL GRADUATION DEGREE OF D PHARMACY FROM RIFAH UNIVERSITY RIPS-F08-42 was lost on 25TH JUNE 2024 last during travel. It is informed that if anyone finds it, please post it on the given address or contact my father on the his mobile number given below.
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Briefs

ANF recovers 2.5 kg drugs in two operations

DNA

RAWALPIND: Anti-Narcotics Force (ANF) while conducting two operations managed to recover 2.5 kg drugs and arrested an accused, said an ANF Headquarters spokesman here on Tuesday. He informed that 1.9 kg Ice was recovered from a parcel sent to Australia at a cargo office in Lahore. In another operation, 640 grams heroin was recovered from a passenger going to Karachi from Peshawar Airport. Cases have been registered against the accused and further investigations are under process.

IRSA releases 223,500 cusecs water

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Indus River System Authority (IRSA) on Tuesday released 223,500 cusecs water from various rim stations with inflow of 274,200 cusecs. According to the data released by IRSA, water level in River Indus at Tarbela Dam was 1467.78 feet and was 69.78 feet higher than its dead level of 1,398 feet. Water inflow and outflow in the dam was recorded as 125,900 cusecs and 85,000 cusecs respectively. The water level in River Jhelum at Mangla Dam was 1182.40 feet, which was 134.40 feet higher than its dead level of 1,050 feet. The inflow and outflow of water was recorded 39,900 cusecs and 30,000 cusecs respectively. The release of water at Kalabagh, Taunsa, Guddu and Sukkur was recorded as 114,400, 133,600, 114,900 and 88,700 cusecs respectively. Similarly, from River Kabul, a total of 67,700 cusecs of water released at Nowshera and 10,300 cusecs released from River Chenab at Marala.

NPO to organize a workshop on "Conflict Management & Negotiation Skills" on June, 26

DNA

ISLAMABAD: The National Productivity Organization (NPO) is going to organize a workshop on "Conflict Management & Negotiation Skills" on Wednesday (June 26). The workshop aimed at to understand the appropriate techniques to manage conflict, understand the appropriate action plan and strategies to manage inter-group conflict, and handle conflict situations as they arise during negotiation events, according to an NPO document shared here on Monday. The workshop provides information about the importance of conflict & negotiation in organizational behaviour, conflict management styles, steps to conflict resolution, causes & effects of conflict, 4 R's in conflict resolution strategy, the purpose of negotiation, the negotiation process, and negotiation strategies. Conflict management and negotiation skills are critical skills for any manager to be effective in the workplace. Conflict situations are common in the work situation. So, it's important for managers to become familiar with the principles, processes, and techniques of conflict management and negotiations. The workshop is designed for everyone doing supervision at all levels, heads of departments, departmental managers, shift in-charges, HR managers, middle management, production engineers, warehouse in-charge, lab managers, quality managers, managers of all functions, executives of all functions, it added.



ISLAMABAD Chairman Senate, Syed Yousuf Raza Gilani in a meeting with Australian High Commissioner Mr. Neil Kawkins at parliament house.—DNA

Bilawal announces to provide constitutional protection to BISP

The proposed increase in BISP allocation underscores the government's focus on social welfare and poverty alleviation, reaffirming its dedication to the welfare of the most vulnerable segments of society

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan People's Party (PPP) Chairman, Bilawal Bhutto Zardari on Tuesday appreciated the government's proposal to increase the allocation for Benazir Income Support Program (BISP) by 27% and announced plans to provide constitutional cover to it. Participating in the budget debate, he said the objective behind this constitutional cover was to ensure that no future government could reverse the program, following the example of other countries that wanted to provide relief to their masses. "This program should be provided with constitutional cover so that nobody can reverse it," the PPP chairman said. The proposed increase in BISP allocation underscores the government's focus on social welfare and poverty alleviation, reaffirming its dedication to the welfare of the most vulnerable segments of society, he added. He regretted that the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) government tried to end this program, which provided support to thousands of

families in the country. The chairman noted that data gathered for the BISP was being used during floods and other climate disasters to provide relief to the people. Bilawal Bhutto Zardari said that the main issues facing common people were inflation and unemployment and urged all political parties to sit together and come up with suggestions to overcome these problems. He believed that it would have been much better if the government had consulted with allied and opposition parties before preparing the budget. "We know the difficulties of the government; if the consultation had been held, the outcome would have been much better," he added. The chairman said that the people of the country were not concerned with the problems of political parties, adding they wanted solutions to their own problems. He proposed to prepare an economic plan with consultation and consensus from all political parties for the next 20 years to ensure sustainable economic growth. "It will ensure continuity of the policies, and whoever is in the

government, the policies will be followed for the long term," he said. While endorsing the proposal of a 'Charter of Economy' by Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif, Bilawal said that political parties in the parliament should be taken into confidence on this important issue. He appreciated the government's efforts in bringing down inflation and expressed hope that the policies would be continued to provide relief to the masses. The chairman suggested the government to focus on direct taxes instead of indirect taxes and review the proposed taxes in the 2024-25 budget. Sharing the achievements of his government in the past, he mentioned that the PPP government made Pakistan a rice and wheat exporter instead of an importer. Bilawal also suggested the government abolish subsidies and provide direct relief to the farmers. He called on the government to announce establishment of IT parks in every division of the country through public-private partnerships. He believed the initiative would facilitate the provision of

high-speed broadband internet services, extending from the mountains of Gilgit to every corner of the nation. The chairman suggested that the federal government could effectively address the issue of load shedding by promoting solar energy. Advocating for increased utilization of solar power, windmills, and hydroelectric sources, he said that these efforts would not only bolster the national economy but also yield positive environmental benefits. He further advocated for reducing the import bill by utilizing coal from Thar instead of importing it. The chairman said according to constitutional provisions, regions that produce natural resources such as gas should have the primary claim on these resources. Implementing this principle, he asserted, would bring about an economic revolution in underdeveloped areas—a step he commended the Prime Minister for considering. Bilawal expressed his party's commitment to progressive taxation, noting discussions with the Finance Minister aimed at broad-

ening the tax base. He said that the PPP advocated for taxing the wealthy rather than burdening the poor. However, he expressed regret over the country's failure to succeed in this endeavor, which he identified as a primary reason for Pakistan's economic challenges. The chairman asserted that expanding the tax base necessitated a shift towards direct taxation. He called for a collaborative approach with the public to develop successful revenue-increasing policies. He suggested that all provinces should be included in the sales tax on services, praising the commendable performance of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and Balochistan in that regard, which had even surpassed the Federal Board of Revenue (FBR). Proposing that the authority to collect sales tax should be delegated to the provinces, he suggested that each province should meet its targets for the federation. "If a province collects more than its target, the excess should be returned to it," he added.

