



Islamabad POST

Saturday, July 27, 2024

Pakistan's Credible Daily Newspaper

Price Rs. 30

Erdogan criticizes US congress for applauding Netanyahu

Detailed News On Page-07

Obama endorse Kamala Harris for president

Detailed News On Page-08



Shoaib urges India to visit Pak for CT

Detailed News On Page-06



ISLAMABAD: Ambassador of Tajikistan, Amb. Sharifzoda Yusuf Toir, paid a courtesy call on Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif at the Prime Minister House. – DNA

CPPA seeks Rs 2.63 per unit increase

CPPA-G maintained the actual cost of electricity remained Rs 9.77 per unit

FAISAL SHEIKH

ISLAMABAD: The Central Power Purchasing Agency (CPPA-G) has sought Rs 2.63 per unit increase in power tariff for June under monthly fuel cost adjustment (FCA) mechanism. In a petition submitted to National Electric Power Regulatory Authority (NEPRA) on behalf of XWAPDA power distribution companies (DISCOs), the CPPA-G maintained the actual cost of electricity remained Rs 9.77 per unit against reference fuel charges of Rs 7.14 per unit for the month of June. A total of 13,459 GWh electricity worth Rs 119,704 million was generated during the said period while net 13,071 GWh worth Rs 127,712 million was delivered to DISCOs. The share of hydel generation stood at 35.19 per cent, local coal 11 per cent, imported coal 4.74 per cent, furnace oil zero per cent, gas 8.66 per cent, RLNG 18.10 per cent, nuclear 14.85 per cent, wind 3.83 per cent and solar 0.87 per cent. The power regulator will hold public hearing on July 31.

Ambreen Jan appointed Information Secretary



APNS assures new Secy its full cooperation

DNA

ISLAMABAD: A senior officer of the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting Ms. Ambreen Jan has been appointed as the Federal Information Secretary. She is presently posted as the Executive Director General External Publicity Wing, Ministry of Information and Broadcasting. Ms. Ambreen Jan has served on various important positions and is considered as an upright officer.

Continued on Page 06

Holiday Notice

The offices of daily Islamabad POST shall remain closed on Saturday on account of weekly off therefore there will be no newspaper on Sunday. – Editor

PTI calls off protest

Ji to continue protest against IPPs despite arrests, says Naeem

Strict security measures in place in Islamabad, Punjab as political parties hold countrywide protests

STAFF REPORT

ISLAMABAD: At least 1,150 activists of Jamat-e-Islami (JI) workers were arrested in different cities while trying to march on Islamabad for protest against inflation, while the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) called off its rally in the federal capital after the local administration denied it permission in view of security concerns on Friday.

PICTURE ON BACK PAGE

Ji is protesting against a massive hike in electricity prices while the PTI took to streets across the country today (Friday) to press for the release of the party's

Continued on Page 06

'Govt still open for talks': Tarar

Says when it was agreed to hold the rally at Liaquat Bagh, the march towards Islamabad is incomprensible

STAFF REPORT

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Information and Broadcasting, Attaullah Tarar accused Jamaat-e-Islami (JI) of breaching the agreement with

Continued on Page 06

Calls Bannu incident tragic

CM voices against any operation in KPK

He instructed the police to take action against armed groups across the province

SHAMIM SHAHID

BANNU: Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Chief Minister Ali Amin Gandapur said on Friday no one will be allowed to conduct any operation in the province. Addressing a peace rally in Bannu, the chief minister said Pashtoons had played a significant role for independence of Pakistan, adding that the tribal people also participated in the 1965 war. He highlighted that KP people had to face displacement due to operation against terrorism, adding that they had reservations over the utilisation of funds received by using their names. "We have to render sacrifices due to wrong policies made under the influence of the US," Mr Gandapur said. "Now we will take our decision and not anyone else," he asserted.

Continued on Page 06

Terrorist gunned down in North Waziristan IBO

STAFF REPORT

RAWALPINDI: Security forces on Friday gunned down a terrorist involved in numerous terror activities and killings of innocent masses and soldiers during an intelligence-based operation (IBO) in North Waziristan District, Inter-Services Public Relations (ISPR) said. According to military's media wing, the security forces conducted

Continued on Page 06

Sanam, Yasmin, Alia among candidates for reserved seats

PTI submits Candidates' list includes 67 names for reserved seats for women and 11 for minorities, say sources

MEHTAB PIRZADA

ISLAMABAD: The Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) has submitted a list of the candidates for the reserved seats to the Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP), picking Sanam Javed, Aliya Hamza Malik, Yasmin Rashid among others for the seats reserved in assemblies for women and minorities, party sources said on Friday. The development came after the Supreme Court, in its July 12 short order in the reserved seats case, allowed the former ruling party to have reserved seats in assemblies, paving the way for the party to potentially become the largest parliamentary party. In the landmark ruling, the apex court directed the PTI to

submit a list of its eligible candidates for reserved seats to the electoral body within 15 days of the verdict. The ECP should then publish the list of reserved seats of the candidates on its website within seven days, the SC ruling stated. Complying with the short order of the top court, the PTI submitted the list of its candidates for the reserved in national, Punjab, Sindh and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa assemblies, according to the sources.

The list includes 67 names for seats reserved for women and 11 for minorities seats, sources said, adding the names of Javed, Hamza, Kanwal Shauzab, Rubina Shaheen and Seemab Tahir have been chosen for the National Assembly reserved seats for women. Meanwhile, Lal Chand Malhi has been nominated by the party for the minority seat in the lower house of parliament, the PTI sources said, adding Dr Yasmin Rashid has been named for the reserved seat for women in Punjab Assembly. A day earlier the polls regulator declared 39 PTI lawmakers – who contested the February 8 elections as independent

Continued on Page 06



Tajik ambassador calls on PM

PM tasks ministries to explore bilateral coop with Tajikistan

The Prime Minister renewed his invitation to President Rahmon to undertake an official visit to Pakistan at his earliest convenience, while adding that Pakistan was looking forward to Tajikistan's participation in the SCO Council of Heads of Government meeting in Islamabad

ANSAR BHATTI

ISLAMABAD: Ambassador of Tajikistan, Amb. Sharifzoda Yusuf Toir, paid a courtesy call on Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif at the Prime Minister House. The Prime Minister welcomed the Ambassador and wished him a successful tenure in Pakistan. While fondly recalling his recent visit to Dushanbe earlier this month, the Prime Minister said he was touched by the warm welcome extended to him and hailed the friendly and productive discussions with H.E. President Emomali Rahmon during the visit. Expressing satisfaction at the MoUs/agreements signed between the two sides during his visit, the Prime Minister urged that timely implementation and follow up would help to strengthen bilateral ties even further. The Prime Minister renewed his invitation to President Rahmon to undertake an official visit to Pakistan at his earliest convenience, while adding that Pakistan was looking forward to Tajikistan's participation in the SCO Council of Heads of Government meeting in Islamabad in October this year. The Tajik Ambassador briefed the Prime Minister on a number of proposals aimed at enhancing bilateral cooperation in various fields including education, agriculture and defence as well as connectivity through land and air routes.

Continued on Page 06

Flood rehabilitation ADB approves \$400m loan for Pakistan

Project will rehabilitate flood-damaged houses and community infrastructure and support livelihood recovery

FOREIGN DESK

MANILA: The Asian Development Bank (ADB) today approved a \$400 million concessional loan to support the reconstruction of houses and community infrastructure in Sindh damaged by the devastating floods in 2022. The Sindh Emergency Housing Reconstruction Project will rehabilitate flood-damaged houses and community infrastructure and support livelihood recovery, with a focus on strengthening communities' resilience against climate change-induced natural hazards.

Continued on Page 06



Oil & Gas Regulatory Authority
Government of Pakistan

خبردار!



LPG میں
کاربن ڈائی آکسائیڈ
(CO₂)

کی مکسنگ انتہائی خطرناک اور غیر قانونی عمل ہے

اس غیر قانونی اور جان لیوا عمل میں ملوث افراد کے خلاف اوگرانے کریک ڈاؤن کا آغاز کر دیا ہے

اور ابتدائی طور پر قانون نافذ کرنے والے اداروں نے ایسی تین جگہوں کو سیل کر دیا ہے

عوام الناس کو آگاہ کیا جاتا ہے کہ

ایل پی جی انتہائی آتش گیر ہے جس میں کاربن ڈائی آکسائیڈ (CO₂) کی مکسنگ نا صرف ماحول کو آلودہ کر سکتی ہے بلکہ دھماکے کی صورت میں بڑے پیمانے پر تباہی پھیلا سکتی ہے

قانون نافذ کرنے والے اداروں سے بھی درخواست ہے کہ ایل پی جی اور کاربن ڈائی آکسائیڈ (CO₂) کی مکسنگ میں ملوث افراد کے خلاف کارروائی کریں اور انسانی جان و مال کا تحفظ یقینی بنانے میں اوگرانے کا ساتھ دیں

اگر آپ بھی کہیں پر یہ غیر قانونی عمل دیکھیں تو فوری 15: قریبی پولیس سٹیشن ضلعی انتظامیہ OGRA ہیلپ لائن 0800-77733 پر اطلاع دیں

Ambassador lauds HEC's support to Palestinian students

He hoped that the Palestinian students will play a very important role in the development of Palestine, adding that the Palestinians will emerge as a stronger nation out of the hardships they are facing

ADIL SHAHEEN

ISLAMABAD: Ambassador of the State



of Palestine Ahmed Jawad A. A. Rabei called on Chairman Higher Education Commission (HEC) Mukhtar Ahmed on Friday to discuss issues of academic interest. Welcoming the

Ambassador, Mukhtar Ahmed reiterated HEC's commitment to extending all-possible support to students from Muslim countries. He asserted that HEC will dedicatedly continue putting its due efforts to educate people, enabling them to make a difference in the quality of their lives and the national development. He hoped that the Palestinian students will play a very important role in the development of Palestine, adding that the Palestinians will emerge as a stronger nation out of the hardships they are facing. Ambassador Ahmed Jawad A. A. Rabei appreciated HEC's continuous support to the students of Palestine by providing them with quality higher education opportunities. He acknowledged that the Pakistani universities are extending facilitation to the Palestinian students and are imparting education to them at par with the Pakistani students.



ISLAMABAD : Australian High Commissioner to Pakistan Mr. Neil Hawkins called on Minister of State for IT and Telecommunication Ms. Shaza Fatima Khawaja.—DNA

PUTA delegation calls on higher education minister

PESHAWAR : A delegation of Peshawar University Teachers Association (PUTA) on Friday called on Khyber Pakhtunkhwa minister for Higher Education, Meena Khan Afridi and apprised him about their problems. The delegation WAS comprised of Dr Muhammad Uzair, president of the association, Anwar ul Haq, Joint Secretary, Dr Shehla Nazneen, Female Vice President and executive members including Dr Muhammad Farooq, Dr Bashir at Hussain and Dr Kausar Shaheen. The delegation discussed financial and other issues being faced by University of Peshawar. The representative delegation informed provincial minister in detail about financial and administrative issues of the university. Financial difficulties, the need for timely and transparent advertisement of positions, criteria for promotion of PhD lecturers, concerns of retired employees, establishment of provincial Higher Education Commission (HEC), budget and other agendas were came into discussion. Speaking on the occasion, Meena Khan Afridi assured support and cooperation to solve issues of university and said that a task force has been formed on special directives of Chief Minister Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Ali Amin Gandapur to solve current financial crises of universities.—APP

Shaza, Australian HC discuss digitalization, fiberization issues

Minister of State for IT Shaza Fatima during a meeting said that the present government is focused upon digitalization in the country

FAISAL SHEIKH

ISLAMABAD : Minister of State for IT and Telecommunication Shaza Fatima Khawaja and Australian High Commissioner to Pakistan Neil Hawkins discussed matters of bilateral interest, IT and Telecommunication, digitalization, fiberization, and cybersecurity during a meeting. Minister of State for

IT Shaza Fatima during a meeting said that the present government is focused upon digitalization in the country. She said that digitalization of the economy is top government priority. Governance and society are also being digitalized under National Digitalization Plan, she added. She said that work is going on National Fiberization Policy, as robust fiberization is

utmost necessary for 5G technology in the country. Shaza Fatima said Ministry of IT & Telecom is committed for ending digital gender divide. She said that startups exchange program can be started between Pakistan and Australia. Director General International Coordination, MoITT Syed Jawwad Ali Sherazi was also present in the meeting.

