



Islamabad POST

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Ethiopia inspired by Pak strategies, seeks closer ties

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Hassan Nasrallah asserts etaliation is inevitable

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Carini tearfully quits bout in just 46 seconds

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PM depllores world silence

Pakistan observes day of mourning on Haniyeh's shahadat

The prime minister said Netanyahu was out to destroy Palestine. Despite clear verdicts of the International Court of Justice (ICJ) and resolutions of the United Nations, Israel could not be stopped from its barbaric acts

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif on Thursday strongly denounced the attack that led to martyrdom of Ismail Haniyeh, chief of Hamas Political Bureau, in Tehran, terming it a barbaric act that was a flagrant violation of international laws and rules. The extraterritorial assassination, he said, had sparked widespread condemnation across the world including Pakistan, Turkiye, Russia, Iran, China and Malaysia which had denounced the attack in the strongest words. Ismail Haniyeh's children and grandchildren had also been ruthlessly martyred, he added. The prime minister was chairing a meeting on the situation of Palestine which was attended by the parliamentarians representing the government's allied political parties. Shehbaz Sharif said that the bloodshed in Palestine continued for last nine months claiming lives of many innocent Palestinians everyday. Over 40,000 Palestinians including thousands of children had been martyred till date. "The world is silent over this barbarism," he said. "Such terrorism and extremism is highly condemnable." The prime minister said Netanyahu was out to destroy Palestine. Despite clear verdicts of the International Court of Justice (ICJ) and resolutions of the United Nations, Israel could not be stopped from its barbaric acts. He expressed gratitude to the countries from the West such as Ireland and Spain who had openly supported the Palestinian cause and its two-state resolution.

Calls for revenge Haniyeh's funeral prayers held in Iran, led by Khamenei

FOREIGN DESK

TEHRAN: Leader of the Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Seyyed Ali Khamenei has led funeral prayers for Hamas's Political Bureau Chief Ismail Haniyeh and his security guard, who were assassinated during his visit to Tehran on Wednesday. During a ceremony held at Tehran University on Thursday, Ayatollah Khamenei paid homage to the Hamas chief and his bodyguard, identified as Wasim Abu Shaaban. Massive crowds of Iranian mourners took part in funeral procession for the assassinated Hamas official. Haniyeh was in the Iranian capital to attend Tuesday's swearing-in ceremony of Iran's newly-elected President Masoud Pezeshkian, where he was accompanied by other Axis of Resistance leaders. The details of the assassination plot aren't known yet, but the preliminary investigation points to the direct role of the Israeli regime and the green light from the Joe Biden administration in Washington. Addressing the ceremony, Iranian Parliament Speaker Mohammad Baqer Qalibaf said the Israeli regime is

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Briefs

Raof Hasan's bail approved

PTI information secretary is behind bars since July 22

MEHTAB PIRZADA

ISLAMABAD: A court in the federal capital has granted bail to Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) Information Secretary Raof Hasan in the anti-state propaganda case, but he will not be released. Duty Magistrate Abbas Shah, a judge of the special court recently formed to hear cases filed under the Prevention of Electronic Crimes (PECA) Act, 2016, issued the verdict on Thursday. The PTI leader cannot come out of jail today as an anti-terrorism court had on Wednesday handed him over to the counter-terrorism department in a terrorism case for two days – the remand ends tomorrow.

JI to hold sit-ins in all four provinces

First sit-in in Karachi, then in Peshawar, Lahore, Quetta

ADIL SHAHEEN

ISLAMABAD: Jamaat-e-Islami decided to hold sit-ins in all four provincial capitals against electricity rates and revision of contracts with the IPPs. The Jamaat-e-Islami held a meeting regarding sit-in plan C. The Ji emir Hafiz Naemur Rehman presided over the meeting. All the leadership including the provincial leaders of the party participated in the meeting. It is said that Jamaat-e-Islami has completed all arrangements for the public sit-in. Jamaat-e-Islami will hold a sit-in in Karachi from Friday. Later, the sit-ins will be held in Peshawar, Lahore and Quetta. The sources further said that the protest would then be expanded to the divisional level.

Next PTI power show in Swabi PTI vows to form 'grand opp alliance' against govt

Asad Qaiser says PTI's August 5 power show aims to demand release of Imran Khan, other leaders

KHAYAM ABBASI

ISLAMABAD: As the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) is all set to hold a power show next week, the party's senior leader Asad Qaiser said Thursday that incarcerated party founder Imran Khan gave the nod for forming a "grand opposition alliance" by expanding the existing platform – Tehreek Tahafuz-e-Ayin-e-Pakistan (TTAP). "PTI decides to expand the opposition alliance in meeting with Imran Khan," said former National Assembly speaker while addressing the media alongside the party's Secretary-General Omar Ayub Khan and others outside Rawalpindi's Adiala Jail today. He announced that the former ruling party would gather all opposition parties to run a powerful anti-government movement. Qaiser said that the party's forthcoming power show in Swabi was aimed at raising a "strong voice" for the release of PTI founder and other detained leaders. "This country will only be governed in accordance with the law and the Constitution," he emphasised. During his address, Qaiser also censured the

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We will restore X whenever govt wants: PTA

"PTA is whitelisting VPNs after which only selected VPNs will be available in Pak," says official

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan Telecommunication Authority (PTA) Chairman Hafeezur Rehman said on Thursday that they would lift the ban on X, formerly known as Twitter, whenever the government asked them to do so. Rehman made the statement during a meeting of the Senate's Standing Committee on Cabinet Secretariat which Rana Mahmoodul Hasan chaired in Islamabad. The social media platform has been suspended in Pakistan

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Privatization process of DISCOs has begun: Attaullah Tarar

Tarar said that the matter of electricity tariff was the issue of the entire nation and a collective approach was needed to overcome this issue

