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Israel must face consequences to deter others from 'cruelty'

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PTI's Shafqat Mahmood quits politics

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Champion Zheng into Palermo final

Detailed News On Page-06



Grave security lapse

Afghans attack Pak Consulate in Frankfurt

The video of the incident went viral on social media in which the Afghan nationals could be seen storming the Pakistani consulate. There are reports that they also tried burning Pakistani flag

NEWS DESK/DNA

FRANKFURT: Pakistani consulate in Germany's Frankfurt came under attack by Afghan nationals who vandalised the building by throwing stones and also pulled down the country's flag. The video of the incident went viral on social media in which the Afghan nationals could be seen storming the Pakistani consulate. There are reports that they also tried burning the Pakistani flag. Following the incident, Pakistani diplomatic officials raised concerns about the security of foreign installations, demanding the German Foreign Ministry to initiate an investigation into the attack. The officials also said that German government is responsible for the security of the foreign diplomatic installations. Meanwhile, it has been reported that the situation has also drawn attention of the international communities which raised similar concerns regarding the security. However, the officials have been assured of a thorough investigation by

Pak condemns reprehensible vandalising act

FAISAL SHEIKH

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan Embassy in Germany on Sunday strongly condemned the reprehensible vandalising act at Pakistan Consulate General in Frankfurt by miscreants on July 20, 2024. "We are in contact with the German authorities to ensure such a situation doesn't arise again and the miscreants face legal consequences," the embassy said on its official X handle. It also appealed to its community to remain patient and calm. According to media reports, the Pakistani consulate in Frankfurt came under attack on Saturday (July 20) by Afghan nationals who vandalised the building by throwing stones and also pulled down the country's flag.

The German authorities in Frankfurt. They have also arrested several people who are being investi-

gated after the video went viral. It is, however, unclear as to what was the cause of the incident.



ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif unveiling a plaque during the groundbreaking of Jinnah Medical Complex. – DNA

PTI to file reference against CEC

The reference demands the removal of the Chief Election Commissioner and the four members

ADIL SHAHEEN

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) has decided to file a reference against the Chief Election Commissioner Sikandar Sultan Raja and four other members of the Election Commission today. Barrister Ali Zafar will be representing PTI in this matter. The founder of PTI has entrusted Barrister Ali Zafar with the responsibility of filing the reference, which will be submitted to the Supreme Judicial Council. The reference demands the removal of the Chief Election Commissioner and

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Pak to press Chinese IPPs to adopt local coal

"If Chinese IPPs move from imported to domestic coal, the electricity tariff may decrease by Rs2.5 per unit," says energy minister

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan has decided to press Chinese independent power producers (IPPs), which rely on imported coal, to switch to locally sourced solid fossil fuel to cut generation costs and provide relief to consumers tormented by bloated utility bills. "Pakistan this month will ask Chinese power plants

Continued on Page 06

Jinnah Medical Complex

Gov't determined to provide free medical facilities to patients

He said the nursing schools and laboratories would also be established in the hospital and the deserving patients would avail 100% lab tests facility

STAFF REPORT

ISLAMABAD, Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif on Sunday said the government was determined to provide state of the art free healthcare facilities to the deserving patients across the country. Addressing a groundbreaking ceremony of Jinnah Medical Complex here, the prime minister said the Complex was going to be the region's one of the best medical center where the deserving people would get 100% free medical treatment. "This is the gift of the coalition government not only for the residents of the Rawalpindi and Islamabad but for the people from Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Azad Jammu & Kashmir and Gilgit Baltistan as well," PM Shehbaz Sharif said. He said once completed, the medical complex would offer the world's best healthcare

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Governor urges PM to call APC on law, order situation in KP

Faisal Kundi also responds to defamation notice from Gandapur

SHAMIM SHAHID

PESHAWAR: Responding to defamation notice against him from Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP) Chief Minister Ali Amin Gandapur, Governor Faisal Karim Kundi said he did not think Gandapur commanded respect. The governor said the law and order situation in the province is not good, urging Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif to convene

Continued on Page 06

Briefs

Naqvi condemns attack in Peshawar

Emphasizes nation is united in its resolve to combat terrorism

MEHTAB PIRZADA

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Interior Mohsin Naqvi has strongly condemned the firing attack at a police check post in Peshawar. He paid rich tribute to Constable Saeed, who sacrificed his life in the line of duty. The Minister for Interior expressed his heartfelt condolences to the family of the martyred constable and said that Constable Saeed had rendered the highest sacrifice by laying down his life while performing his duty. He added that we salute the sacrifice of Constable Saeed, who laid down his life for the country. He stated that sacrifices of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Police in the war against terrorism will always be remembered. He emphasized the nation is united in its resolve to combat terrorism and has shown unwavering determination at every level.

Turkmenistan's FM will arrive today

Talks between the two sides will cover all aspects of bilateral relations

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Foreign Minister of Turkmenistan Rasit Meredow is paying a three day visit to Pakistan from today. He will hold extensive talks with Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Ishaq Dar and call on Pakistani leadership. Talks between the two sides will cover all aspects of bilateral relations. They will also exchange views on regional and global developments.

PTI orchestrated Bannu rally incident to blame army: Tarar

Imran's Adiala 'presidential suite' better than middle-class house, says information minister

KHAYAM ABBASI

ISLAMABAD: Information Minister Attaullah Tarar slammed Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) founder Imran Khan for claiming that he was imprisoned in a death cell when, in actuality, he was in a "presidential suite", which is better than a middle-class family's house. "You are telling the West that you're facing troubles, and you're imprisoned in a death cell. This death cell is a 'presidential suite' in Adiala jail, which is better than a middle-class house," Tarar said during a press conference in Islamabad. Imran, in an interview with a British newspaper through his lawyers, claimed that he was imprisoned in a death cell, where "terrorists" are kept to ensure "they have no contact with anyone". The 71-year-old cricketer-turned-politician has been in prison for almost a year now in three cases – the Toshakhana case, cipher case, and the un-Islamic marriage case. His wife, Bushra Bibi, is also behind bars.

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NAB probes Imran Khan, Bushra Bibi in new Toshakhana reference

IHC takes up Imran, Bushra pleas today

COURT REPORTER

RAWALPINDI: The National Accountability Bureau (NAB) team, headed by Deputy Director Mustansar Imam Shah probed Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) founder Imran Khan and his spouse Bushra Bibi in the new Toshakhana reference at Adiala Jail. According to jail sources, today marks the seventh day of the NAB team's

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Bangladesh court scraps job quotas after deadly unrest

Law Minister Anisul Huq said the government would implement the ruling within days. Some student leaders have vowed to continue protesting

FOREIGN DESK

DHAKA: Bangladesh's top court has scrapped most of the quotas on government jobs that had sparked violent clashes across the country that have killed more than 100 people. A third of public sector jobs had been reserved for the relatives of veterans from the country's war for independence from Pakistan in 1971. But now the court has ruled just 5% of the roles can be reserved for veterans' relatives. Law Minister Anisul Huq said the government would implement the ruling within days. Some student leaders have vowed to continue protesting. Speaking to the media, Mr Huq also denied that Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina - who has been in power since 2009 - was losing her grip on Bangladesh. "In that case you would have seen the mass population of the country to revolt. They have actually supported the government in this turmoil and they have said yes, the government should act to bring the violence to an end," he said. He blamed opposition forces for joining the protests and destroying "the symbols of Bangladesh's development". Several protest movement coordinators have told the BBC

that action would continue until the government took action. "We applaud the court's verdict," said one coordinator, Nusrat Tabassum. "But our main demand is with the executive department. Until those demands are implemented, the ongoing nationwide complete shutdown program will continue." The students' demands also include justice for protesters killed in recent days, the release of detained protest leaders, the restoration of internet services and resignations of government ministers. Streets in the capital Dhaka are deserted as a second day of curfew is in force, but sporadic clashes continued even after the supreme court ruling. About 115 people are known to have died but local media report a much higher casualty figure. At least 50 people were killed on Friday alone. The Supreme Court ruling orders that 93% of public sector jobs should be recruited on merit, leaving 5% for the family members of the veterans of the country's independence war. A remaining 2% is reserved for people from ethnic minorities or with disabilities. Scrapped in 2018 by Ms Hasina's government, the quota system was reinstated by a lower court last month,

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PM's aide announces mountaineering school in Gilgit-Baltistan

Romina Khurshid Alam credits PM Shehbaz for Gilgit-Baltistan mountaineering school and mountain region development

ADIL SHAHEEN

ISLAMABAD :Coordinator to the Prime Minister on Climate Change & Environmental Coordination, Romina Khurshid Alam on Sunday emphasised efforts have been launched on the PM's directives to set up mountaineering school in Gilgit-Baltistan having structured training and educational facilities specifically tailored to mountaineering, sherpa training and sustainable tourism practices in Pakistan's north to promote world-class environmental-friendly mountaineering, climbing and mountain tourism. While chairing a second review meeting of the Prime Minister's Committee to Establish Mountaineering School in Gilgit-Baltistan held here in the climate change and environmental coordination ministry, Romina Khurshid Alam said, "Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif is very much instrumental for setting up the mountaineering school in Gilgit-Baltistan and other mountain regions of the country." Establishing such facilities that would help equip aspirant mountaineers and mountain climbers with the knowledge and confidence to enjoy the mountains safely while respecting the local environment, values and cultures of mountain communities and fellow climbers would prove an important

imitative for promoting sustainable and environmental-friendly mountaineering and climbing in the country, the PM's climate aide said. "A plan is being implemented in close coordination and support with the Gilgit-Baltistan government to set up first government-run mountaineering school of the world-class standard in Skardu. It also aims to open new vistas of employment opportunities for the local mountain communities and help promote sustainable and environmental-friendly mountaineering and climbing," remarked the PM's aide. Romina Khurshid said that the picturesque Gilgit-Baltistan has long been celebrated for its scenic towering peaks, including K2, the second highest mountain in the world. The region is rich in natural beauty and cultural heritage, attracting adventurers and explorers from around the globe. However, the region holds a great untapped potential for promoting mountaineering and climbing despite through arrangement of mountaineering skill development trainings and facilities, she added. "By equipping local and international participants with the necessary skills and knowledge at the proposed mountaineering school to be established in Skardu soon, we aim to foster a new generation of mountaineers and tourism professionals who are committed

to preserving the natural and cultural integrity of Gilgit-Baltistan," the PM's climate aide stressed. Earlier, the meeting discussed at length the mountaineering and climbing curriculum, modules for relevant skill development, rescue trainings, identification of site for building mountaineering school, training programme for local tour guides and potential funding opportunities and collaboration opportunities for establishing and managing the proposed mountaineering school facility. The meeting was attended, among others, by Additional Secretary Climate Change & Environmental Coordination Zulfiqar Younas, Deputy Secretary (CC) Climate Change and Environmental Coordination Ministry Dr. Mazhar Hayat, Secretary, Inter-Provincial Coordination Ministry Nadeem Irshad Kayani, Secretary federal education & professional training, Mohyuddin Ahmad Wani, senior official representative of National Vocational and Technical Training Commission, Gilgit-Baltistan Planning & Development Department, Leading Pakistani mountaineer Naila Kiani PRO to PM's Coordinator Muhammad Arshad Chaudhry, Deputy Director Climate Change & Environmental Coordination Ministry Muhammad Saleem.



ISLAMABAD : Coordinator to PM on Climate Change, Romina Khurshid Alam chairing Second Review Meeting of PM's Committee to establish mountaineering school in Gilgit-Baltistan held here in the Climate Change and Environmental Coordination Ministry.—DNA

3-day IT test phase concludes in Hyderabad

HYDERABAD: Under the Governor's Initiative, the three-day IT test phase was concluded here Sunday. On July 19, over 25,000 young people appeared in the test, followed by more than 15,000 on July 20. On the third and final day, a significant number of youth from Hyderabad participated in the tests. After the three-day testing process results will be announced on the Governor House website and Governor Sindh's social media accounts. Only successful candidates will be eligible for free IT training courses. Following Karachi, Hyderabad will also witness 50,000 young people receiving free IT education. It was pertinent to mention that on the first day of the tests, Governor Sindh Kamran Khan Tessori himself participated and remained present for over six hours. Various Consul Generals have offered Governor Sindh the opportunity to provide jobs in their countries for trained IT professionals. During the training, the participants are earning between \$300 to \$400 per month, with potential earnings of up to 1.5 to 2 million PKR per month upon course completion. The significance and effectiveness of the IT courses under the Governor Initiative have led to widespread demand for these programs in other regions and constituencies.—APP

Youth needs provision of proper guidance: Minister

Meena Khan Afridi said that the primary purpose of entering into politics was to bring about reforms in the society

SHAMIM SHAHID

PESHAWAR : The Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Minister for Higher Education, Meena Khan Afridi on Sunday said that youths were the precious assets of Pakistan that needed provision of proper guidance while their right utilization can put the country on track of development. He said that the primary purpose of entering into politics was to bring about reforms in the society. The minister said that to pull Pakistan out of its current crises, everyone must play a positive role. We have to play a key role for the solution of issues being faced by Pakistan. He expressed these views as a chief guest at a degree-awarding ceremony held at Frontier Law College Peshawar. The event was attended by the Controller of Examinations of

University of Peshawar, Dr. Hizbullah Khan, College Principal Justice (Retd) Yahya Zahid Gillani, College founder Akhtar Ali Khan Nahqi, Coordinator Lubna Shamshad Khan, former Peshawar Mayor candidate Rizwan Bangash and a large number of students. Addressing the ceremony, the provincial minister said we have to think and fulfill our duties and responsibilities with enthusiasm adding that no one would come from abroad to solve our issues. "Pakistan's biggest asset is its youth. If we make sure the use of young people properly and provide them with better platforms, Pakistan can progress significantly," he said. Youth can play an important role in the development of a country, the minister said. He added that Pakistan cannot progress until the supremacy of law and constitution was established in the country. "You are entering into your practical life with many responsibilities. Your education should not be limited to obtaining a degree but extend to establish the supremacy of law and play a role in bridging the gap between the rich and the poor. Step into practical life with the mindset that we will serve the country by ensuring the supremacy of law in society and providing speedy justice to people" Meena Khan urged the law graduated students of the college. He further said every human being has the potential, and you also have talent, bring out your talent and use it for the development of the country. At the end of the ceremony, the provincial minister distributed law degrees among the graduates of the College, awarded trophies to the position holders and congratulated them.

