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Venezuela's Maduro says, talks to resume with United States

Detailed News On Page-07

Maryum's victory challenged

Detailed News On Page-08

Rizwan favours surgery in cricket team

Detailed News On Page-06



PM meets Tajik President

Shehbaz calls for enhancing Pak-Tajik trade ties

He stressed Pakistan, Afghanistan and Tajikistan can promote trade by road and mentioned the fields of agriculture, health, education and investment where ties will be cemented

NEWS DESK

DUSHANBE: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif met with Tajik President Emomali Rahmon during his two-day visit to Tajikistan. Upon his arrival, Prime Minister Sharif was warmly welcomed by President Rahmon, emphasizing the long-standing brotherly relations between Pakistan and Tajikistan. During their meeting, discussions focused on enhancing mutual cooperation in various fields, with Prime Minister Sharif highlighting Pakistan's unlimited potential for international investment in sectors such as energy, minerals, industry, and agriculture. He invited the Tajik President to invest in Pakistan and to expand regional and social ties between the two nations. The visit began with a ceremony where Prime Minister Sharif laid a wreath at the monument of Ismail Somoni, a historic figure of Central Asia and a national hero of Tajikistan. Somoni is celebrated for his rule in the 9th and 10th centuries, which brought significant development to the region. Upon arrival at Dushanbe airport, Prime Minister Sharif was received by Tajik Prime Minister Kokhir Rasulzoda, Energy Minister Dalerjuma, Deputy Foreign Minister Farrukh Sharifzoda, Tajik Ambassador in Islamabad Yousuf Sharifzoda, Pakistan Ambassador in Dushanbe Saeed Sarwar, and senior diplomatic officers. Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif has said Pak-Tajik ties will take new heights. Addressing a joint press conference with the Tajikistan president, he said bilateral relations will be strengthened with the signing of memorandums of

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Pakistan reminds world of duty to prevent genocide

DNA

NEW YORK: Asserting that the primary responsibility to defend vulnerable populations rests with the State itself, Pakistan has told the UN General Assembly that the concept of 'responsibility to protect', or R2P, which was used to justify some interventions, had failed to prevent genocide where it actually happened—like in the ongoing Israeli war in Gaza. Speaking in a 193-member Assembly's debate on the responsibility to protect and the prevention of genocide, war crimes, ethnic cleansing and crimes against humanity, Ambassador Munir Akram also warned that 900,000 Indian troops deployed in Indian occupied Kashmir were engaged in brutal atrocities to suppress the Kashmiris quest for freedom and self-determination. (The controversial concept of R2P rests upon

Continued on Page 06



TAJIKISTAN: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif meets the President of Tajikistan H.E. Emomali Rahmon in Qasr-e-Millat, Dushanbe, Tajikistan. — DNA

Justice Aalia becomes first woman CJ of LHC

Justice Shafi Siddiqui nominated as new Chief Justice of Sindh High Court



SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

ISLAMABAD: Justice Aalia Neelum has been nominated as the chief justice (CJ) of the Lahore High Court (LHC) in a first event of a woman judge being named for the post, sources said on Tuesday. The jurist was unanimously nominated by the Judicial Commission of Pakistan (JCP) during a meeting headed by Chief Justice of Pakistan Qazi Faez Isa earlier in the day. Justice Aalia is third in the seniority list of the LHC after the elevation of

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Pakistan's trade deficit rises

Increase in both exports and imports demonstrates the robust economic activities

DNA

KARACHI: Pakistan's trade picture for fiscal year 2023-24 paints a mixed picture with domestic exports saw an encouraging 10.5% increase to \$30.64 billion, imports surged even faster, leading to a wider trade deficit. The country exported goods worth \$30.64 billion, reflecting a 10.5% increase in

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Rebuffing UN body's report

Imran's detention 'internal matter', says law minister

"PTI founder has all rights according to Constitution, law, and international standards," says Azam Nazeer Tarar

ANSAR BHATTI

ISLAMABAD: Law Minister Azam Nazeer Tarar issued a response to a UN report — which termed Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) founder Imran Khan's detention arbitrary and in violation of international law — and called the arrest and cases against him an "internal matter". "The PTI founder has all the rights according to the country's constitution and law and international standards," said the law minister in a statement issued on Tuesday. Imran has been facing a slew of charges ranging from corruption to terrorism since his removal as the premier. The PTI founder has been in jail since last August and was convicted in some cases ahead of a nationwide election earlier this year. He is also fighting dozens of other cases which are continuing. Tarar said that the former prime minister is in jail as a convicted prisoner, adding that

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Afghan Taliban, Pakistan diplomats 'meet in Doha'

Afghan interim gov't spokesperson thanks Pakistani diplomats' hospitality, hopes for good bilateral ties

FOREIGN DESK

DOHA: In a fresh diplomatic engagement after Islamabad announced an operation against Afghanistan-based terrorists, an Afghan Taliban delegation headed by Afghan interim government's spokesperson Zabihullah Mujahid met Pakistani diplomats on the sidelines of the Doha-III conference. Pakistan and Afghanistan enjoyed close and brotherly ties as South Asian neighbours which lately become strained due to frequent cross-border attacks largely carried out by the banned outfit — Tehreek-e-Taliban

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After UN body's report US asks Pakistan to respect people's basic rights

"In case of Khan, you've heard us say this before: This is internal matter for Pakistan," says State Dept spokesperson

AGENCIES

WASHINGTON: After a United Nations body decried Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) founder Imran Khan's detention in "politically motivated" cases, the US State Department has asked Pakistan to respect people's fundamental

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Briefs

Country can only be run through politics

We should move forward in form of a movement: Rana Sanaullah

MEHTAB PIRZADA

ISLAMABAD: Advisor to Prime Minister on Political Affairs and Inter-Provincial Coordination (IPC) Rana Sanaullah said that the country can only be run through politics and political parties. Addressing a seminar on Tuesday, Rana Sanaullah urged the people to dispel the impression that politics is a negative word. "When a person faces injustice or inequality, we say that politics is being done with him," Rana Sana said. "We all should be clear in it that this country can only be run through politics," said the veteran politician.

PTI only wants anarchy: Awn

A conspiracy was hatched against Pakistan by the PTI, says the IPP leader

ADIL SHAHEEN

ISLAMABAD: Istehkam-e-Pakistan Party (IPP) leader Awn Chaudhry said that Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) has been exposed for running campaign against the country. Addressing a press conference in National Press Club Islamabad on Tuesday, the IPP leader said that a smear campaign was run against the armed forces of the country. "A conspiracy was hatched against Pakistan by the PTI in connivance with the Jewish lobby," said Awn Chaudhry, who was once considered as close confidant of PTI founder Imran Khan.

Praises US Congress resolution

Imran alleges agency's interference in jail matters

"We have filed a petition in court questioning the presence of ISI Majors and Colonels in Adiala Jail," Khan says

KHAYAM ABBASI

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) founding chairman Imran Khan has criticised the alleged interference of the Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI) in civilian matters. In an informal media talk inside Adiala Jail today, the incarcerated former prime minister said, "We have filed a petition in court questioning the presence of ISI Majors and Colonels in Adiala Jail." "The ISI has no authority in civil matters or judiciary interference. The prison superintendent is following ISI orders, leading to the transfer of two officers to ensure no leniency is shown to me." Talking about the results of the February general elections, the PTI founder expressed confusion stating, "Five months have passed since the elections, and I still do not know who won or lost." He also spoke about the recent resolution by the US Congress on alleged election irregularities in Pakistan highlighting that it had passed with 85% support. "Even the most powerful Israeli lobby has never managed such a resolution. The US conducted

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Abbasi demands to abolish NAB

NAB was created to make political cases: Former PM

NAZIR SIYAL

KARACHI: Former Prime Minister Shahid Khaqan Abbasi demanded to abolish NAB, otherwise, he warned the country will remain paralysed. Talking to the media in Karachi, Abbasi also criticised the justice system. He said that NAB has been created to make political cases. He said that former NAB Chairman Javed Iqbal used to say that he didn't make cases without the direction of former PM Imran Khan. He said that the government's people said that the budget was a failure, the additional tax of Rs four thousand billion was a new thing in this budget,

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ECP misinterpreted SC verdict, says Justice Minallah

"ECP's own record is accepting these people as belonging to SIC," says Justice Muneeb Akhtar

COURT REPORTER

ISLAMABAD: Supreme Court's Justice Athar Minallah said Tuesday that it is a "proven fact" that the Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) misinterpreted the apex court's verdict denying the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) of its "bat" symbol over failure to hold valid intra-party polls. "Should the court give its validation to an unconstitutional interpretation done by a constitutional body? [...] Do you want us to revive the doctrine of necessity?" Justice Minallah remarked. His remarks came as a 13-member full-court SC bench heard the Sunni Ittehad Council's (SIC) plea against the Peshawar High Court's (PHC) verdict upholding the Election Commission of Pakistan's (ECP) decision denying them the reserved seats. The bench, led by Chief Justice of Pakistan (CJP) Qazi Faez Isa, comprises Justice Syed Mansoor Ali Shah, Justice Muneeb Akhtar, Justice Yahya Afridi, Justice Amin-ud-Din Khan, Justice Jamal Khan Mandokhail, Justice Muhammad Ali Mazhar,

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Political instability pushes Pakistan to economic crisis

He said the budget announced by the federal government is not public friendly

FAISAL SHEIKH

ISLAMABAD: Former federal information minister, Shibli Faraz has claimed that Pakistan is facing a crisis due to political instability. The Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf leader, talking to the media accompanied by Kanwal Shaukat in Islamabad, asserted that only elected representatives' presence in parliament can ensure improvements. He said current occupants of parliament hold their seats due to Form-47, not through a public vote. These people lack legitimacy as public representatives, he added.

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11# Block 18-A, Awan Plaza,
G-8 Markez, Islamabad-Pakistan
Ph: 051-2261960, 051-2266165



President Zardari, Bilour discuss national issues

President Zardari said that consultation and consensus among all political parties on major national issues were indispensable

ISLAMABAD : Former Federal Minister Ghulam Ahmed Bilour met with President Asif Ali Zardari on Tuesday to discuss the country's overall political, security, and law and order situation. Speaking to senior leader of the Awami National Party (ANP) Ghulam Ahmed Bilour, the president emphasized the importance of collaboration among all political parties to address national issues and achieve political and economic stability.