STAFF REPORT / DNA

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Information, Broadcasting, National Heritage and Culture Attaullah Tarar said, as part of the present government's reform agenda, the process of privatization of DISCOs has been started after an amendment in the State Owned Enterprises Act. Addressing a press conference along with Muttahida Qaumi Movement leader Mustafa Kamal here Thursday, the information minister said that he pointed out that inefficiency and corruption of DISCOs span over several decades. Therefore, he said it was decided to bring competent and professional people from the private sector to run the DISCOs free from any political interference. He said a delegation of MQM Pakistan comprising Dr. Khalid Maqbool Siddiqui and Mustafa Kamal met Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif and matters related to electricity bills and IPP issue were discussed. The minister appreciated the MQM for always showing responsibility and

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Reforms must to make EFF last IMF programme

SAIFULLAH ANSAR

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Finance and Revenue, Senator Muhammad Aurangzeb here on Thursday reiterated the need for structural reforms to ensure the Extended Fund Facility (EFF) with International Monetary Fund (IMF) is the country's last programme, highlighting the importance of privatization, export-led growth, and foreign direct investment to sustainable macroeconomic stability. Addressing the Ground Breaking Ceremony of the Head Office Building of the Securities and Exchange Commission of Pakistan (SECP), the minister said, the Staff Level Agreement (SLA) has been signed with IMF and it would go to fund's board for final approval. "So under the fund umbrella, it is not only getting the fund but making sure that this time we do the structural reforms," he remarked. "If we have to make it last

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NATIONAL DAY OF SWITZERLAND



ISLAMABAD: Federal Commerce Minister Jam Kamal, Ambassador of Switzerland Georg Steiner and others cutting cake to celebrate the National Day of Switzerland. – DNA

UNSC report endorses Pakistan stance: FO

UN report pointed out that TTP operatives and its new recruits are being trained in Afghanistan, says FO

FAISAL SHEIKH

ISLAMABAD: The United Nations Security Council (UNSC) report has endorsed Pakistan's view regarding terrorists of the banned Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP) taking refuge within hideouts and sanctuaries in Afghanistan. Addressing the weekly press briefing in Islamabad on Thursday, Foreign Office Spokesperson Mumtaz Zahra Baloch said that the report mentions how

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24 killed in rain-related incidents in KP

PDMA says monsoon spell has caused heavy downpours since July 29 in different areas of KP

STAFF REPORT

ISLAMABAD: At least 24 people have been killed and 17 others injured in various rain-related incidents during the last three days in different areas of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, said the Provincial Disaster Management Authority (PDMA) on Thursday, warning that more rains are likely in the coming days in the province.

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Ambassador Steiner says Switzerland one of the top foreign direct investments in Pakistan

Pak greatly values ties with Switzerland: Jam Kamal

ANSAR MAHMOOD BHATTI

ISLAMABAD: Ambassador of Switzerland to Pakistan Georg Steiner has said Over the last 75 years, Pakistan and Switzerland have managed to engage in mutually beneficial relations in various domains. Today, Switzerland is one of the top foreign-direct investments in Pakistan. Thousands of jobs have been created in the country by a considerable number of Swiss companies. Ambassador Steiner expressed these views while speaking on the occasion of the 733rd National Day and 75 years of Diplomatic Relations between Switzerland and Pakistan. Federal Commerce Minister Jam Khan was the chief guest. The Swiss ambassador further said, financial trade has been significant and reaches a volume of hundreds of millions of Swiss francs every year. And most importantly, more and more people in Switzerland are getting aware and take note of the opportunities that Pakistan offers. That is also one of the reasons why we have the privilege to welcome the Swiss foreign minister in Pakistan a few months after I had arrived here, he added. He said Switzerland and Pakistan will continue to move forward together and to grow together. 'We will continue to listen to each other and most importantly, we will continue to learn from each other. And wherever there is potential for even closer relations, we will keep out and do our best to deliver. I believe there are quite a few interesting areas that deserve further efforts from both sides. He also congratulated all Swiss companies operating so successfully in the Pakistani market. He added he had the privilege to meet most of you personally over the last 24 months. 'You form a very important bridge between Switzerland and Pakistan, and you contribute in so many positive ways to bringing our two

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TURKISH AIRLINES advertisement featuring a night view of the Golden Gate Bridge in Istanbul and promotional text: 'BEST PART OF THE JOURNEY Stopover IN ISTANBUL'. It also includes information about 'EASY VISA' and 'FREE ACCOMMODATION' for passengers.

Briefs

Hunerkada concludes six-week long Children's Art Workshop with artworks showcase at IAT

ISLAMABAD: Hunerkada successfully concluded its six-week Children's Art Workshop on Thursday with an exclusive showcase of the artists' endeavours of the children at the Islamabad Art Gallery in F-9 Park today. The exhibition featured artwork created by the young participants, highlighting their creativity and progress. The event was graced by Chairman Mr. Jamal Shah and Hunerkada Director, Amna Shah, hosted the showcase. Over the past six weeks, children aged 5-15 participated in an enriching art workshop led by experienced instructors from Hunerkada. The workshop provided a comprehensive exploration of various artistic techniques, including drawing, painting, sculpture, and mixed media. The participants were encouraged to experiment with different materials and develop their unique artistic voices. The showcase displayed a diverse range of artworks, reflecting the creativity and talent nurtured throughout the workshop. The event offered a unique opportunity for families, friends, and the public to celebrate the young artists' achievements.—APP