Punishment for forest officers deferred due to discrepancies

The government's decision to investigate the program stems from allegations of corruption and discrepancies reported in the monitoring reports

MUMTAZ BHATTI

ISLAMABAD: The decision to punish forest officers and forest employees based on the negative findings of the monitoring teams was deferred, as there was a clear discrepancy between the negative findings of the monitoring teams and the ground realities. Up-scaling Green Pakistan Programme Initiative launched under the leadership of Imran Khan, aims to combat the adverse effects of climate change through extensive afforestation. The government's decision to investigate the program stems from allegations of

corruption and discrepancies reported in the monitoring reports. Specifically, the reports highlighted that the number of plants was reported at plantation sites, and the plants in the nurseries were significantly less than documented. Overlapping of plantation sites was cited, raising concerns about the authenticity of the program's reported progress. Contrary to the allegations, media reports showcased the exemplary progress of the forest departments. Documentaries and GPS coordinates of the plantation sites were used to substantiate the claims of successful afforestation ef-

orts. These media reports and evidence challenged the monitoring team's findings, suggesting that the reported discrepancies were potentially fabricated to malign the program. Despite the controversy, the Up-scaling Green Pakistan Programme has seen notable successes across all four provinces, Azad Jammu and Kashmir (AJK), and Gilgit-Baltistan (GB). Various regions have witnessed significant plantation efforts, contributing to increased green cover and environmental benefits. These successes are critical in demonstrating the program's potential to

make a tangible impact on Pakistan's environment. Allegations of corruption and mismanagement pose significant threats to the program's integrity. Addressing these allegations transparently and effectively is crucial to maintaining public trust and ensuring the continuation of the program. Instead of punitive actions, the government should focus on providing facilities and support to forest officers and employees. Adequate training, resources, and incentives can enhance their performance and commitment to the program's goals.

100,000 laptops to be distributed among students

ISLAMABAD : Chairman of the Prime Minister Youth Programme (PMYP) Rana Mashhood Ahmed Khan on Friday said that around 100,000 laptops would be given to the students on merit during the year 2024. According to the PMYP office spokesperson, as many as 600,000 laptops have been distributed to the students under the Prime Minister Laptop Scheme so far while during the last three years 64 per cent were successful in getting jobs trained under the Youth Skill Development Programme. The Chairman PMYP said that the government was working with the National Vocational and Technical Training Commission on skill development, especially the provision of education.—APP

Lesco chief reviews facilities at customer service centres

During the 300 days of the grand anti-theft campaign, the spokesman mentioned, the LESCO detected pilferage on 107,955 power connections and 91,554 FIRs have been registered against electricity thieves in the relevant police stations, while 34,556 accused have so far been arrested by the police. The LESCO has so far charged a total of 120,424,168 detection units worth Rs 4,304,208,898 to all the power pilferers

LAHORE : The Chief Executive Officer (CEO) Lahore Electric Supply Company (Lesco) Engineer Shahid Haider on Friday chaired a high-level meeting in which facilities provided in Lesco customer service centres were reviewed. According to the Public Relations Department of Lesco, the CEO said that providing the best facilities to customers and solving their problems immediately was our first priority, and they should be resolved on an urgent basis. Engineer Shahid Haider, Director HR Zameer Hussain Kolachi, Director Customer Services Sarwar Mughal, Chief Engineer P&D Imran Mehmood, Chief Engineer PIU Ejaz Bhatti and Chief Internal Audit Muhammad Tayyab were present. Meanwhile, Lahore Electric Supply Company (LESCO) has detected a total of 504 connections from where the customers were pilfering electricity in all its circles of five districts (Lahore, Sheikhupura, Nankana Sahib, Kasur and Okara) on the 300th day of grand anti-power theft campaign. The LESCO spokesman told media here Friday that the company has also submitted FIR applications against electricity thieves, out of which 177 FIRs have been registered in respective police stations, while 30 accused have been arrested by the respective police.

Grand anti-power theft operations against electricity thieves are being conducted on the directives of the Federal Power Division and the LESCO Chief Executive Officer (CEO) Engineer Shahid Haider is supervising these operations. The LESCO chief vowed that the operations would continue without discrimination until the complete end of electricity theft. The electricity pilferers as well as the LESCO officers and employees who facilitate them are also being brought to justice. On the 300th consecutive day of the anti-power theft campaign, the spokesman added, large commercial consumers were also found involved in electricity theft and all of them were also disconnected and charged with detection units. Among the seized connections 09 were commercial, 15 agricultural and 480 domestic, and all these connections were disconnected and charged with a total of 535,414 units as detection bill amounting to Rs 17.249 million. During the 300 days of the grand anti-theft campaign, the spokesman mentioned, the LESCO detected pilferage on 107,955 power connections and 91,554 FIRs have been registered against electricity thieves in the relevant police stations, while 34,556 accused have so far been arrested by the police. The LESCO has so far charged a total of 120,424,168 detection units worth Rs 4,304,208,898 to all the power pilferers.—APP

ISSI holds webinar on "Elections in Iran"

ISLAMABAD : The Centre for Afghanistan Middle East and Africa (CAMEA) at the Institute of Strategic Studies Islamabad (ISSI) hosted a webinar, titled "Elections in Iran: Regional and International Insights." The webinar was moderated by Ms. Amina Khan, Director CAMEA. Speakers included Ambassador Sohail Mahmood, Director General ISSI; Ambassador Khalid Mahmood, Chairman BoG, ISSI; Ambassador Riffat Masood, Pakistan's Former Ambassador to Iran; Dr. Nabi-Sonboli, Senior Research Fellow at Institute for Political and International Studies (IPIS), Iran; Dr. Flavius Caba Maria, President and Director of the Political Department, Middle East Political and Economic Institute (MEPEI), Romania; and Dr. Murat Aslan, Senior Researcher SETA Foundation for Political, Economic and Social Research, Turkiye. DG ISSI Ambassador Sohail Mahmood highlighted the importance of elections in Iran, particularly given the country's regional and international significance. He noted that the recent elections, held after the

tragic demise of President Raisi and Foreign Minister Abdollahian, resulted in Dr. Masoud Pezeshkian winning in the run-off garnering over 16 million votes. This outcome was surprising to many, as Dr. Pezeshkian was a relatively lesser known candidate and his previous two presidential attempts had been unsuccessful. However, Ambassador Sohail Mahmood pointed out, Dr. Pezeshkian was a seasoned parliamentarian, former Health Minister, and distinguished academic and surgeon. His victory, especially in northern and western provinces with significant minority populations, reflected substantial support from Kurds, Turks and Sunnis. He also secured substantial support of women and the youth. Ambassador Sohail added that Dr. Pezeshkian's campaign focused on reform, national unity, and international engagement, with priorities like lifting of sanctions and reviving the nuclear agreement with the West. Dr. Pezeshkian aims to balance relations with all countries, enhance regional partnerships, and explore economic and technological opportunities. The

President-elect had critiqued the U.S. stance on the nuclear issue (JCPOA) and called for recognition of Iran's legitimate rights. The DG ISSI underlined that Dr. Pezeshkian's success will depend on support from national stakeholders, and the Supreme Leader, and would be assisted by a highly experienced diplomat Dr. Javad Zarif. He also mentioned that the U.S. election results and 'balancing' relations with China and Russia on the one hand and forging constructive engagement with the West on the other hand would pose a challenge. For Pakistan-Iran relations, Ambassador Sohail Mahmood stressed the potential for enhanced collaboration in trade and other sectors, continuing the positive and forward-looking trajectory set during late President Raisi's visit to Pakistan. Ms. Amina Khan noted that while Dr. Pezeshkian has made promises to moderate Iran's conservative outlook, improve relations with the region and the West alike, including calls for negotiations as well as the potential revival of the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA), many are of the view that he will carefully balance

promises of change while remaining loyal to Iran's Supreme Leader, Ayatollah Seyed Ali Khamenei. She emphasized that under former President Raisi, Pakistan-Iran enjoyed strong ties which saw significant developments such as the opening of border markets and a shift towards barter trade to deepen bilateral economic collaboration. She also mentioned Pakistan's Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif's congratulatory call to Dr. Pezeshkian, where both leaders expressed a desire to enhance cooperation in trade, energy, and regional security. Dr. Nabi-Sonboli noted that Dr. Pezeshkian's victory was unexpected and signifies a slight shift from the previous administration, where major changes are unlikely. The President-elect is expected to continue existing policies with moderate adjustments, focusing on national unity and forming a diverse government - which will signify a mix of change and continuity. Dr. Sonboli noted that Dr. Pezeshkian's commitment to peace and diplomacy links economic development with regional stability, which will create opportunities to enhance.—DNA

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OPENING SOON

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

National Days and Armed Forces Days

JULY

July 01/Japan
Self Defence Day

July 01/Singapore
Armed Forces Day

July 01 / Canada
National Day

July 01/Somalia
Independence Day

July 04/USA
Independence Day

July 05/Algeria
Independence Day

July 09/Argentina
Independence Day

July 09/Mongolia
Revolution Day

July 14/France
National Day

July 15/Brunei
Sultan's Birthday

July 21/Belgium
National Day

July 20/TRNC
Independence Day

July 23/Egypt
National Day

July 26/Cuba
National Day

July 26/Liberia
National Day

July 30/Morocco
National Day

Hotels & Restaurants



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



Turkish Airlines.....8494949



Emergency

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

Enquiry

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



Hospitals

CMH.....5611111
MH.....5611116
Cantt Hospital...9270907-11
DHQ.....5556311-4
RGH.....9290301-7
Holy Family.....9290322-7
PIMS.....9261170-79
Polyclinic.....9218300-09
Shifa International 4603666



Departments

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

Water Tank

Islamabad.....0321-5744480

Early detection, diet can overcome risks of cancer

Exercising regularly builds overall health and reduces the risk factors for development of thirteen different cancers, he said, adding, exercise helps reduce overweight and obesity, which is important for reducing cancer risk

FAISAL SHEIKH

ISLAMABAD: Health expert on Friday highlighted that early detection through regular screenings, self-examinations, and media awareness drives for cancer symptoms can significantly improve treatment outcomes and save lives. Renowned Oncologist & Cancer Surgeon Dr Kashif Khan said that by being proactive about our health and taking small steps towards a healthier lifestyle, we can significantly reduce our risk of cancer and improve our chances of beating the disease if diagnosed. He emphasized the need for adopting healthy habits such as a balanced diet rich in fruits, vegetables, and whole grains, regular physical activity, and avoidance of tobacco and excessive alcohol consumption. Dr also encouraged the public to be aware of



their family medical history and genetic predispositions, which can increase cancer risk. By combining early detection and healthy habits, individuals can significantly reduce their cancer risk and improve their overall well-being. Exercising regularly builds overall health and reduces

the risk factors for development of thirteen different cancers, he said, adding, exercise helps reduce overweight and obesity, which is important for reducing cancer risk. Reducing the time over each day spent without moving, sometimes called sedentary behavior, also reduces

cancer risk, he mentioned. Talking about mouth cancer, he said it is our duty and obligation to contribute to the fight against it, adding, through education, research, and advocacy, we can make a tangible difference in preventing, detecting, and treating oral cancer. He also

described detailed early clinical signs such as ulceration, exophytic growth, and paraesthesia, urging prompt action. Replying a question about breast cancer, he called for comprehensive societal support for women facing breast cancer, including the provision of free medications and advocated joint efforts to educate women on preventive measures and access to free medical camps. He lamented that still women in Pakistan often seek medical attention at advanced stages due to multiple socio-economic and cultural factors, including age, employment status, limited awareness, fear of surgery and reliance on traditional treatments and spiritual healing. We need open communication and regular breast examinations, not only among elderly women but also younger individuals, he added.