Combating illicit trafficking among govt priorities

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif calling the menace of drug abuse a global concern unconfined by territorial boundaries plaguing the society with associated crime and violence, said that the Government of Pakistan placed utmost priority on addressing the issue of drug abuse and taking effective measures to combat illicit trafficking. The prime minister, in his message on International Day Against Drug Abuse and Illicit Trafficking annually observed on June 26, said the country commemorated the Day to reiterate its firm determination to strengthen action and cooperation to collectively achieve the goal of an international society free of drug abuse. He said the occasion served as a reminder of shared responsibility in combating the illicit trade and trafficking of drugs. The prime minister said that through collaborative efforts, Pakistan reaffirmed its strong determination to curb and eradicate the distribution of narcotics and banned substances, which posed a grave threat to the well-being of the society. "As we reflect on the impact of drugs on our society, this year's theme, 'The Evidence is Clear: Invest in Prevention,' reminds us that prevention is paramount and underscores the significance of adopting evidence-based strategies focused on prevention," he remarked. The prime minister called for aligning the collective efforts with internationally recognized best practices, placing a strong emphasis on upholding human rights and guaranteeing that individuals grappling with addiction receive the essential support they need. This encompasses improving accessibility to medical and psychological services for rehabilitation, as well as integrating scientific research into policy formulation, he added. Emphasising a renewed strong determination and pledge to combat the illicit drug trade collectively, Prime Minister Shehbaz urged the NGOs, civil society organizations, religious leaders, and the media to actively support the government's efforts.—APP

MNAs call for revisions on taxes

Criticizing the lack of relief for both common people and businesses, he said that higher electricity bills were making difficult for exporters to compete globally due to rising production costs

FAISAL SHEIKH

ISLAMABAD: The lawmakers in the National Assembly on Tuesday called on the government to revisit the increase in taxes on the agriculture sector, baby milk, salaried class, and stationery items in the budget for 2024-25. Participating in the debate in the House, Chief Whip of the Sunni Ittehad Council (SIC), Malik Aamir Dogar urged the government to reduce taxes on essential items like milk and stationery. Criticizing the lack of relief for both common people and businesses, he said that higher electricity bills were making difficult for exporters to compete

globally due to rising production costs. He said that agriculture was the backbone of the economy and should be more incentivized to strengthen the national economy and support the farmers. Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) Lawmaker, Shahid Usman Ibrahim acknowledging both the positive and negative aspects of the budget, said that under the current challenging circumstances, the government presented a positive budget. He said that the PML-N government saved Pakistan from financial collapse and set it on the right path, affirming that his party would continue to protect the country's interests. Highlighting that

agriculture contributes 24 percent of the GDP and involves two-thirds of the population, he said that the government had allocated Rs 5 billion for the agricultural sector in the budget. The lawmaker also claimed that inflation dropped from 38 percent to 11.8 percent and that the stock market reached new heights, with the index hitting 78,000 points for the first time. He stressed the importance of implementing the structural reforms mentioned by the Finance Minister and reducing government expenditures. Another PML-N Member, Anwar-ul-Haq Chaudhry, appreciated the government for presenting a balanced and people-friendly

budget under the current adverse circumstances. He attributed the drop in inflation to 11.8 percent to the government's concrete measures over the past three to four months, adding that there had been a significant reduction in petroleum prices and anticipated further decreases, potentially bringing inflation to single digits. Anwar-ul-Haq expressed confidence in Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif's ability to tackle these economic challenges. He stressed the urgent need for foreign investment and expressed optimism about positive outcomes from the Prime Minister's recent visits to China and other friendly countries.

Excise deptt continues crackdown against illegal car modifications

ISLAMABAD: The Excise and Taxation (E&T) Department has continued its crackdown against illegal car modifications, targeting vehicles with tinted glasses and unauthorised number plates. On the directive of the Deputy Commissioner (DC) Islamabad, Irfan Nawaz Memon, the Excise Department has intensified its efforts to enforce the law, said the spokesman of Islamabad Capital Territory Administration here on Tuesday. During recent checks, a total of above 300 vehicles were inspected, leading to the removal of about 150 tinted windows and 100 unauthorised number plates. Additionally, 10 vehicles had their registrations suspended, while five received warnings. The crackdown, led by Assistant Commissioners alongside Assistant Excise & Taxation Officers (AETOs) and Traffic Police, focused on areas including Faizabad bus stand, Zero Point, 9th Avenue near IGP, and Marriott Hotel checkpoint. Vehicles found in violation had their registrations suspended until the illegal modifications were rectified. In response to the ongoing enforcement, the Deputy Commissioner urged citizens to adhere to regulations by removing tinted windows and using only approved number plates. This joint effort between the Excise and Taxation Department and the Islamabad Transport Authority aims to maintain road safety and uphold the law.—APP

FDE institutions' performance being improved

ISLAMABAD: Federal Academic Advisory Council (FAAC) in its 1st meeting has decided to take steps for improvement of the institutions keeping in view academics, sports activities, life skills, confidence building in students, infrastructure and trust building in public. The meeting was held here on Tuesday under the Chairmanship of Secretary, Ministry of Federal Education & Professional Training. According to the Education Ministry, the meeting was organized by Director (Academics & QA) Riffat Jabeen, and Principal IMCG F-11/3, Islamabad, Farah Hamid Khan on the directions by the chair to discuss the function and objectives of FAAC and the gaps existed in curriculum, assessment system,

syllabus, pedagogical skills, infrastructure of the institutions & possible solutions to be proposed. During the meeting, several deliberations were made by the chair, which are to be addressed and effective practical solutions would be suggested by the members of the council in its next meeting likely to be held on 1st July. As per details, mechanism /benchmarks may be devised for ranking of the FDE institutions for healthy competition. It has been decided that welcoming atmosphere may be created by holding parents-teachers meetings and their feedback may be sought for positive change. Similarly, to make the FDE institutions "Centers of Excellence" all the resources ought to be utilized effectively

for better output at par with the private institutions. However, smart tutoring system may be introduced especially for the Class 10th result awaiting students attending the summer camp so that they have better coverage and understanding of the concepts, when they attend the regular classes in their respective institutions. Furthermore, it is decided that multipurpose room must be established in every institution for blended & smart learning. The meeting also deliberated that mathematics ought to be taught as a skill not as a subject to appear for exam. While, monthly tests may be ensured in all the institutions at all levels and spot testing may also be carried out by the ex-party /aca-

demical evaluation agency for establishing the ranking of the institutions. To induce the habit of self-adaptive learning among students, Taleemabad learning material and links are to be made available for the students and teachers by 1st August, 2024, it added. Under the plan, criteria may be formulated to identify top five schools and colleges in all aspects and two bonus salaries will be rewarded to those teachers, who will contribute to such a success. Keeping in view de-generation of the society, steps would be taken for character building of the students and they would also be taught the norms of public speaking through motivational lectures by guest speakers.—APP