President Zardari said that consultation and consensus among all political parties on major national issues were indispensable. Former Railways Minister Bilour congratulated President Zardari on assuming the office of the

President of Pakistan for the second time. Earlier on Tuesday President Asif Ali Zardari summoned the Senate to meet on July 4. The Senate will meet at the Parliament House on Thursday at 1700 hours, according to a President House-pressed release. The president summoned the session in exercise of the powers conferred on him under Article 54 (1) of the Constitution. Meanwhile, President Asif Ali Zardari signed the Finance Bill 2024 approving the federal budget 2024-25. A signed copy of the Finance Bill will also be sent to Parliament. The new federal budget will come into effect from July 1. On June 28, the

National Assembly passed the federal budget amid opposition protests. The National Assembly, in a session chaired by Speaker Ayaz Sadiq, approved the federal budget worth Rs18,877 trillion. However, the session saw a walkout by the opposition after they were not allowed to speak on their objections during the passage of the financial bill. Despite the opposition's protest, the assembly passed the provision to increase the tax rates on international air travel tickets. From July 1, passengers travelling in economy and economy plus classes must pay an additional tax of Rs12,500 on international tickets.



ISLAMABAD : Former Federal Minister and senior leader of the Awami National Party, Ghulam Ahmed Bilour, called on President Asif Ali Zardari, at Aiwan-e-Sadr.—DNA

BISP to introduce skill training initiative

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Chairperson Benazir Income Support Programme (BISP), Senator Rubina Khalid Tuesday said that a new skill training initiative is being launched to help members of deserving families start their own businesses and rise out of poverty. She was speaking during a visit to the BISP's Campsite at Government High School Iqbal Town in Lahore. The visit aimed to review the basic facilities provided to deserving women who come to receive the Kafaalat quarterly stipend. During her visit, Senator Rubina Khalid engaged with the women beneficiaries, listened to their concerns, and assured them of BISP's commitment to addressing their issues. She instructed the BISP staff to conduct surveys at tehsil offices to prevent overcrowding at payment centers. The BISP staff briefed the Chairperson on the current payment system. She emphasized the importance of disbursing payments to all deserving women in a fair and transparent manner. Earlier, Senator Rubina Khalid also addressed media representatives at BISP Central Zonal Office in Lahore, highlighting the impact of the programme. She shared that 9.5 million deserving families benefit from BISP and the program's scope is being further expanded. Senator Rubina Khalid noted past efforts to change the name of the Benazir Income Support Programme but reaffirmed its commitment to honoring the legacy of Shaheed Mohtarma Benazir Bhutto. To combat fraud, BISP, in collaboration with the Ministry of Information Technology, is taking significant steps, she added. The official BISP number, 8171, is the only number beneficiaries should trust. Furthermore, BISP is introducing a new payment system involving six banks to ensure transparency. Senator Rubina Khalid reiterated BISP's mission to economically empower women, in line with the vision of Shaheed Mohtarma Benazir Bhutto. Under the guidance of President Asif Ali Zardari and Chairman PPP Bilawal Bhutto, the program ensures that payments are disbursed to deserving women in a transparent and dignified manner.

Experts discuss education crisis in Pakistan

Activist Nargis says modernising education system is crucial for state's development

NAZIR SIYAL

KARACHI :The state's lack of interest in promoting education is leading us nowhere but to poor educational quality in both schools and universities, said Economist Dr Kaiser Bengali. While addressing a seminar titled "Improving the Education System of Pakistan," organised by the Pakistan Women's Foundation for Peace (PWFPP), Dr Bengali pointed out the double standards of the elite class that secure top-notch education for their children via the Cambridge Schooling System but fail to support educational development in Pakistan. He criticised the state of mathematics education in Pakistan, noting that the

private sector also fails to provide a high standard of mathematics education. He emphasised that a solid foundation in mathematics is essential for producing scientists. He highlighted the inadequate mathematics syllabus, which often leads to students memorising concepts without truly understanding the subject. He expressed dismay over Pakistan's reliance on imported goods, highlighting the country's inability to manufacture simple items like stapler pins. PWFPP Chairperson, Nargis Rehman, hosted the seminar and emphasised that modernising the education system is crucial for development. She stressed the need for collective efforts to pro-

note literacy among the underprivileged, highlighting the importance of skill training, extracurricular activities, and modern technology in the education system. Nargis lamented that cheating in exams has become rampant in Pakistan. She noted that Pakistan trails behind its neighbouring countries in development and stated that educational institutions have commodified education, turning it into a business. Present on the occasion, Educationist Baela Raza Jameel highlighted the dire situation in Pakistan, where 60% of the population cannot afford the educational expenses of their children. Baela noted that the country has been without an education policy since 2009.

President FPCI urges gov't to reduce expenses

DNA

ISLAMABAD : President Federation of Pakistan Chamber of Commerce and Industry Atif Ikram Sheikh has said that we request the government to revise the budget, after the presentation of the budget, the difficulties of the export sector have increased. Electricity and gas rates have already increased. Not globally competitive, these will increase further, which will put us out of the competitive race in the region. Federation President Atif Ikram said that the stakeholders were not taken into confidence in the budgeting process. As a representative of the business community, I appeal to the government to revisit the budget due to the excessive taxes. In the current budget, tax payers have been burdened with billions of rupees, businesses will be affected after electricity and gas become expensive. Opportunities are running out for entrepreneurs burdened by taxes. The government should reduce its expenditure and give relief to the people and businessmen.

DC vows to provide all facilities to tourists

ISLAMABAD: Deputy Commissioner Murree Agha Zaheer Abbas Shrazi on Tuesday said that district administration was fully committed to take all possible measures to facilities to the tourists thronging to these areas. In a statement issued here, the DC said that according to the vision of Punjab Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz, practical steps are being taken for the promotion of tourism. He instructed the authorities concerned to complete the development works on their stipulated time to get desirable results and reviewed other recreational facilities including washrooms to be built at Thanda Jangal entertainment venue.—APP

RPO visits RCCI, assure measures to protect citizens

President Saqib Rafiq said that this is the first time that the three chiefs of Rawalpindi Police have come to the Chamber of Commerce to meet the business community

DNA

RAWALPINDI: Regional Police Officer (RPO) Babar Sarfaraz along with his team including City Police Officer (CPO) Khalid Hamdani and Chief Traffic Officer (CTO) Taimur Khan paid a visit to the Rawalpindi Chamber of Commerce and Industry (RCCI) here on Tuesday. President RCCI Saqib Rafiq and Group Leader RCCI Sohail Altaf and office bearers welcomed the RPO and his team. President Saqib Rafiq said that this is the first time that the three chiefs of Rawalpindi Police have come to the Chamber of Commerce to meet the busi-

ness community, which shows their seriousness to strengthen the interaction and communication with stakeholders to solve their problems. RPO Babar Sarfaraz in his remarks said that the business community is the backbone of the country's economy and further added that the Rawalpindi Chamber of Commerce is playing an important role in promoting community policing in the society. The Safe City project in Rawalpindi will be fully operational by the end of this month, which will help in more effective measures and measures against criminal elements, he further added. RPO Sarfaraz emphasized the essential

role of the business community in the economy and assured that all necessary measures would be taken to address their concerns. CPO Khalid Hamdani said that addressing the problems of traders are the first priority for which Rawalpindi Police is using all resources. CTO Taimur Khan informed the participants about the measures taken to address traffic congestion in the city. Senior Vice President RCCI Muhammad Hamza Sarosh, Vice President Faisal Shahzad, Former Presidents, executive committee members, distinguished RCCI members, and members from various trade associations were also present in the meeting.

PMD, RIMES hold climate application forum

ISLAMABAD : The Pakistan Meteorological Department (PMD), in collaboration with the Regional Integrated Multi-Hazard Early Warning System (RIMES) arranged a Climate Application Forum on Tuesday. This event brought together experts, policymakers, and stakeholders from various sectors to discuss innovative strategies and applications for climate resilience and disaster risk reduction. The forum commenced with an insightful keynote address by Dr. Muhammad Afzal, Chief Meteorologist, PMD, who emphasized the critical need for enhanced climate services and innovative applications to mitigate the impacts of climate change. Chief Guest Lt. Gen. (Retd.) Nadeem Ahmad, Advisor, RIMES highlighted the collaborative effort needed to tackle climate change and extreme weather events. Sahibzad Khan, Director General of PMD, said: "This forum marks a significant milestone in our efforts to integrate cutting-edge climate science with practical applications. By partnering with RIMES, we are committed to advancing our capabilities in early warning systems and fostering a culture of preparedness and resilience in the face of climate change." Ms. Ruby Rose Policarpio, CARE Component 1 Project Director, RIMES, added, "The collaborative spirit demonstrated at this forum is a testament to the importance of international cooperation in tackling the global challenge of climate change." The forum featured a series of presentations, panel discussions, and interactive sessions focused on the latest advancements in climate science and sustainable practices. This event was supported by the World Bank and Climate Adaptation and Resilience (CARE). The Climate Application Forum concluded with a commitment to ongoing collaboration and the development of actionable strategies to address climate-related challenges.

Faisalabad promised 100 eco-friendly buses

FAISALABAD :The government is contemplating to run 100 environment-friendly buses in Faisalabad. The facility will be expanded to the tehsil level at a later stage. This was stated by MNA Chaudhry Shehbaz Babar while presiding over a meeting of the Faisalabad District Coordination Committee (DCC). He said the government was spending huge funds to improve the standard of living of the people by providing them basic amenities at their doorsteps. After a briefing about the inter-city bus service, the legislator said that in the first phase, 100 environment-friendly buses would start providing service in Faisalabad within the limits of the Ring Road. However, in a later phase, the facility would be expanded to the tehsil level so that the students and industrial workers could avail the service to the maximum extent. He also stressed the need of security arrangements for Muharram and said the DCC should be convened again before Ashura.—APP

Death anniversary of Moosavi was observed with devotion

Scholars, senior leaders of TNFJ draped a veil over the shrine of the leader, while the Mukhtar Force and Ibrahim Scouts saluted their leader.