BISP starts registration for Sikh families

ISLAMABAD : In a historic development, the internationally acclaimed Benazir Income Support Programme (BISP) has started the registration process for the Sikh community in Buner, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. The registration process has been commenced in pursuance of the directives of Chairperson of the BISP, Senator Rubina Khalid. BISP field staff is actively conducting surveys of deserving Sikh families to include them in the program, reflecting the promise and commitment made by the chairperson to the Sikh community. This initiative reflects Senator Rubina Khalid's firm commitment to ensure that all deserving families, regardless of their religious background, receive the support and benefits of the BISP. Sikh community has expressed their gratitude to Senator Rubina Khalid and appreciated her efforts towards their welfare through BISP. During her recent visit to Buner, Senator Rubina Khalid met with members of the Sikh community at Pir Baba Gurdwara. She guided the Sikh women through the BISP registration process and instructed the staff at the BISP office in Buner to facilitate the survey for deserving women from the Sikh community.—APP

IGP releases Rs 2.15m funds for treatment of cops children

LAHORE: Inspector General of Police (IGP) Punjab Dr. Usman has released additional funds of Rs 2.15 million for treatment of children of police employees, who are suffering from serious diseases. According to details, Constable Khadim Hussain of Dera Ghazi Khan received Rs1 million for a bone-marrow operation of his 3-year-old son. ASI Agha Baqir of Rahim Yar Khan received Rs 300,000 for heart surgery of his 5-year-old son. Driver constable Safdar Hussain received Rs 250,000 for treatment of his 12-year-old daughter's blood cancer. Constable Muhammad Amanullah of Khushab received Rs 250,000 for major surgery of his 5-year-old

son. Constable Muhammad Abbas of Okara received Rs 250,000 for treatment of his 4-year-old daughter Anaya Abbas's blood cancer. Family of Constable Shehbaz Mansoor (late) of Lahore Police received Rs 100,000 for an eye operation of his son Arman Mansoor. The funds were issued after a meeting and scrutiny by the Medical Financial Assistance Committee. Earlier this year, more than Rs 220 million has been provided for medical expenses for the children of police employees. Meanwhile, Inspector General of Police (IGP) Punjab Dr. Usman Anwar has taken notice of an incident in Pakpattan where a youth was set on fire and killed over a shop ownership dispute near Hos-

pital Road. He has sought a report from RPO Sahiwal. He directed DPO Pakpattan to arrest the accused immediately. The IGP said that the accused did not deserve any leniency, strict legal action should be taken against him. Pakpattan police took immediate action following the death of Abbas, who died from burns in the City Pakpattan police station area. Based on the complaint, filed by the deceased's mother, a case was registered against three accused and two unidentified persons. The City Pakpattan police have arrested the three named suspects. DPO Pakpattan Tariq Wilayat said the parties involved had a dispute over shop ownership.—APP

Law Minister inaugurates projects costing Rs.55.5mn

PESHAWAR: Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Law and Parliamentary Affairs Minister Aftab Alam Afridi Advocate along with senior party stalwart Abid ur Rahman Afridi on Sunday laid the foundation stone of reconstruction of the building of Government Girls Primary School Sunni Khel in Tehsil Dara Adam Khel of Kohat District which will be completed at a cost of Rs.25.5 Million. Similarly, the Minister along with the local party leadership and elders also inaugurated the Shadikehel-Mandakhel-Kamalkhel Road which has been completed at a cost of Rs.30 Million. The Law Minister on this occasion said that developmental works are not a favor to anyone but it is the right of the people. He said that we are the custodians of the people's rights and we will leave no stone unturned to achieve this goal for which the people have voted him to power. The minister regretted that some rejected elements by are trying to shine their politics on our projects, but the people know very well that who completed this road which was remained damaged for the last many years. He assured, in the present tenure, not only incomplete projects will be completed but also new projects of public interest will be started with the mutual consultation of the local leadership. Referring to the education sector, Aftab Alam said that the government of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa is paying special attention to education, especially the women's education.—APP

Duties and responsibilities of food departments Punjab, Sindh, KP, Balochistan AJK & GB

Public complaints about the food departments are widespread, and it is important to determine whether these complaints are based on facts or misconceptions

MUMTAZ AHMED BHATTI



In Pakistan, the provincial food departments play a critical role in ensuring the availability and quality of flour, a staple food for the majority of the population. Their primary responsibilities include the procurement of wheat, the release of wheat to flour mills, and the monitoring of flour quality to ensure that high-quality flour reaches the people. The procurement of wheat is a fundamental responsibility of the provincial food departments. This process involves purchasing wheat from farmers at a set support price, which aims to ensure a fair income for farmers while maintaining a stable wheat supply for consumers. Once procured, the wheat is released to flour mills according to the needs of the

market. The objective is to ensure that there is a consistent supply of flour, preventing shortages and stabilizing prices. This process is often marred by inefficiencies and corruption. Reports indicate that wheat bags are sometimes reopened during dispatch from procurement centers, particularly in regions such as Punjab, Sindh, South Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, and South Balochistan. This reopening can lead to the tampering of wheat quality and quantity, ultimately affecting the final product. Ensuring that wheat bags are not reopened and that wheat reaches flour mills intact is essential for maintaining the integrity of the supply chain. Maintaining the quality of flour is another crucial responsibility of the provincial food departments. To achieve this, these departments take samples of flour from mills and markets and send them to laboratories for testing. Flour mills whose samples fail to meet quality standards are subject to fines, closures, or reductions in their wheat release quotas. This system is designed to incentivize mills to maintain high standards and to ensure that substandard flour does not reach consumers. Despite these measures, the presence of substandard flour in the market remains a significant issue. In many cities, flour with high moisture and gluten content is commonly found. The failure of food officers to fulfill their responsibilities and the lack of strict action against suppliers of substandard flour are major con-

tributing factors. Effective quality control requires not only rigorous testing but also the enforcement of penalties against those who violate standards. A single, high-quality type of flour should be available to meet the needs of the population. The markets in Pakistan's provinces, Azad Jammu and Kashmir, and Gilgit-Baltistan offer a wide variety of flour types, often of varying quality. This diversity can be confusing for consumers and can lead to the consumption of substandard flour. Ensuring uniformity in the quality of flour available in the market is a challenge that requires consistent monitoring and regulation. The effective functioning of the provincial food departments is also hindered by administrative challenges. According to rules and regulations, appointments within these departments should be made proportionately between food officers and administrative officers. Political influence often leads to appointments that violate these regulations. Junior grade officers are sometimes posted to senior positions, and influential officers are stationed at favored locations for extended periods. Officers are occasionally given additional charges of multiple posts, which can lead to inefficiencies and conflicts of interest. The appointment of officers based on merit and adherence to regulations is crucial for the effective functioning of food departments. Political interference not only undermines the departments' operations but also erodes public

trust in their ability to ensure food security. Proper storage of wheat is essential to maintain its quality before it is processed into flour. After procurement, wheat must be stored according to prescribed standards to prevent spoilage and contamination. In Pakistan, maintaining these standards is a significant challenge. Inadequate storage facilities, poor handling practices, and the reopening of wheat bags all contribute to the degradation of wheat quality. Improving storage infrastructure and practices is vital to ensure that wheat remains in good condition until it reaches the flour mills. Public complaints about the food departments are widespread, and it is important to determine whether these complaints are based on facts or misconceptions. One common concern is the spread of stomach diseases due to the consumption of non-standard flour. The presence of contaminants or improper processing methods can lead to serious health issues. Addressing these complaints requires a transparent and responsive approach from the food departments, including thorough investigations and corrective actions. Food departments must enhance their transparency and responsiveness to public complaints to restore trust and ensure that high-quality flour reaches the people. By addressing these challenges, the provincial food departments can better fulfill their mandate and contribute to the overall well-being of the population.

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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

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MH.....5611116
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Met Office.....9250360-6
RDA.....5555864
TMA.....5770886
Cantonment Board 9270151-3

Water Tank

Islamabad.....0321-5744480

A quest for resilient energy landscape

The government is focusing on harnessing these resources to curb emission of greenhouse by 2030 with hopes that renewable energy contributes to affordable electricity nationwide and stabilizes energy prices in the long run

ISLAMABAD: As Pakistan strides towards a future defined by sustainable development and energy security, the spotlight turns to a diverse array of renewable energy (RE) sources, including hydropower, wind, solar, and bagasse. These resources collectively emerge as pillars of hope in Pakistan's quest for a greener and more resilient energy landscape to curtail ever-increasing country's fuel import bill and materialize the dream of affordable energy. As the present government buttress efforts to tap the potential of clean energy, particularly solar, launching of its National Solar Energy Initiative, aims at tapping this rich potential to replace costly hydel energy with cheaper solar power. "With its favorable geographical location and abundant

natural resources, Pakistan has vast potential for renewable energy, boasting of over 64,000 MW hydel and up to 2.9 million MW of solar energy," remarked Managing Director Private Power Infrastructure Board (PPIB) Dr Shah Jahan Mirza. "Then we have an inexhaustible supply of wind power reaching up to 132,000 MW potential and 175 billion-ton Thar Coal Reserve as a cost-effective indigenous fuel option for base load power generation for decades," Mirza said. He said the government is focusing on harnessing these resources to curb emission of greenhouse by 2030 with hopes that renewable energy contributes to affordable electricity nationwide and stabilizes energy prices in the long run. It also aligns with the United Nations SDGs,

particularly Goal 7 by promoting access to clean energy, alleviating poverty, addressing climate change and access to affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern energy for all, Mirza explained. PPIB is a policy implementing agency of the government, focusing on clean and indigenous power generation and facilitates installation of private sector power plants in hydropower, solar, wind and Bagasse. Dr Shah Jahan informed that pursuant to IGCEP 2022-31, the proposed share of renewable energy resources is 12,926 MW solar and 6,767 MW wind as the share of hydropower in national energy mix will be increased from 25% to 33%, from 10,847 MW to 22,701 MW. "This indicates that total share of clean and green energy in domestic installed capacity is tar-

geted to be 62% by 2031." He said the Framework Guidelines for Fast-Track Solar PV Initiatives 2022 had already been launched to address the impact of high international oil and LNG prices on electricity tariffs and foreign exchange reserves. "These initiatives include, substitution of expensive imported fossil fuels with Solar PV Energy, Solar PV Generation on 11 kV Feeders and solarization of public buildings." It is worth mentioning that to reduce high electricity tariffs and drain of precious foreign exchange, the Government approved Framework Guidelines for Fast-Track Solar PV Initiatives 2022 for deployment of solar PV. Therefore, a 600 MW solar project is planned for Kot Addu / Muzaffargarh on G2G mode and the same has been offered to

Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. Decentralized, medium-scale Solar PV power can contribute cost-efficiently to alleviate some of these problems by feeding directly into the medium-voltage (MV) network, thereby improving the local losses and voltage situation. Accordingly, Solar PV projects of suitable capacity up to maximum 4 MW will be procured through competitive bidding process at 11 kV feeder level expecting that approximately 2000 MW solar PV capacity will be added under this initiative. As solarization of public sector buildings is also hoped to electricity load sharing and reduce electricity bills of public offices, building-specific Solar PV net-metering based systems are being installed, through bidding.—APP

Expert urges citizens to take proactive measures

ISLAMABAD: As the monsoon season intensifies, health expert Sunday warned citizens to take proactive measures to avoid waterborne diseases that pose a significant threat to public health and urged media to educate people about the healthy food eating habits during the season.