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From Kiev to Brussels

ON Friday, after some internal bargaining, the EU finally approved launching accession negotiations with Ukraine and Moldova. Hailed as a "historic step" by Ukraine's President Volodymyr Zelensky, this decision does bring Ukraine one step closer to the EU in procedure. However, Ukraine still has a long way to go to become a formal member of the EU, and the road ahead is not smooth. For the EU, showing political support to Ukraine by starting accession negotiations may bring new geopolitical and economic risks and introduce new variables to European integration. The process of admitting new members to the EU can be roughly summarized as follows: application, becoming an official candidate for membership, opening formal membership negotiations, post-negotiation consultations, and formal admission, with the third stage of formal membership negotiations being considered the substantive stage. Against the backdrop of the Ukraine crisis, bringing Ukraine into the orbit of the EU is a key tool used by the EU to demonstrate political support and firmly bind Ukraine to the West. Ukraine has continuously set records in the first two stages of joining the EU. From February 2022, when it applied for EU membership, it took only about four months from applying to being accepted as a candidate country, and just about two years to start accession negotiations. This special treatment of Ukraine has made other candidate countries "envious" and has also created significant contradictions within the EU. Some member states see this special treatment given to Ukraine as violating the existing accession rules and unfair to other candidate countries waiting patiently. The EU's political support for Ukraine currently outweighs considerations of maintaining accession rules and authority. However, these deep divisions will continue to be reflected in the upcoming accession negotiations and will be a constant obstacle for Ukraine in its future accession process. First, the reality in Ukraine remains the biggest obstacle to its accession process. Until the Russia-Ukraine conflict is completely resolved and Ukraine's reconstruction begins, the EU is unlikely to seriously consider accepting Ukraine as a formal member. The accession process seems more like political bait for Ukraine than a choice that can bring tangible benefits and actual advantages to European integration. Second, Ukraine is in a state of conflict where its political, economic, social and legal systems are all in wartime condition, making it difficult to measure up to the EU's routine standards. Although, formally, the EU may demand that Ukraine initiate a series of reforms to meet its requirements, it is hard to imagine Ukraine achieving full compliance. Given this backdrop, if the EU continues to offer preferential treatment to Ukraine and lowers acceptance standards, existing internal conflicts could escalate once more. More member states might reconsider or change their stance, considering the potential long-term political, economic and legal challenges of Ukraine's accession, particularly as some major EU member states still reflect on whether the initial enlargement was overly optimistic and hastily executed. Ukraine's accession process and its outcomes will not only reshape the logic and form of European integration internally but also bring new uncertainties and risks to the EU in terms of security, economics and geopolitics.

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Defining issues of 2024 US election

ECONOMISTS are struggling to reconcile their upbeat views on the US economy with the angst of average Americans. The key measures of economic performance – growth, unemployment and inflation – are almost perfect, putting the United States in an enviably strong position. But ahead of November's presidential election, voters continue to cite the economy as a top issue. The main problem: inflation. How can this be? To the exasperation of most economists, all this hand-wringing seems terribly misplaced. The Covid-19 shock to US prices from the spring of 2021 has subsided dramatically. Yes, we are still waiting for an all-clear sign that inflation is settling back down to the 2 per cent target that the US Federal Reserve judges to be consistent with price stability, but there can be no mistaking a significant reduction in inflation risks. Of course, there is an important catch. Even if inflation was to return to the promised land of price stability – although not as quickly as the optimists of the "transitory" camp initially expected – there is still a serious political problem with that result. Namely, prices are too high and are likely to remain elevated for many years to come. By using the word "prices" instead of inflation, I am not splitting hairs. Inflation depicts changes in aggregate prices, which is very different from the level of the price index. That distinction bears critically on the political debate ahead of the election. US President Joe Biden's team is focused on the inflation rate while the American public is more concerned about the price level. There is little debate over the progress on inflation. After surging to a post-pandemic high of 9.1 per cent in June 2022, the overall inflation rate as measured by the consumer price index (CPI) has since receded to a 3.3 per cent average during the past 11 months – an extraordinary reduction over such a short period. Nevertheless, inflation remains more than double the 1.5 per cent average rate during the seven years prior to Covid-19. It is also significantly above the Fed's 2 per cent target, as seen through the lens of a slightly different metric, the GDP-based personal consumption expenditures price index. This near-complete recovery from the inflation shock of 2021-23 contrasts sharply with the still-elevated price level. Therein lies the political problem for Biden: notwithstanding recent disinflation, the headline CPI in May was still fully 20 per cent above its level in January 2021, when he took office. Since January 2021, price levels remain especially elevated for energy (41 per cent), transport (40 per cent), shelter (22 per cent) and food (21 per cent), which together account for 63 per cent of the typical US consumer's basket of goods and services. They are called essential purchases for good reason: families can't live without them. A back-of-the-envelope estimate suggests that, as of May, the aggregate price level measured by headline CPI is fully 15 percentage points higher than it would have been had the CPI maintained its 1.5 per cent pre-Covid-19 trajectory. No wonder Americans are so pessimistic about the economy. The big jump in prices, especially for basic necessities, overwhelmingly outweighs the drop in the inflation rate.

Palestine and EU's diplomatic unity

Dr. Muhammad Akram Zaheer



The decisions by Ireland, Spain and Norway's involvement (though not an EU member) are significant for breaking the EU's diplomatic unity rather than for their legal impact. Most of the few EU members that recognized Palestinian statehood did so in 1988 before joining the EU and were mainly former Warsaw Pact countries. Before the recent declarations only Sweden had departed from the EU's general stance on Palestine, doing so in 2014

IRELAND, Spain and Norway recently decided to recognize Palestinian statehood. This move could potentially help revive the idea of a two-state solution which is a long-supported international goal that Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu strongly opposes. Spain's Prime Minister Pedro Sanchez clarified that this decision should not be seen as an action against Israel. Despite Netanyahu labeling it a "reward for terrorism" Sanchez views it as a step towards peace. Other European countries might follow suit adding to the over 140 nations that already recognize Palestinian statehood. However, the situation remains complex and tense. Rafah, a city in the Gaza Strip is under the heavy attack despite international calls for restraint. This includes appeals from the International Court of Justice, the United States and the European Union. This makes it challenging to see these diplomatic recognitions as anything more than symbolic gestures, highlighting internal divisions within Europe and its struggle to apply coordinated pressure on Israel. The actions by Ireland, Spain and Norway might reflect growing frustration in Europe over stalled peace efforts and the Israeli government's perceived stubbornness. Yet, without a unified European approach, these individual recognitions may not significantly change the situation. The ongoing violence in Rafah emphasizes the gap between diplomatic actions and on the ground realities. Even though more countries recognizing Palestinian statehood could be a symbolic win for Palestinians, it is uncertain if this will lead

to real progress towards peace especially with strong opposition from key players like Israel and the United States. For these recognitions to be effective, Europe needs to present a unified and strong front which is difficult given current geopolitical dynamics. The decision by Ireland, Spain and Norway was expected due to their national debates and growing public support for action supporting Palestine. Politically, this is notable because other European countries, such as Malta, Slovenia and Belgium have hesitated to take similar steps. Belgium has been vocal about Palestinian rights during its presidency of the Council of the European Union however national elections and other factors have made it cautious. National election cycles and the upcoming election of a new European Parliament have influenced how European governments handle the sensitive Middle East issue, depending on their domestic politics and the views of their ruling parties. The decisions by Ireland, Spain and Norway's involvement (though not an EU member) are significant for breaking the EU's diplomatic unity rather than for their legal impact. Most of the few EU members that recognized Palestinian statehood did so in 1988 before joining the EU and were mainly former Warsaw Pact countries. Before the recent declarations only Sweden had departed from the EU's general stance on Palestine, doing so in 2014. The current Swedish government's different stance compared to the previous one shows how volatile this issue can be. There is still no consistent, unified approach among all 27 EU member states

that goes beyond national political cycles and short-term agendas. Even though there has been some agreement within the EU since the conflict started, reaching a comprehensive EU-wide consensus is still far off. It would be too cynical to dismiss the entire EU diplomatic effort after the October 7, 2023, Hamas terrorist attack as futile. The EU High Representative Josep Borrell has worked hard to coordinate a common European position during critical moments of the conflict, sometimes with success. The Spanish and Belgian EU presidencies have tried to convince Israel that resuming peace talks is a key to defeating Hamas politically not just militarily. Despite Israel's ongoing military campaign which has killed tens of thousands, EU leaders like Germany and France have become more critical of Israeli policy. French President Emmanuel Macron even said in February that recognizing Palestinian statehood is no longer a taboo for Paris. However, the EU has not yet united around measures that would apply real pressure especially in trade and economic relations. The EU is the largest provider of aid to Palestinians and Israel's biggest trade partner. Recently, sanctions were seriously discussed for the first time at an EU foreign ministers' meeting but no agreement was reached. It's important for the EU to stay involved in resolving the conflict by engaging with Arab countries, but its effectiveness is limited by internal differences and political cycles. With pro-Israel Hungary taking over the EU Council presidency in July, achieving a common and meaningful EU position will remain a challenge.