DNA

ISLAMABAD : The second anniversary of Agha Syed Hamid Ali Shah Moosavi, the spiritual leader of the Shiite world, the patron-in-chief of the Supreme Shia Ulema Board and the head of Tehreek Nifaz Fiqh Jafaria, was observed with devotion and respect across the country. Scholars, senior leaders of TNFJ draped a veil over the shrine of the leader, while the Mukhtar Force and Ibrahim Scouts saluted their leader. The main gathering of the anniversary, 'Pyam Aqaye Moosavi Convention', was held at the shrine of Quaid Jamia Al-Murtaza, Islamabad, in which scholars, preachers and poets from all over the country



addressed and paid tribute to the leader for his unforgettable services to the country and the nation. On this occasion, under the leadership of the sons of Quaid Agha Muhammad Murtaza Moosavi Advocate and

Agha Ali Rooh Al Abbas Moosavi, a renewed commitment was made to ensure the protection of the unity of the Ummah and the ideology of Pakistan while remaining closed to the mission-e-willa o azza established by

Quaid Millat Jafaria Agha Moosavi. The participants also expressed their determination that the code of mourning of Agha Moosavi will be fully implemented and unity among Muslims will be promoted in month

of Muharram. The Payam Moosavi convention was attended by the elders of the nation from the four provinces, Azad Kashmir and Gilgit-Baltistan, the followers of Agha Moosavi and the provincial officials of Tehreek Nifaz Fiqh Jafaria.

Nusrat criticizes PML N gov't for price hike

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) leader Nasrat Khan has criticized the PML (N)-led government, alleging that it has turned the life of the common man into a living hell. He pointed out that due to skyrocketing prices of electricity, gas, and petroleum, the public has been pushed to the brink, with some resorting to suicide. In a statement, Nasrat Khan asserted that the government and its allies have an agenda focused solely



on corruption and exploiting the people. He further stated that it is a fact that the IMF's demands have been officially accepted in the budget announcement.

In response to a question, Nasrat Khan emphasized that the country's issues will not be resolved from the government's tenure until its departure. A PTI leader added that despite the passage of legislation in the US Congress regarding electoral fraud in the February 8 elections, the government's credibility has been severely tarnished. Nasrat Khan also mentioned that today, from Khyber to Karachi, ordinary Pakistanis stand with Imran Khan because they know he is the only leader capable of solving Pakistan's problems.



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National Days and Armed Forces Days

JULY

- July 01/Japan Self Defence Day
- July 01/Singapore Armed Forces Day
- July 01 / Canada National Day
- July 01/Somalia Independence Day
- July 04/USA Independence Day
- July 05/Algeria Independence Day
- July 09/Argentina Independence Day
- July 09/Mongolia Revolution Day
- July 14/France National Day
- July 15/Brunei Sultan's Birthday
- July 21/Belgium National Day
- July 20/TRNC Independence Day
- July 23/Egypt National Day
- July 26/Cuba National Day
- July 26/Liberia National Day
- July 30/Morocco National 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

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

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 MH.....5611116
 Cantt Hospital...9270907-11
 DHQ.....5556311-4
 RGH.....9290301-7
 Holy Family.....9290322-7
 PIMS.....9261170-79
 Polyclinic.....9218300-09
 Shifa International 4603666

Departments

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

Water Tank

Islamabad.....0321-5744480

Deserving traders to get residential plots on competitive price: ICCI

Ahsan Zafar Bakhtawari said that during his election campaign he announced that he will get launched a Housing Scheme for the deserving traders to enable them to have their own accommodations in the capital and that now the time has come to fulfil this dream of the community and on the matter all the spade work has been completed with a renowned business group of the capital city which will not only provide residential plots on 25% discount but receive the payments on easy instalments

DNA



ISLAMABAD: President Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry Ahsan Zafar Bakhtawari has said that the business community is wholeheartedly determined to serve the country by making it an economic hub and investment friendly destination and that ICCI on its part will continue to play the role of a bridge between the community and the government to foster business development. He said this while addressing the Presidents of different Traders Welfare Associations of Islamabad who called on him at the Chamber House. Ahsan Zafar Bakhtawari said that during his election campaign he announced that he will get launched a Housing Scheme for the deserving traders to enable them to have their own accommodations in the capital and that now the time has come to fulfil this dream of the community and on the matter all the spade work has been completed with a renowned business group of the capital city which will not only provide residential plots on 25% discount but receive the payments on easy instalments. He went on to say that alongside his work as President ICCI he is

also continuing to perform his corporate social responsibilities by installing water filtration plants, Water Coolers, setting up of free medical camps, provision of computers and laboratory equipment to educational institutions. Former President ICCI Zafar Bakhtawari said that a viable and comprehensive strategy has been evolved to go into the forthcoming ICCI election. He underlined the need for strengthening unity in the ranks of the community for

the resolution of its problems on priority basis and for the availability of the level playing field for the development of the businesses. The participants by appreciating the performance of Ahsan Zafar Bakhtawari as President ICCI not only reposed their confidence in him but also pledged to stand with him in all the circumstances and in all his future endeavors for the economic wellbeing of the community. In his address former President FPCCI Zubair

Ahmad Malik extended congratulations to Ahsan Zafar Bakhtawari and his team for the successful conduct of the All Pakistan Chambers President Conference. Yousuf Rajput, Group leader Blue Area, Raja Hassan Akhtar President Blue Area, Asad Aziz President Jinnah Super Market, Raja Javid Iqbal, President G/9 markaz, Iftikhar Abbasi, President E-11 markaz, Naeem Akhtar Awan President G-11 markaz, Kashif Chaudhry President I-10 markaz,

Nasir Chaudhry President G-8/1, Raja Fayyaz Gul President I-8 markaz, Ahmad Khan President F-10 markaz, Wajid Ayub, Azhar Iqbal President Melody Market, Shahzad Shabbir Abbasi President F-6 markaz, President TWA Tarnol, Khalid Chaudhry General Secretary Traders Action Committee also spoke on the occasion and showed full solidarity with founder group and endorsed the unity move between City and Industrial Area.

UN Pakistan Resident Coordinator calls on Convener SDGs

ISLAMABAD: The UN Pakistan Resident Coordinator Mohamed Yahya called on the Convener Parliamentary Taskforce on Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), Bilal Azhar Kayani at the Parliament House. Both sides discussed the current status of implementation of SDGs in Pakistan and role of the Parliament in the attainment of these goals, said news release issued here on Tuesday. They also deliberated upon international best practices and their socio-economic compatibility in terms of the contemporary challenges faced by Pakistan. During the discussion it was stressed upon to pro-actively assist the MPs during the legislation phase and to build knowledge around the SDGs framework to support localization & implementation of 2030 Agenda more effectively. The Convener while reaffirming commitment of the Parliament to play a constructive role in accelerating the progress to achieve SDGs stated "Parliamentary Task Force on SDGs is vigorously striving for a sustainable future for all." He said Parliamentary Taskforce will complement governments effort in ensuring access to quality education, better health facilities and devising strategies to effectively tackle climate change.—APP

Senator Sherry proposes youth climate caucus

ISLAMABAD: Chairperson, Senate Standing Committee on Climate Change, Senator Sherry Rehman on Tuesday in the maiden meeting of the body proposed the forum for establishing the Youth Climate Caucus at the Senator for giving representation to the young voices in policy making and legislative oversight. The Committee with Senator Rehman in chair at single agenda item of developing a comprehensive agenda for a plan of action that is both inclusive and responsive to the country needs across all the sectors that reflect climate and environmental values as well as challenges participated by Senator Bushra Anjum Butt, Senator Naseema Ehsan, Senator Manzoor Ahmed Kakar, whereas Senators Dr Zarqa Suharwardy Taimour, Quratulain Marri and Taj Haider joined the meeting online. Speaking on the occasion, Senator Sherry Rehman said the Committee would propose the Upper House of the Parliament to establish the Youth Climate Caucus as the younger generation amid galloping climate crises was anguished and frustrated that needed to be harnessed positively. She said the Committee with a retrospective approach would hold two environmental public hearings for a national stock take of efforts being made to address the country's spiking up vulnerability to climate change. She informed the members that the Committee would visit the iconic Leopard Preserve Zone in the Margalla Hills National Park that is home to exotic birds, plants, mammals and reptiles species. Since, the Ministry of Climate Change and Environmental Coordination was signatory to the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES) that banned trade or captivity of nonindigenous animals to a foreign country. She commended the Islamabad Wildlife Management Board (IWMB) for its efforts in controlling poaching, and illegal captivity of endangered species. "A Bengal tiger was rescued by IWMB that was facing maltreatment and poor health which will be released in its natural habitat," she added. Senator Rehman called for ban on exotic species' trade and captivity in Rawalpindi and the Islamabad Capital Territory (ICT). She urged the members to raise issues pertaining to environmental pollution and degradation in the ICT. She mentioned that Smog was the fifth season of Pakistan now, whereas the Committee would also hold public hearing in Pakistan Institute of Parliamentary Services and would invite all. —DNA

PHA authorities directed to upgrade parks of Murree

RAWALPINDI: Director General (DG) Parks and Horticulture Authority (PHA), Ahmad Hasan Ranjha has directed the authorities concerned to make all-out efforts to upgrade parks of Murree. According to a PHA spokesman, during a visit of various parks of Murree, the DG reviewed the facilities being provided to the public in terms of quality recreations. She informed, the DG instructed the officers concerned about the improvement of parks and to ensure better recreational facilities for the tourists. According to the orders of the Punjab government, the tourists and local residents were being provided with the best available facilities. The PHA is also ensuring provision of clean drinking water for the tourists in Murree, benches for sitting and better lighting arrangements. The DG during the visited inspected all the arrangements regarding lighting and sitting, drinking water and other facilities in the parks and orders were also issued to the officers to take all possible steps for improvement of the facilities, she informed. The spokesman said that the PHA on the special directives of the DG would successfully achieve the plantation target by ensuring a full-scale plantation drive in upcoming monsoon season this year.—APP

Scope of ECE project to be expanded: Education Minister

Faisal Sheikh

ISLAMABAD: Minister for Federal Education and Professional Training, Dr. Khalid Maqbool Siddiqui Tuesday expressed his commitment to expand the scope of the Early Childhood Education project to all parts of the country. The minister was speaking after inaugurating the Islamabad Capital Territory's first state-of-the-art Early Childhood Education Center (ECE) at Islamabad Model School, F-7/2. The federal minister stated "such facilities are designed to stimulate children early childhood development". Emphasizing the importance of early child education for social and intellectual development of the children during the initial years, the minister said that this project will be extended to other parts of the country. Appreciating the initiative, Secretary Ministry of Education and Professional Training, Mohyuddin Ahmad Wani explained that this model is based on the pilot project being executed in urban 10 school with five ECE. He said that ECE project will be expanded to existing 50 rural and 50 urban schools with attached washrooms while the staff is being trained as well to handle these children in liaison with America Lycetuff DNK School System. The ministry believed ECE as one of the most pivotal stages of learning. The latest developments in science have shown that the first six years of a child's life are crucial when it comes to early childhood development.