Pakistan's exports to China increase by 33.67% in FY 2023-24

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan's export of goods and services to China witnessed an increase of 33.67 percent during the twelve months of the fiscal year (2023-24) as compared to the exports of the corresponding period of last year, State Bank of Pakistan (SBP) reported. The overall exports to China were recorded at US \$2.707 billion during July-June (2023-24) against exports of US \$2.025 billion during July-June (2022-23), SBP data revealed. On a year-to-year basis, the exports to China also surged by 12.59 percent from \$136.546 million in June 2023, against the exports of \$153.745 million in June 2024. Meanwhile, on a month-on-month basis, the exports to China decreased by 27.61 percent during June 2024 as compared to the exports of \$212.392 million in May 2024, the SBP data revealed. Overall Pakistan's exports to other countries witnessed an increase of 11.53 percent in FY 2023-24, from US \$27.875 billion to US \$31.090 billion, the SBP data revealed. On the other hand, the imports from China into the country during the period under review were recorded at US \$13.506 billion against US \$9.662 billion last year.—APP

Trade counselors' role vital for attracting foreign investment

During his visit to the Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry (ICCI), Chaudhry met with President Ahsan Zafar Bakhtawari and highlighted the significance of chambers worldwide in fostering trade and business relations

FAISAL SHEIKH

ISLAMABAD: Danyal Chaudhry, Member National Assembly and Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs, emphasized that Pakistan has immense potential for foreign investment, requiring dedication and passion to showcase its products globally. Mentioning the government's initiatives to enhance foreign exchange earnings and economic growth, he stressed the crucial role of trade and investment counselors in foreign missions for the cause. During his visit to the Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry (ICCI), Chaudhry met with President Ahsan Zafar Bakhtawari and highlighted the significance of chambers worldwide in fostering trade and business relations. He appreciated ICCI's efforts in exploring business opportunities and attracting foreign investors, saying, "Chambers play a vital role in promoting economic development, and ICCI is doing a commendable job in this regard." Bakhtawari briefed Chaudhry on ICCI's initiatives, including organizing trade delegations, hosting international events, and providing a platform for businesses to connect with foreign investors. He also shared ICCI's achievements, such as facilitating joint ventures and collaborations between Pakistani and foreign companies. Bakhtawari suggested linking commercial counselors' promotions to their performance in meeting investment targets, saying, "This will incentivize them



to work harder and attract more foreign investment." He also proposed establishing business display centers in foreign missions to showcase Pakistani products to promote the country's export potential. Furthermore, Bakhtawari announced ICCI's plans to organize

events engaging youth in entrepreneurship and startups. He emphasized the need to equip young people with skills to become job creators rather than job seekers. Former ICCI President and United Business Group (UBG, FPCCI), Secretary General Zafar Bakhtawari emphasized the

importance of guiding the young generation, determined to contribute to the country's advancement, to secure a brighter future. He said, "Our youth is our asset, and with proper guidance, they can play a significant role in Pakistan's economic growth." He also appreciated the role of

Chairman Prime Minister's Youth Programme, Rana Mashood Ahmed Khan in empowering the youth of Pakistan. Those present in the meeting also include Ameer Hamza, Faizan Shahzad, Zulqurnain Abbasi, Zia Chaudhry, Waseem Chaudhry and others.

Bank Alfalah Reports Substantial Growth

ISLAMABAD: The Board of Directors of Bank Alfalah Limited (BAFL), in its meeting held on August 01, 2024, approved the Bank's financial results for the half year ended June 30, 2024. The Bank reported profit after tax of PKR 20.609 billion, representing Earning Per Share (EPS) of PKR 13.07. The Board of Directors declared an interim cash dividend of PKR 2.00 per share (20%) for the quarter ended June 30, 2024, bringing the total interim cash dividend for the year to PKR 4.00 per share (40%). The Board had earlier declared and paid an interim cash dividend of PKR 2.00 per share (20%). The Bank's deposit base closed at Rs. 2.102 trillion as at June 30, 2024; representing a 18.3% year-on-year (YoY) increase. CA and CASA ratios stood at 41.4% and 68.9% respectively. The Bank remains focused on strengthening its customer franchise by gearing towards its strategic pillars of expansion and innovation. The Bank reported its advances at Rs. 820.004 billion while upholding robust credit discipline amid challenging market conditions, and has sufficient provision against non-performing loans with a coverage of 118.5%, including general provision.—APP

AIOU to commence admissions in BA, B.Ed. from Sept. 1

ISLAMABAD: Allama Iqbal Open University (AIOU) will open admissions for its Teacher Training Programs, including the 1.5-year, 2.5-year, and 4-year B.Ed programs, starting September 1st. According to AIOU, in addition, the university will offer a range of other programs in the second phase of the Fall 2024 semester, including associate degrees (BA/B. Com), Postgraduate Diplomas, and BS (ODL) programs. Professor Dr. Nasir Mahmood, Vice Chancellor of the university, highlighted the success of the Faculty of Education's teacher training initiatives. He noted that millions of teachers have been trained through these programs, with alumni serving in educational institutions across the country. "Our trained educators are making a significant impact in schools, colleges, and universities nationwide," Dr. Mahmood remarked. The first phase of admissions for the Fall 2024 semester is currently underway. The deadline for Matric, FA, and I.Com program applications is September 5th, while applications for BS (Face-to-Face) programs, MS, MPhil.—DNA



ISLAMABAD: German Ambassador to Pakistan Alfred Grannas, dressed in attire featuring the German and Pakistani flags, posed for a special picture to express the bonds of friendship between Germany and Pakistan on the occasion of World Friendship Day.—DNA

Mohsin Naqvi visits development projects in Islamabad

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Interior Mohsin Naqvi conducted a detailed and sudden visit of ongoing development projects in Islamabad here on Thursday. He made four hours long visit of the three different development projects during the night. Chairman CDA Muhammad Ali Randhawa briefed the Interior Minister regarding these projects. He reviewed the progress of work on Islamabad Expressway and Park Road projects. He also reviewed the upgradation work at Jinnah Convention Center. Mohsin Naqvi inspected the 7 km long Expressway route and the ongoing construction work on Bhinder Bridge. Minister directed 100 percent completion of the Expressway project from PWD Chowk to T-Chowk within two months and also sought a plan to make the Expressway a controlled corridor. The FWO officials briefed the Interior Minister on the progress of the development work. Interior Minister planted a sapling in the lawn of FWO's camp office. Later, the Interior Minister also reviewed the 7.2 km long Park Road widening project and directed its completion before September this year. He also sought a plan for diverting traffic to other routes during the development work. DIG Operations and SSP Traffic were directed to visit the project and formulate a feasible plan. Interior Minister also inspected the ongoing upgradation work at Jinnah Convention Center and visited various sections of the center.—DNA