Ayaz, Italian envoy discuss bilateral ties

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Speaker of the National Assembly Sardar Ayaz Sadiq Friday said that Pakistan and Italy enjoy a long-standing cordial relations based on a shared commitment to global peace and sustainable de-

velopment. "It is high time to enhance political, cultural, economic, and people-to-people connections between the two countries for the mutual benefit of the people on both sides, the speaker said during a meeting with the Italian Ambassador to Pakistan, Mrs. Marilina Armellini, who called on him. According to news release, during the meeting, the two

ry friendship groups and the exchange of parliamentary delegations, in order to share

and learn from each other's experiences. The Ambassador expressed gratitude to the speaker for his kind remarks and reiterated that Italy considered Pakistan as an important regional stakeholder. She expressed a desire to further strengthen linkages in all areas of mutual inter-



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and people-to-people connections between the two countries for the mutual benefit of the people on both sides, the speaker said during a meeting with the Italian Ambassador to Pakistan, Mrs. Marilina Armellini, who called on him. According to news release, during the meeting, the two

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Business Facilitation Center to be completed by September 2024

ISLAMABAD: The Business Facilitation Center, a project to streamline investment processes, is expected to be completed by September this year, CDA Chairman Muhammad Ali Randhawa told Federal Minister for Board of Investment (BOI), Abdul Aleem Khan on Friday. CDA Chairman briefed the minister about ongoing work to the project, stating that the facility will provide investors with all necessary services under one roof, making it an attractive destination for both local and foreign investors. Minister Aleem emphasized the importance of creating a corporate culture-friendly environment, which Chairman Randhawa assured would be achieved through the center's design. The center's construction is being carried out around the clock, with the BOI and CDA collaborating to ensure its success. The BOI will provide the necessary manpower and hardware, while the CDA will complete the construction work. The Business Facilitation Center is poised to revolutionize investment in Islamabad, making it an ideal location for businesses to thrive. Its completion is eagerly anticipated by investors and stakeholders alike.—APP

Commerce minister highlights significant contributions of ECO

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Commerce Jam Kamal Khan on Friday underscored Pakistan's commitment to the ECO, highlighting its significant contributions to the organization's initiatives. In a pivotal meeting held in Islamabad, ECO Secretary General Ambassador Khusrav Noziri met with Pakistani Federal Minister for Commerce Jam Kamal Khan to discuss regional trade dynamics and the future direction of the Economic Cooperation Organization (ECO), said a press release issued here. During the meeting, Minister Jam Kamal Khan lauded Ambassador Noziri for his exceptional service to the ECO and expressed confidence that his successor, Ambassador Asad Majeed Khan, would continue to advance the organization's activities. Noziri provided an overview of ECO's recent activities and emphasized the ongoing reforms aimed at enhancing the organization's regional and global influence. He expressed optimism that these reforms would continue under the new Secretary General, strengthening the organization's impact. The discussion focused on strategies to boost intra-regional trade and enhance connectivity among member states. Both sides reviewed the progress of ECO-Vision 2025, which was adopted during the 13th ECO Summit in Islamabad in 2017. Minister Khan highlighted Pakistan's visa-free policy for 126 countries as a model to enhance trade cooperation globally and suggested a similar ECO Visa policy to facilitate trade among member states. Quorum issues for ECO meetings were also addressed to ensure effective decision-making and policy formulation. Ambassador Noziri acknowledged Pakistan's pivotal role in the organization, both in trade and political spheres, being a founding member of the ECO. Minister Jam Kamal Khan emphasized the need for concrete and results-oriented policies to promote sustainable development in the region.—APP

Education minister announces ambitious matric, Inter-tech courses

ISLAMABAD: "In a major boost to the education sector in Punjab, Provincial Minister for Education Rana Sikandar Hayat Friday unveiled a groundbreaking initiative, announcing the launch of an ambitious Matric, Inter-Tech project to revolutionize the learning experience for students in 300 public schools across the province which will enable them hands-on experience and skill-building in their chosen fields. Talking to a Private news channel, he said the Matric, Inter-Tech project aims to address the long-standing issue of students graduating with theoretical knowledge but lacking the practical skills demanded by employers. To achieve this, the courses will be carefully crafted to integrate theoretical concepts with hands-on training, ensuring students are job-ready upon graduation, he mentioned. "Responding to a question, Provincial Minister for Education clarified that the government does not plan to build new school buildings for the Matric, Inter-Tech project, adding, instead, the existing infrastructure will be optimized by merging 600 to 700 school buildings, creating larger, more resourceful campuses. He said that by incorporating these cutting-edge subjects into the curriculum, the government aims to equip students with the skills required to thrive in the modern workforce. The merged schools will also provide students with access to advanced tools, software, and equipment, ensuring they are well-prepared for the demands of the 21st century, he added. "With the implementation of the Matric, Inter-Tech pilot project which later will further extend to other cities, Pakistani children will have the opportunity to receive a world-class education, on par with international standards", he mentioned. This will enable them to compete with their peers globally and be recognized for their skills and knowledge on the international stage, he expressed confidence. The project's focus on cutting-edge technologies, such as artificial intelligence, data science and cybersecurity, will provide students with a unique advantage in the global job market, he added.

Pakistani students will be able to participate in international competitions, collaborations, and exchange programs, showcasing their talents and innovative ideas to a global audience, he highlighted.—DNA

3000 cops deployed to ensure security in Rwp

RAWALPINDI: Rawalpindi district police on the directives of City Police Officer (CPO) Rawalpindi, Syed Khalid Hamdani here on Friday deployed over 3000 cops at Murree Road, Metro Stations and other important city points to ensure security. According to a police spokesman, Section 144 was enforced in Rawalpindi, restricting gatherings, processions, and protests. "Violation of Section 144 is not permitted under any circumstances.—APP

Tarar castigates PTI for using deepfake against Azma Bukhari

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Information, Broadcasting, National Heritage and Culture Attallah Tarar said on Friday that Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf had indulged in an obnoxious and dirty act by using deepfake regarding PML-N leader and provincial Minister Azma Bukhari under a well-thought-out conspiracy. Using his X account, he said that the original video has also been traced and the rest of the information has also been obtained. Lambasting the PTI for shameful heinous act he said it had exposed the real face of the PTI.—APP

CDA Chairman orders swift development in Islamabad's sectors

ISLAMABAD: Capital Development Authority (CDA) Chairman Mohammad Ali Randhawa directed authorities concerned to accelerate development work in various sectors to facilitate the residents. He instructed in a meeting held the other day to review development work in various sectors. With regard to long-standing issues of Sector E-12 residents, the Chairman directed the establishment of a single window facility to provide legitimate rehabilitation benefits to affected individuals. Furthermore, Randhawa instructed officials to remove bottlenecks hindering progress in Sector C-15, ensuring swift development in the area. Expressing satisfaction with the ongoing development in Sectors C-14 and C-16, the Chairman commended the team's efforts and encouraged them to maintain the momentum. This latest push for development is expected to bring relief to residents and contribute to Islamabad's growth, solidifying its status as a modern and well-planned city.—APP

Police arrest two bike lifters with five motorcycles

RAWALPINDI, Jul 26 (APP): Police have arrested two bike lifters and street criminals and recovered five stolen motorcycles and other items from their possession, said a Police spokesman here on Friday. He informed that a team under the supervision of SHO, R.A. Bazar Police Station managed to net two bike lifters namely Mobeen and Moazam and recovered five stolen motorcycles and other items from their possession. A case has been registered against the accused while further investigation is underway. Superintendent of Police, Potohar, Nasir Nawaz said the accomplices and facilitators of the accused would also be sent behind bars.—APP

JULY 2024

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Briefs

Police bust street criminal gang; arrest three

RAWALPINDI: Police have busted a street criminal gang by arresting three of active members of Ramzan gang allegedly involved in street and other crimes and recovered cash Rs 40,000, a motorcycle, weapons and other items from their possession. According to a police spokesman, Bani police held three street criminals namely Ramzan, Faisal and Sohail and recovered Rs 40,000, a motorcycle, weapons and other items. A case has been registered against the accused while further investigation is under process. The accused have been shifted to jail for identification parade, he added. Superintendent of Police, Rawal said that police are making efforts to net other members of the gang.—APP

SPI inflation up by 0.17 pc

ISLAMABAD: The weekly inflation, measured by the Sensitive Price Indicator (SPI), witnessed an increase of 0.17 percent for the combined consumption groups during the week ended on July 25, the Pakistan Bureau of Statistics (PBS) reported on Friday. According to the PBS data, the SPI for the week under review in the above-mentioned group was recorded at 321.95 points as compared to 321.40 points during the past week. As compared to the corresponding week of last year, the SPI for the combined consumption group in the week under review witnessed an increase of 20.09 per cent. The weekly SPI with the base year 2015-16 =100 covers 17 urban centres and 51 essential items for all expenditure groups. The SPI for the lowest consumption group of up to Rs 17,732, increased by 0.08 per cent and went up to 312.22 points from last week's 311.97 points. The SPI for the lowest consumption groups of Rs 17,732-22,888, Rs 22,889-29,517; Rs 29,518-44,175 and above Rs 44,175 increased by 0.13 percent, 0.15 percent, 0.18 and 0.19 percent respectively. During the week, out of 51 items, prices of 19 (37.25%) items increased, 8 (15.69%) items decreased and 24 (47.06%) items remained stable.—APP

NPO to organize workshop on 'Green Productivity for SMEs'

ISLAMABAD: The National Productivity Organization (NPO) is going to organize a workshop on "Green Productivity for Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs)" on Wednesday (July 31). The workshop aimed at to promote and enhance green productivity culture in the country, said an NPO document shared here on Friday. The workshop provides information about green productivity and its strategies, as well as assesses environmental impact and implements green productivity initiatives. It also highlights the financial aspect of green productivity, regulatory compliance and standards, technology and innovation, building a culture of sustainability.—APP

Experts call for deepening China-Pak flaxseed cultivation cooperation

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Experts have called for deepening China-Pak cooperation to improve flaxseed cultivation and improving the overall efficiency of the flaxseed value chain. "Empowering flaxseed farmers through agro-technology is just our beginning. Our collaboration project could contribute to the economic development of both sides by creating job opportunities, increasing trade, and improving the overall efficiency of the flaxseed value chain," said Prof Dr. A. W. Gandahi, Chairman, Department of Soil Science, at Sindh Agriculture University, at a flaxseed collaboration semi-



ISLAMABAD: Chairman Senate, Syed Yousuf Raza Gilani witnessing the art exhibition at Pakistan National Council of Arts (PNCA).—DNA

Masses urged to cooperate with authorities during monsoon

He emphasized the importance of citizen cooperation with emergency services 1122, urging residents to take an active role in ensuring their safety and the safety of those around them, adding, with the online training program citizens can learn vital techniques, such as first aid, emergency evacuation procedures, and flood safety measures, enabling them to respond confidently in crisis situations

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Secretary of Emergency Services Punjab Dr. Rizwan Naseer Friday urged upon citizens to cooperate with government's community-based online emergency safety services programme during monsoon season. Talking to PTV news channel, Secretary said Punjab's emergency response plan has been activated to ensure a swift and effective response to emergencies during the monsoon season. He said the government has launched a community-based online safety training sessions that will be equipping citizens with essential skills to handle emergency situations. He emphasized the importance of citizen cooperation with emergency services 1122, urging residents

to take an active role in ensuring their safety and the safety of those around them, adding, with the online training program citizens can learn vital techniques, such as first aid, emergency evacuation procedures, and flood safety measures, enabling them to respond confidently in crisis situations. He further explained that by working together with 1122, citizens can help minimize risks and ensure a safer, more resilient community during the monsoon season and beyond, he added.

Responding a question, Secretary announced that the Punjab government has also initiated the training of health staff for the planned air ambulance service, a groundbreaking initiative aimed at revolutionizing emergency medical response in the

province. comprehensive training program, conducted in collaboration with international experts, will equip healthcare professionals with the specialized skills required to provide critical care during air transport, he added. The training covers advanced life support techniques, aero-medical evacuation procedures, and flight medicine protocols, ensuring that the medical team can handle complex emergencies with precision and care, he added. The air ambulance service was being launch which will significantly enhance access to emergency medical care, particularly in remote and hard-to-reach areas of Punjab, he mentioned. By combining rapid air transport with expert medical care, the Punjab govern-

ment under the dedicated leadership of Maryum Nawaz Sharif will reduce response times, improve patient outcomes, and save lives, he mentioned. The trained health staff will be deployed on state-of-the-art air ambulances, equipped with cutting-edge medical equipment and communication technology, to provide seamless emergency medical services to the people of Punjab, he highlighted. To another question, he appealed to citizens to take timely emergency steps to avoid emergencies during monsoon rains, emphasizing the importance of proactive measures to ensure safety. He urged residents to stay informed about weather forecasts and warnings, and to take necessary precautions to secure their homes and sur-

roundings. This includes clearing drains and gutters, trimming tree branches, and removing loose outdoor items that could become projectiles in strong winds, he advised. He also advised citizens to avoid traveling during heavy rainfall, and to stay away from flooded areas, power lines, and standing water, which can be deadly. Additionally, he reminded residents to keep emergency phone numbers handy, including the 1122 helpline, and to have a first aid kit and essential supplies, such as food, water, and batteries, readily available. By taking these simple yet crucial steps, citizens can significantly reduce the risk of accidents, injuries, and losses during the monsoon season, and help ensure a safer and more resilient community.

ETC Test for GB Elementary School Teachers Postponed

DNA

ISLAMABAD: The Education Testing Council (ETC), Higher Education Commission has postponed the screening test for Gilgit-Baltistan's Elementary School Teachers (ESTs/ BPS-14), which was scheduled for Sunday (July 28, 2024). In this regard, ETC is also contacting the candidates individually to inform them about the postponement. The test has been delayed, till further orders, owing to a stay order in effect.—APP

IRSA releases 328,400 cusecs water

ISLAMABAD: Indus River System Authority (IRSA) on Friday released 328,400 cusecs water from various rim stations with inflow of 347,500 cusecs. According to the data released by IRSA, water level in River Indus at Tarbela Dam was 1516.68 feet and was 118.68 feet higher than its dead level of 1,398 feet. Water inflow and outflow in the dam was recorded as 208,500 cusecs and 200,000 cusecs respectively. The water level in River Jhelum at Mangla Dam was 1198.80 feet, which was 150.80 feet higher than its dead level of 1,050 feet. The inflow and outflow of water was recorded 22,600 cusecs and 12,000 cusecs respectively. The release of water at Kalabagh, Taunsa, Guddu and Sukkur was recorded as 227,300, 198,800, 137,500 and 77,600 cusecs respectively. Similarly, from River Kabul, a total of 52,700 cusecs of water released at Nowshera and 36,000 cusecs released from River Chenab at Marala.—APP

Livestock Deptt to distribute 5300 bucks

ISLAMABAD: In a significant move to enhance livestock quality and bolster agricultural productivity, the Livestock Department has announced the distribution of 5,300 high-breed bucks and rams (male goats and male sheep) to cattle farmers. This initiative, aimed at improving animal breeds and increasing milk, meat and wool production, will revolutionise cattle farming, said Deputy Director Livestock Dr Jamshaid while talking to media.—APP

Economy cannot grow by indiscriminately raising taxes

MEHTAB PIRZADA

ISLAMABAD: Former President of the Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry (ICCI), Dr Shahid Rasheed Butt, said on Friday that no economy could ever develop by indiscriminately increasing taxes.