Can AI break gender bias for an inclusive future?

Amina AG



Significant research findings indicate substantial gender bias in GAI, particularly in professions traditionally dominated by men. For example, studies have shown that men are represented in 76% of AI-generated images of professionals, while women appear in only 8% (A. M. Gorska and D. Jemielniak, 2023). This disparity not only highlights but also potentially exacerbates existing gender inequalities in society. The underrepresentation of women in AI-generated content suggests ...

IN an era marked by globalization and rapid technological advancements, the relationship between gender dynamics and technology continues to exhibit signs of deep-rooted patriarchy. This issue is particularly significant in the context of the adoption and integration of Generative Artificial Intelligence (GAI) across diverse cultural landscapes. Factors such as technology access, educational pathways, cultural norms, gender equity initiatives, and techno-activism all play crucial roles in the adoption and utilization of AI. However, generative AI currently tends to predominantly represent males, leading to a skewed perception of professional roles. For instance, when searching for images of professionals in fields like law, medicine, engineering, or scientific research, AI-generated results overwhelmingly depict men. This bias in representation highlights the nuanced intersections between gender identity and the adoption of advanced technologies like GAI, which have profound implications for both present and future generations. Addressing these issues is essential to ensure a more equitable and inclusive technological future. Significant research findings indicate substantial gender bias in GAI, particularly in professions traditionally dominated by men. For example, studies have shown that men are represented in 76% of AI-generated images of professionals, while women appear in only 8% (A. M. Gorska and D. Jemielniak, 2023). This disparity not only highlights but also potentially exacerbates existing gender inequalities in society. The underrepresentation of women in AI-generated content suggests a reinforcement of gender stereotypes that can influence societal perceptions and career aspirations. It is crucial that women are included and acknowledged for their presence and contributions to the advancement, design, and implementation of AI technologies. The gendered nature of technology, especially generative AI, becomes apparent when examining recent studies, which show that 99% of AI-generated images of professionals depict men. This alarming underrepresentation of women suggests that generative AI could perpetuate gender biases and male dominance in professional fields. Moreover, certain systems affect the physical and mental well-being of women and non-binary individuals. Gender-biased systems used in healthcare, welfare, and the automotive industry, in particular, pose significant risks. Approximately

18.8% of gender-biased systems compromise physical safety, while 3.42% create health hazards. These statistics underscore the urgent need to address gender biases within AI to protect the well-being of all users. The adoption of GAI will likely impact gender perceptions in future generations, who will rely on AI for educational and other purposes. This reliance on AI-generated content may reinforce male dominance and potentially hinder women's empowerment. Consequently, this issue necessitates a strategic and multifaceted approach to address and mitigate these biases. Technologists, policymakers, educators, and all stakeholders must collaborate to build a platform for women's empowerment and ensure that AI technologies reflect diverse and balanced representations. In the realm of socio-economic development, especially within the context of Pakistan, there exists a pressing demand for inclusive growth, with a particular emphasis on the empowerment of women. Gendered AI could exacerbate gender inequality, making inclusive progress in technology essential for the equitable development of society. Highlighting the need for a more intersectional and inclusive approach in AI advancement, especially in AI-generated images, is imperative. This approach must consider how gender intersects with other dimensions of power and oppression, such as race, class, and ability. Ensuring that the experiences of marginalized groups, including women of color, transgender individuals, and people with disabilities, are adequately addressed within feminist techno science studies is vital. An inclusive approach will help achieve the goals of women's empowerment, societal justice, economic growth, and creating space for everyone. Empowering and encouraging more women and all genders to take visible roles in all realms of life will be instrumental in driving forward societal and technological progress. This comprehensive strategy involves revising the algorithms and datasets used in AI training and fostering a culture that values and promotes gender diversity in the tech industry. To address these disparities, we must take a holistic approach that includes enhancing technology access for all genders, promoting inclusive educational pathways, challenging cultural norms that reinforce gender biases, and strengthening gender equity initiatives. It is also essential to support techno-activism efforts that advocate for fair representation in AI.

Generative AI has the potential to shape societal perceptions significantly. Therefore, its development and implementation must prioritize inclusivity. Policymakers, technologists, educators, and activists must collaborate to create frameworks that ensure AI technologies reflect diverse and balanced representations. This involves not only revising the algorithms and datasets used in AI training but also fostering a culture that values and promotes gender diversity in the tech industry. Moreover, addressing the gender biases inherent in GAI is critical for achieving broader goals of gender equality and empowerment. If left unchecked then these biases can perpetuate and even exacerbate existing inequalities, hindering progress toward a more just and equitable society. Therefore, it is imperative to incorporate intersectional approaches that consider how gender intersects with other dimensions of power and oppression. By actively working to eliminate gender bias in GAI and other technologies, we can pave the way for a future where technology serves as a tool for empowerment rather than a mechanism of exclusion. This will not only benefit women but also enrich the technological landscape by bringing diverse perspectives and ideas to the forefront. Ultimately, achieving gender parity in technology, especially in emerging fields like GAI, requires concerted efforts from all sectors of society. By fostering an environment that encourages and supports the participation of all genders, we can ensure that the advancements in AI and other technologies are truly reflective of our diverse world and contribute to a more inclusive and equitable future for everyone. This inclusive vision of technological development holds the promise of a future where all individuals, regardless of gender, have the opportunity to contribute to and benefit from the digital transformation that is shaping our world. By addressing these issues comprehensively, we can create a more equitable and just society, where everyone has the opportunity to thrive and succeed in the technological age. Prioritizing gender equity and justice as primary goals for AI systems can create a downstream impact on design and management decisions, fostering a technological landscape that benefits all.

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Briefs

Death toll in China floods rises to 60

ANKARA: Death toll from heavy rains and floods in China has climbed at least 60, state media reported on Tuesday. Several parts in the country's south have been hit by heavy rain since last week, triggering floods and landslides. Another five people were declared dead in Hunan province after a body was found by the rescuers. The National Meteorological Center issued a red alert, the highest level, for rainstorms in eight provinces and municipalities including Anhui and Hunan provinces for the next three days. Around 47 people were killed in the southern Guangdong province last week, while at least eight people went missing after a landslide hit Douxi village in the Xinhuang Dong autonomous county of Huaihu avillage in Hunan. Authorities on Saturday said they found six people dead who went missing in landslides in the south-eastern province of Fujian. Heavy rains have struck southern China since the annual flooding season got an early start, destroying thousands of low-lying houses and damaging roads and crops.—APP

