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Carlos Alcaraz qualifies for final in singles

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Amid countrywide protests

PM Shehbaz says it's govt's agenda to slash power bills

PM Shehbaz Sharif warns against politicising issue of electricity bills

DNA / ABID RAZA

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif has said that it is the coalition government's agenda to reduce electricity bills, stressing that it should not be politicised as protests continue in different parts of the country against high cost of power. The premier, while chairing a cabinet meeting in Islamabad on Friday, said that politics on electricity issue was tantamount to insulting people. "We do not believe in politics for the sake of politics," he added. The prime minister's remarks came amid protests led by Jamaat-e-Islami (JI) against the high cost of electricity which prompted the shutting down of a major road to Islamabad, while protests were held in several other cities as well by traders. Protesters, who have taken to the streets, are demanding the government to withdraw taxes imposed on power consumption which have triggered a massive hike in bills, exacerbating the suffering of consumers, particularly those from the low- and middle-income class. While the Shehbaz-led government has held negotiations with the protest leaders, no indication has been given with regard to their demand being accepted. According to JI Emir Hafiz Naeem ur Rehman, the party is prepared to continue protesting on the streets with the aim of standing firm against the government's decision on the rising cost of power. During the last fiscal year that ended on June 30, the federal government approved a 26% increase in the cost of electricity. On July 13, the public, which was already bearing the brunt of rising inflation, suffered another blow after the Shehbaz administration tacked on another 20% hike. It is also important to note that experts — during a panel discussion in Karachi — did not indicate

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Senate body seeks IPPs' audit

"We have all made mistakes," says Nepra Chairman Waseem Mukhtar

MAHNOOR ANSAR

ISLAMABAD: The Senate Standing Committee on Cabinet Secretariat Friday has called for conducting a forensic audit of independent power producers (IPPs) after public outcry over inflated bills. Pakistanis have been receiving high electricity bills which also include capacity payments being made to the IPPs. The power producers are paid capacity payment regardless of whether they generate electricity or not. Several protests have been staged across the country against high electricity bills, including a sit-in being held by the Jamaat-e-Islami in Rawalpindi. During the committee meeting, chaired by Senator Rana Mahmood ul Hassan, National Electric Power Regulatory Authority (Nepra) Chairman Waseem Mukhtar briefed the members. The Nepra chairman informed the committee that maintaining a balance between the government,

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ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif, Chairman PTI Barrister Gohar and Parliamentarians offering funeral prayer of Shaheed Ismail Haniyeh. — DNA

Rainfalls cause 96 deaths in one month

NDMA has published a report on the loss of lives and properties due to recent rains

FAISAL SHEIKH

ISLAMABAD: The National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA) has published a report on the loss of lives and properties due to destructions made by the recent rainfalls. According to the report of the (NDMA), 96 people lost their lives across the country from July 1 to August 1, Punjab reported the highest number of 39 deaths. According to NDMA,

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Pak observes day of mourning

PM, cabinet offer funeral prayer in absentia for Haniyeh

NA passes resolution unanimously to condemn Israeli oppression; express complete solidarity with Palestinians

KHAYAM ABBASI

ISLAMABAD: A day of mourning was observed across the country today to express solidarity with the Palestinian brothers and sisters and to condemn the Israeli state-sponsored terrorism in Palestine. The decision to observe the day of mourning was taken at a consultative meeting of the allied parties held with Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif in the chair in Islamabad. Meanwhile, the funeral prayer in absentia for Hamas leader Ismail Haniyeh, who was assassinated in Tehran, was offered after Jumma prayer in the entire country. Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif, Deputy Prime Minister Mohammad Ishaq Dar, Speaker National Assembly Sardar Ayaz Sadiq, Federal Ministers including Minister for Information and Broadcasting Attaulah

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Martyr Haneyya laid to rest in Doha

The head of Hamas abroad, Khaled Mishal, spoke about the martyred leader, noting that he "did not leave Gaza except to continue struggle for the Palestinian cause"

FOREIGN DESK

DOHA: Tens of thousands of worshippers flocked to the Imam Muhammad bin Abdul Wahhab Mosque in the Qatari capital Doha to participate in the funeral procession of Ismail Haniyeh, the head of the Hamas political bureau, after the Friday prayer. Member of the Hamas political bureau,

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Briefs

JI sit-in continues at Rawalpindi

Two rounds of negotiations have finished fruitless between the government and the JI leadership

ADIL SHAHEEN

RAWALPINDI: The Jamaat-e-Islami's sit-in against inflated electricity bills and rising inflation has entered its eighth day at Liaquat Bagh, Rawalpindi. The protest includes 10 demands from the government, including significant reduction in electricity prices, elimination of unnecessary taxes, renegotiation of contracts with Independent Power Producers (IPPs), and cuts in government expenditures. Two rounds of negotiations between the government and the Jamaat-e-Islami leadership have ended fruitless.

Pak offers free visas to Chinese citizens

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan is set to offer free visas to Chinese citizens starting August 14, showing Islamabad's commitment to Beijing, PM Shehbaz Sharif said. The premier's statement came during his meeting with a 12-member high-level Chinese delegation led by Minister Wang Fukang who called on him. Speaking to the delegation, the prime minister said that during his recent visit to China, he requested President Xi Jinping and PM Li Qiang to send experts to Pakistan.

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

Gwadar sit-in to end as BYC, govt sign accord

Clashes erupted between the protesters and the security forces, killing three protesters and injuring at least 24. BYC leader Dr Mahrang Baloch claimed that over 200 people were arrested by security personnel

STAFF REPORT

GWADAR: The Baloch Yakjehti Committee (BYC) has decided to end its protest in Gwadar, Balochistan's interior minister confirmed on Friday, after the two sides signed a seven-point agreement. The BYC has been holding protests for almost a week at the Marine Drive in Gwadar and other areas to decry the alleged human rights violations against the people of Balochistan, enforced disappearances, and alleged extrajudicial killings of the Baloch people. Clashes erupted between the protesters and the security forces, killing three protesters and injuring at least 24. BYC leader Dr Mahrang Baloch claimed that over 200 people were arrested by security personnel. Following days of protest, negotiations between the government and the BYC began on Wednesday evening after which officials announced that talks had been "successful" and BYC had agreed to call its sit-in off after signing a deal.