He said that raising taxes while avoiding the expansion of the tax is increasing poverty in the country. In a statement issued today, Shahid Rasheed Butt stated that a country where the masses are starving and the middle class is being wiped out could never become self-reliant. The business leader said the economy could never flourish by increasing taxes and utility prices. There have been many claims of the country's development in the last nine years, but the electricity consumption in Pakistan is the same as it was nine years ago, while the population has increased a lot. He warned that if we do

not make electricity more affordable for economic development, businesses will close, businesspersons will go bankrupt, and people will lose their jobs. The government will have to pay attention to the closing industries. He asked, "How can industrial production increase when our industry is not functioning?" Millions of workers have lost jobs due to the industry's closure; therefore, the government should move towards industry revival. After three years of activation, the textile looms have once again closed. He underlined that if the wheel of industry moves, the wheel of the economy will move, too. He asserted that although agriculture serves as the foundation of the nation's economy, it needs to receive more attention, leading the agricultural nation to import food items valued at billions of dollars. Shahid Rashid Butt advocated for modernizing

agriculture to boost crop and fruit production, making barren and uninhabited land fertile, and providing farmers with subsidies for fertilizer, oil, and electricity. In three provinces, gas and oil reserves can increase production and improve the country's fortune by cutting energy import bills. Many countries in the world depend on tourism. We have beautiful valleys, mountains, rivers, deserts, plains, and beaches. However, we have yet to attract tourists' attention, primarily due to the law and order problem. We have never paid much attention to religious tourism, even though our country is the birthplace of Buddhism, Hinduism, and Sikhism. If we open the doors to the people of these three religions, we will have given them access to their holy places to two and a half billion people, which can change the country's destiny.

Govt taking steps to facilitate business community

ISLAMABAD: Minister for industries and production Rana Tanveer Hussain on Friday said that the government is taking steps to facilitate the business community and common man. The minister said while talking to a delegation of Federation of Pakistan Chamber of Commerce and Industry (FPCCI) led by its President Atif Ikram Sheikh. He said that the government is setting up special economic zones for investment whereas.—DNA

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Vol: 05 Issue: 112

Email: dailyisbpost@gmail.com

Phone: 051-2266165 / 051-2261960

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Is shutting down social media smart for BD?

AFTER a prolonged internet shutdown that all but brought the "Digital Bangladesh" to a standstill, broadband internet has finally been restored across the country. However, mobile internet is still suspended. More worryingly still, sources say that the government is unlikely to provide uninterrupted access to social media platforms anytime soon—at least until tech companies comply with its demands. State Minister for ICT Zunaid Ahmed Palak stated on Wednesday that social media platforms, particularly Facebook and YouTube, have not been complying with Bangladesh's laws; as such, Facebook, along with Meta's other popular platforms such as Messenger and WhatsApp—and ByteDance's TikTok—will remain blocked indefinitely. The internet was shut down at the height of the quota reform protests around 9pm on July 18, with the government offering conflicting accounts of why it occurred from the very beginning. While it claims that the shutdown occurred due to an attack on the data centres in the capital's Mohakhali area, Thenews agency, upon visiting the centres, found no sign of damage to the building that housed them—to say nothing of the fact that it's a technical impossibility for an entire country's internet to be disrupted simply because of a localised disruption. The government's decision to prolong the ban on social media will only confirm the public's suspicion that it is doing so to control the free flow of information about the severity of the atrocities conducted during the protests.

We are disturbed that the government ordered such a shutdown, which lasted for over five days—which, as highlighted by UN experts, represent a dramatic means of limiting fundamental freedoms and contravene international law. But that it did so under false pretext can only add to people's growing mistrust of the government at a time when the latter needs to assure the former of its commitment to democratic norms and human rights. The government's decision to prolong the ban on social media will only confirm the public's suspicion that it is doing so to control the free flow of information about the severity of the atrocities conducted during the protests. During such a vacuum, it is natural for misinformation and rumours to spread among a population starved of information. We have observed with increasing alarm the government's stringent measures to curtail digital freedoms over the decade, from arbitrarily arresting people under the draconian Digital Security Act (now the Cyber Security Act) for their social media posts, to the surveillance of private data of citizens, to demanding that tech companies block certain users or content or provide their personal details. We have seen such measures being intensified in the aftermath of mass protests. We urge the government to realise that blocking social media indefinitely will only fuel panic, resentment and misinformation and further alienate it from the public. Putting aside the obvious violations of our digital rights and freedoms of speech and expression, what is to happen to the numerous businesses that are now dependent on social media for their very survival?



Beijing declaration marks milestone

FATAH and Hamas, along with other Palestinian factions, signed on Tuesday the Beijing Declaration on ending division and strengthening Palestinian national unity, sending a shock wave across the world. This is the second agreement regarding the Middle East signed under China's mediation, following the deal between Iran and Saudi Arabia to restore full-fledged diplomatic ties last year. Palestinian internal unity has long been a difficult issue, so why did 14 Palestinian factions travel all the way to Beijing to discuss it? Will they uphold the declaration, and what will its regional significance be? After the death of former Fatah leader Yasser Arafat in 2004, internal divisions in Palestine began to deepen. Afterwards, efforts to reunite continued to emerge, with many external interventions. However, the mutual weaknesses of external and internal factors have prevented any substantial progress in Palestinian national unity. First, the power to facilitate reconciliation between the two sides is limited. The US considers Hamas a terrorist group and only backs Mahmoud Abbas' Palestinian Authority, making it impossible to promote Palestinian unity. Historically, Arab countries have been the main supporters of the Palestinian Liberation Organization (PLO), but internal divisions in the Arab world have led to Arab countries reaching separate reconciliations with Israel and seeking peace. International powers, such as the US, offer financial aid to Abbas' Palestinian Authority on the condition that they adopt a moderate approach, renounce violence and work toward peace with Israel. In 2011, Fatah and Hamas held negotiations in Egypt and signed a reconciliation agreement; in 2022, under the mediation of Algeria, the two parties signed an agreement in Algiers. However, these agreements are very fragile and have not been implemented. China, however, has gained strong capabilities and widespread trust and has actually become the most stable and sincere external force in promoting unity among various factions in Palestine. Second, the current situation is different from the past. In the past, Fatah and Hamas each had their own territory and ways of survival. After the serious conflict between Hamas and Israel on October 7 last year, Israel not only vowed to eradicate Hamas, but also intended to occupy the Gaza Strip for a long time after the war, threatening the survival of the entire PLO movement. If Hamas completely loses control of Gaza, it will have nowhere to turn, and Fatah's influence will also be greatly diminished. The entire Palestinian nation, including Hamas and Fatah, is in urgent need of unity at this critical juncture. Hence, leaders of 14 Palestinian factions, including Hamas and Fatah, went to Beijing together. Third, China is the most qualified to talk about national unity with abundant historical experience and practical resources in this issue. China is a permanent member of the UN Security Council and the largest force outside the Western world. China has the greatest credibility in guiding the Palestinian factions to reach an agreement and pushing them to abide by the agreement.

For a fair world, stand with Palestine

Selcuk Bayraktar

This imperative is not just a theoretical ideal but a practical necessity that humanity must embrace to avert the recurrence of historical atrocities and to ensure a just and peaceful world. Some 20 years ago, when I was a research assistant at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT), a group of students came together to raise awareness about the Palestinian struggle. We would put up posters, screen informative films, and distribute brochures. Apathy, which stops the international community from taking meaningful action today, manifested itself then in the form of the following questions: What is this going to change? Will this help stop the bleeding after decades?

ADDRESSING a joint meeting of the United States Congress on Wednesday, Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu pushed back against international criticism that Israel has been committing war crimes and crimes against humanity in Gaza, where approximately 40,000 people – men, women, children and babies – have been killed to date. He also doubled down on his government's policy of genocide and extermination, refusing to signal that the bloodshed will stop soon. He received a standing ovation from some of America's leading politicians. Had Satan and his minions descended on Earth and performed a ritual, even they would have been less audacious. Scientific evidence suggests that the Almighty created the world four billion years ago. Since then, it has been destroyed and rebuilt many times over. Over the last 200,000 years, humankind has established institutions, organisations and agreements to maintain peace and promote order by learning from past mistakes. Indeed, this is what distinguishes us from all other creatures: We are uniquely capable of accumulating knowledge and passing it down to future generations – unlike the beaver, for example, which has been building the exact same dam for millions of years. Therefore, it is unsettling that Antonio Gramsci's words from 1932, preceding World War II, remain remarkably pertinent today: "The old world is dying, and the new world struggles to be born; now is the time of monsters." A century later, humanity has come full circle. Despite the establishment of institutions like the United Nations and

acceptance of documents like the Universal Declaration of Human Rights aimed at promoting peace and justice, we bear witness to the first livestreamed genocide in history. The kind of suffering currently unfolding in Palestine is unprecedented. The Palestinian people, who have been resisting injustice for 75 years, are now daring to survive in front of a global audience. The Palestinian people's resistance is emblematic of a broader human struggle for justice, as captured in one of my favourite poems, "Soon the Sun will rise", by Erdem Bayazit: "You are the heroes of humanity resisting amid steel gears." It is an undeniable fact that the struggle for justice and the fight for a better world are perennial themes that resonate deeply in our collective consciousness. As one particularly poignant line from another favourite poem, Ismet Ozel's "Life My Darling", relates: This imperative is not just a theoretical ideal but a practical necessity that humanity must embrace to avert the recurrence of historical atrocities and to ensure a just and peaceful world. Some 20 years ago, when I was a research assistant at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT), a group of students came together to raise awareness about the Palestinian struggle. We would put up posters, screen informative films, and distribute brochures. Apathy, which stops the international community from taking meaningful action today, manifested itself then in the form of the following questions: What is this going to change? Will this help stop the bleeding after decades? This scepticism was understandable but

ultimately misplaced. The impact of seemingly insignificant actions is not always immediate or visible, but they contribute to a broader movement of awareness and change. Indeed, thank Allah, protests have swept through the United States and Europe, including the world's most prestigious schools like Harvard, MIT, Columbia and others. Our actions, whether through organised events or individual efforts, contribute to the broader struggle for justice. We are not merely passive observers but active participants in shaping the moral fabric of our society. The changes we seek must begin within ourselves. As I told my friends two decades ago, the resistance and struggle are not just for the heroes on the front lines, but for the rest of us, to transform our own indifference into action. The ultimate goal is to foster a world where our children can grow up in safety and dignity. This requires a collective effort to uphold justice, challenge oppression, and promote peace. The poem continues: Unless we act now, this will be the result. So, what will it take for humanity to abandon laying the groundwork for such an apocalypse? Let us keep reciting the poem: The Palestinians are fulfilling their duty by resisting. It is the rest of us that need to change. All of us – not just the handful of people already standing up for justice in Palestine. The world cannot be saved unless and until the rest changes. Let us today take the tiniest step towards doing the smallest amount of good so that, in two decades' time, we can tell our children that we stood up for what was right for a fair world. Sourced by Al Jazeera news.

ICJ compelled the int'l community to take action against Israel

Abbas-Ali Kadkhodaei

The advisory opinion was also a vindication of the work many other UN officials and special rapporteurs have done on the occupation in the past and a rebuke of the Israeli regime's attacks against them. Indeed, Special Rapporteur Albanese is hardly the first UN official targeted, maligned and prevented from efficiently fulfilling their mandate by the Israeli regime for the "crime" of exposing Israeli atrocities and standing up for the rights of the Palestinian people. The regime, for example, levelled accusations of anti-Israel bias at and persistently denied entry to Albanese's predecessor, Michael Lynk, who was the UN special rapporteur on the situation of human...