NPO to organize Webinar

ISLAMABAD: National Productivity Organization (NPO) is going to organize a webinar on "Excel Skills for Business Forecasting" on Wednesday (tomorrow). Forecasting refers to the practice of predicting what will happen in the future by taking into consideration events in the past and present. Basically, it's a decision-making tool that helps businesses cope with the impact of the future's uncertainty by examining historical data and trends, said an NPO document shared here on Tuesday. The tool enables businesses to chart their next moves and create budgets that will hopefully cover whatever uncertainties may occur, it added. The webinar highlights fundamentals of business forecasting, business forecasting via powerful function, and fast-forecasting tools in excel.—APP

Surveyor General highlights NSDI's benefits

ISLAMABAD: The Surveyor General of Pakistan, Major General Rafiq-ur-Rehman, HI (M) on Tuesday said the implementation of the National Spatial Data Infrastructure (NSDI) would significantly benefit sectors such as health, education, agriculture, and tourism, among many others. Speaking at a ceremony held here at a local hotel, he highlighted that the NSDI would also aid in achieving the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals, including efforts to combat climate change. He noted that the NSDI is established globally for policy planning and developing sustainable solutions. In Pakistan, a feasibility study for establishing the NSDI has been completed by the Survey of Pakistan in collaboration with GIS Plus. The ceremony concluded with the distribution of shields to the participants.—APP

Consistency vs unpredictable performance

TANVEER HUSSAIN



Sports enthusiasts are familiar with these terms. The performance of teams in any sport is judged on the basis of these two criteria. Any team is a sustainable team if it improves its performance through hard work training and technique. When that team goes to play in the tournament, its supporters get an idea of how our team will perform. Even if that team performs a little less or more than their expectations, the fans easily accept it. On the other hand, there are teams with unexpected

performances. Pakistan cricket team belongs to the same type. Sometimes our team beat the toughest opponents; and when they come down, they lose badly to inexperienced newcomers. The biggest downside of this kind of unpredictable performance is that people place high expectations on the team that obviously cannot be met. Then when the team comes back to lose, people express anger at the players and the management. Eventually an inquiry is held to cool the public anger, the team captain is changed and some players are dropped from the team. The same story is repeated in almost every major event. This is not a story of a few months or years, it is our entire history. Being a nation, we are unpredictable nation. If you analyze, Pakistanis always seem to be on two extremes of success and failure. One of our scientists, Dr. Qadeer Khan makes Pakistan a nuclear power and national defense impregnable despite the shortage of resources and opposition of the west. On the other hand, we have not been able to administer polio drops to our children for 75 years. Arfa Karim, a Pakistani student makes a world record by becoming a Microsoft Certified Professional (MCP) at the age of just 9 years. On the other hand, millions of our children are deprived of education. And the ability and efficiency of the educated people is that the country is going downhill day by day. One of our pilots, MM Alam, shoots down five warplanes of India in one minute, and after only 6 years, the enemy not only captures half of our country, but also takes 93,000 soldiers as prisoners of war. Instead of working with consistency and hard work, people have kept unrealistic concepts in their minds. They look for short cuts to get rich overnight instead of long hours of hard work.

Illegitimate wealth is not considered bad for getting rich quick. The terrible result of which comes in the form of corruption, adulteration, fraud, bribery and street crime. Many young people, attracted by the dazzling lights of Europe, cross the border illegally. Many of them fall victim to accidents and become food for sea creatures. These shortcuts have also had a profound effect on the psychology of people. People don't care much about the serious stuff, but the noise and false claims have millions of followers. People love noisy and sloganeering singers, scholars and leaders. It is very important to tell people about hard work and honesty to get them out of these situations. From day one, children should be made aware that there are no shortcuts to lasting success. With short cuts you may be successful temporarily but for lasting success you need hard work and dedication.

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Briefs

Motorway police reunite lost boy with mother

ISLAMABAD: The National Highways and Motorway Police (NHMP) reunited a 12-year-old boy with a mental disability to his family here on Tuesday. According to NHMP North Zone spokesman Muhammad Saqib, while patrolling, the motorway police found a boy near Wali interchange in distress who could not speak fluently. After getting information from the nearby areas, the NH&MP handed over the boy to his mother, who belonged to the Charsada area. The boy's mother thanked and hailed the performance of the NHMP for the recovery of his mentally disabled lost boy.—APP

Pak-China strategic partnership opens doors to vast opportunities in IT sector

ISLAMABAD: Minister of State for IT and Telecommunications, Shaza Fatima Khawaja Tuesday said that the all-weather strategic cooperative partnership between Pakistan and China opens doors to unparalleled opportunities in IT sector. The China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) serves as a cornerstone of bilateral cooperation between Pakistan and China, offering a multitude of opportunities for joint ventures and technology-driven initiatives as well. The integration of digital technologies into CPEC projects holds the promise of unlocking new avenues for economic growth, job creation, and sustainable development, she made the remarks while addressing opening ceremony of Global Digital Economy Conference 2024. The minister said that the strategic partnership between Pakistan and China opens doors to unparalleled opportunities for collaboration in the IT sector. "Whether it is in the fields of artificial intelligence, cybersecurity, e-commerce, or digital infrastructure, there exists immense potential for joint ventures, knowledge exchange, networking opportunities and skill development," she added. Shaza Fatima said that the vast potential of China's IT market presents a significant opportunity for foreign companies, including those from Pakistan, to expand their businesses and boost exports. The minister remarked that the partnership between Pakistan and China continues to flourish, reflecting a long-standing tradition of collaboration and mutual growth. This partnership takes a significant step forward as they convene to explore the vast potential within the Information Technology (IT) sector.—DNA



ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif chairs a meeting regarding national preparedness for the monsoon.

Korean diplomat shares experiences in research

Additional Foreign Secretary for Policy Planning Ambassador Israr Ahmed emphasized the importance of science diplomacy and cooperation between Pakistan and the Republic of Korea in the domain of Science and Technology

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Ambassador of the Republic of Korea on Science and Technology Dr. Sung-Chul Shin was the keynote speaker at a Science Diplomacy event hosted by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs on 27 June 2024. The event was attended by Federal Secretary for Science and Technology Mr. Ali Tahir, Federal Secretary for Federal Education and Professional Training Mr. Mohyuddin Ahmad Wani, senior officials from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and eminent scientists from several universities. Welcoming the participants, Additional Foreign Secretary for Policy Planning Ambassador Israr Ahmed emphasized the importance of science diplomacy and cooperation between Pakistan and the Republic

of Korea in the domain of Science and Technology. In his keynote address, Dr. Shin presented the policies employed by the Republic of Korea in planning and promoting scientific research and innovation. He also explained how these strategies have contributed to Korea's remarkable economic transformation, elevating the economic status country from a developing to a developed nation.



The talk was followed by a focused dialogue among scientists, researchers, and policymakers with Dr. Sung-Chul Shin. Secretary Science and Technology Mr. Ali Tahir expressed Pakistan's keen desire to enhance collaboration between Pakistan and the Republic of Korea. He also underlined Pakistan's policies of promoting scientific education and research by providing opportunities, resources, and support to scientists to encourage research and innovation. Scientists and researchers from the Air University, Bahria University, COMSATS, Fatima Jinnah Women University, GIKI, Institute of Space Technology, NUST, Pakistan Institute of Engineering Sciences, QAU and UET Taxila participated in the interactive session. They presented the cutting-edge scientific research being conducted

at their institutions. They also discussed methods to establish effective communication channels between policymakers and the scientific community to leverage science for development through collaborative efforts among universities, scholars, and students. Ambassador Shin was invited to Pakistan from 24-27 June 2024 by the invitation of Ministry of Foreign Affairs to promote scientific exchanges between Pakistan and the Republic of Korea. During his visit to Pakistan, Ambassador Shin called on the Foreign Secretary Muhammad Syrus Sajjad Qazi. He also visited the National Center for Physics, Quaid-e-Azam University and National Center for Physics, National University for Science and Technology and met with the alumni of scientific universities in the Republic of Korea.