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Pakistani youth with innovation key to brighten future: Patricia Scotland

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Secretary General, Commonwealth, Patricia Scotland on Thursday said the Pakistani youth full of rich potential in creativity and innovation are the key to brighten future and embrace climate resilience. She was addressing as special guest at the Sustainable Development Policy Institute (SDPI) jointly held symposium, titled "Driving the Change: The Dynamic Role of Pakistan's Youth and Civil Society in Climate Resilience", in collaboration with the Prime Minister's Youth Programme (PMYP) and the Ministry of Climate Change and Environmental Coordination here at the Pakistan Institute of Parliamentary Studies (PIPS). Secretary General Commonwealth, Patricia Scotland said the courage and equity of the youth would drive the future of the world amid climate crises. She said it's the first generation to face the worst impacts of climate change and the last to take action against climate change risks. She mentioned that the passion, energy, equity and knowledge at the symposium gives great hope. Commenting on her visit to National University of Sciences and Technology (NUST), she said that she had

witnessed innovation, creativity and solutions that gave her joy, help and hope to fight climate crisis with the possibility of a bright future. "This youth bulge is the richest gold reserve in this part of the country. The Commonwealth nations represent one-third of the world whereas that demographic diversity give us a chance to grapple with the problems of tomorrow. AI will add \$15.7 trillion to the global economy, and we should ensure our youth take benefit of it," she mentioned. The Commonwealth had developed a consortium with the Silicon Valley to develop an AI Academy to train the youth as mankind amid AI revolution have the chance to be master or mastered by it. Chairman, PMYP, Rana Mashood Ahmad Khan in his keynote address commended the Commonwealth Secretary General, Patricia Scotland for forging alliances among the member nations. He also commended the donors and partners for their support. "Youth empowerment is the way forward and the Prime Minister Youth Programme is running Green Youth Movement under which green clubs have been established in 137 varieties out of the total 268 universities which will be further rolled out at all educational levels," he said. Under the PMYP, he said the programme is

educating youth and driving advocacy drive through them at the community level. "Youth of Pakistan has to take a stand to keep house in order. The government is going to launch the National Volunteer Corps whose logo will be launched today by the Commonwealth Secretary General," he added. He further mentioned that 200,000 youngsters would be trained under the Corps for disaster management activities due to rising natural calamities intensity and frequency throughout the country. It would also engage the community at large on the lines of Green Youth Movement, he said, adding, "Youth must visit Pakistan youth portal to see government initiatives being launched for the younger generation." On the occasion, guest of honour, Prime Minister's Coordinator for Climate Change, Romina Khurshid Alam said the symposium like forums play a crucial role in giving voice to the youth. "Youth of Pakistan has great will to do and are committed to achieve any task, whereas it's important to have effective communication between parliamentarians and youth to share ideas and give voice to the younger people for solutions," she said. Romina Khurshid said international youth should join hands for collective whereas the Commonwealth can play

a great role in driving climate agenda. She suggested the Commonwealth Secretary General to collaborate on educational scholarships imparting knowledge and exposure to talented youth to drive solutions to climate change. Earlier, in his welcome remarks, Executive Director, SDPI, Dr. Abid Qaiyum Suleri briefed the distinguished guests that the Institute is the oldest independent think-tank of Pakistan that represents itself as a shadow government due to its collaborative role as part of the solution and guiding the government for its course correction in the strategic and policy realms of economy, climate change, food security, international relations and others. Dr. Suleri underlined that major challenge of how policies like Carbon Border Adjustment Mechanism (CBAM) will affect the future of nations like Pakistan as its exporters like other nations would be forced to share carbon emissions at every step of their export products. He also highlighted that it would affect countries like Pakistan having sovereign territories like EU as its export partners. Dr. Abid Suleri mentioned that Artificial Intelligence (AI) and climate change will affect the job market of the future as many present-day knowledge and disciplines will become irrelevant.

Briefs

Haniyeh's funeral prayers held in Iran, led...

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desperate in the face of resistance fighters. He added that the Tel Aviv regime's crimes are rooted in its inability to counter the resistance forces. The top Iranian parliamentarian emphasized that Israel will commit a "strategic mistake" if it thinks that targeting the resistance front will have an impact on the ongoing developments in the region. Qalibaf said the era of "hit and run" for the apartheid Israel and its main ally US has come to end. "It is our duty to react in the right place and at the right time," he pointed out. The Iranian speaker warned that the Israeli regime will pay a "heavy price" for its act of assassination. He noted that the Israeli regime's move to assassinate resistance commanders in Iran and Lebanon is the outcome of its "weakness" and said, "Such acts of terror will have no impact on the [continuation] of our path." Pointing to the Tel Aviv regime's genocidal war against the people of Palestine in Gaza, particularly women and children, Qalibaf added, "We are witnessing the confrontation of humanity with crime there." Addressing huge crowds of mourners, Khalil al-Hayya, deputy chief of the Hamas Political Bureau in the Gaza Strip, said the Zionist regime is delusional to think that it can change the path of the resistance front or weaken its will through Haniyeh's assassination.

Privatization process of DISCOs...