IN recent weeks, the Israeli regime has accelerated its attacks on the core institutions and valued representatives of the United Nations in an effort to conceal the truth about its countless international and humanitarian law violations in Gaza and the rest of the illegally occupied Palestinian territories. In addition to continuing with its longstanding policy of accusing the UN and its agencies of bias and even "complicity in terror" for criticising its illegal occupation and supporting the internationally recognised rights of the long-suffering Palestinian people, the Zionist regime also launched a personal attack against the UN's much respected Special Rapporteur on the human rights situation in the West Bank and Gaza, Francesca Albanese. The regime and its supporters baselessly accused Special Rapporteur Albanese of anti-Israel bias, anti-Semitism and financial improprieties merely because she honourably fulfilled her duty, defended a vulnerable population, exposed Zionist atrocities in Gaza, and demanded that those blatantly violating the human rights of the Palestinians are held to account. Throughout her mandate, which began in May 2022, the special rapporteur tirelessly highlighted the crimes the Israeli regime has long been committing in the territories it illegally occupies, defended the human rights of Palestinians, including their right to self-determination, and supported all her reports and statements with scientific data from the ground and credible legal arguments. She defined Israel as an apartheid state and in a March 2024 report said that Israel's ongoing assault on Gaza amounts to genocide. She also repeatedly emphasised the need for Palestine to be recognised as a sovereign state and Israel to be officially designated as an occupying regime for the human rights violations in Palestine to come to an end. Her position has always been clear: Palestinians have been living under the Zionist regime's illegal, violent occupation for more than 50 years, deprived of their freedom of movement and denied access to their most basic rights and natural resources. The international community must take immediate action to end the regime's apartheid practices and ethnic cleansing. It should enforce international norms and urgently act to defend the Palestinian people's right to self-determination. Israel has been pointing to these stances when mounting its accusations of bias against Special Rapporteur Albanese. However, everything she has stated about Palestine is supported by leading international scholars, prominent NGOs, and recently, were explicitly approved by the International Court of Justice – the world's highest judicial body. Indeed, in its landmark advisory opinion issued on July 19, 2024, on the "legal consequences

arising from the policies and practices of Israel in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem", the World Court ruled that Israel's continued presence in the occupied Palestinian territory is unlawful and should come to an end "as rapidly as possible". And it further affirmed the rights of Palestinians who have endured decades of systematic human rights violations as a result of this unlawful occupation. The court not only recognised the Israeli regime's ongoing occupation of Palestine and persecution of a defenceless people as a clear threat to international peace and security but also officially acknowledged the fact that the Zionist regime is committing the crime of racial discrimination and apartheid against Palestinians. The advisory opinion was also a vindication of the work many other UN officials and special rapporteurs have done on the occupation in the past and a rebuke of the Israeli regime's attacks against them. Indeed, Special Rapporteur Albanese is hardly the first UN official targeted, maligned and prevented from efficiently fulfilling their mandate by the Israeli regime for the "crime" of exposing Israeli atrocities and standing up for the rights of the Palestinian people. The regime, for example, levelled accusations of anti-Israel bias at and persistently denied entry to Albanese's predecessor, Michael Lynk, who was the UN special rapporteur on the situation of human rights in the occupied Palestinian territory between 2016-2022. Like Albanese, Lynk had equated illegal Israeli settlements to a war crime, accused Israel of apartheid practices against the Palestinians and called on economic sanctions on the Israeli regime. Richard Falk, who held the same role between 2008 and 2014 was also barred from entering the occupied territories for speaking the truth and exposing the regime's unlawful practices. Makarim Wibisono, another former UN special rapporteur on the situation of human rights in the occupied Palestinian territory (2014-2016), meanwhile, was forced to resign from the position before completing his mandate due to Israeli pressure. The regime's efforts to evade scrutiny and accountability for its widespread human rights violations by targeting UN officials performing their duties was not limited to the targeting of special rapporteurs either. It also routinely denied access to UN fact-finding missions tasked with examining the human rights situation in the occupied territories. In 2020, the Israeli regime refused to renew the visas of staff members of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) and consequently expelled 15 international OHCHR staff members from the occupied territories.

After consequent requests for visas by the office were ignored for two years, the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights Michelle Bachelet issued a statement in August 2022 condemning the regime's behaviour. "Israel's treatment of our staff is part of a wider and worrying trend to block human rights access to the occupied Palestinian territory," she said. "This raises the question of what exactly the Israeli authorities are trying to hide." Looking at the Israeli regime's long history of preventing the UN's human rights officials from accessing the occupied territories, makes it clear that its ongoing accusations against UN agencies and Special Rapporteur Albanese are merely a continuation of a long term policy of inflicting costs on officials and experts exposing its crimes. The aim of this strategy is to evade punishment for blatant violations of international law and prevent the international community from rising against this criminal regime in support of the Palestinian people. The ICJ's landmark advisory opinion published on July 19, however, ensured that this strategy can no longer yield the intended results. After the World Court made its position on the issue clear, and declared the Israeli occupation unlawful and the regime's treatment of Palestinians unacceptable, efforts to silence and intimidate UN special rapporteurs can no longer shield Israel's criminal behaviour from international attention and condemnation. It should be added that the ICJ, in its advisory opinion, has placed the responsibility for ending the Israeli regime's flagrant violations of international law on the United Nations and all its member states. This is a serious wake-up call, especially for governments that have made it their clear and open policy to defend the Zionist regime's ongoing crimes, which the World Court clearly said must be stopped immediately. The countries that have not listened to Special Rapporteur Albanese and her predecessors in the past better start paying attention and act accordingly now that the ICJ has officially reached the same conclusions on Israel's occupation as they did. Indeed, all states and international organisations have a duty to react and express unequivocal condemnation in the face of a state's blatant breach of international law and attacks on the UN and its representatives, like Special Rapporteur Francesca Albanese. The consequence of neglecting this important matter any longer, especially after the ICJ's landmark advisory opinion, will be the further weakening of the credibility of the current supposedly rules-based world order.

- Sourced by Al Jazeera News

Briefs

PM tasks ministries...

FROM PAGE 01

While noting the proposals, the Prime Minister tasked relevant Ministries to get in touch with the Tajik Ambassador for further discussions. Regional connectivity projects including CASA-1000, also came under discussion. The Tajik Ambassador thanked the Prime Minister for conveying greetings of his President to the Prime Minister and expressed his country's desire to further enhance its relations with Pakistan.

Ambreen Jan appointed...

FROM PAGE 01

She is also heading the grievance committee, which is reviewing complaints of journalists regarding allotment of plots. Meanwhile the President, Secretary General and the office-bearers of the Executive Committee of the APNS have welcomed the appointment of Ms. Ambreen Jan as the new Information Secretary and hoped during her tenure relations between govt and the media industry shall further be strengthened. The APNS also drew attention of the new secretary towards problems being faced by the print media industry especially issue of the payments and increase in the govt rates.

ADB approves...

FROM PAGE 01

This project is a key part of ADB's multifaceted response to Pakistan's flood crisis and forms part of the bank's commitment to provide \$1.5 billion in total assistance from 2023 to 2025 to accelerate the country's flood recovery. "This project will help rebuild homes and communities, and restore livelihood and basic services in Sindh, the province most affected by the devastating 2022 floods," said ADB Director General for Central and West Asia Yevgeniy Zhukov. "It is part of ADB's extensive support to help Pakistan recover from the disaster which affected 33 million people and damaged houses and infrastructure across the nation." Sindh sustained about 83% of the total housing damage inflicted by the 2022 floods, with around 2.1 million houses either fully destroyed or damaged. Two years on, many victims still reside in inadequate, temporary shelters lacking essential services such as water, sanitation, and electricity.

CM voices against...

FROM PAGE 01

Calling the Bannu incident tragic, he said the people of the city cooperated with authorities to prevent further damages. "We will render sacrifices for this country but our decision will not be taken by others," he said. He alleged that some elements presented the facts by twisting them for their vested interests. The chief minister also instructed the police to take action against armed groups across the province. "Do your work, public stand with you," he urged the cops. He also vowed not to spare corrupt elements and drug peddlers. "Correct yourself or face the music," he warned. Ali Amin Gandapur said, "We may disagree with a person, but the heart is hurt when something bad is uttered against martyrs. We all have to support the families of martyrs". The chief minister also highlighted the measures being taken to facilitate the seminary students, saying the government has set aside funds for them in the budget.

Sanam, Yasmin, Alia among...

FROM PAGE 01

candidates and later joined the Sunni Ittehad Council (SIC) – as PTI members in line with the Supreme Court's ruling. Earlier this week, the PTI submitted relevant documents with declaration of party's affiliation to the Election Commission to be entitled to have reserved seats in the assemblies in line with the court's order.

India outclass BD to qualify for Women's Asia Cup final

Verma scored 26 off 28 deliveries while Mandhana scored a brilliant half-century, scoring 55 runs on 39 balls with the help of nine fours and a six

SPORTS DESK

DUBAI: Indian women's cricket team qualified for the Women's T20 Asia Cup 2024 final after defeating Bangladesh by 10 wickets in the first semi-final which was played at Rangiri Dambulla International Stadium on Friday. Chasing the target of 81 runs, India had no trouble as their openers Shafali Verma and Smriti Mandhana guided their side home in just 11 overs. Verma scored 26 off 28 deliveries while Mandhana scored a brilliant half-century, scoring 55 runs on 39 balls with the help of nine fours and a six. With their place in the final cemented, India will wait for one of Pakistan or Sri Lanka in the final to compete for the trophy. Earlier, opting to bat first, things did not go Bangladesh's way as the Indian bowling attack gave their players no room to settle down. Three of their top-order players –



Dilara Akter (6), Murshida Khatun (4) and Ishma Tanjim (8) – returned to the pavilion early in the game. Skipper Nigar Sultana provided some resistance as she scored 32 runs on 51 balls but her innings was ended by Radha Yadav. Down the order, Shorna Akter contributed 19 runs with two boundaries. It was an all-round display from the Indian bowlers. Yadav and Renuka Singh picked three wickets each while Pooja Vastrakar and Deepti Sharma bagged one each.

Playing XI: India: Shafali Verma, Smriti Mandhana, Uma Chetry, Harmanpreet Kaur (c), Jemimah Rodrigues, Richa Ghosh (wk), Deepti Sharma, Pooja Vastrakar, Radha Yadav, Tanuja Kanwar, Renuka Thakur Singh

Bangladesh: Dilara Akter, Murshida Khatun, Nigar Sultana (c & wk), Rumana Ahmed, Ishma Tanjim, Ritu Moni, Rabeya Khan, Shorna Akter, Nahida Akter, Jahannara Alam, Marufa Akter

Jasprit praises Rohit Sharma, Virat Kohli's leadership skills

NEW DELHI: India pacer Jasprit Bumrah lauded the leadership skills of two veteran cricketers, Virat Kohli and Rohit Sharma, after the Blues ended their 11-year-long ICC trophy drought by lifting T20 World Cup 2024 in West Indies. Bumrah was key to India's success in the tournament as he bagged 15 wickets and was also named the Player of the Tournament due to his heroics, especially in the final when all hopes were lost for Sharma's men. The speedster was asked how his favourite Indian captain is to which he hilariously picked himself. "My favourite captain is me because I have captained a few games. Obviously, there are great captains, but I will take my name. I am my favourite captain," Bumrah told The Indian Express. After sharing some laughter, Bumrah went on to praise Sharma for the way he has been leading the team. Especially during the five-Test against England where India played several youngsters. "In the recent England series, when the youngsters came, Rohit made the atmosphere very comfortable," Bumrah said. "He took extra effort; he will take them out; he will talk to them about the game; he will try and push them to take the responsibility, as the youngsters should think all are equally important; there is no senior or junior. A captain needs to have empathy towards bowlers and Rohit Sharma is one of the few captains who has empathy for bowlers. "Playing in the IPL as well, I even used to go and tell Rohit that 'You set the field, I am going to bowl this ball. You set the field, and I trust you whatever you feel is right. You set the field'," Bumrah revealed about his early days at Mumbai Indians. The pacer also hailed Kohli, who retired after T20 World Cup win, saying that he brings energy and passion to the team. "Virat is energy-driven. He is quite passionate, wears his heart on his sleeves. He pushed us in terms of fitness. He changed the narrative that way. Even though Virat is not the captain, he is still the leader," Bumrah said of the 35-year-old. – Agencies

Rybakina joins missing list from Olympic tennis

PARIS: The Olympic tennis competition suffered another blow as women's third seed Elena Rybakina joined a lengthy list of non-starters hours due to illness just hours after the draw took place at Roland Garros on Thursday. The big-serving 25-year-old Kazakh was down to face Romania's Jaqueline Cristian in the first round of the singles. "It is difficult for me to announce this, but unfortunately, I will not be able to participate in the Paris Olympics. After Wimbledon, I contracted acute bronchitis, and despite trying to return to training, my body has yet to recover. The doctors have strictly forbidden me from going to court," Rybakina posted on Instagram. Rybakina's withdrawal means that France's Caroline Garcia moves into her spot in the draw as the 17th seed while Australia's Daria Saville enters the draw as an alternate. With the action to begin on Saturday, the flurry of high-profile withdrawals has cast something of a cloud over the tournament being staged on the Parisian clay. On Wednesday, men's world number one and top seed Jannik Sinner of Italy had to withdraw from the singles and doubles because of illness while exciting Danish youngster Holger Rune also pulled out on Wednesday with a wrist injury.