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IHC orders govt to produce Shahbaz Gill's brother

Justice Aurangzeb heard the petition for the recovery of Shahbaz Gill's brother Ghulam Shabbir

DNA

ISLAMABAD: The Islamabad High Court has ordered the authorities concerned to recover the missing brother of Shahbaz Gill by Aug 6 and present him in court. Justice Miangul Hasan Aurangzeb heard the petition for the recovery of Shahbaz Gill's brother Ghulam Shabbir. Justice Aurangzeb ordered to place today's court order in front of Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif and that the kidnapped brother of

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2 cops martyred DI Khan in attack

Incident took place near Hathala area kills two cops deputed for security of the judges

SHAMIM SHAHID

PESHAWAR: At least two policemen were martyred on Friday in an attack on a convoy of vehicles carrying judges near Hathala area in Dera Ismail Khan (DIK) district of Khyber-Pakhtunwa (K-P). The convoy included Additional Judge Tang Hasnain, Additional Sessions Judge South, and Senior Civil Judge Mah Jabeen, who were all unharmed in the attack.

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Govt to provide financial assistance for families of missing persons

Special committee to examine genuine cases of missing persons, says Law Minister Azam Nazeer Tarar

MEHTAB PIRZADA

ISLAMABAD: The government has announced a package worth Rs5 million for each family as part of its efforts to provide legal and financial assistance to the heirs of missing persons, said Federal Law Minister Azam Nazeer Tarar on Friday. The minister stated this while briefing the media on the decisions taken in the federal cabinet meeting chaired by Prime Minister Shehbaz earlier today in Islamabad. Tarar said the federal cabinet discussed the issue of missing persons and approved the support package and added that the premier approved the package in light of the recommendations made by the previous committees on the issue of missing persons. The law minister said two reports about the missing persons were presented before the cabinet today, adding that the cabinet also approved the constitution of a special committee to examine genuine cases of families in need of support after reviewing the final report of the committees. He further said the new committee will address the problems being faced by the missing persons' families. The assistance announced today is not a remuneration, he clarified, adding it is an attempt by the government to share the grief of missing persons'

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Fawad urges joint protest against govt

Former minister lambasts govt for burdening salaried class with excessive taxes

BUREAU REPORT

LAHORE: Former federal minister Fawad Chaudhry slammed the government on Friday for burdening the salaried class with excessive taxes and reaping benefits from that. Speaking to media outside an anti-terrorism court (ATC) after his court appearance, the former minister said that it was obvious that the government would not give any leverage to the weighed down salaried class. He called for a joint protest by the opposition parties against

Continued on Page 06

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Ambassador Rizwan seeks stronger US economic ties

Pakistan's designate Ambassador to the US Rizwan Saeed Sheikh has said that in the capacity of a professional diplomat he thinks that his first and foremost responsibility will be to bring both the countries closer to each other

ADIL SHAHEEN

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan's designate Ambassador to the United States Rizwan Saeed Sheikh has said that America is the most attractive market for Pakistan and that he will focus on it to explore more and more economic opportunities. He said this while talking to Ahsan Zafar Bakhtawari, President Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry during his visit to the Chamber. He said that in the capacity of a professional diplomat he thinks that his first and foremost responsibility will be to bring both the countries closer to each other. The Ambassador designate said that the United States is a consumer society that's why it enjoys vital potential of trade and economic connectivity and that he will focus on more and more liaison to facilitate the holding

of exhibitions to showcase Pakistani products. Rizwan Saeed Sheikh added that he was totally convinced that Pakistan will successfully overcome its existing economic difficulties and that for the purpose he will also approach the Pakistani-Americans irrespective of their political affiliations to persuade them for exploring the investment opportunities in Pakistan. He described Pakistan's IT sector as the most significant and attractive area for the rest of the world because of being the cost effective as compared to other countries. On his part, Ahsan Zafar Bakhtawari noted that the United States is not only the largest export market of Pakistan but a leading investor also with more than 80 companies currently functioning and providing employment to hundreds of thousands of people. He said that both the countries are resolute to foster the existing economic part-

nership to long term stability and mutual prosperity by upgrading their economic collaboration in alternate energy, agriculture, climate resilience and technology. Highlighting the significance of direct flights between the two countries he said that over the past few years the US companies have invested more than \$1.5 billion in Pakistan in different sectors especially in consumer goods, agri-business, financial service, information and communication technology, healthcare and energy. By expressing his good wishes for the Ambassador designate Rizwan Saeed Sheikh with regard to discharge of his duties in the United States, Bakhtawari said that ICC will not hesitate in extending every possible support to him for building bridges between the business fraternity of both the countries. Former President ICCI Khalid Javaid by mentioning the difficulties the business communities is facing at the moment termed the expanded investments the only way forward to overcome the problem. Former President ICCI and Secretary General United Business Group (FPCCI, UBG) Zafar Bakhtawari by terming the designate Ambassador as the most suitable professional for the job said that there is a dire need to focus on economic diplomacy instead of the political diplomacy to pull the country out of the existing economic mess. He said that when we will set right our economic matters, the political matters will automatically be aligned it will yield positive results. He also highlighted the exchange of trade and business delegations importance for the image building. Former President ICCI Mian Shaikat Masood expressed the hope that the Ambassador would build all the things articulately and focus on enhancement of country's exports to the United States.