A leading expert in infectious diseases Dr Waqar Naem talking to a Private news channel stressed the importance of awareness and preparedness in preventing monsoon-related ailments. "Monsoon diseases like cholera, typhoid, and dengue are a major health concern, and it's essential that citizens are aware of the risks and take necessary precautions, he added. The health expert also emphasized the importance of seeking medical attention immediately if symptoms persist. "Early detection and treatment are crucial in preventing complications and saving lives," Dr added.—APP



ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif receives briefing regarding the construction of Jinnah Medical Complex in Islamabad.—DNA

Competition tribunal affirms penalty

ISLAMABAD: Competition Appellate Tribunal has upheld the decision of the Competition Commission of Pakistan (CCP) against M/s Reliance Paints Pakistan for fixing the retail prices of its products, in violation of Section 4 of the Competition Act, 2010. The CCP initiated an inquiry after receiving a formal complaint from Alko Nobel Pakistan Ltd, which alleged that Reliance Paint was fixing the minimum resale price for its products and also monitoring and penalizing the dealers/distributors/retailers for non-compliance with its price directives, said a press release issued here on Sunday. CCP's enquiry report concluded that these practices were restricting competition not only between the dealers and retailers but also between Reliance and its competitors as the retail price became inflexible and no discounts could be offered by dealers to consumers for Reliance's products. Commission observed that the agreements/arrangements enforced by Reliance Paints restricted intra-brand competition amongst its dealers or distributors/retailers as the same impairs their ability to compete on prices in the sale and distribution of Reliance Paint's products. Consequently, the CCP imposed a penalty of PKR 5 million on Reliance Paints. Reliance Paints filed an appeal against the CCP's order with the Competition Appellate Tribunal. The Tribunal upheld findings of the Commission regarding Reliance Paint's violations of Section 4 of the Act. However, it reduced the penalty to PKR 2.5 million.—DNA

DPO inaugurates new branch of D Watson

DNA

ISLAMABAD: D Watson Group has launched a new branch in front of DHQ Hospital, Mansehra, inaugurated by DPO Mansehra Shafiullah Gandapur. The ceremony was attended by prominent figures, including Zafar Bakhtawari, Chairman of D Watson Group, Syed Mumtaz Ahmed, President of Mansehra Chamber of Commerce, Haji Haroon Rasheed, President of Anjuman Tajran Mansehra, Wajid Ali, President of Mansehra Chemist and Druggist Association, and a delegation from Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry. DPO Mansehra Shafiullah Gandapur praised the establishment

of D Watson Chemist, stating that it will provide quality medicines and convenience to the people of Mansehra, previously having to travel to Abbottabad for such services. He commended Zafar Bakhtawari for this initiative, acknowledging D Watson Group's reputation as a national brand with a proven track record. Syed Mumtaz Ahmed, President of Mansehra Chamber of Commerce, highlighted the success of D Watson Group's previous branch in Mansehra and expressed optimism about the new branch's potential to facilitate consumers with quality medicines and essentials. He also noted Mansehra's strategic location as a gate-

way to northern regions, making it an important hub for tourists and locals alike. Haji Haroon Rasheed, Patron-in-Chief of Anjuman Tajran Mansehra, and Wajid Ali, President of Pakistan Chemist and Druggist Association Mansehra, also appreciated the launch of the new branch, acknowledging D Watson Group's commitment to providing quality medicines and promoting business in areas like Mansehra. The inauguration of D Watson Chemist in Mansehra marks a significant milestone in the region's healthcare and business landscape, ensuring access to quality medicines and services for the local community.

Punjab Auqaf Department adopts modern approach

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Secretary of Punjab Auqaf & Religious Affairs Department Dr Syed Tahir Raza Bukhari Sunday said that his department has introduced a range of initiatives aimed at fostering greater understanding and mutual respect among diverse faith communities. "We are committed to creating a more tolerant and cohesive society, where people of all faiths can co-exist peacefully," he said while talking to PTV news channel. He also highlighted the department's efforts to promote interfaith dialogue and cooperation, adding, the auqaf department has also restored historic shrines across Punjab. He explained the Auqaf department in its efforts to promote interfaith harmony, is arranging a series of awareness programs across Punjab, adding, these programs aim to educate people about the importance of tolerance, mutual respect, and cooperation among diverse faith communities. Through seminars, work-

shops, and cultural events, the department is bringing together people from various religious backgrounds to share their experiences, beliefs, and values, he mentioned. Renowned scholars, Ulema, and interfaith leaders are being invited to deliver lectures and engage in dialogues, highlighting the commonalities that unite humanity as they can play a leading role for bringing interfaith harmony among society. Additionally, the department is organizing visits to religious sites, such as mosques, churches, temples, and gurdwaras, to promote understanding and appreciation of different faiths, he added. These initiatives are helping break down barriers and build bridges between communities, fostering a culture of peace, harmony, and coexistence in the province, he mentioned. He stressed the need for collective efforts from all stakeholders to promote interfaith harmony in the country, as it is the key pillar of development. Through interactive sessions and seminars, these

religious leaders are using their platforms to educate people about the causes, symptoms, and prevention of diseases, as well as the importance of maintaining good health and hygiene, he added. By using mosques and other religious centers as venues for these awareness sessions, the Auqaf department is able to reach a large and diverse audience, particularly in rural areas where access to healthcare and education may be limited, he mentioned. The Ulema and scholars are using their expertise to explain complex medical concepts in simple terms, making the information more accessible and relatable to the common people, he added. Additionally, they are also emphasizing the importance of seeking medical treatment and adhering to healthcare guidelines, while also highlighting the role of faith and spirituality in maintaining overall well-being. By combining religious guidance with health awareness, the Auqaf department is making a significant impact in promoting health and wellness in the community, he highlighted.

CONDOLENCE

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Mr. Ghulam Sabir

father of

Mr. Mobashir Hasan

Principal Information Officer (PIO)

Government of Pakistan.

May Allah the Almighty rest his

soul in eternal peace and grant

courage to the family to bear the loss.



All Pakistan Newspapers Society

Briefs

PMD advises public for safety measures

ISLAMABAD: Chief Meteorologist of Pakistan Meteorological Department (PMD), Sardar Sarfaraz on Sunday advised public to take all necessary precautions and health safety measures in anticipation of a fresh monsoon spell expected to commence from (July 22). Talking to a private news channel, he said the new rain spell is likely to bring heavy rainfall, thunderstorms, and strong winds, which may cause flash flooding, landslides, and other hazards.

"We already issued instructions to district administrations to prepare in advance for any unpleasant incidents due to dust storms, strong winds, or thunderstorms", he said. The district administrations have also been directed to ensure the availability of small and large machinery to deal with any emergency in advance, he added. Replying to a question, he said strong monsoon currents are likely to penetrate from Arabian Sea and Bay of Bengal in the upper parts from July 22. To another question, he said in light of the risk of urban flooding, the administration of major cities has been instructed to remain vigilant and complete advance arrangements to mitigate potential impacts.

This includes ensuring that storm-water drainage systems are clear and functioning properly, conducting regular inspections of waterways and culverts, and identifying areas prone to flooding, he added. Additionally, city officials are urged to develop emergency response plans, stockpile necessary supplies such as sandbags and water pumps, and establish communication networks to quickly disseminate critical information to residents, he added.—APP

Motorway lady cop escape unhurt

ISLAMABAD :A sub-inspector of Motorway Police on Sunday escaped unhurt after two motorcyclists opened fire on her personal vehicle near Nowshera Mardan Road, Bara Banda, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province. According to a spokesperson for Motorway Police, Sub-Inspector Jawaria Shah was on her way to duty on the highway when the incident occurred.

A heavy contingent of Motorway Police and District Nowshera police station Risalpur immediately reached the scene and launched an investigation into the incident. An FIR was registered, and a search operation underway to apprehend the unknown accused.—APP

Sanitary workers appreciated

RAWALPINDI: Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of the Rawalpindi Waste Management Company (RWMC) Rana Sajid Saffar Sunday said that sanitary workers had done a great job by ensuring the best cleanliness of the city during Muharram Ul Haram and Eid Ul Azha days. Giving a grand banquet in their honour, he said that sanitary workers are the heroes of successful Eid Ul Azha and Muharram cleanliness operations and added that workers performed their duties diligently despite holidays, epidemics, rains and others. He cherished the entire staff of RWMC for their exceptional performance during the Eid holidays and Ashura day processions. Rana said that RWMC completed its cleanliness operation by removing all waste materials on the routes of the Ashura day processions besides sprinkling lime powder after the culmination of processions. He said a comprehensive cleanliness plan, following the policy of Punjab Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz Sharif, had been chalked out for Muharram processions to keep the processions routes neat and clean for the mourners. Under the special cleanliness programme, all Imambarghas, procession routes and their vicinity were cleaned besides the waste containers were also emptied, adding nullahs and drains adjacent to Imambarghas had also been cleared with excavators and heavy machinery.—APP



ISLAMABAD: Benazir Income Support Programme (BISP) staff registering Sikh families —DNA

Pak committed to maintain a strong and credible deterrence

Ambassador Jauhar Saleem, President IRS, expressed concern that India's development and acquisition of advanced weapons was contributing to an arms race and eroding the essential strategic stability required for peace in South Asia

DNA

ISLAMABAD: In a discussion organized by the Institute of Regional Studies (IRS), Ambassador Zamir Akram, advisor to the Strategic Plans Division, emphasized the importance of Pakistan's commitment to maintaining the credibility of deterrence. Highlighting the evolving nature of deterrence in view of advancing technologies, the eminent expert on strategic stability underscored the need to preserve deterrence credibility to

enduring peace. Reflecting on the genesis of conflicts between India and Pakistan, Ambassador Akram emphasized that the territorial disputes stemmed from India's pursuit of hegemonic policies since 1947. Consequently, Pakistan's pursuit of security was primarily motivated as a response to India's aggressive ambitions. He contended that Pakistan's acquisition of nuclear capability was essential to counter India's conventional dominance and establish a credible deterrent, which

had effectively kept New Delhi from waging war on several occasions in the past. Speaking on the occasion, Ambassador Jauhar Saleem, President IRS, expressed concern that India's development and acquisition of advanced weapons was contributing to an arms race and eroding the essential strategic stability required for peace in South Asia. He warned that India's ultra-nationalistic approach was aggravating mistrust among the nuclear states, with negative repercussions for

the fragile strategic environment obtaining in the region. During a vibrant Q & A session, while elaborating on Indo-US cooperation, Amb Akram noted that India — leveraging US cooperation — was adopting a more aggressive stance, as evident by Balakot incident and revocation of Articles 370 and 35 A in IIOJK, while pretending to be a net security provider in the region. He noted that it was in response to India's belligerent approach that Pakistan was forced to adopt a Full Spectrum Deter-

rence (FSD) to ensure credibility of deterrence between the two states. Ambassador Akram also emphasized the importance of avoiding miscalculations in a sensitive security environment in South Asia and reiterated Pakistan's dedication to maintaining credible deterrence essential for upholding peace in the region, which necessitates embracing education in science and technology to stay abreast of the latest advancements in technology.

Population explosion poses a threat to the economy: FPCCI

FAISAL SHEIKH

ISLAMABAD: Iftikhar Khan, the advisor to the President of FPCCI, said on Sunday that the highest population growth and the lowest GDP growth are the perfect recipe for disaster. He said that uncontrolled population growth amid low GDP growth is a serious challenge. Speaking to the business community, he stated that Pakistan's population is growing at the fastest rate in the region and will double by 2050. Iftikhar Khan said that with 241.49 million inhabitants, Pakistan is currently the sixth most populated nation in the world, according to the census statistics. Among them, 48.51 percent are women, and 51.48 percent are men. He warned that if the country's population continues at its current rate of 2.55 percent, the highest in the region, it will double by 2050, which will be very difficult to manage. Iftikhar Khan said that in Pakistan, 36.47 million individuals are under five years old, 97.53 million are under fifteen, 62.58 million are between the ages of fifteen and twenty-nine, and 190.27 million are under forty, according to literacy indices, 61% of Pakistanis who are ten years of age or older are literate, but Bangladesh and India have achieved better than Pakistan in a number of areas, including education. According to the business leader, Paki-

stanis are on par with everyone in terms of intelligence and ability, but if we do not broaden our horizons, we will not even be considered in the global competition. He underlined the necessity of maintaining political stability and peace, as well as the significance of maintaining policy consistency for a minimum of ten years. Without keeping up with the world, we'll become irrelevant, he warned. Commenting on the budget, he stated that the recent budget's controversy stems from its failure to provide any relief to the middle class. Instead, it increased the effective income tax rate for salaried individuals to 39 percent, for associations to 44 percent, and for non-salaried individuals to 50 percent from last year. At a time when this particular section of society has lost nearly half of its purchasing power in the last five years, the already stressed salaried class is facing an increase in taxes, which is difficult for the masses to accept. The budget, instead of bringing some respite for the have-nots from the undue inflation for which they are the least responsible, has once again added to their agony by imposing additional levies on electricity, petrol, diesel, grocery items, property, etc. The major reason behind the surge in taxes is to secure a new deal with the International Monetary Fund to somehow keep the national economy afloat.

Zero load management in all 6 circles

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Despite sultry weather, Islamabad Electric Supply Company (IESCO) continued to maintain zero load management across its six circles including Azad Jammu and Kashmir (AJK). The electricity demand in Islamabad Electric Supply Company (IESCO) on Sunday stood at 2,032 megawatts (MW) at 12: 00 pm against the allocation quota of 2,250 MW from the national grid system. Chief Engineer Operation Director Muhammad Aslam Khan told that owing to availability of sufficient electricity in the system, IESCO maintained zero load management programme in all six circles and AJK. Smooth and uninterrupted power supply was being supplied in Islamabad, Rawalpindi City, Rawalpindi Cantt, Jhelum, Attock and Chakwal Circles besides AJK, he added. He said that the company was withdrawing 1,956 MW from the National Grid.