Czech player Marketa Vondrousova, who was runner-up in the singles in Tokyo three years ago, withdrew on Monday because of injury, as did Poland's Hubert Hurkacz because of a knee injury sustained at Wimbledon. Switzerland's Belinda Bencic, the champion in Tokyo, is also missing after giving birth to a daughter in April. Two-time Olympic singles champion Andy Murray announced before Thursday's draw that he was not fit enough to compete in the singles but would still play doubles with Dan Evans. Other notable absences from the tennis at the Games include world number three Aryna Sabalenka, Tunisia's Ons Jabeur, Britain's Emma Raducanu, American Ben Shelton and Tokyo men's bronze medal winner Pablo Carreno Busta of Spain. – Agencies

Shoaib urges India to visit Pakistan for CT 2025

DNA

ISLAMABAD: All-rounder Shoaib Malik urged India to visit Pakistan to participate in the Champions Trophy 2025 which is set to take place in the country from February to March next year. The PCB stands firm on its stance of hosting all of the Champions Trophy 2025 matches in the country despite rumours of a neutral venue or plan B. It was reported that the Indian cricket team will not travel to Pakistan and play their matches on a neutral venue. Malik believes that India should visit Pakistan to play the Champions Trophy

as the Green Shirts too went to India to play the World Cup last year. The all-rounder stressed on keeping politics aside in sports. "Whatever reservations there are between the countries, that's a separate issue and should be solved separately. Politics shouldn't come into sports. The Pakistan team went to India last year, and now it's a good opportunity for the Indian team too," Malik said while talking on a YouTube channel. "I think there are many players in the Indian team who haven't played in Pakistan, so it would be great for them. We are good people. We're very hospitable people, so I'm sure the Indian team should come." Three venues –

Karachi, Rawalpindi and Lahore – will host the matches of eight matches and according to PCB's proposed schedule to ICC, all of India's matches will take place in Lahore. Except India, all eight teams that will participate in the Champions Trophy have already played in Pakistan and the PCB believes that India does not have a strong reason not to come here. The proposed dates for the Champions Trophy are from 19th February to 9th March. This event will mark the return of ICC Champions Trophy after an eight-year hiatus, with its last occurrence in 2017, when Pakistan emerged victorious by defeating India in the final.

Bavuma unhappy with South Africa's Test calendar

CAPE TOWN: South Africa's captain Temba Bavuma is unhappy with the Proteas' red-ball calendar as they have just played four matches in the World Test Championship (WTC) 2023-25 calendar. The Proteas are currently seventh on the WTC points table and their chances of making it to the final are not that bright. Bavuma stated that the players believe that they are starting over and over again because they don't get to play as many Tests as the Big Three – India, Australia and England. "It's a challenge that's not necessarily unique to us and probably something that all the teams outside the big three face. It feels like we're starting again and again as a team. You can hear in terms of the conversations, there's a lot of reminding ourselves of a philosophy, how we want to play and

basically what our blueprint is to winning," Bavuma was quoted as saying by ESPNCricinfo. "It's nothing that is unique to us as a South African team. The challenge is we've just got to make it work with what we have. We don't use it as an excuse. I think there's definitely a lot of excitement from the guys and we'd like to focus on that excitement more than all the other uncontrollable," he added. South Africa have eight more Test matches scheduled in the WTC cycle, two against West Indies – starting in August, two in Bangladesh in October and a home series against Sri Lanka and Pakistan.

South Africa Test squad for West Indies series: Temba Bavuma (c), David Bedingham, Matthew Breetzke, Nandre Burger, Gerald Coetzee, Tony de Zorzi, Keshav Maharaj, Aiden Markram, Wiaan Mulder, Lungi Ngidi, Dane Paterson, Dane Piedt, Kagiso Rabada, Tristan Stubbs, Ryan Rickelton, Kyle Verreyne.

Tour Itinerary: Warm-up Match: 31 July – 03 August @ Brian Lara Cricket Academy, Trinidad and Tobago.

First Test: 07 – 11 August – @ Queen's Park Oval, Trinidad and Tobago, **Second Test:** 15 – 19 August – @ Guyana National Stadium, Guyana. – Agencies



ISLAMABAD: GENIX Pharma Hosts HIV, HCV, and HBV Camp with Dr. Mirza Inam Ul Haq at Golra Family Hospital. Volunteers: Rafay Pirzada, Saleem Abbas. – DNA

Pakistan's key athletes to watch at the PO

From track to pool and shooting range, watch Pakistan's athletes compete for glory



AS the world prepares for the Paris 2024 Olympics, Pakistan is set to make its mark on the global stage. Pakistan's Olympic journey began in 1948, and over the years, the country has earned recognition primarily through its field hockey team, which has secured three gold medals. However, the nation's athletes have increasingly diversified into other sports, making their presence felt in wrestling, boxing, athletics, and more.

Here's your guide to watch Pakistan athletes, their events, and the dates you won't want to miss. **Arshad Nadeem – Javelin Throw:** Arshad Nadeem is one of Pakistan's brightest hopes in athletics. After a commendable fifth-place finish at the Tokyo 2020 Olympics with a distance of 84.62m, Nadeem has continued to excel, setting new national records and earning medals at various international events. His journey to Paris has been marked by rigorous training and an unyielding spirit. Fans eagerly anticipate his performance, hoping he can secure Pakistan's first Olympic medal in athletics. **Event Schedule:** - Qualification Round: August 3, 2024, - Final: August 5, 2024, Faiqa Riaz – Women's 100m, Faiqa Riaz is a rising star in Pakistani

athletics, specializing in the 100m sprint. While Paris 2024 marks her Olympic debut, she has already made a name for herself in regional competitions, showcasing remarkable speed and agility. Her participation is a significant step for Pakistan in track events, and she aims to advance beyond the preliminary rounds, bringing pride to her country. **Event Schedule:** -Preliminary Round: August 2, 2024, at the Stade de France, Kishmala Talat – Shooting, Kishmala Talat is a young and talented shooter who has steadily climbed the ranks in international shooting events. Although Paris 2024 is her first Olympic appearance, she has competed in multiple ISSF World Cups, gaining valuable experience and honing her skills. Talat's versatility in both air pistol and stand-

ard pistol events makes her a formidable competitor. **Event Schedule:** - 10m Air Pistol Women's Qualification Round: July 27, 2024, - 10m Air Pistol Mixed Team Qualification Round: July 29, 2024, - 25m Pistol Women's Qualification Round: August 2, 2024, - Location: Chateauroux Shooting Centre, Gulfam Joseph – Shooting, Gulfam Joseph competed in the Tokyo 2020 Olympics, where he performed admirably in the 10m air pistol event. His experience at Tokyo has prepared him well for Paris 2024. Joseph's calm demeanor and precise shooting have earned him accolades in various international competitions, making him one of Pakistan's top shooting prospects. **Event Schedule:** - 10m Air Pistol Men's Qualification Round: July

27, 2024, - 10m Air Pistol Mixed Team Qualification Round: July 29, 2024, - Location: Chateauroux Shooting Centre, Ghulam Mustafa Bashir – Shooting, Ghulam Mustafa Bashir has represented Pakistan in previous Olympics, including the Rio 2016 and Tokyo 2020 Games. Specializing in the rapid fire pistol event, Bashir has consistently demonstrated his expertise and competitive spirit. His experience and skill make him a strong contender in Paris, where he aims to achieve a personal best. **Event Schedule:** - 25m Rapid Fire Pistol Men's Qualification Round: August 4, 2024, - Location: Chateauroux Shooting Centre, Muhammad Ahmed Durrani – Men's 200m Freestyle, Muhammad Ahmed Durrani is set to make his Olympic debut

in Paris, representing Pakistan in the 200m freestyle swimming event. Durrani has shown impressive progress in national and regional swimming competitions, setting multiple records. His participation in the Olympics marks a significant milestone for Pakistan's swimming on the international stage. **Event Schedule:** - Heats: July 28, 2024, at the Paris La Defense Arena Jehanara Nabi – Women's 200m Freestyle, Jehanara Nabi is another debutant for Pakistan at the Paris 2024 Olympics, competing in the 200m freestyle. Nabi has been a standout performer in national swimming circuits, demonstrating exceptional speed and endurance. Her presence in the Olympics highlights the growing talent in Pakistan women's swimming.

Terrorist gunned down in North...

FROM PAGE 01

an intelligence-based operation in North Waziristan, wherein terrorist – identified as Razaq – was killed. He was a close associate of Gul Bahadur and was actively involved in numerous terrorist activities in the area including target killing of Malik Sher Muhammad, grandson of Faqir of Ippi on 6 January 2023 as well as facilitation of suicide bombing attack in North Waziristan on 16 March 2024 which resulted in shahadat of seven brave soldiers. "Sanitisation operation is being conducted to eliminate any other terrorist found in the area as Security Forces of Pakistan remain determined to eliminate the menace of terrorism from the country," the ISPR said.

JI to continue protest...

FROM PAGE 01

founder, Imran Khan and other detained part leaders. The federal capital has been completely sealed off with containers, effectively isolating it from surrounding areas, including Rawalpindi. Meanwhile, strict security arrangements have been made in Islamabad, with blockades on various arteries to keep the protesters from gathering, leading to widespread traffic disruptions across the city. Section 144 remains imposed across Punjab and the federal capital, prohibiting assemblies, processions and protests ahead of rallies announced by opposition parties. Personnel of law enforcement agencies have been deployed in the federal capital to ensure compliance and citizens are urged to avoid participating in any illegal activity. Several individuals affiliated with JI were arrested by the Islamabad police while trying to gather in the federal capital for a protest at D-Chowk, in defiance of Section 144. Several others were arrested in Lahore as well when JI protesters gathered to march towards Islamabad. In the wake of arrests and barricades, JI's Rawalpindi Emir Arif Sherazi later announced that they would stage the sit-in outside Liaquat Bagh instead of D-Chowk, which will continue till their demands are accepted. The party's representative said that JI Emir Hafiz Naeem ur Rehman, who is leading a march procession from Khyber Pakhtunkhwa will reach Liaquat Bagh, where the sit-in is being staged. Rawalpindi Central Police Officer Khalid Mahmood Hamdani said that JI had been permitted to stage a rally in Liaquat Bagh after agreeing on certain SOPs with the protestors.

'Govt still open for talks': Tarar

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the government about concluding their protest against inflation with a rally at Liaquat Bagh. However, the government remains open to dialogue, he added. "When it was agreed to hold the rally at Liaquat Bagh, the march towards Islamabad is incomprehensible," he said while addressing a press conference alongside Amir Muqam in Islamabad on Friday. Tarar emphasised that the government is still willing to engage in talks with Jamaat-e-Islami. Reacting to Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa Chief Minister Ali Amin Gandapur's speech at the Bannu rally, Tarar remarked, "We understand his constraints. He reassures in the Apex Committee, but speaks differently in public. After the decision to bring back TTP terrorists, terrorism has increased." Tarar criticised the CM Gandapur further, saying, "What should have been done is to outline your actions against terrorism. They have made an agreement with a fake artificial intelligence institution, uncensored by any organisation, which will not benefit the youth." Meanwhile, Islamabad police have arrested numerous participants of the Jamaat-e-Islami sit-in at the federal capital's D-Chowk, with ongoing efforts to detain more. The arrested individuals have been transported in prisoner vans, and the routes leading to D-Chowk have been blocked with containers by police and administration.