ISLAMABAD: Zafar Bakhtawari, Secretary General United Business Group (FPCCI, UBG) is meeting with President Asif Ali Zardari. Former Federal Minister for Commerce and Industry Dr. Ejaz Gohar is also present. DNA

KP govt to activate cooperative department

PESHAWAR: Provincial Minister for Livestock, Fisheries and Cooperative Fazal Hakeem Khan Yousafzai has said that the provincial government will take steps to make the Cooperative Department more active to enable the farmers to get benefits and support in the true sense. He directed to provide details of the Cooperative Department's assets and point out where assets are leased. He gave these instructions while chairing a meeting of the Cooperative Department here Friday. The meeting was attended by Secretary Livestock, Fisheries and Cooperative Muhammad Fakhar Alam, Registrar Cooperative Muhammad Ishaq, Director General Livestock Extension Dr. Asad Khan and others relevant officials. During a briefing, the meeting was told that at present, there were 5200 registered societies in the province which were providing services in various sectors such as housing, handicrafts, marketing, honey bee keeping and others. The meeting was also informed about the problems faced in this regard. The provincial minister issued instructions that a joint task force should be formed to formulate a comprehensive policy for the rehabilitation and development of the Livestock, Fisheries and especially the Cooperatives department so that the department can play an important role in the development of the people and especially farmers. He further said that in the past, cooperative banks used to provide loans to farmers on easy terms.—APP

Push against 10-stick cigarette packs to protect youth

MEHTAB PIERZAD

ISLAMABAD: Public health advocates in Pakistan are warning against a proposed change to tobacco regulations that could harm the nation's youth. The amendment would allow the production and export of 10-stick cigarette packs, which experts believe could undermine efforts to control smoking. Currently, Pakistani law requires cigarette packs to contain at least 20 sticks. This rule helps limit tobacco access for minors and reduce smoking among young people. Smaller 10-stick packs, however, would be cheaper and more accessible, especially to adolescents. Such packs could be sold secretly

or through informal channels, increasing the risk of youth smoking. With about 1,200 new young smokers daily in Pakistan, this change could worsen the situation by making it easier for young people to start smoking earlier, thus weakening current tobacco control efforts. Mehboob Ul Haq, CEO of the Human Development Foundation (HDF), highlighted the issue: "We must protect our children from tobacco's harmful effects. Smaller cigarette packs make tobacco more affordable and accessible to underage individuals. With 166,000 tobacco-related deaths annually, banning these packs is crucial to curb tobacco use and prevent diseases and deaths." The tobacco industry's plan to export these smaller packs

to Sudan, a country already suffering from conflict, raises additional concerns. Introducing 10-stick packs in war-torn areas like Sudan could make tobacco more accessible to vulnerable children facing instability and a lack of resources. Arooj Rajput, the focal person for HDF's tobacco control campaign, added, "The proposed amendment endangers not only our youth's health but also ignores our global responsibility to protect children everywhere. Every child, whether in Pakistan or Sudan, deserves protection from the tobacco industry's harmful practices. Pakistan has made significant progress in tobacco control, and allowing the production and export of 10-stick packs would harm these efforts."



Governor meets federal health services academy delegation

PESHAWAR: Governor Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Faisal Karim Kundi met with a delegation from the Federal Health Services Academy, led by Vice Chancellor Dr. Shehzad Ahmad Khan, at the Governor's House in Peshawar on Friday. The meeting centered on the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) signed with the Provincial Health Services Academy. Dr. Shehzad Ahmad Khan briefed the Governor on the academy's services and its plans to enhance health-related higher education in the province. Vice Chancellor announced that 30 students from Khyber Pakhtunkhwa will receive full scholarships for technical education in paramedical health technician courses, including free accommodation. These free degree courses are set to begin in September, with the entire process overseen by the Governor's House. The academy will provide technical education to 300 students annually from the province's backward districts. Governor Kundi lauded the initiative, highlighting the global demand for a skilled workforce and assured the delegation of his full support.—APP

CDA chief issues directives for IESSI improvements

ISLAMABAD: Chief Commissioner Islamabad Muhammad Ali Randhawa chaired the 16th meeting of the Governing Body of the ICT Employees Social Security Institution (IESSI). The meeting was attended by the Governing Body Members of IESSI while the Commissioner IESSI, Ms. Rabia Auragzeb gave a comprehensive briefing on the overall financial position, activities and performance of various wings and sections of the institute. The Chief Commissioner issued several directives to

improve IESSI operations as well as Islamabad based employer's compliance. In this regard, he directed that a notification is to be issued to all employers, mandating the submission of their contribution percentage. He stressed the need that the issuance of trade licenses to the employers and the restaurants at Islamabad must be contingent upon registration with IESSI as well as their contribution. He directed IESSI to carry out survey of Islamabad based employers and issue notices to unregistered businesses. The Chief Commis-

sioner further directed to engage with employers and trade unions to encourage registration with IESSI and send appreciation letters to contributing employers. The Chief Commissioner also directed to explore the options for better healthcare services. The Chair emphasized leveraging the expertise of the Punjab IT Board (PITB) to digitize IESSI activities, using CNICs from NADRA instead of IESSI cards. He added that there is a need to ensure that the high ratings labs are associated with IESSI.—APP

IGP directs police to aid in relief efforts

LAHORE: Inspector General of Police Punjab, Dr. Usman Anwar, has directed the police force to actively participate in relief activities across all districts of the province in light of the monsoon rains. IG Punjab Dr. Usman Anwar said that, considering the rainfall in various regions of Punjab, including Lahore, police officers and personnel should remain alert. He emphasized that police officers and staff should perform their duties with increased vigilance in the rain-affected areas, and supervisory officers should personally monitor rescue and relief operations in those regions. IG Punjab Dr. Usman Anwar said that the Punjab Police is in constant contact with PDMA, district administration, and rescue organizations regarding rescue and relief activities. Details of damage caused by the rain are also being collected from the control rooms of the Punjab Police. IG Punjab Dr. Usman Anwar emphasized that police officers and personnel should assist in water drainage on rain-affected roads in Lahore and other areas in collaboration with WASA and other organizations. Dr. Usman Anwar said that efforts are being made to provide full support from relevant departments in rescuing citizens affected by the rain. In view of the potential for more rain, police officers and personnel should remain highly alert and respond promptly to any emergency situation. Meanwhile, Under the guidance of IG Punjab Dr. Usman Anwar, Punjab Police is actively working to clean Lahore and all other districts of the province from illegal arms. During a special campaign, thousands of various firearms, bullets, and cartridges have been recovered this year. According to the Punjab Police spokesperson, the following weapons have been seized from suspects throughout the province including 993 Kalashnikovs, 2,065 guns, 425 revolvers, 26,617 pistols, 1,921 rifles, and over 176,000 bullets and cartridges. In the provincial capital, 102 Kalashnikovs, 217 guns, 41 revolvers, 424 rifles, 5,685 pistols, and over 34,000 bullets have been recovered from suspects.—APP