Hazza Institute of Technology empowers 25,000 Youth

ISLAMABAD :Managing Director Hazza Institute of Technology Islamabad Azhar Iqbal Sindhu Monday while stressing for soft skill training education for youth highlighted that his institute has successfully trained 25,000 youth in technical education, with an impressive 17,000 registering for future programs. "We are offering training programs to bridge the gap between education and employment, providing youth with practical skills and knowledge to enhance their career prospects, he said while talking to PTV news channel. With such initiatives, Hazza Institute of Technology with the supportive role of government is playing a vital role in shaping the future of Pakistan's youth and contributing to the country's socio-economic development, he added. He said Hazza Institute of Technology stand as a beacon of excellence in IT and vocational training across Pakistan, adding, with a legacy of empowering individuals, we have been at the forefront of unleashing the potential of both traditional and cutting-edge technologies since our inception. He said we are attached with other 4 to 5 countries and arranging training programs, adding, the Hazza Institute of Technology's partnership with the National Vocational and Technical Training Commission (NAVTTTC) marks a significant milestone in the development of Pakistan's technical and vocational education sector. The "TVET Uplifting across Pakistan" initiative aims to provide students with access to cutting-edge technical training in high-demand fields such as civil, mechanical, and electrical technologies, he added. Through this collaboration, Hazza Institute of Technology is offering specialized training programs that cater to the needs of the modern industry, ensuring that students are equipped with the skills and knowledge required to excel in their chosen fields, he mentioned. The programs are focusing on hands-on training, practical application, and industry-specific skills, preparing students for immediate employment upon graduation, he added.—APP

Political stability vital for economic boom

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan Muslim League-N senior leader Shakila Luqman Sunday emphasized that a stable political environment is essential for creating an investor-friendly climate, which is critical for stimulating economic activity and driving growth. Talking to PTV news channel, she said political stability is one of the most important elements in attracting investments, as it gives clarity about the political economy direction and a sign of clear commitment. She said to achieve sustainable economic growth, it is imperative that all stakeholders, including politicians, businessmen, and bureaucracy are on the same page and committed to carrying out structural and deep-rooted reforms. By putting aside their vested interests and working together, we can create a conducive environment that fosters investment, promotes industry, and drives economic growth, she added. The government is also focused on implementing structural reforms to improve the business environment, increase economic efficiency, and promote private sector growth, she added. "Our goal is to create an enabling environment that fosters entrepreneurship, innovation, and job creation," she emphasized. In addition, the government is committed to strengthening social protection programs to protect the vulnerable segments of society from economic shocks, she added. This includes enhancing safety nets, improving access to education and healthcare, and promoting financial inclusion, she highlighted.

"We recognize that economic growth must be inclusive and equitable to ensure that all segments of society benefit," she stressed.

IRSA releases 317,700 cusecs water

ISLAMABAD: Indus River System Authority (IRSA) on Sunday released 317,700 cusecs water from various rim stations with inflow of 301,500 cusecs. According to the data released by IRSA, water level in River Indus at Tarbela Dam was 1516.72 feet and was 118.72 feet higher than its dead level of 1,398 feet. Water inflow and outflow in the dam was recorded as 166,300 cusecs and 190,000 cusecs respectively. The water level in River Jhelum at Mangla Dam was 1196.95 feet, which was 148.95 feet higher than its dead level of 1,050 feet. The inflow and outflow of water was recorded 22,600 cusecs and 15,000 cusecs respectively. The release of water at Kalabagh, Taunsa, Guddu and Sukkur was recorded as 219,100, 204,700, 140,000 and 74,600 cusecs respectively. Similarly, from River Kabul, a total of 53,000 cusecs of water released at Nowshera and 31,800 cusecs released from River Chenab at Marala.—APP

Drive on Railway safety, prohibited items in full swing

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan Railways awareness campaign was in full swing in order to raise public knowledge of the dangers of trespassing, crossing railroad tracks, and carrying forbidden objects like gas cylinders, guns without a license, cartridges, drugs, and daggers. "The campaign was launched on the directives of Secretary Syed Mazhar Ali Shah which will not help the department to control accidents but also win the confidence of the passengers of the rail" an official told APP. The official said, "Pakistan Railways will use all the social media platforms including print, electronic media, twitter, Facebook, poster and pamphlets to create an awareness among the citizens about a safe train journey." He said the department has also asked all the divisional superintendents to ensure checking of luggage of passengers at entry points with scanners, metal detectors and walk through gates. The official said Pakistan Railways had always given importance to the safety of citizens and its passengers. "It has been directed to discourage and stop those passengers who are carrying prohibited products. It is suggested to install emergency doors and auto-lock doors in coaches in case of any emergency," he added. The official urged the citizens to stop at the level crossing before crossing the track, look on both sides of the track and wait for the train to pass if any train was coming. He said that double whistle boards had been provided at most of level crossings where train drivers were bound to play horn to warn the road users about train arrival. To a question, he said, "Pakistan Railways has converted approximately 181 unmanned level crossings to manned level crossings across the country, out of 550 identified by the department over the entire railway network in over one year." —APP

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BRICS-wide currency

IRAN has suggested a common mechanism to connect the financial systems of all BRICS nations to facilitate smooth cross-border economic transactions using a common payment method and promote financial integration among the member states. The plan tends to eliminate reliance on the US dollar, expedite transactions, and fortify economic relations among the BRICS bloc's developing economies by establishing a common currency. The BRICS are going to have a fascinating time navigating the trade-offs and agreements that come with integrating their financial systems. This bold step might lead to a more varied and balanced international monetary system, establishing the BRICS countries as forward-thinking leaders in the dynamic field of global finance. Russian state-owned news agency TASS, quoting the head of the Central Bank of Iran, claimed that starting August 22, Iranians can withdraw rubles from Shetab smart cards at Russian ATMs and make purchases in Russian stores. The next phase will allow Russians to use Mir cards in Iran and purchase Iranian products. Presently, twelve countries and territories, including Abkhazia, Belarus, Cuba, and South Ossetia, accept the Mir payment card, with plans to introduce it in Egypt, Iran, Mauritius, and Myanmar. Six other countries are also considering its use. Iran's proposal to link the payment systems of BRICS member countries would entail common settlements through ATM withdrawals using the member countries' bank cards. This would lead to the development of a unified payment method, BRICS Pay, for financial transactions between the member states. Iran also recommends establishing a cloud platform to integrate national payment systems and an online wallet for system access, which will enable merchants to make payments via smartphones. Furthermore, Iran underscored the potential for BRICS national payment systems to supplant Visa and Mastercard transactions. "At a bilateral level, Iran and Russia have successfully linked their national payment systems via their respective central banks, creating the necessary conditions for the transfer of trade payments to national currencies. During our ongoing discussions, Iran has proposed to the Russian side to expand this mechanism to the BRICS countries. The Russian side views this proposal positively," Kanani said. The Iranian proposal promises numerous advantages by linking local currency systems, including mitigating dependence on global currencies, which are frequently susceptible to fluctuations and geopolitical influences. By enabling transactions in local currencies, businesses and individuals can reduce the risks associated with exchange rate volatility and currency conversion fees. This, in turn, can result in more predictable financial planning for cross-border operations and reduce transaction costs. Moreover, the utilization of local currencies in international trade and investment can foster increased economic self-sufficiency and resilience in the countries that are involved. By bolstering the role of local currencies, these countries can more effectively protect their domestic markets from external disruptions and maintain a greater degree of control over their economic policies. This degree of financial autonomy can be especially beneficial for developing nations, which frequently encounter difficulties in navigating the intricacies of global currency markets.



France's Olympics hijab ban

THERE is so much that the world gets wrong about Islam, labeling it as an "oppressive", "unjust" religion, primarily for women. This Islamophobic myth is not only tone-deaf; it is a serious misrepresentation of Islam. France recently barred Muslim women from wearing hijab, a protective garment that women wear to symbolize modesty, in this year's Olympics. Often, wearing a hijab is associated with oppression when in truth, it is a conscious choice made by Muslim women for themselves. In hindsight and from a historical standpoint, France has been Islamophobic toward Muslims who constitute 10 percent of the total population. In 2004, the French Senate passed a bill, banning headscarves across public schools. This tragedy was followed by a first-of-its-kind burqa ban in 2010 that restricted Muslim women from wearing a garment that fully covered them from head to toe. According to research, in 2017, only 39 percent of French citizens found Islam to be compatible with France, while more than 75 mosques were under ruthless surveillance by the French government. Workplace discrimination is prevalent, too, affecting Muslims who are less than half as likely to receive an employer response compared to their Christian counterparts. These instances of deep-seated Islamophobia are not mere coincidences or naive mistakes. These are conscious efforts to discriminate against Muslims in an attempt to segregate them from non-Muslims in France. French Sports Minister Amelie Oudea-Castera made the announcement of the Olympics hijab ban last year. Since France is hosting the Olympics this year, the organizing committee saw an opportunity to target Muslims once again. However, a backlash has grown stronger as the Olympic games draw closer, and rightfully so, because France not only violated the International Human Rights Law, it violated the Olympics Charter, which prohibits discrimination based on race, color, sex, and religion. Despite the International Olympic Committee (IOC) upholding nondiscrimination values, the organization has been slow to condemn France's decision to ban hijabs for Muslim athletes. In fact, the IOC issued a statement, claiming that France's prohibition on sports hijabs was outside the remit of the Olympic movement, further stating that "freedom of religion is interpreted in many different ways by different states." Olympic games are a measure of muscular strength and athleticism, not religious values that reflect how one chooses to dress. France's claim of being the first to be gender-equal in this year's Olympics cycle, achieving a 50:50 male-to-female ratio is hypocritical on many fronts. You cannot achieve gender parity by discriminating against women's right to wear what they choose. France would never ban bikinis or swimsuits in sports but will be quick to violate a woman's right to dress modestly in the Olympic games. That is clear-cut gender discrimination based on cultural and religious values. It is unknowable why the French government has been so draconian in the past toward millions of Muslims living in the country. Cultural stereotyping and the media's constant misrepresentation may be contributing factors that are fueling Islamophobic violence.

China's CPC meeting and lessons for Pakistan

Qamar Bashir



The meeting took stock of the economic slowdown, high debt levels, and real estate market issues and emphasized the need to build a high-standard socialist market economy by leveraging market mechanisms more effectively while maintaining robust regulations to ensure fairness and efficiency. It proposed reforms in fiscal, tax, and financial sectors aimed at enhancing macroeconomic governance, promoting high-quality development, and fostering new growth drivers besides highlighting the importance of supply-side structural reforms and improving the mechanisms that incentivize and constrain development and continue...

THE greatness of China is primarily due to the farsighted visions of the Chinese leadership which are conceived, evolved and implemented and overseen by the Central Committee Party, the most important policy making machine of the Chinese state. The CPC Central Committee meeting is held at strategic intervals and plays a crucial role in setting China's policy direction, addressing current challenges, and planning for the future. These meetings are timed to align with economic conditions, significant political milestones, and strategic planning needs, reinforcing party unity and the central leadership's authority while shaping China's development trajectory in various sectors. The recently held Third Plenary Session of the 20th CPC Central Committee in Beijing from July 15 to 18, 2024, was a significant event marked by several important decisions aimed at further deepening reform and advancing Chinese modernization. The timing of the Third Plenary Session was important because it allowed for a thorough mid-term review, addressed pressing economic and social challenges, reinforced political unity, positioned China strategically in the global context, and set clear milestones aligned with significant future adversaries. China faces a variety of challenges across multiple sectors that impact its continued rise and multidimensional power. Economically, China is grappling with a slowdown in growth, high levels of corporate and local government debt, and a potentially overvalued real estate market. Trade tensions, particularly with the United States, add to the uncertainty surrounding China's export-driven economy. Socially, an aging population strains healthcare and pension systems, while growing income inequality and rapid urbanization exacerbate social tensions and infrastructure deficits in both urban and rural areas. Technologically, China has made significant progress but still faces an innovation gap in high-tech sectors and challenges related to intellectual property protection. Cybersecurity threats are increasing as the country digitizes more aspects of its economy and governance. Environmentally, pollution remains a critical issue, affecting public health and quality of life. Climate change poses a significant challenge as China, one of the largest carbon emitters, seeks to balance economic growth with reducing greenhouse gas emissions and transitioning to renewable energy. Efficient resource management,