Briefs

Nigeria's army warns against Kenya-style protests

ABUJA : President Bola Ahmed Tinubu and Nigeria's armed forces on Thursday warned against Kenya-style violence in protests planned for next week over soaring living costs, with the military saying it would head off "anarchy". Kenya was rocked by deadly protests that forced the government to repeal new taxes. Nigeria's economic reforms have seen a 40 percent spike in food inflation but there has been no unrest. Social media calls have been made for demonstrations from August 1. It is unclear who is behind the calls or whether people will take part at a time when many Nigerians are wary of losing work and cautious over past crackdowns. President Tinubu touched on the concerns in a statement late Thursday, saying: "We are not afraid of protests. Our concern is the ordinary people, and the damages that will be done." In a separate statement, he said "we do not want to turn Nigeria into Sudan," referencing the 15-month-old civil war in the northeast African country. "We are talking about hunger, not burials. We have to be careful." Prices have risen since Tinubu ended a costly fuel subsidy and liberalised the naira currency in reforms needed to revive the economy of Africa's most populous nation. Officials, security forces and governors have urged youth to stay away from any protests. Some have even accused the organisers of treason and seeking to destabilise the country. —APP

Brazil records world's first Oropouche virus deaths

SAO PAULO : Brazil has recorded the world's first Oropouche virus deaths, the country's health ministry said Thursday, after two women died of the illness spread by infected flies and mosquitoes, women from the state of Bahia in northeast Brazil were "under 30 years old, with no comorbidities, but who had signs and symptoms similar to a severe case of dengue," the ministry said in a statement. The US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention website states there are currently known outbreaks of Oropouche in parts of Bolivia, Brazil, Colombia, Cuba and Peru. The Brazil health ministry said there have been 7,236 cases of Oropouche infection recorded in 2024, with the majority being reported out of the states of Amazonas and Rondonia. According to the CDC, symptoms of Oropouche viral infection usually begin four to eight days after being bitten. Symptoms typically last for three to six days, the health agency said, with similar symptoms to dengue, such as fever, muscle aches, stiff joints, headache, vomiting, nausea, chills or sensitivity to light. Severe cases can result in life-threatening complications such as meningitis. —APP

Thousands evacuated as record rains hit Japan

TOKYO : Record heavy rain forced the evacuation of thousands of people across parts of northern Japan and killed at least two, as rivers burst their banks washing away bridges and cars, officials and media reports said Friday. A rescuer is among the dead after the downpours in Yamagata and Akita prefectures on the main island of Honshu. Two other people, including another rescuer, are missing. In Yamagata, where two rivers burst their banks, one police officer in his 20s who had been searching for a missing person was found "submerged" and later confirmed dead, a local police spokesman told AFP. Another police officer also tasked with a search operation, remains unaccounted for, the spokesman said. In northern Akita region, one body was also found, media reports said, with police trying to ascertain whether it was that of an 86-year-old man earlier reported missing. — Agencies

Erdogan criticizes US congress for applauding Netanyahu

President Erdogan said that US House of Representatives applauded those who massacred nearly 40,000 children, women and the elders

FOREIGN DESK

ANKAR : President Recep Tayyip Erdogan on Friday put the U.S. Congress on blast for applauding and platforming Israeli premier Benjamin Netanyahu. "The whole world saw how genocidal murderer was applauded in the U.S. Congress," Erdogan told a technology incentive promotion program in Istanbul. "Those who give lessons of democracy and human rights to the world do not show an ounce of shame when they crown Hitler of our time," Erdogan said. "We are face to face with an eclipse of reason that not only hosts a butcher with the blood of over 150,000 Gazans on his hands but also applauds him for his speech full of delirium," Erdo an said, likely referring to a study from the journal Lancet that put Gaza death toll estimate over 186,000



Palestinians. The international community has been outraged at Netanyahu's speech at a joint session at the U.S. Congress where he claimed Israel's genocidal war on Gaza has one of the lowest ratios of combatants to non-combatant casualties in the history of urban warfare." The Israeli leader drew dozens of standing ovations from those assembled within the august

chamber, but about half of all congressional Democrats chose to boycott. The American public has also shown growing sympathy for Palestinians in recent years, and thousands of demonstrators took to Washington to protest Congress' decision to grant a highly sought platform to Netanyahu as Israel faces allegations of genocide at the U.N.'s top court. Netanyahu's claim is far from the truth in Gaza, where the confirmed Palestinian death toll sits at nearly 40,000, according to Gaza's Health Ministry. The majority of the dead have been women and children and not every man killed has been a combatant. Israel has largely shrugged off civilian casualties, blaming Hamas as the number has risen dramatically over the past nine months. The true death toll is likely far

higher than the official numbers from the ministry, a fact even the Biden administration has acknowledged. "If there are Palestinians in Gaza who aren't getting enough food, it's not because Israel is blocking it, it's because Hamas is stealing it," Netanyahu said in his speech. He also called pro-Palestinian demonstrators outside the Congress during his speech "Iran's useful idiots". Türkiye has been a virulent critic of Israel, has hosted Hamas leaders and welcomes the Palestinian resistance group as a liberation movement, unlike the majority of the Western world. Ankara has called on the U.N. Security Council and the U.S. to exert pressure on Israel to accept a cease-fire proposal. Erdo an himself often condemns Washington for providing a political shield to Israel.

Fidan, Lavrov discuss bilateral ties at ASEAN

The two ministers also discussed the Russia-Ukraine war, developments in the Gaza Strip, the situation in Syria, and other regional issues



WEB DESK

MOSCOW : Türkiye's Foreign Minister Hakan Fidan met with his Russian counterpart Sergey Lavrov on Friday at the ASEAN Summit in Laos and discussed

bilateral relations as well as energy and economic cooperation. Fidan, who is in Vientiane, Laos' capital, for the Sixth Trilateral Meeting of the Türkiye-ASEAN Sectoral Dialogue Partnership, which took place on the margins of the 57th

ASEAN Foreign Ministers' Meeting, met with Lavrov, according to Turkish diplomatic sources. The two ministers also discussed the Russia-Ukraine war, developments in the Gaza Strip, the situation in Syria, and other regional

issues. Fidan is expected to meet with counterparts from Malaysia, Laos, Singapore, and England. He will also meet with the ASEAN general secretary. Türkiye established institutional relations and signed the Treaty of Amity and Cooperation, one of ASEAN's founding documents, in 2010, before becoming a sectoral dialogue partner in 2017. In July last year, the foreign minister attended the fifth ASEAN-Türkiye Sectoral Dialogue Partnership Meeting in Indonesia. Türkiye's trade volume with ASEAN countries, which was \$6.5 billion in 2010, increased over the years to reach \$12 billion in 2017, the year when the sectoral dialogue partnership was established. The trade volume between Türkiye and ASEAN reached \$14.8 billion in 2022 and \$14.6 billion in 2023.

WHO calls to reduce alcohol consumption in Europe

The report also notes that countries like Russia, Ukraine and Türkiye have achieved the WHO's alcohol reduction targets by increasing taxes on alcohol and reducing its accessibility.

LONDON : The World Health Organization (WHO) has issued an urgent call to action to halt the rising trend of alcohol consumption in Europe, which is among the highest in the world. The WHO published a report on alcohol consumption in Europe, revealing that it leads to almost 800,000 deaths annually, making it one of the leading causes of death in the region. Every day, 2,200 people in Europe die from alcohol-related causes, accounting for nearly 9% of all deaths in the region. Alcohol consumption significantly impacts domestic violence, accidents and mental health issues. Despite this, many people are unaware of the dangers associated with alcohol use. Despite the health risks, Europeans top the global list with an average annual alcohol consumption of 9.2 liters. According to the latest WHO data, men drink about four times more than women. In Europe, two out of three adults consume alcohol, and one in 10 adults is considered an alcoholic. Doctors say that alcohol consumption can lead to cardiovascular diseases, cancer and liver cirrhosis. But there has been no reduction in alcohol consumption in European Union countries for over a decade. The report also notes that countries like Russia, Ukraine and Türkiye have achieved the WHO's alcohol reduction targets by increasing taxes on alcohol and reducing its accessibility. —APP

Philippines 'prepares for worst' after oil spill

JAKARTA : The Philippine Coast Guard has deployed floating barriers and started to clean up an oil spill to prevent it from reaching the capital, Manila. Authorities are racing to stop the oil spill from the 65-metre-long (213 feet) MT Terra Nova, which capsized on Thursday as monsoon rains battered large swathes of the country. The leak appeared to be coming from the ship's engine, not its cargo tank, which was carrying close to 1.5 million litres of industrial fuel, officials said. There are fears that the spill, which stretches out over several kilometres, could be the worst in the country's history if it is not contained. Videos released by the coast guard show a personnel siphoning oil from the affected waters with a bucket. But officials are "preparing for the worst", said Rear Admiral Armand Balilo, the coast guard spokesman. The area is popular with fishermen and there are fears the spill could affect both the fishing industry and marine life. "We are talking about industrial fuel here... It will definitely affect the marine environment and could even reach us here in Manila," said Rear Adm Balilo. Hernando Bacosa, an environmental sciences expert at the Mindanao State University, told the BBC that the amount of oil the MT Terra Nova was carrying would warrant the issuance of the country's highest oil spill alert. "Manila Bay is where the Port of Manila is, the biggest port in the Philippines and the center of trade and economic activity. —Agencies



Islamabad : The delegation of Federation of Pakistan Chamber of Commerce and Industry (FPCCI) led by its President Atif Ikram Sheikh called on Federal Minister for Industries and production, Rana Tanveer Hussain. —DNA

Humanitarian situation in Gaza 'total disaster': UN chief

'We absolutely must keep the two-state solution as the only possible long-term solution for peace in the region' Antonio Guterres says

NEWS DESK

WASHINGTON : UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres warned about the humanitarian situation in the Gaza Strip while reiterating a two-state solution between Israel and Palestine. "The humanitarian situation in Gaza is a total disaster," Guterres said as he listed two reasons. "First, a military campaign that has the highest level of killing and destruction that I remember in any other military campaign since I am Secretary General, anywhere in the world," he said. "The second reason is because the level of humanitarian aid is totally out of proportion with the needs." His remarks came one day after Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu addressed a joint session of the US Congress, where he claimed that the war in Gaza has "one of the lowest ratios of combatants to non-com-

batant casualties in the history of urban warfare." Turning to Netanyahu's claims about Gaza, Guterres said: "There was nothing said yesterday that is new. So, there is nothing that was said that deserves comments, and obviously, we absolutely must keep the two-state solution as the only possible long-term solution for peace in the region, independently of whatever is said by whoever, wherever." Asked by Anadolu about his evaluations of Netanyahu's claims about the number of casualties in Gaza, Guterres said: "My answer is simple: to whom people believe in relation to that, I am very at ease in relation to this question." Guterres said he has not reached out to Netanyahu while he is in the US to discuss attacks on UN convoys in Gaza. "I have not reached out to the Prime Minister, but our people have been reaching out, both to Israeli authorities and also to

other countries, exactly in order to make sure that this kind of regrettable incidents are not repeated," he added. Netanyahu has faced a wave of protests since arriving Monday in Washington. Thousands took to the streets to protest his address to Congress and his policies in Gaza. They are also demanding a cease-fire in the besieged enclave. 39,200 Palestinians have since been killed, mostly women and children, and over 90,400 injured, according to local health authorities. Over nine months into the Israeli onslaught, vast tracts of Gaza lie in ruins amid a crippling blockade of food, clean water and medicine. Israel is accused of genocide at the International Court of Justice, which ordered Tel Aviv to immediately halt its military operation in the southern city of Rafah, where more than 1 million Palestinians had sought refuge from the war before it

was invaded on May 6. Earlier on , UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres drew attention Thursday to the growing danger of heat to the world. "Heat is estimated to kill almost half a million people a year, that's about 30 times more than tropical cyclones. We know what is driving it - fossil fuel-charged, human-induced climate change. And we know it's going to get worse," Guterres told reporters. Extreme heat is "the new abnormal," he said. "But the good news is we can save lives and limit its impact." Stressing that extreme heat is increasingly tearing through economies, widening inequalities, undermining the UN's Sustainable Development Goals and killing victims, Guterres said he is launching a global demand with four areas of focus - caring for the most vulnerable, stepping up protections for workers, boosting the resilience of econ-

omies and societies using data and science. "Finally, I want to make one over-arching point. Today, our focus is on the impact of extreme heat. But let's not forget that there are many other devastating symptoms of the climate crisis: Ever-more fierce hurricanes, floods, droughts, wildfires, rising sea levels - the list goes on," said Guterres. To tackle the symptoms, he said: "We need to fight the disease. The disease is the madness of incinerating our only home. The disease is the addiction to fossil fuels. The disease is climate inaction." He said the G20 must shift fossil fuel subsidies to renewables and supporting vulnerable countries and communities. "The message is clear: The heat is on. Extreme heat is having an extreme impact on people and the planet. The world must rise to the challenge of rising temperatures," he added

AI skills estimated to dominate industries

LONDON : The widespread integration of Artificial Intelligence (AI) in various industries is likely to render many job sectors obsolete and increase layoffs, with those that adopt AI technology replacing those who do not. According to the World Economic Forum's (WEF) Future of Jobs Report, automation and artificial intelligence (AI) might replace almost 85 million jobs worldwide by 2025. The report also estimated that the shift in work division between people, robots, and algorithms would result in the creation of around 97 million new positions in the labor market. Several high-profile companies have recently announced plans to increase the use of automation and AI, resulting in workforce reductions. IBM is planning to lay off around 10,000 employees across Europe. Similarly, Amazon has announced that it will terminate hundreds of jobs in sectors requiring physical labor to maximize efficiency from AI-focused processes. Digital media company BuzzFeed revealed that it laid off 12% of its workforce last December and an additional 15% in April. The company also plans to shut down its news unit, BuzzFeed News. Walt Disney, one of the largest companies in the US entertainment industry, has announced plans to lay off 7,000 employees and eliminate \$5.5 billion in costs. —DNA

Apple falls out of China's top 5

BEIJING : US-based global tech firm Apple dropped from top 5 list of smartphone vendors in China in the second quarter of this year, according to a report by Canalis. The American tech company ranked sixth on the list with a market share of 14% in April-June period of this year, down from 16% in the same period of last year, said Canalis, a Singapore-based global technology market analyst firm. Mainland China's smartphone market saw a 10% year-on-year growth in the second quarter with shipments exceeding 70 million units, said the report released Thursday. "It is the first quarter in history that domestic vendors dominate all the top five positions," Canalis Research Analyst Lucas Zhong said in the report. "Chinese vendors' strategies for high-end products and their deep collaboration with local supply chains are starting to pay off in hardware and software features." Chinese multinational technology company vivo reclaimed the number one spot by shipping 13.1 million units, recording a 15% increase over the previous year, and capturing a 19% market share, it said. —APP

Asian markets battle to recover from tech rout after US data

HONG KONG: Asian traders struggled to fight back Friday after a tech-fuelled sell-off, taking heart from forecast-beating US growth data that reassured that the economy was still in rude health, but did not dent hopes for an interest rate cut. The positive performance came despite more losses on Wall Street, where the so-called "Magnificent Seven" heavyweights - which have been key to this year's markets surge - suffered more selling as investors swapped out of them and into cheaper, small caps. However, Taipei had a rough start as it reopened after being closed for two days by a typhoon, with chip giants including TSMC tanking as traders played catch-up with the recent rout, which was sparked by disappointing earnings from Tesla and Google-parent Alphabet. Figures showing the US economy expanded far more than expected in the second quarter - and much quicker than the previous three months - provided a much-needed boost to sentiment and eased concerns. —Agencies

Briefs

PML-N leader defends internet firewall

Authorities lack necessary technical support and resources to implement laws and regulations, says Talal

ADIL SHAHEEN

ISLAMABAD: The Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) has defended the federal government's decision to introduce an internet firewall citing the non-implementation of laws and regulations regarding social media due to a lack of relevant technical resources, the capacity of authorities and state institutions.