Bird flu spreads to tenth Australian poultry farm

CANBERRA: A highly pathogenic strain of avian influenza has spread to an eighth poultry farm near Melbourne, the government of Australia's Victoria state said on Tuesday, taking the total number of infected facilities in the country to 10. Australia is dealing with three parallel outbreaks of bird flu, two near Melbourne and one near Sydney. Each involves a different strain of the virus, none of which is the H5N1 type that has spread through bird and mammal populations and even to humans around the world. Victorian authorities said the new infection was within a quarantine zone already set up around affected farms and was therefore not unexpected. The flu has mostly hit egg farms. Around 1.5 million birds have been or will be killed to control the spread of the virus. There is so far no shortage of eggs in stores. Bird flu spreads to farmed animals from wild birds. The 2024 infections are the tenth outbreak in Australia since 1976. Each was contained and eradicated, according to the government.—APP

Greece tries to rein in beach chaos

PEFKOCHORI: The waves of the Aegean Sea lap gently at the tables and chairs of two beach restaurants on Greece's Halkidiki peninsula. It is an idyllic scene, but one that is totally illegal. Like many others in Greece, the two establishments on Pefkochori beach do not have a licence to set up shop close to the water. But after a wave of protests last summer by locals about bars and restaurants illegally covering beaches with sunbeds and tables, the Greek state is taking action. It is cracking down on rogue tourist practices with surveillance drones, satellite imagery and a special app on which people can complain. Pensioner Evgenia Rapti, who has a summer home near Pefkochori beach, is one of many outraged by the inexorable growth of Greece's tourism industry. The whole beach has been taken over with tables, chairs and deck chairs, the 64-year-old pensioner told AFP in the northern resort. "When we bought our house 40 years ago, it was completely different," she recalled wistfully. "The beach was empty and it was nice to lie there." Greece's travel sector has rebounded with a vengeance from the Covid pandemic — but the downside is overtourism. Last year, nearly 33 million people visited Greece, five million more than in 2022. Renting two mattresses and a parasol for a day on the beach in Greece usually costs between 20 and 40 euros (\$21-43). —Agencies

Macron under fire over France 'Civil War' warning

Parties on far right and left alike are exploiting insecurity issues in France, according to president

NEWS DESK

PARIS: French President Emmanuel Macron came under strong criticism on Tuesday for warning a far-right or hard-left win in snap polls could spark a "civil war", with his opponents urging him not to scare the public. France is preparing to vote on Sunday in the country's most polarising ballot in decades. Macron called the parliamentary polls after the far-right National Rally scored a runaway victory in European Parliament elections earlier this month. The

election is shaping up as a showdown between the far-right RN and the left-wing New Popular Front, which is dominated by the hard-left France Unbowed. Macron warned on Monday that the programmes of the two "extremes" could spark a "civil war", accusing both the RN and France Unbowed of sowing tensions and dividing people. Leaders of both left and right condemned his remarks. Eric Ciotti, the leader of the conservative Republicans (LR), who sparked outrage among allies by personally agreeing an election pact with the RN, accused the French



president of being irresponsible. "This is a strategy of fear," he said, speaking on BFMTV-RMC.

RN heavyweight Marine Le Pen said Macron's argument was "weak" and showed "he thinks he's lost this election". Patrick Kanner, head of the Socialists in the Senate, said Macron's remarks showed he was fighting for his political survival. "We are faced with someone who no longer controls anything," he said. Jean-Luc Melançon, the head of France Unbowed, also criticised Macron, saying on Monday night: "He's always there to set things on fire." The three main camps — left, far-right and centre — are set for a key TV debate on Tues-

day evening. It will pit Prime Minister Gabriel Attal of Macron's centrist Renaissance party against far-right RN party leader Bardella and Manuel Bompard of the left-wing New Popular Front. Some polls have suggested the RN could win 35-36 percent in the first-round vote on Sunday, ahead of the left-wing alliance on 27-29.5 percent and Macron's centrists coming third on 19.5-22 percent. A second round of voting will follow on July 7 in constituencies where no candidate takes more than 50 percent in the first round.

UNRWA funding secured until August : Lazzarini

UN agency for Palestinian refugees has still faces shortfall of about \$100-140M to reach end of year, says Lazzarini

WEB DESK

GENEVA: The head of the UN agency for Palestinian refugees (UNRWA) on Tuesday underlined the funding gap, saying that the agency has a budget until the end of August. Philippe Lazzarini told a press conference in Geneva that he is referring to the regular budget, which is the "backbone" of the organization that covers 30,000 staff. "We have the cash until the end of August, and basically, we still have a shortfall of about \$100-140 million to reach the end of the year," Lazzarini said. Regarding the funding of emergency appeals, he said that the appeal on the occu-

pled Palestinian territory is funded by 15-18%, while the appeal on Syria is about 15% funded. "These two appeals are significantly underfunded, which prevents us, for example, from doing cash distribution or food distribution in Syria and Lebanon and in Gaza," he said. About the recent appeal of \$1.2 billion, he said that it is 15% funded and added: "We are far from the needs we were expecting to cover." The UNRWA chief eyed the next donors' event in New York on July 12 as a chance to receive new contributions. The agency is proportionally less funded in its regular budget than this time last year, he noted. Meanwhile, Pro-Palestinian activists on Tuesday

staged a protest at the Port of Genoa, northern Italy in protest of arms shipments to Israel. Protesters, including civil society groups and dockers union, blockaded the port early Tuesday in solidarity with Palestinians in the Gaza Strip. Over 500 protesters prevented the passage of trucks carrying containers to be loaded on ships, the Italian state news agency ANSA reported. The crowd criticized the arms supply to Israel and opined that the Port of Genoa is a transit point for weapons, used in the "massacre" of the Palestinians. A group, named "giovani-palestinesi" (Young Palestinians) wrote on Instagram that containers arriving at

the Port were blocked at 6 a.m. local time (0400GMT) Tuesday morning. It added: "We know very well that the war machine starts from the logistics that send weapons, ammunition and technology that caused the genocide of our people." Israel has killed more than 37,600 Palestinians since the Oct. 7, 2023 cross-border incursion by Hamas that claimed 1,200 lives. The onslaught has reduced the territory to rubble and led to conditions of famine. Israel, flouting a UN Security Council resolution demanding an immediate ceasefire, has faced international condemnation amid its continued brutal offensive on Gaza since Oct. 7 attack last year by Hamas.

Indonesia lauds digital solutions in Hajj management

JAKARTA: Indonesia's Religious Affairs Minister Yaqut Cholil Qoumas has praised Saudi Arabia for its new Hajj-management digital solutions, as the country's pilgrims begin to return home after completing the spiritual journey. A total of 241,000 Indonesian pilgrims were among nearly 2 million Muslims who traveled to Makkah to perform the pilgrimage that is one of the five pillars of Islam. Pilgrims from the world's biggest Muslim-majority nation reached the Kingdom on special flights that began one month ahead of the main rituals. Some returned home over the weekend, with flights scheduled until next month. "Thank you to King Salman and Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman for their strong leadership as the highest officials in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia that made all Hajj-related journeys go smoothly," Qoumas said in a statement issued on Monday. "The Indonesian government would also like to express our highest appreciation for the innovations launched by the Hajj and Umrah Ministry under Minister Tawfiq Al-Rabiah, such as the Smart Card or Nusuk Card." The Nusuk card, launched earlier this year, is a form of identity that allows pilgrims entry to the holy sites in Saudi Arabia. This year, about 128,000 Indonesian pilgrims traveled under the Makkah Route initiative after Saudi Arabia expanded the facility to three airports across the country: Jakarta, Surabaya and Solo. Launched in 2019, Makkah Route is a pre-travel program created to help pilgrims meet all visa, customs and health requirements at their airports of origin. This saves them long hours of waiting before and upon arrival in Saudi Arabia.—APP