particularly of water and arable land, is essential for sustainable development. Geopolitically, China must navigate complex trade relationships and regional tensions, such as territorial disputes in the South China Sea and relations with Taiwan, while promoting its Belt and Road Initiative. Governance challenges include continuing anti-corruption efforts, strengthening the rule of law, ensuring political stability, and improving access to quality healthcare and education. Addressing these multifaceted challenges is crucial for China to maintain its growth trajectory and consolidate its position as a leading global power. The CPC Central Committee meeting held from July 15 to 18, 2024, comprehensively addressed these multifaceted challenges and proposed several solutions to ensure its continued rise and modernization. The meeting took stock of the economic slowdown, high debt levels, and real estate market issues and emphasized the need to build a high-standard socialist market economy by leveraging market mechanisms more effectively while maintaining robust regulations to ensure fairness and efficiency. It proposed reforms in fiscal, tax, and financial sectors aimed at enhancing macroeconomic governance, promoting high-quality development, and fostering new growth drivers besides highlighting the importance of supply-side structural reforms and improving the mechanisms that incentivize and constrain development and continue improving and developing the system of socialism with Chinese characteristics and modernizing China's system and capacity for governance. The meeting addressed the social challenges such as an aging population and income inequality and proposed comprehensive reforms in education, healthcare, and social security systems. It laid prime focus on improving income distribution, employment policies, and enhancing population-related services to promote social cohesion and development. It also emphasized the importance of Urban-rural integration and proposed plans to promote equal exchanges of production factors and narrow disparities between cities and the countryside. On the environmental front, the meeting underscored the need for coordinated efforts in pollution reduction, green development, and climate change response, with a commitment to improving ecological conservation systems and managing natural resources sustainably. The committee

took stock of the technological, geopolitical, and governance challenges and proposed bridging the innovation gap, counter cyber security threats and bring deeper reforms in education and talent development by fostering integration between the real economy and the digital economy. The meeting also stressed the importance of advancing whole-process people's democracy, strengthening the rule of law, and ensuring full implementation of the Constitution. Geopolitically, the CPC aims to expand institutional opening-up, deepen foreign trade structural reform, and enhance cooperation under the Belt and Road Initiative and expediting efforts to maintain political stability and continue anti-corruption measures to ensure that governance reforms support China's long-term strategic goals. The CPC Central Committee setup timeline for short term, medium term and long term reform. In the short term (2024-2025), the focus will be on economic social reforms, leveraging market mechanisms, stabilizing the real estate market and improving income distribution, and urban-rural integration coupled with mitigating environmental challenges. By the mid-term (2026-2029), China aims to foster innovation and establish new institutions for education and technology. Long-term goals (2030-2035) include finalizing the high-standard socialist market economy, maintaining high standards of living through advanced healthcare and social security systems and fully modernizing its governance systems. Pakistan can benefit from adopting a similar approach by setting defined milestones to guide national development. Like China, Pakistan should focus on leveraging market mechanisms while maintaining effective regulation to balance free-market principles with government oversight, ensuring efficiency and fairness. Emphasizing high-quality development and innovation is crucial, which can be achieved by prioritizing structural reforms in education, technology, and talent development to foster sustainable growth. Additionally, integrating urban and rural development is essential to narrow disparities and promote common prosperity. Lastly, Pakistan must commit to ensuring the supremacy of the Rule of Law, upholding the constitution, and fostering national unity through legal reforms to strengthen its governance systems.

— Former Press Secretary to the President
Former Press Minister to the
Embassy of Pakistan to France
Former MD, SRBC

The new composition of European Union

Dr. Muhammad Akram Zaheer



The European Union election results reveal several important trends and insights into the current political climate across Europe: The Greens/EFA group has seen a notable increase in seats, reflecting growing support for environmental issues and sustainability across Europe. Renew Europe (RE) has also gained seats, indicating a shift towards centrist...

THE recent European Union elections have delivered a diverse and multifaceted outcome, reflecting the complex political landscape across the continent. There are total number of seats in the European Parliament, which is 720. The seats are divided among various political groups, each represented by a different color. The largest group is the European People's Party (EPP), which holds 189 seats. This group has experienced a decline of 13 seats from the previous parliament. The Progressive Alliance of Socialists and Democrats (S&D) holds 135 seats, showing a decrease of nine seats. Renew Europe (RE) has 79 seats, with a gain of 23 seats. The Greens/European Free Alliance (Greens/EFA) has 53 seats, gaining 11 seats. The European Conservatives and Reformists (ECR) hold 76 seats, with a significant increase of 19 seats. Identity and Democracy (ID) holds 58 seats, losing nine seats. The Left has 37 seats, gaining two seats. Non-Inscrits (NI), a group of non-aligned members, holds 45 seats, with a decrease of 17 seats. There are also 46 seats classified as 'Others', representing various smaller parties and independent candidates. Germany, the largest country by population, has the most seats with 96. The distribution includes significant representation from EPP, S&D, and Greens/EFA. France has 81 seats, with a notable presence of the National Rally party within the ID group, as well as significant representation from EPP and S&D. Italy holds 76 seats, with a strong showing from ID, EPP, and S&D. Spain has 61 seats, with a major presence from S&D and EPP. Poland, with 53 seats, shows a strong performance from ECR and EPP. Other countries such as Romania, Netherlands, Belgium, and Greece have varying distributions, reflecting their unique political landscapes. The overall voter turnout for the European Union elections stands at 51%, indicating that just over half

of the eligible voters participated. Countries with the highest voter turnout include Belgium and Luxembourg, where voting is compulsory, showing nearly 90% participation. Other countries with high turnout include Denmark, Sweden, and Germany, all with over 60% participation. Conversely, some countries such as Slovakia, Slovenia, and Croatia have lower turnout rates, ranging between 20% and 40%. The European Union election results reveal several important trends and insights into the current political climate across Europe: The Greens/EFA group has seen a notable increase in seats, reflecting growing support for environmental issues and sustainability across Europe. Renew Europe (RE) has also gained seats, indicating a shift towards centrist and pro-European Union policies. The EPP and S&D remain the largest groups in the European Parliament, despite experiencing some losses. Their continued dominance highlights the ongoing support for traditional center-right and center-left ideologies. The ECR and ID groups have made significant gains, particularly in countries like Poland, Italy, and France. This trend reflects the rising influence of right-wing, nationalist, and Eurosceptic parties across the continent. Voter turnout varies widely between countries, with some showing strong engagement and others lagging behind. High turnout in countries with compulsory voting laws suggests that such policies may effectively increase participation. The results of the European Union elections have several implications for the future direction of the EU: With the increased presence of Greens/EFA and Renew Europe, environmental and centrist policies are likely to gain more attention in the European Parliament. The continued strength of traditional parties ensures that issues like economic stability, social welfare, and integration will remain central to the EU's agenda. The rise of right-wing parties poses challenges to the EU's unity and its pro-European agenda. Addressing the concerns

of nationalist and Eurosceptic voters will be crucial for maintaining cohesion within the union. The varying voter turnout rates highlight the need for strategies to increase political engagement and participation across all member states. This could involve educational campaigns, reforms to make voting more accessible, or considering compulsory voting laws. The changing composition of the European Parliament will affect the balance of power and the formation of coalitions. Collaboration between different political groups will be essential for effective governance and decision-making. The recent European Union elections have underscored the diverse and evolving political landscape across Europe. With significant gains for the Greens, liberals, and right-wing parties, alongside continued support for traditional parties, the results reflect a complex interplay of ideologies and priorities. As the European Parliament moves forward, it will face the challenge of addressing a broad spectrum of issues while navigating the dynamic political environment. The varying voter turnout also emphasizes the importance of fostering greater political engagement among EU citizens to ensure a truly representative and robust democratic process. The changing composition of the European Parliament will affect the balance of power and coalition formation. Effective governance and decision-making will require collaboration between different political groups. The election results underscore the diverse and evolving political landscape in Europe, with significant gains for Greens, liberals, and right-wing parties, alongside continued support for traditional parties. As the European Parliament moves forward, it will face the challenge of addressing a broad spectrum of issues while navigating a dynamic political environment. The varying voter turnout also emphasizes the importance of fostering greater political engagement among EU citizens to ensure a truly representative and robust democratic process.

Briefs

Bangladesh court scraps job quotas...

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sparking the protests. The government responded with a harsh crackdown, including a curfew and a communications blackout. Protest coordinators say police and the student wing of the governing Awami League – known as the Bangladesh Chhakra League – have been using brutal force against peaceful demonstrators. The government denies this. Many people have been detained by the authorities. The family of Nahid Islam, one of the coordinators of the quota reform movement, allege that police left him blindfolded on a Dhaka street at midnight. His father, Badrul Islam told media that his son was now in hospital and had been tortured "mentally and physically". The police have not commented. The unrest has also seen arson attacks on government buildings, police check posts and the capital's metro system, which the interior minister said had been left inoperable. Burnt out vehicles can be seen in most Dhaka neighbourhoods. Clashes have been reported in other parts of the country and the authorities have not yet caught any of the 800 prisoners who escaped from a prison near Dhaka. UK-based analyst Kamal Ahmed told the BBC that the re-introduced job quota system had been exploited by the ruling Awami League party.

PTI orchestrated Bannu rally incident...

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However, a court suspended his sentence in the Toshakhana case, while other courts overturned his convictions in the cipher and iddat cases, respectively. While there were hopes for his and Bushra's release in July, they were dashed when the National Accountability Bureau (NAB) arrested them on fresh charges related to the sale of state gifts. As Imran remains behind bars, he has kept claiming that he's not being provided several facilities, but to set the record straight, the government submitted documentary evidence of facilities being provided to the PTI founder in Adiala jail, rebutting his claims that he was being kept in solitary confinement. The pictures shared with the court showed that the PTI founder was provided with several facilities that a common prisoner cannot imagine – since he's a former prime minister. Imran has an exercise bike and stretching belt for physical fitness, books, a separate kitchen, a special menu, an exclusive gallery for a walk, LED, a room cooler, and a study table. In his presser, while referring to the interview, he reminded the people of how a "dictator" Imran would treat his political opponents – regardless of their gender.

NAB probes Imran, Bushra...

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investigation at Adiala Jail and the NAB team will present a progress report on the investigation in court tomorrow. The NAB team is working to gather information and evidence related to the case. Sources revealed that the court has ordered the reappearance of the PTI founder and Bushra Bibi on July 22. It is pertinent to note that Imran Khan and Bushra Bibi are on eight-day judicial remand in new Toshakhana reference. Imran Khan and Bushra Bibi were arrested in a NAB Toshakhana reference, hours after their acquittal in the Iddah nikah case. According to jail sources, Imran Khan and his wife were arrested for not cooperating in the inquiry. A NAB team headed by Deputy Director Mohsin Haroon reached Adiala Jail to arrest the former prime minister and his wife in new case. The sources said that the new case was related to keeping and selling the ten valuable gifts which was against the law. According to the NAB inquiry report, the PTI founder is accused of taking and selling seven precious watches which include Rolex, diamonds, and gold watches.

Paris ramps up security in preparation for the Olympics

France's vast police and military operation is in large part because the July 26-Aug. 11 Games face unprecedented security challenges

PARIS: A year ago, the head of the Paris Olympics boldly declared that France's capital would be "the safest place in the world" when the Games open this Friday. Tony Estanguet's confident forecast looks less far-fetched now with squadrons of police patrolling Paris' streets, fighter jets and soldiers primed to scramble, and imposing metal-fence security barriers erected like an iron curtain on both sides of the River Seine that will star in the opening show. France's vast police and military operation is in large part because the July 26-Aug. 11 Games face unprecedented security challenges. The city has repeatedly suffered deadly extremist attacks and international tensions are high because of the wars in Ukraine and Gaza. Rather than build an Olympic park with venues grouped together outside of the city center, like Rio de Janeiro in 2016 or London in 2012, Paris has chosen to host most of the events in the heart of the bustling capital of 2 million inhabitants, with others dotted around suburbs that house millions more. Putting temporary sports arenas in public spaces and the unprecedented choice to stage a river-borne opening ceremony stretching for kilometers (miles) along the Seine, makes safeguarding them more complex. Olympic organizers also have cyberattack concerns, while rights campaigners and Games critics are worried about Paris' use of AI-equipped surveillance technology and the broad scope and scale of Olympic security. Paris, in short, has a lot riding on keeping 10,500 athletes and millions of visitors safe. Here's how it aims to do it.