PIDE hosts Chinese experts to discuss economic growth

Chinese lead experts have lauded the PIDE for its exceptional efforts in identifying and addressing the critical challenges facing Pakistan


FAISAL SHEIKH

ISLAMABAD: A high-level Chinese expert delegation participated in an event organized by the Pakistan Institute of Development Economics (PIDE) at the Marriott Hotel in Islamabad, marking a significant step towards enhancing economic collaboration between China and Pakistan. The event, titled "Pakistan Economy & Growth: Learning from Chinese Experience," aimed to facilitate an exchange of knowledge and best practices between the two nations. In her introductory remarks, PIDE's Pro VC Dr. Durre Nayab emphasized the importance of such interactions in fostering growth and development. She highlighted the need for adopting strategies that have propelled China to economic success, tailored to Pakistan's unique context. The event featured a detailed presentation by Dr. Nadeem ul Haque, Vice Chancellor of PIDE, who discussed the critical need for policy reforms,

investment in human capital, and fostering an innovation-driven economy. Dr. Haque noted that the event aimed to explore lessons Pakistan can learn from China's economic transformation, which provides insights into growth strategies, infrastructure development, industrialization, and policy reforms applicable to Pakistan. Dr. Haque emphasized that Pakistan is poised for a new era of economic growth and regional connectivity through the dynamic framework of the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC). He highlighted that with a young, burgeoning population and a rapidly expanding middle class, Pakistan presents a compelling case for significant investment and development. Pakistan's demographic profile, with a median age of just 20.6 years and a labor force expanding by over 3 million annually, is a cornerstone of its growth potential. Dr. Haque noted that the projected growth rate of 7-8% per annum is within reach with strategic reforms, positioning Pakistan

as a future market leader. By 2030, Pakistan is expected to become the 7th largest consumer market globally, underscoring its vast potential. Dr. Nadeem further stated that CPEC is not just an infrastructure project but a framework for regional connectivity. It aims to enhance geographical linkages through people-to-people contact, academic and cultural exchanges, and robust trade and business flows. The initiative promises to transform Pakistan into a logistical hub, driving industrial, agricultural, and financial cooperation, along with human resource development and tourism. He pointed out that Pakistan is undergoing significant reforms to create a more investment-friendly environment. Moving from a permission-based to a rule-based economy, the government is addressing regulatory challenges that have historically hampered growth. The implementation of Regulatory Impact Assessments (RIAs) and the reduction of exces-

sive permissions are crucial steps towards this transformation. Dr. Haque noted that beyond infrastructure, CPEC opens up diverse opportunities for investment. Leading global corporations such as Pepsi-Cola, Coca-Cola, General Electric, and Procter & Gamble have already established a strong presence in Pakistan, collectively investing over \$1.5 billion and generating \$3 billion in revenues. The Special Economic Zones (SEZs) under CPEC offer further prospects for investment, particularly in the technology and manufacturing sectors. He highlighted that Pakistan's burgeoning market for electric vehicles (EVs) represents a significant growth area. With over 50% of households owning motorbikes and a growing demand for cars, the market for 2- and 4-wheel EVs is set to expand rapidly. Initiatives to promote EVs and public transport in Islamabad are already underway, positioning Pakistan strategically as a hub for EV production for both local and export markets.



GEPCO TENDER NOTICE

INVITATION FOR BIDS

Sealed Tender STG-Tender No.CE/DEV/GEPCO/PMU/T&G 2024-25/NCB-STG-6 for supply of following items on single stage two envelope basis are invited from Registered / Prequalified firms with DISCOs/NTDC/WAPDA/GENCOS&PEPCO or authorized dealers / manufacturers / suppliers, as per Specifications / drawings without any element of foreign exchange and for free delivery (FCS) at Dy: Manager Ware House GEPCO Wazirabad. Tender will be received upto half an hour before Tender opening time and will be opened in public on date and time mentioned as under.

Tender No.	LOT No.	DESCRIPTION	Unit	Tender Qty.	Amount of Bid Guarantee Required (PKR.)	Tender opening date	Time
NCB-STG-6	I	110V 150AH Station Battery	No.	06	250,000	22.08.2024	10:30 AM - 11:00 AM
	II	110V Battery Charger	No.	07	50,000		
	III	SF6 Gas for Circuit Breaker	Kg	700	125,000		

- Single stage-two envelope procedure will be adopted for the tender process. Bid shall comprise of a single package containing two separate envelopes. Each envelope shall contain separately sealed financial proposal and technical proposal. Envelopes shall be marked as "FINANCIAL PROPOSAL" and "TECHNICAL PROPOSAL" in bold and legible letter to avoid confusion.
- Tender documents can be obtained from the office of undersigned after payment of Rs.5000/- tender (non-refundable) in the office of Manager (CA) GEPCO H/Q upto a day before tender opening date.
- The bid shall remain valid for acceptance for 150 days from the tender opening date. Bid must accompany above mentioned Bid Guarantee/CDR valid for 180 days issued by any Scheduled Bank of Pakistan on specified Proforma alongwith Sales Tax Registration Certificate.
- The bid guarantee should be enclosed in the technical proposal envelope.
- Conditional tender or tender without Bid Guarantee will not be accepted.
- The Average Annual Turnover for the last three years should be equal to OR more than (LOT-I-PKR-10 million) (LOT-II-PKR-1.7 Million) (LOT-III-PKR-5 Million)
- Bids received after the prescribed time and date shall be rejected.
- For further details / information contact undersigned on any working days during office hours.