ANF recovers 630 kg drugs in four operations

RAWALPINDI: Anti-Narcotics Force (ANF) while conducting four operations across the country managed to recover 630 kg drugs, said an ANF Headquarters spokesman here on Tuesday. He informed that 3 different operations were conducted in Balochistan, 510 kg opium and 120 kg hashish were recovered from Panni, Pishin and Quetta. In an operation, 700 grams weed was recovered from a vehicle intercepted in Scheme 3, Rawalpindi.—APP

Railways all set to launch 'Summer Vacation Train'

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan Railways is all set to launch a 'Summer Vacation Special Train' to facilitate and accommodate the passengers between Rawalpindi-Karachi from July 5 to July 30. "All the preparation to launch the train is already completed on the direction of Secretary Railways Syed Mazhar Ali Shah," an official in the Ministry of Railways told APP. The official said that the special train (50-Dn) would commence its journey from Rawalpindi on July 5 and continue to operate on July 8, 11, 14, 17, 20, 23, 26, and 29. He said the departing at 12:30 pm, is scheduled to arrive at Karachi Cantt at 2:15 pm the following day. The official said that the return service (49-Up) would depart from Karachi Cantt on July 6, 9, 12, 15, 18, 21, 24, 27, and 30, starting at 8:45 pm and reaching Rawalpindi at 10 pm the next day. He said this initiative aims to provide a comfortable and convenient travel option for citizens during the summer vacation period. The train would make stops at major stations including Jhelum, Lalamusa, Gujrat, Wazirabad, Gujranwala, Lahore, Raiwind, Okara, Sahiwal, Khanewal, Bahawalpur, Khanpur, Rohri, and Hyderabad, he added. He said the Summer Vacation Special Train would feature two AC standard coaches, two AC business coaches, five economy class coaches, one brake van, and one power plant.—APP

Experts highlight the importance of data for effective migrant management

ISLAMABAD: Data is the key to effective management of Afghan migrants on Pakistani soil. This was stated by experts who were speaking at a panel discussion organized by the Institute of Regional Studies (IRS) here on Monday. The speakers highlighted that it was essential to have a central repository of data on Afghan migrants, including the UN Refugee Agency (UNHCR) mandated refugees, the Afghan Citizenship Card (ACC) holders, as well as the undocumented Afghans. They underscored that currently the data was not being maintained under one roof for ready and effective utilization by the Government of Pakistan. They also called for more efficient coordination between the Government of Pakistan and UNHCR on the matter. In his introductory remarks, President IRS Ambassador Jauhar Saleem stated that Pakistan had adopted various approaches to managing Afghan migrants and continues to strive for the best possible solution. The goal, he said, was to ensure the safe return of Afghan migrants to their homeland with respect and dignity while also ensuring the security of Pakistan's citizens. Human Rights lawyer, Syed Muaz Shah, shared that since the Taliban takeover in Afghanistan in 2021, Pakistan had seen an increase in the numbers of Afghan refugees from 1.44 million to 2.18 million. He acknowledged Pakistan's sovereignty in implementing the repatriation policy while also emphasizing the unique situation faced by Afghan refugees in the country. He added that many Afghan refugees wanted to work and settle in Pakistan as they had established their lives in the country and felt a stronger connection to Pakistan than to Afghanistan.—DNA

IRSA releases 320,000 cusecs water

ISLAMABAD: Indus River System Authority (IRSA) on Tuesday released 320,000 cusecs water from various rim stations with inflow of 454,200 cusecs. According to the data released by IRSA, water level in River Indus at Tarbela Dam was 1470.20 feet and was 81.20 feet higher than its dead level of 1,398 feet. Water inflow and outflow in the dam was recorded as 244,600 cusecs and 130,000 cusecs respectively. The water level in River Jhelum at Mangla Dam was 1185.30 feet, which was 137.30 feet higher than its dead level of 1,050 feet. The inflow and outflow of water was recorded 44,600 cusecs.—APP

PR earned record high revenue in year 2023-24

ISLAMABAD: Director General (DG) Public Relations (PR) Pakistan Railways Dr. Hassan Tahir Bukhari Tuesday said that his department had reached a record high in revenue earnings of Rs 88 billion at the end of the financial year 2023-24 and providing modern amenities to passengers where they are being facilitated with standardized toilet systems. Talking to a PTV news channel he said the PR's land-lease revenue was also being increased by Rs10bn for FY 2024-25", adding, that Pakistan Railway credited achievement to the tireless work of the employees. He said his organization determination to further increase the income to Rs 1 trillion next financial year, adding that with private partnership Pakistan Railway will get its set targets soon. He said 40% earned 40% increase in revenue as compared to previous years.—APP

Needed to balance of tradition and modernity in education

SAHAR ALLAH BUX

The contemporary educational system is a carousel that has been marked with visible developments and constant challenges. This statement likens the current educational system to a carousel, suggesting that it is constantly in motion and subject to continuous change. The educational system is evolving with notable advancements and facing ongoing challenges that require attention and adaptation. "As the global societies develop, so do their educational needs, which necessitate reforms to meet the requirements of diverse populations and dynamics of knowledge transmission. As societies around the world progress and evolve, their educational needs also change. This evolution requires reforms in the educational system to ensure that it meets the diverse needs of various populations. It also needs to address the changing ways in which knowledge is transmitted and received. "In this sphere, there is an outstanding discourse in the Islamic construct of science; it is

a movement aimed at relating Islamic principles to modern educational paradigms." Within the context of these educational reforms, there is significant discussion about the Islamic construct of science. This discourse involves a movement that seeks to integrate Islamic principles with contemporary educational frameworks. It aims to relate the values and teachings of Islam to modern approaches to education and scientific inquiry. Inclusiveness, technical integration, and an emphasis on a comprehensive educational viewpoint are among the characteristics of the modern education system. Digital tools and online platforms are being adopted by schools and universities worldwide enhanced the access and efficiency in learning process. The COVID-19 pandemic has hastened this transformation, leading schools almost overnight towards distance learning programs. While this transition has opened up new opportunities for learning, it has also highlighted the wide disparities in access to technology and internet connectivity, particularly in top-growth areas.

Among these developments, the debate about Islamicizing knowledge is particularly prominent in Muslim-majority countries. This movement, which started at the end of the 20th century, attempts to harmonize modern education with Islamic values and teachings. Proponents argue that contemporary education either undermines or weakens collaboration among most Islamic scholars and spiritual leaders of the Muslim world. They believe that incorporating an Islamic perspective into education can make it more relevant and meaningful for Muslim students, fostering a sense of connectedness with their cultural and religious heritage and a sense of purpose. Critics have expressed concern about the possible dangers of such educational rigidity and vulnerability. They argue that education should remain secular, free from religious or ideological influences, so it can foster critical thinking, scientific research, and universal values. The challenge, therefore, is to find a balance that respects religious beliefs while maintaining the integrity of curricula and the global nature of education.

In practical terms, making science Islamic demands a reexamination of various educational subjects with an Islamic perspective in mind. For example, in science, this could mean highlighting the contributions of medieval Muslim scientists like al-Khwarizmi and Ibn Sina, whose works formed the basis for modern mathematics and medicine. In the humanities, it could mean studying Islamic philosophy and ethics alongside Western philosophical traditions. This perspective not only strengthens the syllabus but also encourages learners to identify mutual connections between global intellectual traditions. As the contemporary educational system continues to advance, tradition and modernity, secularism and religiosity remain in constant interplay. In this context, the Islamization of science represents a significant attempt at harmonizing these seemingly antagonistic forces, offering a unique and enhanced educational vision capable of encompassing multiple truths of twenty-first-century pluralism. Can this vision create a reality that respects the principles of scientific freedom and in-

tellectual diversity in the long term? Countries like Malaysia and Saudi Arabia have taken concrete steps to implement this vision. For instance, Malaysia's International Islamic University offers programs that relate Islamic principles to contemporary pedagogical content. Similarly, Saudi Arabia has made various efforts to develop Islamic knowledge and link it with modern scientific research. These attempts capture far-reaching trends among Muslim-majority nations aimed at establishing their intellectual and cultural identities in the global arena. Despite these actions, Islamicizing knowledge remains a controversial issue. The success of this movement largely depends on teachers and policymakers who engage in open, inclusive dialogues that focus on the diverse needs of students and the challenges they face. Beyond this, it requires scientific excellence and innovation to ensure that educational reforms do not merely replicate traditional models but push the boundaries of science and understanding forward.

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Reinforcing genocide

ISRAELI Prime Minister, Benjamin Netanyahu, is expected to address a joint session of US Congress on 24 July, and speculations about the contents of his speech have been reported in Israeli media, albeit slightly contradictory. Senior Israeli aides to Netanyahu stated that the address would address the normalization agreements between Saudi Arabia and Israel, a ceasefire centered on a deal for the hostages and "a pathway towards a Palestinian State". The latter was contradicted by Netanyahu's office, which stated that the Prime Minister "opposes a Palestinian State and will not change his position in his address to Congress". However, it was reported that Netanyahu would "offer rhetorical support for a vague process that leads toward increased Palestinian autonomy short of a State". Nothing new in the usual diplomatic jargon, but at a time when Israel is openly committing genocide in Gaza, not even "rhetorical support for a vague process" can even claim its usual pedestal in the US-Israeli narrative. By committing genocide, Netanyahu has proved without doubt his opposition to a Palestinian State. Emptying Gaza of Palestinians, on the other hand, is believable even without Netanyahu's rhetoric. The recurring internal forced displacement of Palestinians, Israel forcing Palestinians into areas which it then bombs, the enforced starvation, the mass graves, the bodies buried beneath the rubble – what part of genocide even alludes to a hypothetical autonomous Palestinian entity, let alone a State? Israel and the US have signed on a much larger complicity in their crimes against the colonized Palestinian people. To speak of normalization agreements in the past was already an aberration; the level of absurdity it has now reached requires new vocabulary. Putting genocide in the past seems to be the way forward for Israel and the US. For Palestinians, however, genocide has been ongoing since the Nakba and now openly practiced, as well as endorsed and aided by Western powers. Away from the diplomacy of might, Palestinians are living the horrors and consequences of incessant bombings and slaughters that have already created humanitarian catastrophes. Which Palestinians will have the physical and mental health required to consider politics before relieving starvation, the need for shelter, access to clean water, health and education? All of which were already scarce before the genocide? Genocide did not erupt out of nowhere in the Zionist colonial project. Palestinians repeatedly warned the international community about the various ways they were being ethnically cleansed from their towns and villages since the Nakba. But the international community was too busy protecting its two-state consensus and reinforcing political and economic divisions between Gaza and the Occupied West Bank which played directly into Israeli interests. Palestinians have perpetually been exploited as pawns in international diplomacy, to the point of genocide. Netanyahu's address to Congress is just one more step in political oblivion when it comes to the Palestinian people. Working hand in hand not only with the destruction of Palestine's historical and collective memory, oblivion now finds a better partner in genocide. While the forthcoming speech is speculated upon as to its contents, Israel gains yet more respite through diplomatic channels to massacre more Palestinians in Gaza, and perhaps get the opportunity to speak of a plan for after genocide, in which only the Zionist concept of purported peace can fester. Not a vague process at all, just a bloody one.