FROM PAGE 01
constructive approach towards resolving national issues and played a positive role in the reforms agenda. He said that he was grateful to the Muttahida Qaumi Movement for raising its voice on this issue. Attaullah Tarar said that the matter of electricity tariff was the issue of the entire nation and a collective approach was needed to overcome this issue. "When the PML-N government came to power in 2013, it ended 18-hour load shedding," the minister said, adding at that time Punjab and Federal Governments had installed the cheapest power plants. Through this amendment, he added, the process of privatization of discos has started". He said that electricity consumers using 200 units were given a Rs 50 billion subsidy for three months and this amount was taken from PSDP budget to provide relief to the electricity consumers in summer, adding that steps were also afoot regarding the cases of over-billing, controlling power theft in collaboration with the provincial governments. The minister said that the deadline for payment of electricity bills had been extended by 10 days to facilitate the consumers.

PTI vows to form 'grand opp...

FROM PAGE 01
incumbent government over skyrocketing power bills, saying the bloated electricity bills were "unacceptable" for the inflation-hit masses. The PTI leader also said that they support Jamaat-e-Islami's (JI) sit-in - underway on Rawalpindi's Murree Road since July 26 - against the massive hike in power bills. Ayub, while addressing the same press conference, appealed to the masses to attend the public gathering in Swabi on August 5 in large numbers from across the country to show solidarity with the ex-premier and the "most popular party". In his initial remarks, the politico said that during the meeting, the former prime minister strongly condemned the killing of Hamas political chief Ismail Haniyeh and expressed outrage over the West for doing nothing to stop Israel's atrocities against Palestinians. Imran also urged the international community to take effective steps to ensure peace in Palestine and stop Israeli brutalities in Gaza, said Omar.

PCB responds to BD security consultant request for Test tour

BCB official stated they have requested security consultant from government for Pakistan Test tour

SPORTS DESK

LAHORE: Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) responded to Bangladesh Cricket Board's (BCB) security consultant request for a tour of Pakistan later this month. The BCB official stated that they have requested a security consultant from the government for the tour of Pakistan. The Bangladesh cricket team is scheduled to arrive in Islamabad on August 17. The first Test match of the two-match series will be played from August 21. BCB Cricket Operations Chairman Jalal Yunus said that providing security is Pakistan's responsibility and we have been assured of state-level security "During the Asia Cup, the Bangladesh team was provided state-level security," he said. "Several international teams have toured Pakistan and were satisfied with the security. We are also concerned about security, but we have been given a lot of assurances. We have requested a security consultant from the government to ensure constant communication with the consultant. Meanwhile, PCB spokesperson on BCB's request said: "Security managers or consultants are now considered part of the player support personnel just like a media manager or a team doctor. Even at the ICC Men's T20 World



Cup and other bilateral series, teams have travelled with security managers. "If the BCB wants to include a security consultant as part of their team management for the upcoming Test tour, then it is their prerogative. But as of now, the BCB have not expressed any security concerns

with the PCB. "In fact, and as part of international norms, the PCB shared the security plan along with the MoU with the BCB last month and received no queries or additional requests," he added. It must be noted Bangladesh A cricket team is arriving in Islamabad on August 7. According

to sources, they will not have a security consultant or security manager with them. It must be noted Pakistan Shaheens and Bangladesh A will face off in two four-dayers from 10-13 August and 17-20 August in Pakistan (Venues TBC). The four-dayers will be followed by three 50-over matches

on 23, 25, and 27 August. Schedule of upcoming development/pathways events:
BANGLADESH 'A' IN PAKISTAN
10-13 Aug - 1st four-day match 17-20 Aug - 2nd four-day match 23 Aug - 1st 50-over match 25 Aug - 2nd 50-over match 27 Aug - 3rd 50-over match.

Switzerland one of the top foreign...

FROM PAGE 01
nations closer together. I would like to seize this opportunity to thank you all for your wonderful contributions'. Ambassador Georg said we at the Swiss Embassy will be happy to continue to stay in touch with you, of course, to exchange with you and to support you to the best of our abilities. Of course, you will always be most welcome at the Swiss compound in the diplomatic inquiry. 'Secondly, I would like to say to our esteemed Pakistani counterparts, friends, and colleagues that Switzerland is grateful for the long-standing, friendly, and good relations with Pakistan', he added. Federal Minister Jam Kamal also spoke on the occasion and expressed the hope that relations between the two countries would further be cemented. He said Pakistan greatly values relations with Switzerland and is looking forward to giving new dimensions to these relations. The minister also extended congratulations to the Swiss govt and the Swiss people on behalf of the Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif.

UNSC report endorses...

FROM PAGE 01
the TTP - declared as 'Fitna al-Khawarij' by the Pakistani government - could "transform into an extra regional threat as well as an "umbrella organisation" of other terror groups. The UN report, according to Baloch, pointed out that the TTP operatives and its new recruits are being trained in Afghanistan. FO then urged Afghanistan to take immediate, effective and robust action against the terrorist groups including the 'Fitna al-Khawarij'. Baloch further maintained that the Afghan side must ensure that their land is not used for terrorist activities inside Pakistan.

24 killed in rain-related incidents...

FROM PAGE 01
The PDMA, district administrations and rescue teams are working in concert for rescue and relief activities in the affected areas. The News reported yesterday the deaths of at least 18 people while houses, bridges and roads were washed away in different parts of the province. The monsoon spell has caused heavy downpours since July 29 in different areas of the province, the province's PDMA said in a report issued on Thursday. The disaster-management authority said that 73 houses were completely destroyed while 77 others were partially damaged due to rains in Kohat, Peshawar, DI Khan, Hazara and Malakand divisions.

We will restore X whenever...

FROM PAGE 01
since February 17 due to national security concerns. However, it can be accessed through a virtual private network (VPN). Following the ban, various petitions were filed in the Sindh High Court (SHC) against the restrictions on microblogging site and intermittent suspension of internet services in the country.

Reforms must to make EFF...