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National Days and Armed Forces Days

AUGUST

- Aug 01/China Armed Forces Day
- Aug 01/Switzerland National Day
- Aug 01/Lebanon Armed Forces Day
- Aug 01 /Syria Armed Forces Day
- Aug 4/Bukino Faso National Day
- Aug 09 /Singapore
- Aug 15/DPR Korea Independence Day
- Aug 15/India Independence Day
- Aug 15/Poland Armed Forces Day
- Aug 17 /Indonesia Independence Day
- Aug 24/Ukraine Independence Day
- Aug 25/Uruguay Independence Day
- Aug 30 /Turkey Armed Forces Day
- Aug 31/Kyrgyz Republic Independence Day
- Aug 31/Malaysia National Day

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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

Minister briefs French envoy about reforms process

Ambassador of France to Pakistan meets the Minister of State for Finance & Revenue Mr. Ali Pervaiz Malik

DNA

ISLAMABAD: The Ambassador of France to Pakistan Mr. Nicolas Galey called on Minister of State for Finance & Revenue Mr. Ali Pervaiz Malik at Finance Division today. Minister Ali Pervaiz Malik provided an overview of Pakistan's economic progress, highlighting positive trends such as increased foreign exchange reserves, decreased inflation, and a robust stock market, all corroborated by recent ratings from international agencies. He outlined key reforms underway, including privatization initiatives, energy sector advancements, and restructuring of state-owned enterprises (SOEs). The discussion also covered the Federal Board of Revenue's (FBR) digitization initiative, which is being implemented with support from McKinsey to enhance tax administration and compliance. The Minister of State highlighted the budget for 2024-25, focusing on strategies to expand the tax base by integrating untaxed segments and encouraging non-filers to comply. Significant projects in customs and inland revenue aimed at improving digitization and operational efficiency were also discussed. Ambassador Mr. Nicolas Galey expressed appreciation for the excellent reforms undertaken by Pakistan and



offered technical support from France in areas of mutual interest. He recognized the progress made by the Government of Pakistan in stabilizing the economy and expressed confidence in the potential for further collaboration. Looking ahead, both parties affirmed their commitment to deepen economic relations, exploring investment opportunities, and expanding bilateral trade.

ECP asks political parties to submit consolidated statements

The Consolidated Statement of Accounts to be submitted to the Election Commission complete in all respect and shall accompany by report of a Chartered Accountant with regard to the audit of accounts of a political party and a certificate signed by an office-bearer authorized by the party Head stating that: - i.No funds were received by the party from any source prohibited under the Elections Act, 2017

MEHTAB PIRZADA

ISLAMABAD: The Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) on Friday reminded all the heads of Political Parties to submit their consolidated statements of accounts (Form-D) for financial year 2023-24 on or before August 29. "In terms of section 210 of the Elections Act, 2017 read with section 204 of the Act ibid and rule 159 & 160 of the Election Rules, 2017, thereof, that the political parties are required to file with Election Commission their Consolidated Statement of Accounts on (Form-D) for financial year, 2023-24 ended on 30th June, 2024 on or before 29th August, 2024," said a press release issued here. It may be recalled that Section 210 of the Elections

Act, 2017 provides that a Political Party shall, in such a manner as may be prescribed, submit to the Commission, within sixty days from the close of a financial year, a consolidated statement of its accounts audited by a Chartered Accountant on Form-D containing, annual income and expenses, sources of its funds and assets and liabilities. The Consolidated Statement of Accounts to be submitted to the Election Commission complete in all respect and shall accompany by report of a Chartered Accountant with regard to the audit of accounts of a political party and a certificate signed by an office-bearer authorized by the party Head stating that: - i.No funds were received by the party from any source prohibited under the Elections Act,

2017. ii.The statement of accounts contains an accurate picture of the financial position of the party. iii.The information given above is correct to the best of my knowledge and belief. iv.The above statement is audited by the Chartered Accountant and detailed report thereof is annexed. The statement of accounts is to be submitted on Form-D as provided in the Elections Act, 2017. Printed Forms are available, free of cost, in the Election Commission Secretariat, Islamabad and in the offices of the Provincial Election Commissioners, Punjab, Sindh, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and Balochistan. Form-D / Proforma for source of funds are also available on ECP's Website. Overwriting should be avoided. The attested copy of Membership

/ Certificate issued by ICAP in respect of Auditor engaged shall be annexed to the Form-D along with last valid renewal certificate. The Form-D shall also accompany a legible copy of each of the bank statements for the period of 01.07.2023 to 30.06.2024 of the party, along with a bank reconciliation statement. The subject statement shall be addressed to the Secretary, Election Commission of Pakistan, Constitution Avenue, G-5/2, and Islamabad and shall be delivered through an office bearer of the party, duly authorized by the party head in terms of rule 156 of the Election Rules, 2017. Statements received through post, fax, courier service or any other mode shall not be accepted.

Mashhood reveals govt's master-plan

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan's hockey glory days are set to return as Chairman of the Prime Minister's Youth Program, Rana Mashhood Ahmad Khan Friday has unveiled the government's comprehensive master-plan to restore the national team's supremacy and promote young talent. Talking to a private news channel, Rana Mashhood emphasized that the national hockey league would be a game-changer for Pakistan's hockey landscape, offering a unique opportunity for the country's youth to compete against international teams and learn from the best. This, he believes, would not only enhance their skills but also instill a sense of pride and ownership among the players. "The government's initiative to launch a national hockey league in December is a testament to PM's vision of empowering youth and promoting sports in the country", he mentioned. By providing a world-class platform for young hockey players, the government aims to identify and nurture talent, enabling Pakistan to reclaim its rightful place among the world's top hockey-playing nations, he added. Chairman Rana Mashhood Ahmad Khan credited Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif's vision and direction for the recent resurgence of Pakistan's national hockey team. He revealed that the Prime Minister had given clear instructions to revive the past glory of Pakistan's national game, which had been in decline for over a decade. He expressed optimism that this momentum would continue, and Pakistan's hockey team would soon regain its former glory and bring laurels to the country. Rana Mashhood emphasized that the government's efforts to revive Pakistan's hockey glory extend beyond the national team, with a focus on restoring departmental sports as well. He revealed that meetings are being organized with various federations to prepare a comprehensive roadmap for the future of hockey in Pakistan. This collaborative approach aims to ensure a sustainable and structured development of the sport, from grassroots to the national level, he added. He further explained that the restoration of departmental sports is crucial for providing a platform for young talent to emerge and compete at the highest level. By engaging with federations and stakeholders, the government seeks to create a conducive environment for hockey to flourish, with a clear vision and strategy for success, he mentioned. This inclusive approach is expected to yield positive results, with Pakistan's hockey team poised for a triumphant return to the international arena, he added.—APP