Civil War in Donbass

JULY 1st marked the 10th anniversary of a brutal resumption of hostilities in the Donbass Civil War. Perhaps unsurprisingly, it passed without comment in the Western media. 10 days before the start of the war, Ukrainian President Petro Poroshenko called for a ceasefire in Kiev's "anti-terrorist operation". Launched two months prior following vast protests, and violent clashes between Russian-speaking pro-federal activists and authorities throughout eastern Ukraine, the intended lightning strike routing of internal opposition to the Maidan government quickly became an unwinnable quagmire. Ukrainian forces were consistently beaten back by surprisingly well-organised and determined rebel forces hailing from the breakaway "People's Republics" in Donetsk and Luhansk. Resultantly, Poroshenko outlined a peace plan intended to compel the separatists to put down their arms. They refused to do so, prompting the President to order an even more brutal crackdown. This too was a counterproductive failure, with the rebels inflicting a series of embarrassing defeats on the Western-sponsored government. Kiev was ultimately forced to accept the terms of the first Minsk Accords. This agreement, like its successor, did not provide for secession or independence for the breakaway republics, but their full autonomy within Ukraine. Russia was named as a mediator, not party, in the conflict. Kiev was to resolve its dispute with rebel leaders directly. Successive Ukrainian governments consistently refused to do so, however. Instead, officials endlessly stonewalled, while pressuring Moscow to formally designate itself a party to the civil war. No wonder - had Russia accepted, Kiev's claims that its savage assault on the civilian population of Donbass was in fact a response to invasion by its giant neighbour would've been legitimised. In turn, an all-out Western proxy war in eastern Ukraine, of the kind that erupted in February 2022, could've been precipitated. Which, it is increasingly clear, was the plan all along. ICG noted that Russian leaders were from the start publicly and privately sympathetic to Russian-speakers in Donbass. Nonetheless, they issued no "clear guidance" to businessmen, government advisers, or the domestic population on whether - and how - they would be officially supported by Moscow in their dispute with the Maidan government. Hence, many Russian irregulars, encouraged by "what they regarded as the government's tacit approval, made their way to Ukraine." It was only after the conflict started that the Russian government formalised a relationship with the Donbass rebels, although the Kremlin quickly changed tack on what they should do. ICG records how a Ukrainian fighter "began hearing calls for restraint in rebel efforts to take control of eastern Ukrainian towns and cities" in late April 2014. However, "the separatist movement in Donbass was determined to move ahead." Due to this lack of control, and repeated calls for direct intervention in the conflict from the rebels, Russia replaced the Donetsk and Lugansk rebel leadership with hand-picked figures, who took an explicitly defensive posture. But the Kremlin was ultimately "beholden" to the breakaway republics, not vice versa. It could not even reliably order the rebels to stop fighting. A Lugansk paramilitary told ICG: "What do you do with 40,000 people who believe that, once they put down their arms, they will all be shot or arrested? Of course, they are going to fight to the death."

Will election-wary Iranians choose an ethnic Turk as the next president?

Ata Şahit

This theory, also known as the Theory of Absolute Velayat-e Faqih, posits that political authority should reside with religious scholars, who are regarded as the spiritual successors of the Imams. In Imami Shi'ism, belief in the imamate is one of the fundamental pillars of faith. This belief encompasses the notion that the position of the imamate, much like prophethood, is divinely decreed and sanctioned. Hardline conservatives, on the other hand, endorse the Tafiqi School theory. In other words, Saeed Jalili politically represents the Paydari Front and ideologically aligns with the Tafiqi School. The Turkic ethnic group constitutes a significant portion of Iran's population

REFORMIST with Turkic roots and a hardline conservative will face off in the run-off presidential elections in Iran, with the initial round of voting failing to throw up a clear winner. Elections in the Shia-majority country were necessitated following the death of the then-incumbent president Ebrahim Raisi in a helicopter crash on May 19. On July 5, Iranians will head to the polling booths to choose between reformist MasoudPezeshkian and conservative Saeed Jalili – barely a few days after the country saw a record-low turnout that didn't even reach 40 percent. With the country witnessing seismic shifts, the first question that begs an answer is: what implications do the results of the first round of voting hold for Iranian politics? Iran's political system aims to synthesise Shia interpretation of Islamic law and populism, emphasising both divine legitimacy and popular support. The component of Iran's political system is embodied in the Velayat-e Faqih interpretation of the Usuli school of Twelver Shiism. The theory of Velayat-e Faqih, articulated by Khomeini during his exile in Najaf, emerged as a cornerstone of Iran's founding principles following the 1979 revolution. This theory catalysed a profound transformation in the political ideology of Twelver Shiism. While the term Velayat-e Faqih fundamentally denotes the juridical authority of the faqih within a political framework, it also encompasses the governance authority of the faqih, as well as his role as the head of state. In contrast, the populist component is reflected in the elections for institutions such as the presidency, parliament, and the Assembly of Experts. In Iran's revolutionary discourse, voter turnout in elections is presented as a metric of state legitimacy. Indeed, Iranian officials, including the Supreme Leader Ali Khamenei, utilise the election participation rate to affirm the legitimacy of the republic's political system. In a speech on June 24, Khamenei emphasised the significance of high voter turnout in the presidential elections, asserting that substantial participation would enhance the honour of Iran. However, the first-round election results indicate that Khamenei's aspiration for a high turnout has not been substantially realised. The Iranian Interior Ministry reported that the turnout rate in the first round was 39.96 percent nationwide, with capital Tehran recording one of the lowest turnout rates at 23 percent. This means that 60 percent of voters boycotted the elections, suggesting that the issue of state legitimacy in Iran persists.

The second significant outcome of the first round of the Iranian presidential elections was the elimination of moderate conservatives and the preference for a hardline candidate by the conservative base. In the first round, Mohammad Bagher Ghalibaf represented the moderate conservatives, whereas Saeed Jalili represented the radical conservatives. According to the Iranian Interior Ministry's announcement of the election results, reformist candidate MasoudPezeshkian advanced to the second round with 10,415,991 votes, while the radical conservative candidate Saeed Jalili received 9,473,298 votes. Of these two political ideologies, the Front of Islamic Revolution Stability represents radical conservatism in Iranian politics. It comprises followers of Muhammad Taqi Misbah Yazdi, one of Iran's most hardline Shia clerics over the past forty years. Also known as "Shia Evangelicals", its members are purportedly part of the Hujjatiyeh Community, one of the most clandestine groups in the history of the country. They have been consistently denounced by moderate conservatives and reformists as Salafist Shias and the Iranian Taliban. In Iran's revolutionary ideology, conservatives represent the Intisab (appointment) theory of the Velayat-e Faqih interpretation within the Usuli school of Twelver Shiism, while reformists advocate for the election theory of the same interpretation. This theory, also known as the Theory of Absolute Velayat-e Faqih, posits that political authority should reside with religious scholars, who are regarded as the spiritual successors of the Imams. In Imami Shi'ism, belief in the imamate is one of the fundamental pillars of faith. This belief encompasses the notion that the position of the imamate, much like prophethood, is divinely decreed and sanctioned. Hardline conservatives, on the other hand, endorse the Tafiqi School theory. In other words, Saeed Jalili politically represents the Paydari Front and ideologically aligns with the Tafiqi School. The Turkic ethnic group constitutes a significant portion of Iran's population. According to the Strategic Geography of Iran, published by the Geographical Organization of the Iranian General Staff in 2014, the Persian ethnic group constitutes less than half of Iran's population. More than half of the population comprises non-Persian or non-Persian-speaking ethnic groups, with the Turkic ethnic group being the second-largest after the Persian ethnic group. During his visit to Türkiye in 2014, former Iranian foreign minister Ali Akbar Salehi stated that "40 percent of Iran's population is Turk". He high-

lighted that at least 30 million Turks reside in Iran, saying this demographic figure is a significant factor and can potentially enhance relations between the two countries. An analysis of the debates and campaigns in the first round of the Iranian presidential elections reveals that, for the first time, the issue of Turkic identity in Iran has prominently featured in the general elections. This prominence can be attributed largely to reformist candidate MasoudPezeshkian's Turkic heritage and his emphasis on the demands of the Turkic ethnic group. According to the first-round results, MasoudPezeshkian's focus resonated in regions with dense Turkic populations, where he secured the top position, significantly distancing himself from the runner-up. MasoudPezeshkian's support base is not confined to Azerbaijani Turks in northwest Iran but also includes a substantial following among the Qashqai Turks in central Iran. Sunnis form a significant portion of Iran's population. According to claims by their leaders, Sunnis comprise 20 percent of the population. This Sunni population is primarily concentrated in the northwest and northeast of Iran, particularly in the provinces of Sistan and Baluchestan. Iranian Sunnis allege that they face discrimination and are deprived of many basic rights and freedoms in a country where the official sect is Twelver Shiism. During campaigning, Pezeshkian consistently denounced this discrimination against Sunnis and publicly protested against their unfair treatment by the Tehran government on state television. This stance garnered attention from Iranian Sunnis, leading some Sunni activists to declare their support for Pezeshkian. This support was evident in the election results, where Pezeshkian secured first place in Sistan and Baluchestan province with 443,226 votes. In summary, Saeed Jalili led in regions with dense Persian populations, while MasoudPezeshkian prevailed in areas predominantly inhabited by minorities. On June 28, 60 percent of voters abstained from casting ballots in the elections to elect Iran's ninth president, indicating that the boycott movement has substantial social support. Conversely, over 10 million voters supported reformist candidate Pezeshkian, signalling their dissatisfaction with the status quo and the urgent need for reforms in the country. Given that every election in Iran over the past forty years has precipitated significant political shifts, the country appears to be on the brink of another major transformation. And July 5 could mark a new beginning for Iran and Iranians.

Electoral turmoil in US and France threatens twilight of the West

Baria Alamuddin

The blustering Trump and stumbling Biden in the latest presidential debate did more to discredit Western democracy than Moscow, Tehran or Beijing could ever hope to – a debate so disastrous that many Biden allies are pleading for him to withdraw. If Biden were to step down he would be remembered as a leader who put his nation first: staying and losing would entail historical ignominy as a disastrous president who imperilled US democracy for his own ego. In another highly significant election contest, "reformist" candidate Masoud Pezeshkian...