WHO says mpox cases on rise in Africa

GENEVA : The World Health Organization (WHO) on Tuesday said mpox cases are on the rise in Africa, urging for intensified investigations to identify root causes. "Today, mpox remains a public health threat as the situation continues to evolve," Rosamund Lewis, WHO technical lead for the infectious disease, told a UN press briefing in Geneva. Lewis said over 3,100 laboratory-confirmed cases have been reported globally since the start of 2024, while in May alone about 600 confirmed cases were reported to the WHO from 26 countries. "In addition, cases are on the rise in Africa," she warned, adding that Africa is now the leading region for confirmed cases, replacing the Americas. Since April, South Africa has reported 13 confirmed cases of mpox due to clade Ib virus — a mpox variant — and two deaths, she said. At the same time, she said, the Democratic Republic of the Congo continues to face a major outbreak of mpox due to clade I of the virus, with 9,291 clinically compatible cases and 419 deaths amongst these reported in 2024 alone, with a high case fatality ratio of almost 5%. According to the technical lead, children are particularly affected in this outbreak with "even higher death rates.—APP

China lunar probe to return to Earth

BEIJING: A Chinese probe carrying samples from the far side of the Moon will return to Earth on Tuesday, capping a technically complex 53-day mission heralded as a world first. Beijing's space agency said the Chang'e-6 spacecraft "will come back to Earth carrying precious 'gifts' on June 25", without giving an estimated arrival time. Experts say it will likely touch down on a barren prairie in the northern Inner Mongolia region at around midday (0400 GMT). The probe comes bearing soil and rocks from the side of the Moon that faces away from Earth, a poorly understood region that scientists say holds great research promise because its rugged features are less smoothed over by ancient lava flows than the near side. That means the materials harvested there may help us to better understand how the Moon formed and how it has evolved over time. Chang'e-6 blasted off from a space centre on the island province of Hainan on May 3 and descended into the Moon's immense South Pole-Aitken Basin almost exactly a month later. It used a drill and robotic arm to scoop up samples, snapped some shots of the pockmarked surface and planted a Chinese flag made from basalt in the grey soil. On June 4, the probe made the first ever successful launch from the far side in what Chinese state news agency Xinhua called "an unprecedented feat in human lunar exploration history.—APP

Tokyo stocks open higher

TOKYO : Tokyo shares opened higher on Tuesday after Wall Street finished mixed, with the Dow rising and Nasdaq dragged down as Nvidia fell by more than The benchmark Nikkei 225 index was up 0.08 percent, or 29.74 points, at 38,834.39 in early trade, while the broader Topix index added 0.56 percent, or 15.22 points, to 2,755.41. The dollar fetched 159.64 yen, against 159.63 yen in New York on Monday. Overnight, the Dow Jones Industrial Average finished up 0.7 percent at 39,411.21. The Dow finished higher after "economically sensitive stocks were bought", Daiwa Securities said. The rise in the Dow "supported investor sentiment and led to buying in the Tokyo market," the Nikkei business newspaper said. But investors in Tokyo were also "divided", Daiwa Securities said. On Wall Street, tech-heavy Nasdaq tumbled after Al star Nvidia fell 6.7 percent in the stock's third straight down day. Nvidia has risen spectacularly over the last year to attain a market capitalization above \$3 trillion.—APP

NATO must address Turkey's anti-terrorism efforts :Fidan

ANKARA : NATO needs to be sensitive to Türkiye's concerns about the fight against terrorism, Turkish Foreign Minister Hakan Fidan said Monday. "What is important for us is, firstly, that the Alliance develops sensitivity in the fight against terrorism in a way that will understand and include Türkiye's concerns," Fidan told the Haberturk news channel. His remarks came ahead of a NATO summit in Washington, D.C. on July 9-11. Stressing that NATO member countries should not impose restrictions on each other's defense industry products, Fidan said: "Our expectations on this issue continue like this. There are still some problem areas. They need to be resolved." Regarding the "trust problem" between Türkiye and NATO allies over the PKK/YPG terrorist organization, he said: "The countries we have problems with regarding the YPG are America, England and a little bit with France...In order to maintain its (YPG) presence there, it is present in all operations where America is involved...We express this problem at every level." Underlining that this is against the spirit of the Alliance, Fidan said that Türkiye is continuing the highest level of diplomacy possible and that "it can no longer live with such a reality." "We carry more sensitivity in our fight against the PKK than you (the US and the UK) do in your fight against terrorism, just on the other side of our border. It is out of the question for us to engage in any negotiations here," he said, adding Türkiye will resolutely continue its fight against terrorism. In its nearly 40-year terror campaign against Türkiye, the PKK-listed as a terrorist organization by Türkiye, the US and the European Union has been responsible for the deaths of over 40,000 people, including women, children and infants.—DNA



ISLAMABAD : Pakistan and Asian Development Bank have signed a US\$ 250 million loan to strengthen Public-Private Partnerships. This initiative aims to enhance infrastructure development and foster sustainable economic growth.—DNA

IDEAS Pakistan promotes defence collaboration and peace: Faisal

High Commissioner, Dr. Mohammad Faisal also said that IDEAS would pave way for fostering and promoting Pakistan's strategic relations with UK

LONDON : Pakistan's High Commissioner to the UK, Dr. Mohammad Faisal has said that International Defence Exhibition & Seminar (IDEAS), Pakistan is a mega event that has emerged as the international rendezvous of top entrepreneurs to promote defence collaboration, joint ventures, global peace & prosperity. He was speaking at a webinar titled "Doing Defence & Security Business with Pakistan in perspective of establishing UK Pavilion at IDEAS-2024" organized by Defence Wing of the Pakistan High Commission, London and ADS Group, Defence & Security Exports at the Department for Business and Trade, UK. The webinar was attended by senior officials from Pakistan High Commission, London; Defence Export Promotion Organization (DEPO), Government of Pakistan; Department for Business and Trade of UK; British High Commission, Islamabad; IDEAS management and entrepreneurs. The High Commissioner said that IDEAS, scheduled to take place in November, 2024 at Karachi, is indeed a testimony to our pledge to encourage technological growth. He expressed the hope that IDEAS would pave way for fostering and promoting Pakistan's strategic relations with UK. Major General Asad Nawaz Khan, Director General of Defence Export

Promotion Organization (DEPO), Government of Pakistan stated that Pakistan has successfully established strategic partnerships with various countries. He added that IDEAS truly demonstrated a successful public-private partnership model. Its participation and international attendance was indeed a manifestation of our deeply embedded and mutually beneficial relations with international fraternity. Commodore Zeeshan Nabi Shiekh, Defence & Naval Adviser and Shafiq Ahmed Shehzad Minister (Trade) of Pakistan High Commission, London provided an overview of Pakistan - UK trade potential and

opportunities for future collaboration in defence sector. During the webinar, discussions were held on promoting awareness of the potential commercial opportunities for UK firms to do business in Pakistan. It was assured that Pakistan High Commission, London would provide full facilitation to entrepreneurs & companies from UK intending to participate in IDEAS 2024. Since its inception in 2000, IDEAS Pakistan has grown exponentially over the years, with 532 exhibitors, 350 delegates from 57 countries participating in the 2022 exhibition.—APP