The security operation, by the numbers A Games-time force of up to 45,000 police and gendarmes is also backed up by a 10,000-strong contingent of soldiers that has set up the largest military camp in Paris since World War II, from which soldiers should be able to reach any of the city's Olympic venues within 30 minutes. Armed military patrols aboard vehicles and on foot have become common in crowded places in France since gunmen and suicide bombers acting in the names of Al-Qaeda and the Daesh group repeatedly struck Paris in 2015. They don't have police powers of arrest but can tackle attackers and restrain them until police arrive. For visitors

from countries where armed street patrols aren't the norm, the sight of soldiers with assault rifles might be jarring, just as it was initially for people in France. "At the beginning, it was very strange for them to see us and they were always avoiding our presence, making a detour," said Gen. Eric Chasboeuf, deputy commander of the counter-terror military force, called Sentinelle. Rafale fighter jets, airspace-monitoring AWACS surveillance flights, Reaper surveillance drones, helicopters that can carry sharpshooters, and equipment to disable drones will police Paris skies, which will be closed during the opening ceremony by a no-fly zone extending for 150 kilometers (93 miles) around the capital. Cameras twinned with artificial intelligence software – authorized by a law that expands the state's surveillance powers for the Games – will flag potential security risks, such as abandoned packages or crowd surges. France is also getting help from more than 40 countries that, together, have sent at least 1,900 police reinforcements. Trump assassination attempt highlights Olympic risks Attacks by lone individuals are major concern, a risk driven home most recently to French officials by the assassination attempt against Donald Trump. Some involved in the Olympic security operation were stunned that the gunman armed with an AR-style rifle got within range of the former US president. "No one can guarantee that there won't be mistakes. There, however, it was quite glaring," said Gen. Philippe Pourque, who oversaw the construction of a temporary camp in southeast Paris housing 4,500 soldiers from the Sentinelle force. In France, in the last 13 months alone, men acting alone have carried out knife attacks that targeted tourists in Paris, and children in a park in an Alpine town, among others. A man who stabbed a teacher to death at his former high school in northern France in October had been under surveillance by French security services. With long and bitter experience of deadly extremist attacks, France has armed itself with a dense network of police units, intelligence services and investigators who specialize in fighting terrorism, and suspects in terrorism cases can be held longer for questioning. – Agencies

Nasir clinches Tasmanian Open Squash Championship

Iqbal triumphed in the final against Switzerland's David Barnett, claiming a 3-1 victory

SYDNEY: Pakistan's Nasir Iqbal has won the Tasmanian Open Squash Tournament in Australia, securing his third title in recent days. Iqbal triumphed in the final against Switzerland's David Barnett, claiming a 3-1 victory. The final scoreline read 8-11, 10-12, 11-6, 5-11 in favour of Iqbal. This win follows his recent successes at the Bendigo and Shepparton Opens in Australia. The game marked his third final in four tournaments on Australian soil. Iqbal demonstrated impressive form in the semi-final, where he defeated France's Melvil Ciani-Menko with a decisive score of 4-11, 5-11, and 5-11. The \$9,000 Tasmanian Open has been a pivotal event for Nasir Iqbal,



who has showcased remarkable consistency across the Australian squash circuit. This year, he captured titles at both the Bendigo International and the Shepparton Open and advanced to the semi-final of the Victoria Open. Iqbal's stellar performances in these tournaments have culminated in his suc-

cess at the Tasmanian Open. In the upcoming final, he will face Switzerland's David Barnett, aiming to add another prestigious title to his collection. This accomplishment comes on the heels of his significant appearance in the final of the CNS Squash Championship in Karachi earlier this year. – Agencies

China's defending champion Zheng into Palermo final

PALERMO: Chinese top seed Zheng Qinwen reached her first final since the Australian Open on Saturday with a straight-sets win over Frenchwoman Diane Parry in Palermo. Zheng, who is defending the title after winning her maiden WTA trophy in Sicily last year, won 7-5, 6-4 to set up a Sunday meeting with Karolina Muchova. The world number seven enjoyed a strong start to the year with her run in Melbourne, when she lost in the final to Aryna Sabalenka, but was playing in her first semi-final since. "Tonight I was more pumped than other matches," Zheng said. "She played really well and she has a tough game. She has a really good touch on clay court. It's not easy to play against her. She has a lot of change of rhythm, variation." India's Paes, Amritraj make history joining Tennis Hall of Fame. The 21-year-old took the first set with a hold in the 12th game following a run of three consecutive breaks. A single break in the third game of the second set was enough as Parry failed to make any more inroads into the Zheng serve. In the other last-four match, last year's French Open runner-up Muchova thrashed Irina-Camelia Begu 6-1, 6-1. – Agencies



Gov't determined to provide free...

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facilities with various sections of diseases related to heart, kidneys, lungs, cancer and others. Furthermore, he said a modern first aid emergency section would also be established at the hospital with facility of air ambulance service for patients belonging to hard areas. He said the nursing schools and laboratories would also be established in the hospital and the deserving patients would avail 100% lab tests facility. The prime minister emphasized that this was the same model envisioned by PML-N President Muhammad Nawaz Sharif to provide free medical facilities only to the poor and on-payment facilities to the well-off people at the same place. He specifically thanked Chairman HBL Sultan Ali Allana and Prince Rahim Agha Khan for providing technical consultancy support free of cost for the project. He paid tribute the decades-long services of the Agha Khan Foundation for the country. He directed the authorities concerned to complete the project in one year. "Although one year is a challenging deadline for the huge project but with determination and hard work, it was quite possible.

Paul dominates Perry with sixth-round TKO victory

LONDON: Jake Paul delivered a dominant performance on Saturday night, defeating BKFC star Mike Perry at Amalie Arena. The former YouTuber and Disney Channel star secured a sixth-round TKO after a series of powerful blows sent Perry stumbling into the corner. "He's tough as nails," Paul remarked in the ring following his victory. "I'm sorry it took so long... I just hit too hard, but he took a lot of damage. That's a W, baby. I'm so excited." Paul set the tone early, nearly fulfilling his promise of an early knockout. Within the first minute of the match, he landed a huge blow to Perry's head, sending him to the ground. Although Perry quickly got back up, the knockdown gave Paul a significant early advantage. Paul continued his assault in the second round, delivering another knockdown and opening a cut over Perry's eye. Despite Perry's attempts to defend himself, he struggled to protect his face and even threw Paul to the mat out of frustration. By the fourth round, Paul had Perry cornered multiple times with little resistance. Perry managed to survive the round but was clearly exhausted. When Paul unleashed a flurry of punches in the sixth round, the referee had no choice but to stop the fight. The lead-up to the fight was marked by theatrics, with Perry "attacking" a mascot and Paul mocking Perry's private school education. Paul entered the ring dressed as a gladiator, riding in a chariot carried by his entourage, including his older brother. Perry, a former MMA fighter with a 14-8 record and a perfect 5-0 in the BKFC, was considered one of Paul's toughest opponents on paper. However, Paul's performance demonstrated his growing skills as a boxer. The defeat did not sit well with Conor McGregor, a part-owner of the BKFC, who claimed to have fired Perry from the league on social media, though it remains unclear if he has the authority to do so. Paul, who entered the night with a 9-1 record and six KOs, has faced criticism for fighting non-boxers and other YouTubers. However, his recent victories, including back-to-back KO wins, have begun to silence his critics. – Agencies

Messi-less Miami beat Chicago to stretch MLS lead

Jordi Alba's goal in the 75th minute gave Inter Miami a 2-1 home victory

SPORTS DESK

MIAMI: Jordi Alba's goal in the 75th minute gave Inter Miami a 2-1 home victory over Chicago Fire on Saturday to extend their lead at the top of the MLS standings, despite the injury-enforced absence of Lionel Messi. Inter's 16th win in 25 games took them to 53 points, five clear of second-placed FC Cincinnati who lost 3-1 at New York Red Bulls. Paraguayan midfielder Matias Rojas gave Miami the lead in the sixth minute. Saudi-born German defender Rafael Czichos equalized for the Fire in the 73rd minute before former Spain star Alba scored the winner two minutes later. In New York, Cincinnati were stunned by two goals from Scottish midfielder Lewis Morgan either side of defender Kyle Duncan's strike as the Red Bulls led 3-0 after 59 minutes. Corey Baird got the Cincinnati consolation in the 67th minute. A hat-trick by Philadelphia's Daniel Gazdag gave the Union a 3-0 win over visiting Nashville. Gazdag scored in the 10th, 39th and 89th minutes to keep Philadelphia one point behind Atlanta for the last East playoff spot. Norwegian defender Stian Gregersen scored in the 60th and 77th minutes as Atlanta United came from behind at home to beat Columbus 2-1. Canadian midfielder Richie Laryea scored in the 38th minute to give Toronto a 1-0 victory at Montreal.



Ancelotti eager to find place for Mbappe in RMD

LONDON: Real Madrid boss Carlo Ancelotti is determined to find a place for new signing Kylian Mbappe in the Real Madrid team for the 2024/25 season. Mbappe, 25, was presented in front of a jam-packed Santiago Bernabeu after signing a five-year contract with the European champions that will keep him at the Spanish capital till 2029. Madrid were after Mbappe since 2017 and after finally signing him, the Los Blancos will try to make the most of his signing. The Frenchman will also lead the attack with Vinicius Junior and Rodrygo Goes next to him as he has been given number nine by the club. Ancelotti was asked about where Mbappe will play next season to which the Italian replied, "We will put him somewhere, I will find a place for him." When questioned about the role Mbappe will play, Ancelotti appeared relaxed and assured. Ancelotti then went on to talk about Jude Bellingham who had a stellar first season with Los Blancos as he scored 23 goals and provided 13 assists, helping the Whites win La Liga and the Champions League. "Bellingham's success was surprising but largely due to his genetics. At just 21, he has shown immense character and passion. Genetics play a significant role in his performance, though training is also important," the Italian said of the Englishman. Ancelotti was then asked about his future and where he would be coaching once his future with Madrid ends as he was previously heavily linked with the Brazil national team. "I don't know when I'm going to retire. When Madrid gets tired of me, I'll have to think about what to do," Ancelotti said. "Retire? I don't know. On the one hand, I'd like to spend more time with my family, and travel, but if I still have enthusiasm, I'm sure I'll find the impetus to continue," he said. – Agencies

Governor urges PM to call APC on law, order situation in KP

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All Parties Conference (APC) to take stock of the situation in KP. "Now-a-days he is earning a lot. He may have made this defamation notice a source of income," the KP governor said. Faisal Karim Kundi said he had raised some questions to him on which he started raising hue and cry and complaining. The governor said the KP CM said he did not know about Operation Azm-e-Istehkam; he came to know about the operation from media. "Why did he not walk out of the meeting where the operation was decided? I invited the CM after taking oath as the governor. He always does empty fire and hurls threats. After the 18th amendment, it is the responsibility of a province to maintain law and order. Law and order situation in KP is not good. Prime Minister should convene All Parties Conference to discuss law and order in KP. An emergency meeting of cabinet should also be held," the governor said. It is pertinent to mention that KP CM Ali Amin Gandapur through his lawyer had sent a defamation notice to the provincial governor, claiming the governor in a TV programme had said the KP CM had signed the document of Operation Azm-e-Istehkam in Apex Committee meeting.

Pak to press Chinese IPPs to adopt local coal

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operating in the country to shift to using coal from Thar region rather than imported coal," Federal Minister for Energy (Power Division) Awais Leghari told media on Sunday. He added that the transition could save Pakistan more than Rs200 billion a year in imports, translating to a decrease of as much as Rs2.5 per unit in the price of electricity. "Islamabad may also begin talks on re-profiling Pakistan's energy sector debt during the visit to Beijing." Such a transition would benefit the Chinese-owned plants in Pakistan by reducing pressure on the country's foreign exchange reserves, he said, making it easier to repatriate dividends and offering a better return in dollar terms. The power czar will be part of the delegation to discuss structural reforms to the power sector suggested by the International Monetary Fund (IMF), which last week agreed on a \$7 billion bailout for the heavily indebted South Asian nation. Neighbouring China has set up over \$20 billion worth of energy projects in Pakistan. "One of the key purposes of going along is the conversion of our imported coal units to the local coal. That would have a huge impact on the cost of energy, of power in the near future. So that is one of the biggest (items on the) agenda," Leghari said in an interview. In April a subsidiary of conglomerate Engro agreed to sell all of its thermal assets, including Pakistan's leading coal producer, Sindh Engro Coal Mining to Liberty Power. Liberty said the decision stemmed from Pakistan's foreign exchange crunch and its indigenous coal reserve potential. The minister declined to elaborate on the possible talks with China over re-profiling energy debt.

PTI to file reference against CEC

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the four members, citing several grievances. The reference will argue that PTI has been unfairly blamed and has not been given a level playing field. It will also highlight the delay in holding general elections and changes in the Election Tribunal of Islamabad. Additionally, the reference will address the misinterpretation of Supreme Court decisions and will include specific points from judgments related to particular seats.