FROM PAGE 01
programme of the fund then whether it is on taxation side, energy side, or SOE reforms and the privatization side, we have to move forward because we do not have the space and room any more to dither on this agenda," the minister remarked. He said upgrade in Pakistan's rating by Fitch, an international credit rating agency, and the policy rate reduction by SBP were direct manifestations of macroeconomic stability that the government has been following under the leadership of Shehbaz Sharif. He said, the economic team would continue to move forward with this agenda. However, he added there was need to bring permanence into it. "Stabilization would lead to growth, so we have to bring permanence," he said.

Olympic drama
Italy's Carini tearfully quits bout in just 46 seconds

Angela Carini abandons fight against transgender opponent Algerian Imane Khelif after intense punch

PARIS: Italian boxer Angela Carini tearfully abandoned her Olympic fight against Algerian Imane Khelif just 46 seconds into the bout on Thursday. The match, held at the North Paris Arena, sparked significant controversy due to Khelif's previous disqualification from the women's world championships for failing testosterone and gender eligibility tests. Khelif, along with Lin Yu-ting of Chinese Taipei, was controversially allowed to compete in the Olympics despite these issues. In a tense scene, Carini explained her decision to withdraw after being struck harder than ever before. A powerful punch from Khelif dislodged Carini's chinstrap, and a subsequent blow left her nose in pain and her shorts bloodied. "I am heartbroken," Carini said. "I went to the

ring to honour my father. I was told many times that I was a warrior, but I chose to prioritise my health. I have never felt a punch like this." The 25-year-old from Naples continued, "I didn't give up, but the pain was too much. I decided to stop, holding my head high." Despite her disappointment, Carini emphasised her desire to compete fairly and with dignity. "I wanted to face my opponent and fight," she said, "regardless of who they were or the controversy surrounding them." When asked if she should have withdrawn beforehand, Carini stated, "I don't give up easily. Even if it had been suggested not to fight, I wouldn't have accepted. I have a warrior's mentality, but the pain was too much this time." Carini described entering the ring as a vic-

tory in itself, regardless of the outcome. She asserted that her decision to stop was not a defeat but a mature choice to preserve her dignity. "I was convinced I would win and was focused," she remarked. "But the punches hurt, and I said enough." Carini declined to comment on whether Khelif should have been barred from competing, saying, "It's not my place to judge. I did my job." Khelif, speaking briefly to the BBC, expressed her determination to win gold. "I am here for gold," she said. "I will fight anybody." The situation drew attention from Reem Alsalem, the UN Special Rapporteur on violence against women and girls, who expressed concern over the incident. "Angela Carini rightly prioritised her physical safety," Alsalem tweeted. "She and oth-

er female athletes should not be subjected to physical and psychological violence based on their sex." Italian Prime Minister Giorgia Meloni also weighed in, stating that athletes with male genetic characteristics should not compete in women's events to ensure fairness. "This isn't about discrimination but about competing on equal terms," Meloni said. The International Olympic Committee (IOC) faced criticism for allowing Khelif and Lin to compete. Both had been disqualified from last year's world championships after DNA tests confirmed XY chromosomes, indicative of male characteristics. The International Boxing Association (IBA) criticised the IOC's less stringent rules for the Olympics, raising concerns about competitive fairness.--APP

Independence Day Basketball chip starts from August 10

AFZAL JAVED

ISLAMABAD: The Independence Day Inter-Provincial Basketball Championship for Men and Women will commence from August 10 at the

Pakistan Sports Complex Islamabad. According to the Secretary General of the Pakistan Basketball Federation (PBBF), Khalid Bashir, the five-day championship is being organized at Liaquat Gymnasium under the

auspices of the Federal Basketball Association (FBBAA) with support of the Pakistan Sports Board (PSB). The event is a celebration of Independence Day and aims to showcase the country's basketball talent.

The championship will feature men's and women's competitions, with teams from Punjab, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Sindh, Balochistan and Islamabad will be competing for the championship title. Over 170 players and officials will take part in championship. "All arrangements of the championship have been finalized as Federal Basketball Association (FBBAA) will supervise the event," Khalid said, adding that the federation is doing their best to promote the basketball in the country.



ISLAMABAD: DG Pakistan sports Board Yasir Pirzada in a group photo with player of Pakistan Hockey team, at Naseer Bundha Hockey stadium. Camp Commandant Olympian M Usman welcomed the DG. Team Manager Zeeshan Ashraf and international Umpire Sohail Janjua are also present.--DNA

Briefs

PTI should shun politics of vandalism: Ahsan Iqbal

FAISAL SHEIKH

ISLAMABAD: Minister for Planning, Development and Special Initiatives Professor Ahsan Iqbal said on Thursday that Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) must abandon its politics of instability and apologize to the nation for the vandalism of state institutions and sensitive installations of the armed forces if it wanted to integrate into the national mainstream. In an interview with Voice of America (VOA), he said no democracy in the world could support a party that engaged in destructive politics and undermined national interests for political gain. When asked about the possibility of banning PTI, the minister mentioned that recent information suggested PTI's social media had connections with anti-state elements abroad. The 'surfaced information,' he said, was currently being thoroughly examined by the relevant departments to determine the appropriate legal and constitutional actions. Ahsan Iqbal said the PTI was banned or not, but it was evident that the party's politics were a 'direct attack' on national interests. He added that some political parties were also trying to exploit the current situation while the country was recovering economically.