Briefs

ICC issues arrest warrants for Russian officials

THE HAGUE: The International Criminal Court (ICC) has issued an arrest warrant for Russia's former defence minister, Sergei Shoigu, and the chief of general staff, Valery Gerasimov. The ICC judges said the two men were suspected of committing war crimes and crimes against humanity during the war in Ukraine. The court said there were grounds to believe that Mr Shoigu and Mr Gerasimov bore individual criminal responsibility for attacks on civilian targets between October 2022 and March 2023. They're accused of ordering the assaults or failing to control the forces under their command. Ukraine's President Volodymyr Zelensky said the ICC's decision was "a clear indication that justice for Russian crimes against Ukrainians is inevitable." "Every criminal involved in the planning and execution of these strikes must know that justice will be served. And we do hope to see them behind bars." - Agencies

Pak calls for strengthening of sub-regional dialogue

TEHRAN: Additional Foreign Secretary (Asia & Pacific) Ambassador Imran Ahmed Siddiqui represented Pakistan at the 19th Meeting of the Ministers of Foreign Affairs of the Member States of ACD, held in Tehran on 24 June 2024. He underlined the importance of promoting regional connectivity by leveraging complementarities, tapping the potential of technological zones, capacity building of human resource, enhancing access to financing, and providing a conducive environment for high-quality technology investments. Ambassador Siddiqui also called for strengthening of sub-regional dialogue and cooperation mechanisms in Asia to address the issues of foreign occupation and persecution in the Middle East and South Asia.

Karachi witnesses surge in heatstroke patients

KARACHI: The number of heatstroke patients has witnessed a steep rise in a few days as Karachi remained under the grip of extremely hot and humid weather with the mercury touching 42°C while "feels-like" exceeding 50°C a day earlier in the port city. During the last two days, 150 heatstroke patients have been brought to Karachi's Civil Hospital, including 40 citizens affected by intense heat remained admitted to the medical facility since Tuesday morning.

Azm I Istehkam: govt needs to explain further

PESHAWAR - Unlike of past, this time people from different socio-political circles from all over Khyber Pakhtunkhwa irrespective of their political identities and ideologies are opposing proposed military operation Azm I-Istehkam against militants, mostly associated with banned TTP. Besides PTI considered biggest opposition in Upper and Lower Houses and in govern at Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, other political parties like Jamaat-ul Ulema Islam f, Awami National Party and Jamaat-Islami are on forefront of opposition to Azm-I-Istehkam. Similarly tribesmen from almost tribal districts badly affected by terror in last two decades are also opposing military operation. Since 9/11, when Pakistan joined and agreed for becoming front line in War on Terror, armed forces carried out over three dozens of military operations against local, Afghan and foreign militants slipped into Pakistan from Afghanistan. On completion of each and every operation, government especially high ups of armed forces made tall claims of eradicating terrorists dens, flushing away militants from Pakistan and destabilising terrorist net work. But the ground reality remain different. Strength and influence of militants further enhanced on completion and winding off of each and every military operation. Similarly, people especially tribesmen have made valuable contribution in connection with these military operation by abandoning homes

and rendering precious human lives by extending support to security forces in pointing out hideouts and sanctuaries of militants. But in return they got nothing. Sill thousands of families from almost tribal and troubled districts of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa are waiting for repatriation to native villages and towns. Though the issues of forced disappearance, missing persons and others was commenced in the country with invasion of former USSR troops in Afghanistan in end of 1979 but it was further aggravated with erupting of civil conflicts in Afghanistan after evacuation of Soviet troops in end of 90's. But now it touching its peak as the prolonged conflicts taking shift after shifts due to one and another reason. Analyst Dr. Syed Akhtar Ali Shah believes, "government failure in honoring commitments with affected people regarding their rehabilitation and compensation is the major cause of opposition." Mushtaq Yousafzai recalled, "tribesmen of North Waziristan were badly affected in Zarb I Azab, considered most expensive military operation against militants, therefore, they are reluctant to abandon homes for another period." Still over 15 thousand families of North Waziristan, over one thousand of Tirrah Khyber and hundreds of others from Bajaur are waiting for repatriation to their homes and hamlets. Akhtar Ali Shah said government needs to take socio-political circles into confidence regarding proposed Azm I Istehkam. JULI F chief has put forward a number of questions regarding

purposes of Azm I Istehkam. Advisor to Chief Minister Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Barrister SAif said, "Prime Minister needs to further explain procedure, time frame and other matters pertained to Azm I Istehkam." The nationalist ANP AimalWali Khan said, "we are opposing another military action and government must take all stake holders into confidence." So far traditional Jirga held in Upper and Lower Dir out rightly opposed Azm I Istehkam whereas JUI(F) and PTI also convened Jirga's to discuss and adopt future line of action regarding proposed military operation Azm I Istehkam. Ironic to mention that Chief Minister Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Sardar Ali Amin Khan Gandhapur who was present in the high-level meeting which decided launching of another military operation Azme I Estehkam Pakistan against militants is now "denying", saying "nothing was discussed, debated or come up in the hours long meeting regarding another military operation, to be mostly focused on the soil of Pushtoons, along with Pak Afghan border. No doubt to mention that in the light of government organs especially security forces "indifferent" attitude, common people is no more willing to trust the security forces actions and reactions against alleged militants. MaulanaFazal Ur Rahman has made it clear that security forces operations are nothing else an eyewitness whereas the ANP President AimalWali Khan believes that new military action is aimed at getting occupation of mineral resources in different areas of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.

De-escalation eludes as Israel, Hezbollah gird for all-out war

Recent footage released by Hezbollah, showing aerial views of Israeli military installations captured by a Hudhud (hoopoe) drone, underscores the group's formidable capabilities

NEWS DESK

BEIRUT: Efforts by American diplomats to broker a ceasefire between Israel and Hezbollah in southern Lebanon have hit a dead end, leaving the region perched on the edge of a full-blown war. Since the eruption of hostilities on Oct. 8 last year, both sides have intensified their defense preparations, with leaks and official statements signaling that the Israeli military has authorized operational plans for strikes within Lebanese territory. Meanwhile, reports carried by Hezbollah-aligned media outlets indicate that the powerful Shiite group has prepared extensively for a potential Israeli offensive, planning to counter various military scenarios and thwart attacks on Lebanese soil. Lebanon, already weighed down by deep political divisions and a crumbling economy, now faces the specter of a devastating conflict that could tear apart its fragile unity. As diplomatic solutions falter, the prospect of war looms larger, raising grave concerns among Lebanese citizens and the international community alike. Recent footage released by Hezbollah, showing aerial views of Israeli military installations captured by a Hudhud (hoopoe) drone, underscores the group's formidable capabilities. However, images of Gaza, devastated by repeated Hamas-Israeli conflicts, serve as a stark warning of the potential human and economic toll of renewed warfare. Since Oct. 8, the Lebanon-Israel border has witnessed almost daily exchanges of fire between Hezbollah and allied Palestinian mil-