Briefs

Policy consistency key for Pakistan's economy

ANKARA: Terming Pakistan a distinguished and most prominent country among the Muslim Ummah, senior Turkish journalist Mehmet Oz Turk has said that political instability is the major cause, which destabilized country's economy. Mehmet Oz Turk has suggested that Pakistan needs a political stability, consistency in its policies to overcome the current economic difficulties. "The history, culture, food, and people of Pakistan are all unparalleled; brave and educated young people are Pakistan's asset," Mehmet Oz Turk said during a meeting with Shabana Ayaz head of Turkey-Pakistan Women Forum Abdul Qadir and Pakistan-origin Turkish journalist Abdul Hamid Chohan in Ankara. He said to overcome its current economic difficulties, Pakistan needs political stability and consistency in its policies. To make the people of Pakistan prosperous, it must escape political strife. With over 60% of its population being youth, Pakistan is of utmost importance not only to its region but to the entire Islamic world. He said that Pakistan is a large and nuclear-powered country, but politically and economically, its performance is not good. The wealth of Pakistan is not reaching the common people. To make the people of Pakistan prosperous, it must escape political strife.—APP

Bulgaria's president thanks Türkiye for firefighting support

ANKARA: Bulgarian President Rumen Radev thanked Türkiye on Saturday for its support in bringing fires in his country under control. "My sincere gratitude to President (Recep Tayyip Erdogan) Erdogan for the timely support of the Republic of Türkiye and the courageous Turkish firemen in the fight against the devastating fires in Bulgaria," Radev wrote on X. A fire erupted July 13 in the Svilengrad region of Bulgaria - 6 kilometers (3.7 miles) from the border with Türkiye. The blaze spread to Mladinovo and Mihalic in the south in the following two days, burning tens of thousands of hectares of forest and agricultural land. Türkiye aided its neighbor with the firefighting efforts. Bulgarian fire brigade and civil defense officials reported more than 200 fires across the country in recent days.—APP

Berlin police crack down on pro-Palestinian

BERLIN: German police cracked down harshly on pro-Palestinian protesters Saturday and detained many in Berlin. During a march that started from Neptunbrunnen Square, demonstrators chanted slogans such as "Germany finances, Israel bombs", "Terrorist Israel", "Palestine is ours" and "Freedom for Palestine." Tension rose after three people with opposing views raised the Israeli flag at Potsdamer Platz, the endpoint of the march. Police intervened harshly against those in support of Palestine and detained many of the protesters. Two female demonstrators were injured during the harsh intervention. Since Tel Aviv launched its brutal onslaught on Oct. 7, more than 38,900 Palestinians have been killed in the Gaza Strip, most of them women and children, while over 89,600 have been injured, according to Gaza's local health authorities. More than nine months into the Israeli war, vast tracts of Gaza lay in ruins amid a crippling blockade of food, clean water and medicine. Israel is accused of genocide at the International Court of Justice, which in its latest ruling has ordered Tel Aviv to immediately halt its operation in the southern city of Rafah, where more than 1 million Palestinians had sought refuge from the war before it was invaded on 6 May.—DNA

Israel attacks Hezbollah weapons depots in Lebanon

Lebanese official media said Israeli strike injuring three people and causing rockets to explode

FOREIGN DESK

BEIRUT: Lebanese official media said an Israeli strike on a town deep in the country's south Saturday evening targeted an ammunition depot, lightly injuring three people and causing rockets to explode. The airstrike about 30 kilometres from the border came after Hezbollah, which holds sway over large parts of Lebanon's south, and its Palestinian ally Hamas fired rocket salvos and explosive-laden drones at Israeli positions. "The raid on the town of Adloun targeted an ammunition depot," Lebanon's National News

Agency said, after earlier reporting "the Israeli enemy launched a raid" on the area, with "rockets still exploding" and the blasts "lightly injuring three citizens". Hezbollah has traded near-daily cross-border fire with Israeli forces in support of Hamas since the Palestinian militant group's October 7 attack on southern Israel triggered war in the Gaza Strip. The NNA said traffic on the highway had been interrupted in both directions, with videos circulating online showing several big explosions in the coastal town. "Shrapnel from the explosions flew to surrounding villages," the NNA said. Earlier on Saturday, NNA said Syrian nationals, in-

cluding children, had been injured after an "enemy drone targeted an empty four-wheel drive" near their tent, close to the border. Doctor Mouenes Kalakesh, who heads the Marjayoun government hospital, said a woman and her three children, two of them minors, had been admitted for shrapnel injuries after the strike outside Burj al-Muluk. Among them was an 11-year-old boy in critical condition after he sustained shrapnel injuries and a head wound, Kalakesh told AFP. Hezbollah said it launched "dozens of Katyusha rockets" on Dafna, an area in Israel's north that the group said it was targeting for the first time, "in response to

the attack on civilians". Hamas's armed wing, the Ezzedine al-Qassam Brigades, said they also fired a rocket salvo from south Lebanon towards an Israeli military position in the Upper Galilee "in response to the Zionist massacres against civilians in the Gaza Strip". Later Saturday, the Iran-backed Hezbollah said it also had launched "explosive-laden drones" targeting "artillery and missile positions" and Israeli troops at a site in the Golan Heights as well as Iron Dome platforms. Before the drone attack, the Israeli army said a total of 45 "projectiles" had been fired from Lebanon Saturday afternoon, towards the occupied

Golan Heights and the Galilee, reporting no casualties. The army said it struck "the launcher in southern Lebanon from which the projectiles were launched toward the Golan Heights", also targeting "an additional Hezbollah launcher". Hezbollah leader Hassan Nasrallah had warned that his Iran-backed group would hit new targets in Israel if more civilians were killed in Israeli strikes. The violence since October has killed at least 515 people in Lebanon, according to an AFP tally. Most of the dead have been fighters, but they have included at least 104 civilians. On the Israeli side, 18 soldiers and 13 civilians have been killed, according to Israeli authorities.

Nigeria fines Meta \$220m for 'violations'

LAGOS: Nigeria has issued a \$220 million fine against Meta, the parent company of Facebook and WhatsApp, for "multiple and repeated" violations. The country's Federal Competition and Consumer Protection Commission (FCCPC) on Friday accused Meta of violating the country's data protection and consumer rights laws on Facebook and WhatsApp. The FCCPC's chief executive officer Adamu Abdullahi said the investigations the commission carried out in conjunction with the Nigeria Data Protection Commission between May 2021 and December 2023 showed that it engaged in "invasive practices against data subjects/consumers in Nigeria." Abdullahi accused Meta of discriminatory practices, abuse of market dominance, sharing Nigerians' personal data without authorization and denying Nigerians the right to determine how their data are used. Apart from the hefty fine, the FCCPC boss insisted that Meta must "comply with prevailing law and cease the exploitation of Nigerian consumers and their market abuse." It ordered the company to "desist from future similar or other conduct/practices that do not meet nationally applicable standards." Meta did not immediately respond to a request for a response to the fine. But the FCCPC said the company was aware of its 38-month investigation. About three quarters of the 200 million people in Africa's most populous country are younger than 24 - a generation that is also hyper-connected to social media. The country had some 164.3 million Internet subscriptions as of March, according to the figures published by the National Communication Commission (NCC) on its website. Meta's platforms - WhatsApp, Facebook and Instagram - are among the most popular social media in the country. The minister for communication and the digital economy, Bosun Tijani, said in December that there were "over 51 million WhatsApp users in Nigeria." The European Union (EU) accused Meta at the beginning of July of breaching the bloc's digital rules, paving the way for potential fines worth billions of euros. The EU said Meta's new ad-free subscription model for Facebook and Instagram "forced millions of users" in the bloc to pay to avoid data collection or agree to share their data with Facebook and Instagram to keep using the platforms for free.—Agencies



Dakar: Ambassador Saima Maymunah Syed called on Minister of Armed Forces of Senegal General Brame Diop. They discussed reinforcing Pakistan and Senegal bilateral relations thru enhanced exchanges & collaboration btw the two brotherly countries.—DNA

Uganda protest organisers playing with fire: President

KAMPALA: Uganda's President Yoweri Museveni has warned protesters that they will be "playing with fire" if they press ahead with plans to stage an anti-corruption march to parliament on Tuesday. Young Ugandans have been organising the march on social media to demand an end to corruption in government. They have been partly inspired by their counterparts in neighbouring Kenya, who organised mass demonstrations that forced President William Ruto to drop plans to increase taxes. In a televised address, Mr Museveni warned the Ugandan organisers that their planned protest would not be tolerated. "We are busy producing wealth... and you here want to disturb us. You are playing with fire because we cannot allow you to disturb us," he said. Mr Museveni is accused by his critics of ruling Uganda with an iron hand since taking power in 1986, but his supporters praise him for maintaining stability in the East African state. The president also accused some of the protest organisers of "always working with foreigners" to cause chaos in Uganda. He did not elaborate. Police had earlier announced that they had refused to give permission for the march to take place when parliament opens on Tuesday. One of the main protest leaders told AFP news agency that they would go ahead with it. "We don't need police permission to carry out a peaceful demonstration. It is our constitutional right," Louez Aloikin Opolose was quoted as saying. The UK and US governments imposed sanctions on Uganda's parliamentary speaker, Anita Annet Among, earlier this year after she was accused of corruption. She has denied any wrongdoing. The sanctions bar her from travelling to the UK and the US.—APP

Greece to close 4 Turkish schools

KOMOTINI: Greece will close four Turkish minority primary schools in Western Thrace, where Turks are densely populated, local media reported. The affected schools are the Hacıoren, Keziren and Payamlar primary schools in Rhodope and the Karakoy primary school in Xanthi (Iskece) in northern Greece. Authorities claim the closures are suspensions due to a "lack of students," but the Turkish minority sees it as an attempt to send students to Greek public schools. Local leaders and representatives of the Turkish minority have criticized the government's actions, claiming that they are part of a systematic plan to reduce the presence of minority schools without consulting the affected communities. The closures are part of a broader trend to reduce the number of minority schools, which would have dropped from 307 in 1926 to 86, if the closures take place.—APP

Israel face consequences of its action: Erdogan

Hopefully, recent International Court of Justice opinion on Israel will awaken global community, Recep Tayyip Erdogan says

NEWS DESK

ISTANBUL: Israel must face punishment for its actions severe enough to deter anyone "from considering such cruelty again," Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan said on Sunday. "Israel must face the consequences of its actions, ensuring that the punishment serves as a stark deterrent against anyone considering such cruelty again," Erdogan told reporters on the plane returning from the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus. Erdo-

gan also commented on an advisory opinion issued by the International Court of Justice (ICJ) that affirmed Palestinians' right to self-determination and ruled that Israeli settlements in occupied territories must be evacuated. "I hope this decision and previous ones not implemented by Israel will bring an awakening in the international community," he said. The Turkish president urged the US to exert pressure on Israel, withdrawing its support for "murderer" Prime Minister Benjamin Net-

anyahu and his associates to end the "oppression" in Gaza. "The whole issue is for those who stand for justice against Israel's actions to unite, ensuring everyone stands alongside the decision of the ICJ. We can only disrupt this game with such a stance," he said. "To end this oppression, it is necessary for the US administration to pressure Israel and withdraw its support from murderer Netanyahu and his associates," he added. The top UN court ruled on Friday that Israel should

end its occupation of the Palestinian territories "as rapidly as possible" while also calling on Tel Aviv to make full reparations for its "internationally wrongful acts." The court found multiple breaches of international law by Israel including activities that amounted to apartheid. Since Tel Aviv launched its brutal war on Oct. 7, over 38,900 Palestinians have been killed in Gaza, most of them women and children, while more than 89,600 others are injured, according to Gaza's local health authorities.

S.Korea responds to North's trash balloons with broadcasts

South Korean military said the North's actions raising tensions near the heavily armed border could have fatal consequences

WEB DESK

SEOUL: North Korea on Sunday floated balloons carrying trash towards South Korea, South Korea's military said, declaring it would respond with "full-scale" loudspeaker broadcasts. The South Korean military said the North's actions raising tensions near the heavily armed border could have fatal consequences, adding the North Korean regime would be solely responsible. "As we warned several times, the military will carry out loudspeaker broadcasts in full scale and on all fronts starting 1 p.m. today," the South's Joint Chiefs of Staff said, calling the North's launch of balloons vulgar and shameful. Activists and defectors in South Korea have for years sent their own balloons carrying propaganda leaflets and other items into North Korea, angering Pyongyang. North Korea warns of "devastating consequences" over

leaflets from South Korea's military decided to resume its round-the-clock loudspeaker broadcast campaign targeting North Korea in response to what it called the despicable launch of balloons by Pyongyang carrying trash across the border. Since May, North Korea has been floating thousands of balloons with bags of trash attached to them, which have become a new source of tension between the two Koreas. Blaring propaganda, world news and K-pop music, South Korea's broadcasts are considered by military officials and activists as an effective form of psychological warfare. Meanwhile, South Korea said Friday it has restarted blasting propaganda broadcasts into North Korea to retaliate against the North's latest round of trash-carrying balloon launches, a resumption of Cold War-style tactics that are raising animosities between the rivals. South Korea's Joint Chiefs of Staff

said in a statement that it used frontline loudspeakers to blare anti-Pyongyang broadcasts over the border between Thursday evening and Friday morning. The broadcasts were the first of their kind in about 40 days. The contents of the broadcasts were not immediately known, but its previous ones on June 9 reportedly included K-pop songs, weather forecasts and news on Samsung, the biggest South Korean company, as well as outside criticism of the North's missile program and its crackdown on foreign video. The South Korean broadcasts could trigger an angry response from North Korea which is extremely sensitive to any outside attempt to undermine its political system. In 2015, when South Korea restarted loudspeaker broadcasts for the first time in 11 years, North Korea fired artillery rounds across the border, prompting the South to return fire, according to South Korean officials. No casualties were reported.

CONDOLENCE



APNS expresses profound grief over the sad

demise of

Professor Zakaria Sajid

Renowned Journalist, Teacher, Former Chairman, Mass Communication Department, University of Karachi and Executive Director, Press Institute of Pakistan.

May Allah the Almighty rest his soul in eternal peace and grant courage to the family and colleagues to bear the loss.



All Pakistan Newspapers Society

Briefs

PTI's Shafqat Mahmood quits politics

"After deliberation, I have now decided to retire from politics," says Mahmood

STAFF REPORT

LAHORE: Shafqat Mahmood, a once prominent leader of the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI), Sunday announced quitting politics but stressed that the decision was not due to coercion. "34 years back, I resigned from a government job and entered politics. But after deliberations, I have now decided to retire from politics," Mahmood, a former federal minister, said in a post on X, previously known as Twitter. A plethora of politicians left the former ruling party or quit politics altogether following the May 9 attacks on state installations, with the party saying that they were forced to quit the Imran Khan-founded party.