Exports increase by 11.83% to \$2.3 bln in July 2024

ISLAMABAD: Exports from the country witnessed an increase of 11.83 percent during the first month of fiscal year 2024-25 as compared to the corresponding month of last year, the Pakistan Bureau of Statistics (PBS) reported Friday. The exports during July 2024 were recorded at \$2.308 billion against the exports of \$2.064

billion in July 2023, according to latest PBS data. On the other hand, imports into the country also increased by 15.30 percent to \$4.256 billion during the month under review as against the imports of \$3.691 billion last July. Based on the figures, the trade deficit during the month under review was recorded at \$1.948 billion against

the deficit of \$1.627 billion last year, showing an increase of 19.71 percent. Meanwhile, on a month-on-month basis, the exports from the country decreased by 9.77 percent when compared to the exports of \$2.558 billion during June 2024. The imports also witnessed decrease of 14.27 percent when compared to the imports of \$4.964 billion in June 2024, PBS reported. On the other hand, the export of services during the fiscal year 2023-24 increased by 2.7 percent by going up to \$7.806 billion from \$7.595 billion last year. The services imports also increased from \$8.638 billion last year to \$10.119 billion this year, showing growth of 17.14 percent.—DNA

BEOE advises emigrants to reach out only valid OEPs

ISLAMABAD: The officials of the Bureau of Emigration and Overseas Employment have advised the foreign job-seekers to only reach out to the valid Overseas Employment Promoters (OEP) licenses were valid as more than 5048 licenses had been pronounced invalid. Out of the invalid OEPs, licenses of some 670 were cancelled on various grounds while 805 were expired and rest of them had surrendered. They said all the foreign job-seekers must visit the official website of BEOE regularly to get fresh and valid information and protect themselves from unauthorised OEPs. The officials said that the BEOE was mandated to regulate emigration under the Emigration Ordinance, 1979, promote Emigration of Pakistani citizens and look after the interest and welfare of the emigrants.—APP

Creation of a business community committee on IPPs appreciated

DNA

ISLAMABAD: The Chairman of the FPCCI Advisory Board and National Business Group Pakistan, President Pakistan Businessmen and Intellectuals Forum, and All Karachi Industrial Alliance, as well as former provincial minister Mian Zahid Hussain, said on Friday that the vast majority of people are considering themselves insecure due to inflation and electricity bills. He said that the relationship between the people and the welfare state is constantly weakening, and the youth are eager to seek employment outside the country. Mian Zahid Hussain said that the country's population is increasing faster than its harmful effects on its economy. Talking to the business community, the veteran business leader said that General Zia-ul-Haq was a controversial ruler. Still, there was no inflation during his time.

People urged to observe Black Day on Monday

ISLAMABAD: The All Parties Hurriyat Conference (APHC) has called upon the people of Indian illegally occupied Jammu and Kashmir (IIOJK) to observe August 5, Youm-e-Istehsal Kashmir, as Black Day to send a strong message to the world that India is an illegal occupier of their homeland and that Kashmiris will persist in their struggle for the United Nations-granted right to self-determination. The appeal was made through separate messages issued in Srinagar on behalf of the illegally detained Hurriyat leadership, including APHC Chairman Masarrat Aalam Butt and Shabbir Ahmed Shah, both of whom are languishing in New Delhi's notorious Tihar Jail. Other Hurriyat leaders and parties including incarcerated Bilal Siddique have also called for the observance of August 5 (Monday) as Black Day. The Hurriyat leaders described the illegal actions taken on August 5, 2019 as an assault on Kashmir's unique identity, status, culture, and demography. They urged Kashmiris worldwide to hold protest demonstrations on Monday to draw global attention to the suffering of the oppressed people in occupied Jammu and Kashmir. It was on August 5, 2019, when the RSS-backed BJP government of India, led by Narendra Modi, scrapped the special status of IIOJK in blatant violation of international laws and norms, and stripped Kashmiris of all political, social, religious, and other basic rights, effectively turning the occupied territory into a massive open-air prison.—DNA

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Briefs

President Zardari grieves rain-related losses

DNA

ISLAMABAD: President Asif Ali Zardari on Friday expressed deep sorrow over the loss of lives and damage to properties caused by rain-related incidents across various regions of the country. In a statement issued by the President House, he conveyed his heartfelt condolences to the families of those who lost their lives. The president underscored the urgency of accelerating relief efforts to aid those affected. President Zardari also called for the implementation of precautionary measures to safeguard lives and prevent further rain-related tragedies. He emphasized the importance of timely actions by the administration to ensure the effective drainage of rainwater and mitigate the risks of future incidents. In his prayers, Zardari sought divine peace for the departed souls and strength for the bereaved families to endure their loss.