Hamas slams Joe Biden admin for Gaza genocide

Israeli air strike kills 10 family members of Hamas chief Haniyeh in Gaza

FOREIGN DESK

DOHA: Hamas says US President Joe Biden's administration is responsible for the genocidal campaign in the Gaza Strip. The Palestinian resistance movement said Washington continues to lend political and military support to Israel to carry out further destruction and carnage in the besieged territory. In a statement released on Tuesday, the Gaza-based resistance movement also lamented the death of family members of Ismail Haniyeh, the head of the Hamas political bureau, including his sister, in an Israeli airstrike on their home in western Gaza City. "We in the Hamas movement hold the Biden administration accountable for the unrelenting genocide war against our Palestinian brethren and sisters in the Gaza Strip,

as it continues to offer the Zionist regime and its criminal army unconditional political and military support to press ahead with its destruction and genocide in the Strip," the statement read. "In light of the continuation and escalation of these horrific massacres, we call on Arab and Muslim nations as well as freedom-loving people of the world to step up their actions, and push for an end to the aggression." Hamas urged the international community and the United Nations to assume responsibility for the crimes of Israel in Gaza, protect innocent civilians, and hold the leaders of the terrorist Zionist regime accountable for their crimes. One of the sisters of Haniyeh was killed in Gaza City's Shati refugee camp on Tuesday morning. Palestinian sources say an airstrike on a building belonging to Haniyeh's extended family claimed the lives of 13 people. Earlier in April, Israel had targeted and killed three of Haniyeh's sons, along with four grandchildren - three girls and a boy.

tant groups and Israel's military that have left more than 400 people dead in Lebanon. Most of the fatalities were fighters and commanders, but they also included more than 80 civilians and non-combatants. On the Is-

raeli side, 16 soldiers and 11 civilians have been killed over the past eight months. Against this tense backdrop, Hezbollah's actions affect not only Lebanon but also regional stability, hence its ability to avert

or deal with a direct military confrontation with Israel will be crucial in the days ahead. Last week Hezbollah leader Hassan Nasrallah warned Cyprus against allowing Israel's military to use its airports on the island to bomb Lebanon should a full-blown war break out. This created a diplomatic crisis of sorts as Cyprus and Lebanon have had close and historic relations for decades, with the island hosting thousands of Lebanese during Lebanon's 1975-90 civil war. Adding to the sense of impending doom are growing signs of international alarm. Several embassies and diplomatic missions in Lebanon have issued advisories urging their citizens to leave immediately, citing escalating tensions and the risk of broader conflict. Kuwait's recent decision to advise against travel to Lebanon reflects a wider trend of concern among foreign governments. Lebanon's internal turmoil accentuates its vulnerability. The country has been without a president for nearly two years, relying on a caretaker government unable to make critical decisions amid rampant corruption and economic collapse. More than half of Lebanon's population now depends on aid for survival, while the remainder struggles to secure basic necessities such as education, fuel and electricity. The gravity of Lebanon's predicament was underscored by recent developments at Beirut's Rafik Hariri International Airport. Reports in the UK's Telegraph newspaper suggested that Hezbollah was using the airport to smuggle large quantities of Iranian weaponry, including short-range missiles - a claim that could potentially make the facility a target for Israeli airstrikes.

China space probe returns with Moon rocks

BEIJING: China's lunar probe has returned to Earth with the first ever samples from the Moon's unexplored far side. The Chang'e-6 landed in the Inner Mongolia desert on Tuesday, after a nearly two-month long mission which was fraught with risks. Scientists are eagerly awaiting the Chang'e-6 as the samples could answer key questions about how planets are formed. China is the only country to have landed on the far side of the Moon, having done so before in 2019. The far side - which faces away from Earth - is technically challenging to reach due to its distance, and its difficult terrain of giant craters and few flat surfaces. Scientists are interested in this less-explored side as it is hoped it may contain traces of water, oxygen, and hydrogen. The Chang'e-6 mission is a source of pride for a nation which has stepped up its missions to the Moon - drawing attention from its rival, the US. State media showed officials planting the Chinese flag with a flourish just after the Chang'e-6 capsule landed in the desert of Inner Mongolia. - Agencies

AJK Govt announces budget for 2024-25

MIRPUR: The Azad Jammu & Kashmir (AJK) Government on Tuesday announced its budget of over Rs 220 billion for the financial year 2024-25, including a development outlay of Rs 44 billion. AJK Finance Minister Abdul Majid Khan presented the budget in the session of AJK Legislative Assembly, chaired by Speaker Chaudhary Latif Akbar. Highlighting the key features of the budget, Minister Abdul Majid Khan said the total estimated income stood at Rs 201.17 billion, with significant contributions expected from federal grants and inland revenue. The development expenditure for the fiscal year 2024-25 was projected at Rs 44 billion, he added. The minister detailed that total receipts were estimated at Rs 201.17 billion, with Rs. 105 billion anticipated from the Federal Government under the Federal Variable Grant, Rs 75 billion from inland revenue, Rs 15 billion from electricity, and Rs 0.45 billion from the Forest Department. -APP



ISLAMABAD: Canadian High Commissioner Scanlon Leslie meets Syed Mohsin Raza Naqvi, Federal Minister for Interior & Anti-Narcotics. - DNA

IHC justice rules phone tapping without law 'illegal'

The judge remarked, "If you have made a law, everyone should know. People should know how their privacy is being invaded. Courts here do not know what you are doing. This is not about national security

KHAYAM ABBASI

ISLAMABAD: The Islamabad High Court observed during the hearing of the Audio Leaks case on Tuesday that there is no law regarding phone tapping in the country and what is currently taking place is illegal. The observation came as Justice Babar Sattar of the IHC resumed hearing on petitions challenging the alleged audio leaks involving former prime minister Imran Khan's spouse Bushra Bibi, and Najam Saqib, the son of retired chief justice of Pakistan Saqib Nisar. During the proceedings, Additional Attorney General Munawar Iqbal Duggal informed the court that the Interior Ministry had issued a certain SOP [standard operating procedure] mandating the Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI) and Intelligence Bureau (IB) to directly collect data from service providers. He added that other law enforcement agencies could take data

from the ISI and IB if required. Justice Sattar noticed that the SOP in question had been issued by a section officer and there was no mention of the relevant authority. He questioned how the Interior Ministry came to have this authority and under which law this SOP was issued. He further questioned under what law the government decided it could access the data. The judge then questioned the lawyer about phone tapping, adding that the legal standing of the document provided was yet to be examined. In his response, the state lawyer, while referring to the missing persons' case, stated that the Sindh High Court had issued orders for providing data to secret agencies. At this, the judge inquired whether the Sindh High Court's direction was limited to that case or was permanent. When the judge asked the additional attorney general if he read the policy made [in this regard] in 2013 and whether data was collected as per the mechanism of this policy, the additional attorney general replied in the affirmative.

Gilani for enhancing cooperation between Pakistan, Australia

ADIL SHAHEEN

ISLAMABAD: Chairman Senate Syed Yousaf Raza Gilani on Tuesday stressed for increased exchange of parliamentary delegation to enhance the inter-parliamentary cooperation between Pakistan and Australia. During meeting with High Commissioner of Australia to Pakistan, Neil Hakins who called him here, Gilani said that Pakistan accorded high value to its relations with Australia and wanted to further strengthen the ties between the two countries. He also highlighted Pakistan's significant sacrifices in the war against terror and its humanitarian efforts, including the support extended to hundred thousands of Afghan refugees. Yousaf Raza also emphasized Pakistan's proactive role in combating climate change, underscoring the country's ongoing initiatives and achievements in this critical area. The High Commissioner commended Pakistan for its unwavering commitment and efforts in the fight against terrorism. He particularly praised Pakistan's humanitarian assistance to Afghan refugees and acknowledged the country's constructive contributions to global climate initiatives. Furthermore, the envoy conveyed that they had accommodated 3,500 Afghan Refugees from Pakistan in Australia as gesture of solidarity and support.

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