5 major IPPs given tax free payments

BUREAU REPORT

LAHORE: An annual report of Independent Power Procedures (IPPs) payments revealed that five major powerhouses were given tax-free payments. According to the report, Hub Power was paid Rs 260 billion at 16 percent capacity by the government, Engro was given Rs 74 billion at 54 percent capacity while Lucky Group was paid Rs 62 billion at 28 percent capacity. Similarly, Sapphire was given Rs 34 billion at 34 percent capacity, Mian Mansha's powerhouses operated at 13 percent capacity and were paid Rs 25.6 billion. The sources said these companies are paid annually under agreements and the audit department is responsible for the rest. The Ministry of Energy sources maintained that if there is any irregularity, strict action will be taken. Earlier, former Caretaker Minister Gohar Ejaz said that the government is paying two trillion rupees to IPPs, which are generating 30 percent of their capacity. Addressing a press conference, he said that 70 percent payment being taken without generating electricity. "The Independent Power Producers should be paid as much amount according to their power generation," Gohar Ejaz said.

Pakistan keen to foster deeper ties with Ethiopia: Aurangzeb

Ambassador of Ethiopia to Pakistan meets the Minister for Finance & Revenue Muhammad Aurangzeb

STAFF REPORT

ISLAMABAD: Ambassador of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia to Pakistan H.E. Mr. Jemal Beker Abdula to Pakistan called on Minister for Finance & Revenue Senator Muhammad Aurangzeb at Finance Division. The Finance Minister extended a warm welcome to Ambassador Abdula and provided an overview of the economic reforms currently underway in Pakistan. These reforms are part of a broader home-grown agenda aimed at achieving economic stability. The Minister highlighted recent positive developments, including improvements in foreign exchange reserves, state-owned enterprise (SOE) reforms, and advancements in the power sector. International Rating agencies have started acknowledging the economic stability as a result of Government's economic decisions. Country's economic outlook has improved as confirmed by recent Fitch reports and now government aims at achieving economic sustainability. Ambassador Abdula praised and appreciated Pakistan's macroeconomic stability and shared insights on Ethiopia's similar approach to home-grown economic reforms. He detailed Ethiopia's initiatives inspired by Pakistan's experience, particularly in stabilizing its currency and fostering economic resilience. The discussion also encompassed the potential for enhanced bilateral trade and financial collaborations to foster mutual prosperity. Ambassador Abdula proposed the exploration of educational cooperation, specifically the promotion of student exchange and scholarship programs. This initiative aims at providing Ethi-



opian students with opportunities to study in Pakistan, fostering educational and cultural ties between the two nations. Senator Muhammad Aurangzeb agreed on the importance of fostering deeper ties between the two nations and welcomed the proposed collaborations. Both parties acknowledged the mutual benefits that can be derived from such partnerships and expressed commitment to further strengthening the bilateral relationship.

Ethiopian envoy calls on Chairman CDA

ADIL SHAHEEN

ISLAMABAD: Ambassador of Ethiopia H.E. Mr. Jemal Beker Abdula called on Chairman CDA Muhammad Ali Randhawa at CDA headquarters on Thursday. Chairman CDA briefed the ambassadors about number of ongoing initiative and projects for beautification as well as converting Islamabad into a modern and green city. During the meeting, H.E. Ambassador of Ethiopia has expressed his keen desire to be an active part of the Margalla Hill plantation drive. He appreciated the efforts for boosting the plantation campaign through active involvement of diplomatic community. He expressed his strong resolve for full support for the green initiative from the embassy of Ethiopia. The H.E. Ambassador of Ethiopia also shared the details of the Green Corridor Project at Addis Ababa undertaken by Ethiopian Government along with the bank of river and stressed the need to undertake such project along with the water channels and streams of Islamabad as well. In this connection, the basic concept of the green corridor project at Addis Ababa would be shared as a best practice. During the meeting, the Ethiopian Ambassador also put the proposal for entering into a MoU for declaring Addis Ababa and Islamabad as sister cities.

Israeli military confirms death of Mohammed Deif

NEWS DESK

GAZA: The Israeli military said Thursday that it has confirmed that the head of Hamas' military wing, Mohammed Deif, was killed in an airstrike in Gaza in July. Israel targeted Deif in a July 13 strike that hit a compound on the outskirts of the southern Gaza city of Khan Younis, but the military said for weeks it was working to determine if he died in the blast. Hamas has denied he was killed. More than 90 other people, including displaced civilians in nearby tents, were killed in the strike, Gaza health officials said at the time. In a statement Thursday, the Israeli military said that "following an intelligence assessment, it can be confirmed that Mohammed Deif was eliminated in the strike." There was no immediate comment from Hamas. The Israeli confirmation came a day after an apparent Israeli airstrike in Tehran killed Hamas' top political leader, Ismail Haniyeh. Israel has not confirmed or denied being behind the attack, but Iran has vowed retaliation. Along with Deif and Haniyeh, Israel has vowed to eliminate Hamas' top leader in Gaza, Yehya Sinwar, but he has so far remained elusive. Israel says Sinwar and Deif were the masterminds of the Oct. 7 attack in which Hamas-led militants rampaged in southern Israeli communities, killing around 1,200 people and taking some 250 others hostage. Deif was one of the founders of Hamas' military wing, the Qassam Brigades, in the 1990s and led the unit for decades. Under his command, it carried out dozens of suicide bombings against Israelis on buses and at cafes and built up a formidable arsenal of rockets that could strike deep into Israel and often did. As the US-backed Israeli genocidal war on the Gaza Strip entered day 300 on Thursday, aerial and artillery strikes continued to pound and target different areas and massacre more civilians. Palestinian Information Center (PIC) said that the Israeli occupation army continued to bomb homes and attack citizens in different areas of Gaza during the past 24 hours. According to media sources, Red Crescent crews evacuated one martyr and six wounded civilians to the Indonesian Hospital following an Israeli attack on a house in as-Salateen area in Beit Lahlia, north of Gaza.