ANF recovers 166.8 kg drugs in 3 operations

RAWALPINDI: Anti-Narcotics Force (ANF) while conducting three operations managed to recover 166.8 kg drugs and arrested four accused, said an ANF Headquarters spokesman here on Friday. He informed that in two operations conducted near M-1 Islamabad, ANF recovered 164.4 kg hashish from two vehicles besides arresting 4 accused. In third operation, 2.4 kg hashish was recovered from a motorcycle on University Road Peshawar. Investigations have been started to register cases under the Anti-Narcotics Act against the arrested accused.—APP

Exports increase by 11.83% to \$2.3 bln in July 2024

DNA

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Pakistan's agri potential is being enhanced: Huang Pei

Ambassador Jauhar Saleem, President of IRS, highlighted the strong economic partnership between China and Pakistan. He emphasized that China is Pakistan's top trading and investment partner, as manifested by the \$25 billion mutual investment in the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) under the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI)

FAISAL SHEIKH

ISLAMABAD: Mr. Huang Pei, the Commercial Head of LTEC International Agriculture Development Company of China, participated as a guest speaker and discussed the role of Chinese enterprises in Pakistan at the Institute of Regional Studies on Thursday. The event, jointly organized with the Asian Institute of Eco-civilization, Research, and Development (AI-ERD), was moderated by AIERD CEO Mr. Shakeel Ahmed Ramay and attended by researchers, scholars, and students. Ambassador Jauhar Saleem, President of IRS, highlighted the strong economic partnership between China and Pakistan. He emphasized that China is Pakistan's top trading and investment partner, as manifested by the \$25 billion mutual investment in the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) under the Belt and

Road Initiative (BRI). With CPEC entering its second phase, the focus will shift to innovation, green development, technology, mining, and agriculture—areas with significant potential in Pakistan due to its extensive irrigation system, fertile lands, and large agricultural workforce. New projects, including the introduction of 5,000 tons of dry chilies and advancements in buffalo embryo technology, aim to improve product quality and distribution, promising further growth and prosperity for both nations through their continued collaboration. Mr. Huang Pei outlined the China Chamber of Commerce in Pakistan's (CCCCP) commitment to strengthening bilateral business ventures and socioeconomic cooperation, with active branches in Islamabad, Karachi, and Lahore. The Chamber supports projects across energy, infrastructure, textiles, telecommunications, and green production, nurturing local

talent. He also informed about the role of these enterprises in disaster response, such as a \$17 million donation for flood relief in 2020. The CCCPK has also carried out educational activities, signed an MoU with the Higher Education Commission, and played a crucial role in establishing desalination plants in Balochistan and Sindh. In the realm of CPEC's agricultural cooperation, which began in September 2022, efforts focused on improving Pakistan's agricultural sector, particularly chili production, through contract farming, technological support, and farmer training. To further develop agriculture, he proposed advancements in technology, modern storage facilities, expanded market access in China, rural job creation, and the establishment of an agricultural project incubator. Pakistan's import value in food reached \$9 billion in 2023. China can solve this problem by increasing cooperation in the agriculture

sector, making Pakistan not only food-sufficient but also enabling it to export various food items to China, such as rice, sesame, meat, and corn, Mr. Huang added. Through this cooperation, China can help Pakistan reduce imports of ginger and edible oil. Pakistan can also capitalize on Halal condiments as value additions in the market of 2 billion Muslims worldwide. Pakistan also has good products like pink salt but lacks capacity in brand building, he added. Mr. Huang also noted losses in Pakistan's agriculture due to a lack of warehouses, storage facilities, and processing plants, which are big problems for farmers but can be opportunities for investors. China imports \$200 billion worth of food items annually. If Pakistan gets a share of 10 percent, it would open a window to \$20 billion in revenue. Mr. Huang further elaborated that China's cooperation with Pakistan in technology transfer started 20 years

ago. Pakistan is and always will be a priority partner for China. Many Chinese companies have shifted to East Asian countries due to business and capacity feasibility. There are more opportunities, which depend on how Pakistan can become competitive for Chinese companies. Mr. Shakeel Ahmed Ramay suggested that cooperation in agriculture will be mutually beneficial for both countries. Importing food from Pakistan will lower transportation costs for China. In Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and the former FATA region of Pakistan, good quality cheese is produced, presenting an opportunity for investors in exports, he informed. China can help Pakistan establish research centers to increase agricultural productivity. We can learn from China's best practices in managing water for agriculture. China can play the role of facilitator, but we need to take the initiative, Mr. Shakeel pointed out.



ISLAMABAD: A meeting took place between the Ambassador Mr. Yezhan Kistafin, and the Prime Minister's Coordinator on Climate Change of the Ministry of Environment and Climate Change of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan, Ms. Romina Khurshid Alam.—DNA

SBP asked for more rate reduction as inflation declines

Govt's commitment to strengthening economy commendable

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Iftikhar Khan, the advisor to the president of the FPCCI, on Friday asked the State Bank of Pakistan to immediately lower interest rates due to the fact that headline inflation in July 2024 dropped to 11.09 percent, the lowest level since October 2021. Because the fall is very beneficial to the economy, authorities need to be compelled to reduce interest rates. This would reduce the government's burden of debt payments and benefit businesses, he said. Iftikhar Khan stated that interest payments on debt currently consume between seventy-five and eighty percent of income, with the majority of the debt being domestic and originating from commercial banks. He expects the interest rate to drop further to 9-10% by year's end due to falling inflation. He continued by saying that although oil

and commodities prices are falling globally, the Middle East's circumstances will also have an effect on inflationary pressures. The current real interest rate is 8.4%, and it went positive in March 2024 following a 37-month hiatus. It has been increasing in positive territory ever since, which means the SBP should think about reducing the discount rate even further. The business leader asserts that maintaining a high positive real interest rate poses significant threats to debt's sustainability. High real interest rates raise the cost of borrowing, which increases the government's debt servicing expenses. He observed that high interest rates impose a strain on the state's budget, particularly in the case of a nation that is already deeply indebted, such as Pakistan. He said that there has been a rise in inflation in other domains such as food and drink, transportation expenses, and apparel and footwear. He praised the administra-