OVER the past few days in France I have spoken to many people who profoundly fear for the future of Western democracy. Influential cultural figures and intellectuals spoke eloquently about their trepidation over France's very identity amid the malign rise of extremes. Second-generation citizens worry that their European nationality could come under threat. Everyone I spoke to was determined to make their votes count. President Emmanuel Macron warned that France risked being plunged into civil war if either of his "extreme" opponents won a parliamentary majority. The far-right National Rally looks set to emerge as parliament's largest party after next week's second round of high-risk snap elections called by Macron after the right's dominant performance in the European Parliament elections. The left-wing New Popular Front also looks set to perform strongly, auguring an implosion of Macron's centrist Ensemble alliance. As one French academic put it, if Macron's snap elections gamble pays off, "he'll go down as a brilliant strategist." If not, he'll "go down in history as somebody who essentially exploded the traditional party system in France and ... took a grenade to the institutions of the Fifth Republic." Far-right leader Marine Le Pen threatened to reduce France's support for Ukraine and Macron's ability to control defense policy. While Macron has been one of Ukraine's fiercest supporters in Europe, Le Pen has a long record of flirtation with Putin. Macron accused her of being on the Kremlin's payroll. Financial markets have been spooked at outlandish economic proposals by both left and right, and the campaign has been distinguished by rabid antisemitism, Islamophobia, racism and anti-migrant incitement. Whether the outcome is far-right or far-left government, or a hung parliament, few doubt that France – a keystone state of the EU – is hurtling toward a new phase of dysfunction and polarization. Few European nations have not been rocked by extreme-right ascendancy. Populist-right leaders in Hungary, Austria and

the Czech Republic launched the "Patriots for Europe" parliamentary bloc, with an anti-immigrant, anti-European integration and anti-Ukraine agenda. Britain is a rare nation bucking this trend, with the election on Thursday set to deliver in a center-left majority. Ahead of NATO's 75th anniversary summit in Washington, nervous Europeans are gazing across the Atlantic with increasing certainty that Donald Trump is returning to the presidency. Why worry? Because a Trump presidency would spell disaster for Ukraine, given his unabashed affinity for Putin. Trump's notorious ambivalence to democratic governance norms would furthermore offer succor to autocrats and fascists worldwide. We may be aghast at the Biden administration's handling of the Gaza conflict, but at least Israel has been gently pressed to allow some aid in. Is there anybody who believes that Trump would lose any sleep if Palestinians were left to starve, or were expelled from their homeland altogether? During his first presidency Trump's worst impulses were constrained by heavy-hitting ministerial appointments, and even famously hawkish figures such as John Bolton curbed potentially disastrous policy lurches. It was Trump, before Biden, who ordered a rapid withdrawal from Afghanistan, while seeking to end other American overseas commitments. In the incoming Trump presidency, those appointed would be MAGA yes-men. NATO nations fear the alliance may not survive a further term of Trump unleashed. The blustering Trump and stumbling Biden in the latest presidential debate did more to discredit Western democracy than Moscow, Tehran or Beijing could ever hope to – a debate so disastrous that many Biden allies are pleading for him to withdraw. If Biden were to step down he would be remembered as a leader who put his nation first: staying and losing would entail historical ignominy as a disastrous president who imperilled US democracy for his own ego. In another highly significant election contest, "re-

formist" candidate MasoudPezeshkian will go up against hardliner Saeed Jalili in the second Iranian presidential election round. Perhaps the decision has been made that an unthreatening candidate – a cardiac surgeon indeed – is less likely to put Tehran in the US's crosshairs, given the possibility of an impulsive Trump holding the nuclear trigger. The regime's escalatory language nevertheless persists, with Iran's UN mission last week warning of "an obliterating war" if Israel embarked on "military aggression" in Lebanon. "A regime that threatens destruction deserves to be destroyed," Israeli Foreign Minister Israel Katz retorted, in no less provocative language. Macron has warned of the dangers for Europe of an "unreliable America" under Trump's sway; calling for a "more independent, more sovereign Europe able to defend itself and survive against all threats." However, at the moment when a new Trump presidency looks imminent, the National Rally's surge threatens to cut away Macron's powers to push for European military integration. Nearly 200 French diplomats made a public appeal that "our adversaries will view the victory of the extreme right as a weakening of France" and encouragement "to aggression against Europe." As the French cornerstone of the EU and NATO faces collapse, with Germany also grappling with economic weakness and an ascendant far right, and with Britain having already quit the EU altogether, European freedoms and democracy have scarcely ever looked in more peril. Macron warned this year: "Our Europe is mortal ... it can die, and whether it does depends entirely on our choices." My recent days in Europe served as a reminder that, compared with the US, this is a highly educated, cosmopolitan and cultured continent, populated by sizable demographics who are well aware of the menace posed by all-pervasive xenophobic right-wing autocracy. No less than the future of the Western world is at stake as progressive and freedom loving people embark on this decisive fight to protect their cherished way of life.

Briefs

Over 100 killed in crush at India religious event

LUCKNOW: Nearly a hundred people died in a stampede at a Hindu religious gathering in India's northern state of Uttar Pradesh, with scores of others injured, a senior government official said Tuesday. "We have confirmed 97 deaths so far and are focusing on providing relief and medical aid for the victims," Chaitra V, divisional commissioner of Aligarh city in Uttar Pradesh state, told AFP. The stampede happened in a village in Hathras district, about 200 km (125 miles) southeast of the national capital New Delhi, where authorities said a large crowd had gathered on an area of open ground in response to a call from a local religious leader. District police spokesperson Manish Chikara put the death toll at about 60 people, but said that figure may rise. Videos on social media showed bodies piled up on the ground outside a local hospital. Reuters could not immediately verify the images. "The incident happened due to overcrowding at the time when people were trying to leave the venue," Hathras district administrator Ashish Kumar told reporters. An unidentified witness told broadcaster India Today that there was a narrow exit at the venue: "As we tried to exit towards a field, suddenly a commotion started, and we didn't know what to do." — Agencies

PTI to hold jalsa on July 6

FAISAL SHEIKH

ISLAMABAD: Lashing out at the mandate thieves for resorting to delaying tactics to issue an NOC for its jalsa scheduled for July 6 at Tarnol, PTI leadership announced that they would hold a record-breaking peaceful public gathering at the designated place, come what may. The party leaders vowed that they would continue their peaceful political struggle until the supremacy of the constitution and rule of law are ensured in the country. The announcement was made during a press conference by PTI senior leaders, including Shamim Naqvi, ShoaibShaheen, and PTI Islamabad President Amir Mughal, among others, here on Tuesday. They made it clear that permission or no permission, a successful and peaceful public gathering would be held with public support, with the slogan "Qadi 804 ka Nara, AzadiHaqHarama," and urged supporters and workers to join in the jalsa, "ChaloChalo, Tarnol Chalo." Speaking on the occasion, Amir Mughal said that PTI had been struggling for a long time to get an NOC to hold a public gathering in Islamabad, but the administration denied permission on flimsy grounds.

Punjab CM Maryam's victory challenged

DNA

LAHORE:The Lahore High Court's Election Tribunal (ET) has directed the Election Commission of Pakistan to produce the record of Form-45 related to the Punjab Chief Minister, Maryam Nawaz. The court summoned the record as the success of the CM in the general elections has been challenged. Justice Anwar Hussain of the ET judge heard the appeal filed by Mehar Shafiq who contested against Maryam Nawaz from PP 159, Lahore. Submitting his application, the applicant claimed that the victory notification of Maryam Nawaz is contrary to the facts and should be invalidated. During the proceedings, the CM's lawyers argued that the appeal is not admissible. In response to a query from the tribunal judge, the Election Commission lawyer said that 102 polling stations were set up in the constituency. The tribunal judge asked why Form-45, carrying the signature of the presiding officer and other candidates, was not uploaded on the website.

Palestinians forcefully displaced from Khan Younis to al-Mawasi

The war started with Hamas's October 7 attack on southern Israel, which resulted in the deaths of 1,195 people, mostly civilians, according to an AFP tally based on Israeli figures

NEWS DESK

GAZA STRIP: Israeli occupation forces carried out fresh strikes in southern Gaza on Tuesday, forcing hundreds of Palestinians to flee after the army once again ordered the evacuation of certain densely populated areas. Witnesses reported multiple strikes in and around the city of Khan Younis, where eight people were killed and more than 30 were wounded, according to a medical source and the Palestinian Red Crescent. The bombardment came after a rare rocket barrage claimed by the militant group Islamic Jihad, which has fought alongside Hamas. The rockets were aimed at Israeli occupied areas near the Gaza border and were fired in retaliation for Israeli "crimes... against our Palestinian people," said the Al-Quds Brigades, the armed wing of Islamic Jihad. The Israeli occupation military said about "20 projectiles were identified crossing from the area of Khan Younis," most of which were intercepted. It reported no casualties and said artillery was "striking the sources of the fire." This was followed on Monday by an order to evacuate Al-Qarara, BaniSuhaila and other towns in Rafah and Khan Younis, nearly two months after an initial order to evacuate Rafah ahead of a ground offensive. Prior to Israel's ground incursion in Rafah, well over one million people had been displaced to Gaza's southernmost city. "Fear and extreme anxiety have gripped people after the evacuation order," said BaniSuhaila resident Ahmad Najjar. "There is a large displacement of residents."