Hassan Nasrallah asserts retaliation is inevitable

BEIRUT: The Secretary-General of Hezbollah, Sayyed Hassan Nasrallah confirmed on Thursday that the Israeli attack on Hareit Hreik in the southern suburbs of Beirut was an aggression targeting civilian buildings and killing civilians, not just an assassination operation. The aggression resulted in the martyrdom of five civilians, three women, and two children, in addition to Iranian military advisor Milad Bidi. In a speech delivered at a large funeral ceremony held for Hezbollah's assassinated top military leader Sayyed Fouad Shokor, Sayyed Nasrallah said that the Israeli regime tried to label its aggression as a "response" to the incident in Majdal Shams. He reiterated that the Resistance has rejected this accusation and denied responsibility after a thorough investigation, adding that "we have the courage to take responsibility if it was our attack, even if it was a mistake, and we have precedents in this matter." In this context, Sayyed Nasrallah also emphasized that what the Israeli occupation committed "is not a reaction to what happened in Majdal Shams, but rather a claim, deception, and part of the war and battle," pointing out that the occupation "appointed itself as prosecutor, judge, and executioner." Hezbollah's chief pointed out that "Israel cannot accept the hypothesis that the incident in Majdal Shams was due to an Israeli interceptor missile" despite the massive evidence suggesting it, which was even put forward by numerous military experts. He affirmed that "the aim of accusing the Resistance is to incite sectarian strife between the [Druze] people of the occupied Golan and [Hezbollah] and behind it the Shiite sect, in order to undermine the most significant achievements of the al-Aqsa Flood" of unity and solidarity among Arabs and people of the region. - Agencies

Three men accused of plotting 9/11 reach plea deal

WASHINGTON: Three of the men accused of plotting the 11 September 2001 attacks on the US have entered into a pre-trial agreement, the Department of Defense says. Khalid Sheikh Mohammed, Walid Muhammad Salih Mubarak Bin Attash, and Mustafa Ahmed Adam al-Hawsawi have been held at the US Navy base at Guantanamo Bay, Cuba, for years without going to trial. Details of the deal have not been announced, but US news outlets say the men will plead guilty in exchange for the prosecution agreeing not to seek the death penalty. Nearly 3,000 people in New York, Virginia and Pennsylvania were killed in the attacks, which sparked the "War on Terror" and the invasions of Afghanistan and Iraq. Brett Eagleson, the president of 9/11 Justice, an organization that represents 9/11 survivors and relatives of victims, said in a statement provided to the BBC that the families are "deeply troubled by these plea deals". He said the process lacked transparency and urged the authorities to pursue more information on the role of Saudi Arabia in the attacks. Terry Strada, who lost her husband Tom, told the BBC's Today Programme: "It was a gut-punch to hear that there was a plea deal today that was giving the detainees in Guantanamo Bay what they want." Ms Strada, the national chair of the campaign group 9/11 Families United, added: "This is a victory for Khalid Sheikh Mohammed and the other two, it's a victory for them," she said. - Agencies

Gohar lashes at power producers

ISLAMABAD: Former caretaker Minister of Commerce Dr Gohar Ejaz has criticised the Independent Power Producers (IPPs) for allegedly charging the government Rs 200 billion without generating a single unit of electricity. In a press conference in Islamabad, Dr Ejaz called for a forensic audit of these transactions and questioned the efficiency of the country's energy policies. According to Dr Ejaz, three power plants were paid a substantial sum of Rs 200 billion despite producing zero units of electricity. He highlighted the frustration of the business community, which demands transparency and accountability in the energy sector. "The business community stands with the 240 million people of Pakistan, not with the 40 people who have set up these IPPs," he said. - DNA

Pak invited to Join Commonwealth AI consortium


PM expressed keen desire to evaluate the Commonwealth Performance Management System for further improving governance and transparency

KHAYAM ABBASI

ISLAMABAD: Commonwealth Secretary-General Patricia Scotland, leading a 5-member delegation, called on Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif at the Prime Minister House. The Prime Minister welcomed Secretary-General Scotland on her first official visit to Pakistan. Appreciating the Commonwealth's consistent support for Pakistan's socio-economic and democratic institutions, the Prime Minister reaffirmed the Government's desire to work with the Commonwealth on issues of common interest, particularly on youth empowerment, good governance and climate change. Noting that young people below the age of 30 accounted for two-thirds of Pakistan's population, the Prime Minister said providing modern education and technical training to the youth was one of the Government's highest priorities. He highlighted the various initiatives taken by the Prime Minister's Youth Programme and reiterated the Government's commitment to working with the Commonwealth to help Pakistan's youth by enhancing access and opportunities for them in today's high-tech global economy. Secretary-General Scotland appreciated the Prime Minister's



Youth Programme and said that the Prime Minister's leadership and direct supervision of this Programme was reflective of his personal interest and commitment to youth empowerment initiatives. In order to further improve the performance of government departments and know progress in real time, Ms Patricia offered the Commonwealth's Performance Management System. She also invited Pakistan to join the Commonwealth Artificial Intelligence Consortium (CAIC). The Prime Minister expressed keen desire to evaluate the Commonwealth Performance Management System for further improving governance and transparency in Pakistan's public sector. He also welcomed the invitation to join CAIC where Pakistan's youth will have opportunities for training and could benefit from global innovations such as cloud computing and generative AI and shall be more empowered to play their role in sustainable economic development. Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif also described combating climate change as a common priority for both Pakistan and the Commonwealth. He appreciated the Secretary-General's climate advocacy for Pakistan, following the devastating 2022 floods. The Prime Minister said Pakistan wanted to work with the Commonwealth in helping mobilize more international support for climate-vulnerable countries like Pakistan at the forthcoming COP29 in Baku. Secretary-General Scotland appreciated the Government's efforts for post-flood reconstruction and hoped that the international community would provide more support in building Pakistan's climate resilience. Looking forward towards the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting in Samoa later this year, the Prime Minister and the Commonwealth Secretary-General discussed ways in which the two sides could coordinate on building consensus on key issues of mutual interest and chart a roadmap for the Commonwealth.



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