"There's a difference between censorship and regulating [social media]," PML-N Senator Talal Chaudhry, whose party is in power in the Centre and Punjab, said while speaking on a TV program on Friday. The senator's remarks come as netizens across Pakistan have been facing issues due to slow internet speed and access to social media owing to the trial phase of an internet firewall being tested by Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif's administration. An official told The News that work on the firewall has been in progress since January this year which includes the purchase of the system and its installation which has been done and now it is being commissioned.

Karachi ranked '2nd riskiest' city for tourists

MONITORING DESK

KARACHI: Karachi has been ranked as the second riskiest city for tourists with a rating of 93.12 out of 100, it emerged on Friday. According to a July 11 Forbes Adviser list of three of the riskiest cities, Karachi was second just behind Venezuela's Caracas, which had a score of 100, while Myanmar's Yangon ranked third with a score of 91.67 out of 100. Per the ranking, the city had the highest personal security risk, reflecting risk from crime, violence, terrorist threats, natural disasters, and economic vulnerabilities. It said Karachi had the second-worst (level 3, reconsider travel) travel safety rating from the US State Department. The ranking further said that the metropolis had the fourth-highest infrastructure security risk, reflecting the availability and quality of city infrastructure. To uncover the most and least risky cities for tourists, Forbes Adviser said it compared 60 international cities across seven key metrics. Karachi has repeatedly appeared in lists of "unlivable" cities. The city was named among the least safe cities in the world by the Economist Intelligence Unit in 2017. The research and analysis division of the Economist Group ranked Karachi among the top five "least livable" urban centres in the world.

Pakistan's inflation soars to 20.09%

DNA

ISLAMABAD: The Federal Bureau of Statistics reported that inflation in Pakistan increased by 0.17% last week, bringing the annual inflation rate to 20.09%. The prices of 19 essential commodities saw significant increases, affecting the cost of living for many households, according to the bureau.

According to the bureau, key items such as chicken, garlic, daal channa, eggs, meat, milk, firewood, and cigarettes experienced price hikes. In contrast, the prices of eight items, including tomatoes, onions, wheat flour, potatoes, daal masoor, and LPG, saw a decrease. The data highlights notable annual price increases for several essential commodities.

Harris says she won't be 'silent' on Gaza suffering

De facto presidential nominee draws attention to Palestinians' plight as she walks fine line on divisive conflict



NEWS DESK

WASHINGTON: United States Vice President Kamala Harris has pledged not to stay "silent" about suffering in Gaza, shifting emphasis to the plight of Palestinians as the de facto presidential nominee walks a fine line on the conflict dividing her Democratic Party. Speaking to reporters after a meeting with Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu in Washington on Thursday, Harris said that her commitment to Israel's existence and security was "unwavering", but that "far too many" innocent civilians had been killed in the war. "What has happened in Gaza over the past nine months is devastating. The images of dead children and desperate, hungry people fleeing for safety, sometimes displaced for the second, third or fourth time," Harris said. "We cannot look away in the face of these tragedies. We

Barack Obama endorse Kamala for US president

WASHINGTON: Barack Obama has endorsed Vice-President Kamala Harris to be the Democratic presidential nominee, ending days of speculation over whether he would support her. Former President Obama and ex-First Lady Michelle Obama said in a joint statement that they believe Ms Harris has the "vision, the character, and the strength that this critical moment demands". Mr Obama was reportedly among more than 100 prominent Democrats Ms

cannot allow ourselves to become numb to the suffering. And I will not be silent." Harris, the presumptive Democratic nominee after President Joe Biden's decision to end his re-election campaign, said that she had urged Netanyahu to agree to a US-backed ceasefire proposal.

"It is time for this war to end and end in a way where Israel is secure, all the hostages are released, the suffering of Palestinians in Gaza ends, and the Palestinian people can exercise their right to freedom, dignity and self-determination," Harris said. Harris also reiterated her support for Israel's right to defend itself, condemned Hamas as a "brutal terrorist organisation", and listed the names of five US citizens believed to be in Hamas's captivity in Gaza as well as the names of two others whose remains are believed to be in the enclave. "I have met with the families of these American hostages multiple times now, and I have told each time they are not alone and I stand with them, and President

Harris spoke to after President Joe Biden announced last Sunday he was dropping out of the race. In a statement at the time, Mr Obama praised Mr Biden's exit, but stopped short of endorsing Ms Harris. The US vice-president has already secured the support of a majority of Democratic delegates, setting her on course to become the official nominee at the party convention in August. The Obamas said in Friday's statement that they could not be "more thrilled to endorse" Ms Harris. They vowed to do "everything we can" to elect her. "We agree with President Biden," said the couple's statement, "choosing Kamala was one of the best decisions he's made. She has the resume to prove it." - Agencies

Biden and I are working every day to bring them home," she said. In a nod to divisions over Israel and Gaza, Harris also called on Americans to acknowledge the "complexity" and "nuance" of the conflict. "Too often, the conversation is binary, when the reality is anything but," Harris said. While Harris's remarks did not point to substantive policy differences with Biden, her forceful invocation of Palestinians' suffering drew a contrast with her boss's more subdued, mostly back-channel efforts to restrain Israel. Biden's policy on Gaza has alienated progressive factions of the Democratic Party as well as many Muslim-Americans, a large number of whom live in Michigan, a key swing state that is considered crucial to the outcome of November's election. Al Jazeera's Patty Culhane, reporting from Washington, said that Harris spent more time speaking about the suffering of Palestinians than Biden has, even as she sought to bolster her credentials as a pro-Israel figure.



ISLAMABAD: Amir Jamaat e Islami, Hafiz Naem Ur Rehman addressing Dharna participants at H-8 bridge. DNA

Navy commissions 3rd offshore patrol vessel in Romania

STAFF REPORT

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan Navy has commissioned its Offshore Patrol Vessel (OPV), PNS HUNAIN at Constanta Port, Romania. Chief of the Naval Staff, Admiral Naveed Ashraf graced the occasion as the Chief Guest. Chief of the Defence Staff of Romania General Gheorghita Vlad and Chief of Romanian Navy Vice Admiral Mihai Panait also attended as guests of honour. While addressing the ceremony, Chief of the Naval Staff emphasized on the significance of the project and highlighted the additional set of capabilities added to PN sphere of operations with the induction

of PNS HUNAIN. He expressed his confidence that induction of these multipurpose and highly adaptive platforms; equipped with state-of-the-art weapons/ sensors suite, will further enhance PN forward presence and perpetual operational readiness vis-vis deployment on Regional Maritime Security Patrols (RMSP) in the Indian Ocean Region. Chief of the Naval Staff Admiral Naveed Ashraf commended the exceptional professionalism and dedication of DAMEN Shipyard and expressed confidence in prospects of future cooperation in delivering cutting edge technologies to Pakistan Navy. The newly commissioned, PNS HUNAIN is a multipurpose and highly agile platform of medium size tonnage. The ship is a state of the art electronic warfare, anti-ship & anti-air warfare capable platform with modern self-protection and terminal defence systems. The ship is also capable of embarking multirole helicopter and has the ability to operate independently as well as part of a Task Force for enhanced duration to undertake number of missions while safeguarding the Maritime interests of Pakistan. The commissioning ceremony was attended by the high level dignitaries from Pakistan, Romania and Netherlands, including Pakistani community in Romania.

Chinese policy makers laud macro-economic stability in Pakistan

Underlining Pakistan's plan to launch Panda Bonds, Minister for Finance briefed PBoC and other Financial Institutions about the steps taken so far and sought cooperation of the Chinese institutional investors in the capital market

BEIJING: Senator Muhammad Aurangzeb Minister for Finance & Revenue and Sardar Awais Ahmad Khan Leghari Minister for Power held meetings with Mr. Pan Gongsheng, Governor of People's Bank of China (PBoC) and Mr. Ren Jingong, Vice Administrator NEA. Ambassador Khalil Hashmi and officials of the Embassy accompanied the Ministers. In meetings with high-ranking officials from the Chinese institutions the Ministers briefed about the government's reform agenda and engagement with the IMF. The discussions focused on the significant strides made by Pakistan in improving its macroeconomic indicators by focused reforms in taxation, energy and privatization of the state-owned enterprises. The reforms has already started showing their results, particularly, reducing inflation from 38% to 13% marks a substantial achievement for the economy. Additionally, the stabilization of the exchange rate and the bolstering of foreign

exchange reserves were highlighted as key factors contributing to the economic upturn. There was consensus that such reforms are indispensable for achieving long-term stability and fostering sustainable economic growth. The Governor's recognition of Pakistan's policy measures reflects a broader international perspective on the importance of economic resilience and the positive impact of prudent fiscal management. Underlining Pakistan's plan to launch Panda Bonds, Minister for Finance briefed PBoC and other Financial Institutions about the steps taken so far and sought cooperation of the Chinese institutional investors in the capital market and seek benefit from the pro-business policies of the new Government. Lauding President Xi Jinping's BRI both the Ministers noted the achievements during the first phase of CPEC, a flagship project of BRI, for strengthening the infrastructure in energy, transport sectors along with others. - DNA

PA speaker: Office of opp leader stands vacant

Opposition leader was earlier representing the Sunni Ittehad Council: Malik Ahmad

BUREAU REPORT

LAHORE: Punjab Assembly Speaker Malik Muhammad Ahmad Khan said that the office of opposition leader stood vacant following the verdict of Supreme Court on reserved seats. He was addressing a press conference on Friday in Punjab Assembly. "The opposition leader was representing the Sunni Ittehad Council (SIC) and now SIC is no more a parliamentary party in Punjab Assembly after the verdict of apex court on reserved seats," speaker said.

The office of opposition leader is vacant now as (Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf) Imran Khan and Bushra Bibi until July 30.

has become the parliamentary party instead of SIC, he added. "You cannot remain the opposition leader as your parliamentary party has been changed," said Malik Ahmad Khan.

The PA speaker added that he has the authority to suspend the membership of MPAs who use abusive language in the house. He was of the view that it was really shameful to use abusive language against anyone's family members.

"I gave level-playing field to everyone in the house but I really want to end this abusive culture," he said. The PA speaker said that he has formed a committee of ethics that would soon submit its report in the house.

"The cases of 26 seats are still pending in the courts. The government will not collapse if the verdict goes in the favour of opposition," he said.


Hearing of 190mln pounds reference adjourned

The court gave the last warning to defendant lawyers on cross-examination

COURT REPORTER

RAWALPINDI: An accountability court has adjourned the case hearing of the 190 million pounds reference without proceeding against Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) Imran Khan and Bushra Bibi until July 30. Accountability court's judge Muhammad Ali Warraich heard the 190 million pounds reference today. During the hearing, defendant lawyers and both accused, Imran Khan, Bushra Bibi couldn't appear

before the court by 10 am, later on, the case hearing was postponed for one hour. The court gave the last warning to defendant lawyers on cross-examination. Consequently, the court adjourned the case hearing without proceeding until July 30. It is noteworthy that as many as 34 witnesses have recorded their statements while cross-examination of 33 witnesses has been concluded. A witness in the reference, former federal minister Pervez Khattak, recorded his testimony during the hearing on July 10.



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