The leaders who deserted the now embattled PTI include Fawad Chaudhry, Asad Umar, Shireen Mazarri, Fayazul Hassan Chohan, Maleek-Abokhari, Ali Zaidi, and Musarrat Jamsheed Cheema. While some leaders have tried joining the party ranks once again, the PTI leadership - which consists of several new faces - has decided that deserters would not be brought back to the fold. "There's no pressure on me [to quit PTI] and neither do I plan on joining any other political party," Mahmood said, explaining that he took the decision due to "time" and his "age".

Khalil Qamar abducted, tortured in Lahore

BUREAU REPORT

LAHORE: Renowned Pakistani scriptwriter Khalilur-Rehman Qamar was abducted and robbed in Lahore, police said. According to details, a woman named Anna called Qamar, invited him to her house under the pretext of discussing a drama project. Upon his arrival, armed men abducted him and carried out the robbery. Qamar reportedly paid a large sum to the kidnapers, who then released him. Sundar police station in Lahore registered a case based on Qamar's statement. The first information report (FIR) states that the suspects tortured Qamar and took him to various locations. Qamar alleged that the kidnapers threatened to kill him and demanded money from his relatives. The FIR also mentions that the suspects stole Qamar's mobile phone, watch, and cash, and transferred Rs250,000 from his ATM card. The scriptwriter further stated in the FIR that the kidnapers blindfolded him and left him in a deserted area before fleeing. Qamar is a highly acclaimed Pakistani scriptwriter, director, and producer known for his significant contributions to the country's television and film industry.

AJK: Consumers get Rs3 per unit power bills

DNA

MUZAFFARABAD: The Azad Kashmir government has issued electricity bills according to the new tariff, charging consumers Rs3 per unit. As per details, the development came after violent protests and an agreement was signed between the government and the Jammu Kashmir Joint Awami Action Committee (JAAC). The Azad Kashmir government has fulfilled its promise to provide affordable electricity to the public by issuing bills at the new rate, with no surcharge. The outstanding amounts will be collected in 12 installments. As per the agreement signed in May, the electricity rate was fixed at Rs3 per unit. The Azad Kashmir government issued a notification implementing the new tariff, with rates of Rs3 per unit for up to 100 units, Rs5 per unit for 100-300 units, and Rs6 per unit for above 300 units.

'Locked in death cell for terrorists,' claims Imran

"It is solitary confinement with barely any space to move. I am under constant surveillance by the agencies, being recorded 24/7, and I am denied basic prisoner and human rights such as visitation," he said

NEWS DESK

RAWALPINDI: Incarcerated former premier Imran Khan has claimed he is being "caged like a terrorist", and is being "denied basic prisoner and human rights", British newspaper reported. His remarks came during a rare interview from behind bars with the outlet, conducted via his lawyers, as - according to the article - he is not allowed pencil and paper. Imran, 71, has been imprisoned at the Adiala Jail for almost a year upon his conviction in three cases - the Toshakhana reference, the cipher case, and the Iddat case, in which his wife, Bushra Bibi, is also jailed. Imran's sentence in the Toshakhana reference was suspended on April 1 while he was acquitted by the Islamabad High Court (IHC) in the cipher case in June. Various courts have also acquitted him in several other cases filed against him since the events of May 9, 2023 - the day when his first arrest had caused riots across the country, following which the state launched a crackdown against him and his party. An Islamabad district and sessions court had also recently accepted the appeals filed by Imran and his spouse against their conviction in the Iddat case. Shortly after the court acquitted him in the said case, however, the National Accountability Bureau (NAB) re-arrested Imran and his spouse in a new Toshakhana case, leaving his possible release from prison hanging in the balance.

"I am confined in a 7ft by 8ft death cell, typically reserved for terrorists to ensure they have no contact with anyone," he told British newspaper. "It is solitary confinement with barely any space to move. I am under constant surveillance by the agencies, being recorded 24/7, and I am denied basic prisoner and human rights such as visitation," he said. Earlier this month, a United Nations working group on human rights said the cases against Imran were "without legal basis" and politically motivated to exclude him from the political arena. The group also demanded the former cricketer be released and compensated. Imran and his wife sought relief from high courts after their latest round of



arrests and remand approvals. He was, however, denied bail by the Lahore High Court for allegedly inciting his supporters in the May 9 riots last year. To further tighten the noose around Imran, the government said earlier this week it would impose a ban on his party, PTI. "In view of the foreign funding case, May 9 riots, and the cipher episode as well as the resolution passed in the US, we believe that there is very credible evidence present to have the PTI banned," Information Minister Attaullah Tarar had said. "We are going to impose a ban on PTI and we believe that Article 17 of the Constitution gives the government the right to ban political parties, and this matter will be referred to the Supreme Court." The announcement attracted flak from across the political spectrum, with stakeholders from different parties terming the move "undemocratic." The US State Department also expressed its apprehension at the move, saying: "Banning a political party would be of great concern to us". The information minister said that the government would also submit a review petition to the apex court against last week's verdict which declared that the PTI would be eligi-

ble for reserved seats for women and minorities.

The top court had given its verdict in PTI's favour following the closure of hearing on a set of appeals moved by the Sunni Ittehad Council (SIC) against the denial of reserved seats for women and non-Muslims to it by the Peshawar High Court (PHC) and the Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP). PTI-backed candidates, who had contested and won the February 8 elections as independents after their party was stripped of its election symbol, had joined the SIC to form a coalition of convenience. The top court on July 12 annulled the decision of the PHC while also declaring the decision of the election regulator null and void, terming it against the Constitution. Tarar said that regarding the apex court's verdict, an impression was created that the party was given relief without asking for it.

"However, Tehreek-e-Insaf was not a party in the case, the members [in question] did not claim to be PTI candidates, and all of them submitted SIC affidavits and joined the party", he said, adding that according to the manifesto of the SIC, a non-Muslim could not become a member of the party which is why the party could not get minorities' seats.

"The [SIC] MNAs never expressed their desire to join the PTI before the Supreme Court, therefore, given the legal inaccuracy in this decision, the ruling governmental party and its allies have decided to submit a review petition against the Supreme Court's verdict," Tarar said. The government later submitted a review petition to the apex court calling for the verdict in the case of the reserved seats to be recalled and its operation suspended. Referencing SC's ruling in the reserved seats case, Imran told British newspaper that his party "secured a significant majority of approximately 175 seats, not the 93 that were officially acknowledged after being usurped". He said he spends most of his time in the prison planning for the future, insisting that he will be back. "Despite being caged, the entire country looks to me for hope and resilience. Most importantly, my prayers keep me steadfast, my belief in God assures me that justice will prevail over tyranny."

Gaza: Israel targets fundamental elements to enforce displacement

Health ministry said that the death toll from the ongoing Israeli bombardments and shooting attacks, which started on October 7, climbed to 38,983 martyrs

FOREIGN DESK

GENEVA: The Euro-Mediterranean Human Rights Monitor said that the Israeli occupation army is escalating its targeting of all aspects of life and fundamental elements of existence in the governorates of Gaza and the northern Gaza Strip, to turn them into an unlivable place to push their residents to forcibly migrate towards the southern governorates. The Euro-Med added in a statement on Saturday that "In the tenth month of its continuing crime of genocide, the Israeli occupation army is intensifying its attacks with mass killings, starvation, deprivation of medical care, intimidation, arbitrary arrests, torture, and forced evacuations." "Israeli airstrikes against the Gaza Strip have expanded to target ever more basic aspects of daily life. These include direct targeting of vendors

at their stands, Internet distribution centers, and areas where people gather, including where women fill water containers or prepare food, in addition to the ongoing targeting of homes and shelter centers," it noted. The human rights organization said, "Blocking any attempt to restore even the barest necessities of life in Gaza City and North Gaza governorates, the Israeli army appears to aim to force residents to comply with the orders it continues to issue to evacuate all inhabitants of the two governorates." "The IOF sent voice messages to residents of these two governorates, requesting that they evacuate to the south of the Gaza Valley amid the ongoing airstrikes and artillery shelling," the Euro-Med added. It revealed that it had received testimonies that "the Israeli army tracks individuals moving through the designated passageways on Salah al-Din Road and Al-Rashid Street in Gaza City using electronic monitoring equipment."



ISLAMABAD: A view of burned shops at H-9 Sunday Bazaar in the Federal Capital. - Online

Ukraine and Russia fire dozens of drones at each other

Ukrainian authorities said that the Russian forces launched their attacks on three locations, including Russia's Kursk Oblast, Primorsko-Akhtarsk - a town in Krasnodar Krai

MOSCOW: Ukraine said it downed 35 of 39 Russian drones overnight, whilst Russia said it shot down 26 Ukrainian drones over its southern Rostov region on Saturday. Ukraine's air force has reportedly shot down 35 of 39 Iranian-made Shahed drones that Russia launched overnight on Sunday. The air force also said Russia launched three Iskander-M ballistic missiles and two cruise missiles. They claimed that the cruise missiles didn't reach their targets due to Ukraine's "countermeasures," but didn't mention what the Iskander-M missiles hit or whether any damage was caused. No casualties have been reported. Russian forces regularly attack civilian areas across Ukraine, but their attacks on Ukraine's energy grid have intensified in recent months. That's resulted in often severe damage to multiple energy facilities and forced Ukraine to impose lengthy rolling blackouts. Ukrainian authorities said that the Russian forces launched their attacks on three locations, including Russia's Kursk Oblast, Primorsko-Akhtarsk - a town in Krasnodar Krai

on the Azov Sea coast - and occupied Crimea. Elsewhere in Ukraine, at least two people were killed and three more injured after a Russian missile strike on infrastructure in the country's northeastern Kharkiv region, Governor Oleh Syniuhov said on Saturday. Ukrainian officials also confirmed that the death toll following a Russian strike on Friday on the city of Mykolaiv near the Black Sea had risen to four. A child was among the victims, said the city's mayor, Oleksandr Sienkevych. Writing about the Mykolaiv strike on social media, Ukrainian leader Volodymyr Zelenskyy said that a projectile had hit a playground next to an apartment block. "Russia proves every day with its terror that 'pressure' is not enough," he said. "This destruction of life must be stopped. We need new solutions to support our defences. Russia must feel the power of the world." Russia's attacks have left thousands of people without power or running water in the Poltava region of central Ukraine, Governor Filip Prokin said. A pulverising Russian onslaught in recent months has forced Kyiv's troops to withdraw from some towns and villages in the eastern Donetsk region. Russia's Defence Ministry also claimed on Saturday that it had shot down 26 Ukrainian drones over Russia's southern Rostov region, several hundred kilometres from the front line. Three more drones were destroyed over the Belgorod region, as well as one over the Smolensk region, it said. No casualties were reported. - Agencies

'Corrupt contracts lead to high electricity costs'

Former minister discloses hefty payments made to IPPs, impacting all consumers

MEHTAB PIRZADA

ISLAMABAD: Former caretaker commerce minister Gohar Ejaz has disclosed data on payments to Independent Power Producers (IPPs), revealing significant financial burdens on consumers. Ejaz shared on Sunday that over the past year, IPPs received payments amounting to Rs1.95 trillion. He criticised corrupt contracts and mismanagement that result in electricity being sold at Rs60 per unit, calling for public action against these deals. He highlighted that the government purchased electricity from one power plant at a record Rs750 per unit, and from coal power plants at an average of Rs200 per unit, while wind and solar plants sold electricity at over Rs50 per unit. Ejaz pointed out that despite operating below 20% capacity, IPPs were paid substantial sums, including Rs140 billion to one plant operating at a 15% load factor and Rs120 billion to another at 17%.

Tehreek Tahafuz Ayeen-i-Pakistan calls nationwide protest

DNA

LAHORE: The Tehreek Tahafuz Ayeen-i-Pakistan (TTAP) has called for nationwide protests on Friday. Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) leader Asad Qaiser has made the announcement of protest saying, this protest would be against the deteriorating law and order situation across the country. The motive behind the protest was the release of PTI founder Imran Khan and his spouse Bushra Bibi and called for the participation of every class in the protest, Asad Qaiser stated. He talked about socio-economic conditions prevailing across the country, stating that inflation has destroyed the public and called on the people to come on the streets for their rights.

Trump says he 'took a bullet for democracy'

WASHINGTON: Former US President and Republican nominee for the November elections Donald Trump addressed a crowd of supporters in the swing state of Michigan, speaking alongside his newly announced running mate, J.D. Vance. The Saturday rally in Grand Rapids was Trump's first public campaign event since the attempt on his life last week, when he narrowly avoided getting fatally shot in the head. The gunman's bullets at the rally in Butler, Pennsylvania, grazed the candidate's ear and hit the crowd behind him, killing one person and injuring two others. Michigan is one of several pivotal battleground states on which the outcome of the November presidential election is expected to hinge. In the 2020 election, incumbent US President Joe Biden flipped the state's vote, despite Trump securing it in the previous 2016 election. "At this very moment, Democrat Party bosses are frantically trying to overthrow the results of their own party's primaries to dump Crooked Joe Biden from the ballot," Trump, now wearing a skin-colored bandage on his ear, told the crowd. - Agencies



Sizzling WOK
ASIAN CUISINE

OPENING SOON

PAN ASIAN CUISINE
F-6/3, Kohsar Market, Islamabad