1.9 mln now displaced in Gaza, says UN

NEW YORK: The UN humanitarian coordinator for Gaza said Tuesday that 1.9 million people were now displaced in the territory, adding she was "deeply concerned" by reports of new evacuation orders for Khan Younis. The United Nations has estimated that up to 250,000 people are impacted by the Israeli military order for civilians to leave Al-Qarara, BaniSuhaila and other localities near the territory's second city of Khan Younis. "Over 1 million people have been displaced once again, desperately seeking shelter and safety (and) 1.9 million people are now displaced across Gaza... I'm deeply concerned about reports of new evacuation orders issued in the area of Khan Younis," Sigrid Kaag told the UN Security Council. "Palestinian civilians in Gaza have been plunged into an abyss of suffering. Their homes life shattered, their lives upended. The war has not merely created the most profound of humanitarian crises. It has unleashed a maelstrom of human misery," Kaag added. She said that not enough aid was reaching the war-torn strip, and that the opening of new crossings, particularly to southern Gaza, was necessary to avert a humanitarian disaster. Kaag said the Rafah crossing between Gaza and Egypt should be re-opened, and also pleaded with the international community to do more to fund relief efforts. — Agencies

Other parts of the Gaza Strip were reeling from continued fighting nearly nine months into the devastating conflict. Witnesses and the civil defense agency reported Israeli air strikes in the southern Rafah area and in the central Nuseirat refugee camp. And in Gaza City's Shujaiya district, where battles raged for a fifth day on Monday, witnesses reported heavy Israeli tank fire. An AFP correspondent reported Israeli helicopters firing on houses in Shujaiya, while Hamas's armed wing, the Al-Qassam Brigades, said it was continuing to fight in Shujaiya and Rafah. The Israeli military said troops "eliminated numerous terrorists" in raids in Shujaiya, where air strikes also killed "approximately 20" militants. The military also announced the death of a soldier in southern Gaza, bringing its total toll during the ground offensive to 317. Netanyahu, who recently declared that the "intense phase" of the war was winding down, said on Sunday troops were "operating in Rafah, Shujaiya, everywhere in the Gaza Strip." "This is a difficult fight that is being waged above ground... and below ground" in tunnels. The war started with Hamas's October 7 attack on southern Israel, which resulted in the deaths of 1,195 people, mostly civilians, according to an AFP tally based on Israeli figures. The militants also seized 251 hostages,

116 of whom remain in Gaza including 42 the army says are dead. Israel's retaliatory offensive has killed at least 37,900 people, also mostly civilians, according to data from the health ministry in Hamas-run Gaza. Months of on-and-off talks toward a truce and hostage release deal have made little progress, with Hamas saying Saturday there was "nothing new" in a revised plan presented by US mediators. Israeli authorities released Mohammed Abu Salmiya, director of Gaza City's Al-Shifa hospital, along with dozens of other detainees returned Monday to Gaza for treatment, sparking anger from Netanyahu. Successive Israeli raids have reduced large parts of Al-Shifa, the territory's largest medical complex, to rubble. Israel has accused Hamas of using Al-Shifa and other hospitals in Gaza as a cover for military operations, claims the militants have rejected. Speaking after his release, Abu Salmiya said he had suffered "severe torture" during his detention since November. "Detainees were subjected to physical and psychological humiliation" and "several inmates died in interrogation centers and were deprived of food and medicine," he said. Israel's Shin Bet intelligence agency said it had decided on the release alongside the Israeli military "to free up places in detention centers." The agency said it "opposed the release of terrorists" who had taken part in attacks on Israeli civilians "so it was decided to free several Gaza detainees who represent a lesser danger." But Netanyahu said he had ordered the agency to conduct an investigation into the release and provide him with the results by Tuesday.

Japanese envoy KPS over contributions to IT industry

ADIL SHAHEEN

ISLAMABAD: Ambassador of Japan to Pakistan Wada Mitsuhiro has praised Komatsu Pakistan Soft (KPS) for its outstanding contributions to the Information Technology industry. In an event arranged to celebrate the silver jubilee of Komatsu Pakistan Soft (KPS), the ambassador highlighted KPS as a key player in leveraging Pakistan's rich IT human resources to address the global demand for technology professionals. He informed about the growing recognition of Pakistan as a valuable source of IT talent, especially considering Japan's anticipated shortage of 500,000 IT professionals. He mentioned that Komatsu was established in 1921, began its international expansion in the 1950s, and now has offices in 150 countries worldwide. The Ambassador noted that in 2021, Komatsu celebrated its centenary and is now moving forward to the next 100 years. He added that Japanese human resource companies are active in Pakistan, and the Ministry of IT and Telecommunications, Pakistan Software Export Board (PSEB), and JICA are collaborating to establish a system that connects Pakistani IT human resources with Japanese companies.

Pak-Jordan to enhance coop



ISLAMABAD: Jordanian Ambassador, Dr. Maen Khreasat calls on Senator Ahad Khan Cheema, Minister of Economic Affairs. — DNA

Amb. Hashmi visits Xinjiang to boost economic, cultural ties

BEIJING: Pakistani Ambassador to China Khalil Hashmi recently visited Urumqi and Kashgar cities of Xinjiang Uygur Autonomous Region of China to boost economic, cultural ties, Gwadar Pro reported on Tuesday. In Urumqi he participated in the opening ceremony of the 8th China-Eurasia Expo last week and held meetings with local political leadership and business enterprises. The Ambassador had also a bilateral meeting with Erkin Tuniyaz, Chairman of the people's government of Xinjiang Uygur Autonomous Region. The two sides reaffirmed the significance of Pakistan-China relations and Xinjiang's role as the artery connecting the two countries.

Briefing the Chairman about Pakistan's efforts to attract investment from China in 13 export-oriented sectors, Ambassador Hashmi solicited his support in encouraging Xinjiang businesses to further enhance investment and trade cooperation with Pakistan, especially in sectors such as agriculture, textiles, mining, and logistics. During his stay in Xinjiang, the Ambassador was invited by the local authorities to make a number of speeches. Speaking at the "Open Corps" event, organized by Xinjiang Production and Construction Corps (XPCC), he underlined Pakistan's strong natural and human endowments and the increased opportunities for bilateral economic cooperation. The Ambassador addressed round tables both in Urumqi and Kashgar in agriculture, textiles and logistics, with support from the local authorities. Separately, he interacted with various business enterprises individually in the 13 priority sectors identified. Ambassador Hashmi traveled all the way to the land border between Pakistan and China to hold discussions on integrated border management and arrangements for all-weather route along the Khunjerab pass. In order to further promote academic exchanges, Ambassador Hashmi visited Xinjiang Normal University and got briefed on the Urdu Language Center and interacted with Pakistani students.

UK elections: Muslim vote decisive in 100 constituencies

Labour votes plummeted in areas with a high Muslim population including Blackburn, Bradford

MONITORING DESK

LONDON: The British-Muslim vote could play a crucial role in around 100 constituencies including in majority of swing seats around the country, new research has found. A new campaign group called "The Muslim Vote" and the right-wing "Henry Jackson Society" (HJS) have put the number of seats at 92 and 120 respectively, stating that the population is more than 10% Muslims in around 100 seats. The Henry Jackson Society's research on religious diversity in UK constituencies puts the number at 120 where Muslim vote can play a major role, especially in swing seats. The HJS said that of the 220 most marginal seats in the general election, Islam is the largest minority religion in 129 of them (58.6%); the second largest minority religion in marginal seats is Hinduism in 23 of them (10.5%), followed by Sikhism in six marginal seats (2.7%), and Judaism in three (1.4%). The swing seats were identified by the political consultancy Electoral Calculus, which defines a marginal seat as one where the margin of victory is expected to be 10% or less. The 220 marginal seats at the general election make up a third (33.8%) of all available seats. Martin Baxter, chief executive of Electoral Calculus, said that the results of their most recent MRP poll with Savanta found

that religion is a "significant factor" in how people vote. A demonstration of this came when in the local elections earlier this year, dozens of candidates around the country ran on a Gaza ticket and defeated their Labour rivals — dealing a huge blow to the Labour in areas it took for granted for decades. Labour votes plummeted in areas with a high Muslim population including Blackburn, Bradford, Pendle, Oldham, Luton, London and Manchester. If the same pattern is repeated at the July 4 elections at the hands of the Gaza candidates, the Labour support will collapse further in these areas. The Muslim Vote, a campaign group set up by grassroots Muslim organisations, to encourage Muslim voting participation has identified around 92 seats where the Muslim voters are above 10% of the total vote. However, all agree that Muslims are a diverse group and don't vote in unison or en bloc. They are divided on political, ethnic and sectarian lines. 1-Bradford West (54%), 2-Birmingham Hall Green and Moseley (49%), 3-East Ham (43%), 4-Blackburn (42%), 5-Birmingham Ladywood (42%), 6-Bethnal Green and Stepney (40%), 7-Dewsbury and Batley (39%), 8-Bradford East (39%), 9-Birmingham Perry Barr (38%), 10-Ilford South (37%), 11-Birmingham Yardley (37%), 12-Birmingham Hodge Hill (33%), 13-Leicester South (31%), 14-Poplar and Limehouse (30%), 15-Oldham West (28%), 6-Manchester Rusholme (27%), 17-Stratford and Bow (27%), 18-Slough (27%), 19-Luton North (27%), 20-Ilford North (27%), 21-Luton South and South Bedfordshire (26%), 22-Rochdale (26%), 23-Barking (24%), 24-Gorton and Denton (24%), 25-Brent East (23%), 26-Leicester East (22%), 27-West Ham and Beckton (22%), 28-Queen's Park and Maida Vale (21%), 29-Walthamstow (21%), 30-Bolton South and Walkden (21%).

Bushra Bibi gets bail in 190m pounds case

Two-member IHC bench approved PTI founder Imran Khan's bail plea in said case in May

COURT REPORTER

RAWALPINDI: An accountability court on Monday approved Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) founder Imran Khan's wife and former first lady Bushra Bibi's pre-arrest bail in the £190 million reference. The development comes after a two-member Islamabad High Court (IHC) bench comprising Chief Justice Aamer Farooq and Justice Tariq Mehmood Jahangiri had approved Khan's bail plea in the said case in May. The former prime minister, along with Bushra and other PTI leaders, are facing a NAB inquiry related to a settlement between the PTI government and a property tycoon, which reportedly caused a loss of £190 million to the national exchequer. The couple, however, remains behind bars due to the iddat case and is unlikely to be freed after a district and sessions court rejected their pleas seeking suspension of the sentences in the aforesaid case. During the hearing today, the NAB presented three more witnesses who were cross-examined by the defence lawyers. So far, statements of 30 witnesses have been recorded in the case, of which, 27 have gone through cross-examination. The accountability watchdog's counsels also apprised the court that the arrest warrant for the former first lady has not been issued yet.

Karachi police bust notorious gang

NAZIR SIYAL

KARACHI: Police in Gulbhar Colony, also known as Golimar, on Tuesday arrested a gang of high-tech young thieves specialising in stealing motorcycles, forging documents, and then selling them online — cleverly staying off the radar of anti-vehicle lifting agencies. According to SSP Central Zeeshan Siddiqui, the modus operandi of the motorbike lifters was a sophisticated three-stage operation, which they had been successfully using to make illegal money for quite a while now. "The gang members would first acquire legitimate documents for motorcycles. These documents were the foundation of their illicit trade," said Siddiqui while talking to the media.

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