tion for reaffirming its will to deal with the twin deficits, boost exports, and carry out tax, energy, and state-owned enterprise privatisation reforms. The International Monetary Fund is in charge of this agenda since its board will likely approve a \$7 billion, 37-month Extended Fund Facility for Pakistan during a meeting later this month. Should the facility receive approval, it could potentially facilitate additional loans and international assistance, thereby enhancing investor confidence. The twin deficits have posed serious obstacles to Pakistan's economy, increasing inflation and reducing available funds for infrastructure projects. The government's goal is to lower these deficits by raising revenue and reducing wasteful spending because the country would have to implement reforms to exit the IMF. Pakistan's current fiscal year requires it to repay \$24.8 billion in external debt. \$21.2 billion of the \$24.8 billion total comes from principal

repayment, and the remaining \$3.6 billion comes from interest payments. According to the SBP governor, \$22 billion of the gross funding requirements are for principal repayment, and the remaining \$4 billion is for interest. The government is encouraging the private sector to take the initiative and participate in the nation's economy because it would not be involved in businesses run by the private sector. He emphasized that the credit rating agency Fitch upgrading Pakistan's rating, the central bank lowering the policy rate, and increased global confidence as a result of the IMF's new lending programme all demonstrated the country's macroeconomic stability. Iftikhar Khan asserts that improving economic openness and privatising all public enterprises as soon as possible will reduce the amount of reliance on loans and save trillions of rupees. The Ministry of Finance's most recent consolidated report shows that during the fiscal years 2021.

Kiyani urges opposition to choose solutions over agitation

ISLAMABAD: In a bid to promote constructive politics and find solutions to the country's pressing issues, Pakistan Muslim League Nawaz (PML-N) leader Bilal Azhar Kayani Friday urged the Jamaat-e-Islami (JI) leadership to adopt a collaborative approach with the government, cautioning against the 'politics of agitation' that could only further exacerbate the situation. Talking to a private news channel, he said Prime Minister Shahbaz Sharif has already initiated efforts to address the pressing public issues and alleviate the burden on the poor. The government has launched several initiatives aimed at providing relief to the most vulnerable segments of society, including increased funding for social welfare programs, and measures to reduce inflation. The government has been engaging in negotiations with the Jamaat-e-Islami (JI) leadership to address the shared concerns of public issues, with multiple meetings held in recent weeks, he mentioned. These discussions have focused on finding common ground and collaborative solutions to pressing problems, including inflation, unemployment, and social inequality, he added. We are ready to work for alleviating the suffering of the common man and bring improvement in overall governance of the country, he highlighted. The government has assured the JI leadership that their concerns will be taken seriously and incorporated into policy decisions, paving the way for a united front in tackling the challenges facing the nation, he added. Responding to a query about PTI protest call, he said the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) party has been accused of lacking a genuine public issue agenda, instead prioritizing the personal politics of Imran Khan. The government is not succumbing to pressure from the PTI's agitating politics, and is instead focused on implementing its policy agenda and addressing the pressing issues facing the nation, he said. To another query, he said the government has reiterated its commitment to addressing the pressing public issues facing the nation, and is seeking constructive solutions from the opposition parties.—DNA

Zahid elected as Chairman NA Standing Committee on Education

DNA

ISLAMABAD: The Standing Committee on Federal Education, Professional Training, National Heritage and Culture in a meeting held on Friday in the Parliament House, Islamabad unanimously elected Member National Assembly (MNA) Azim Uddin Zahid, as its Chairman. Syed Jawad Murtaza Naqvi, Additional Secretary (Committees), National Assembly Secretariat welcomed the Committee Members and briefed them about the procedure for the election of the Chairman. Khurram Shahzad Nawaz, MNA/Member, proposed the name of Azim Uddin Zahid, MNA, as Chairman of the Committee while Muhammad Aslam Ghuman, MNA/Member seconded his candidature. Accordingly, Azim Uddin Zahid, MNA, was unanimously elected as Chairman of the Standing Committee on Federal Education, Professional Training, National Heritage and Culture. The Additional Secretary (Committees) and Joint Secretary (Committees) congratulated the newly elected Chairman on behalf of the Speaker, Deputy Speaker, and Secretary General National Assembly and assured him full support from the Secretariat for the effective and efficient functioning of the Committee. The Chairman expressed his gratitude to the members for posing confidence in him and assured them to run the business of the Committee with consensus. The members while appreciating the views of the Chairman assured him their fullest support in the process of legislation. Dr. Tariq Fazal Ch, Aijaz Hussain Jakhri and Malik Muhammad Amir Dogar, MNAs/Chief Whips congratulated the newly elected Chairman and extend their support for the committee. The meeting was attended by MNAs Anjum Aqeel Khan, Raja Khurram Shahzad Nawaz, Zulfiqar Ali Bhatti, Syed Sami ul Hasan Gillani, Farah Naz Akbar, Abdul Hakeem Baloch, Dr. Shazia Sobia Aslam Soomro, Mahtab Akbar Rashdi, Mussarat Rafique Mahesar, Abdul Aleem Khan, Muhammad Aslam Ghuman and Fiaz Hussain. Dr. Tariq Fazal Ch, MNA/Chief Whip (Ruling Party), Malik Muhammad Amir Dogar, MNA/Chief Whip (Opposition) and Aijaz Hussain Jakhri, MNA/Chief Whip (PPP) were also present besides the senior officers of the National Assembly Secretariat.

Mishal Malik appeals world community to 'Save Kashmir from Indian Clutches'

ISLAMABAD: Mishal Hussein Malik, the wife of senior Kashmiri leader Yasin Malik Friday urged the global community to intervene and 'Save Kashmir from Indian Clutches as India continuously snatching the basic rights of Kashmiris, including their right to freedom, self-determination, and even their identity. Her message on PTV news channel related to 'Youm-e-Istehsal day she emphasized the need for global pressure to force India to reverse its illegal actions of August 5, 2019, which have led to a humanitarian crisis and egregious human rights abuses in the region. She appeal seeks to

galvanize international support for the Kashmiri people's quest for justice, freedom, and self-determination. Mishal Hussein Malik question to the international community, asking when they would respond to India's blatant snatching of Kashmiris' property, social, and economic rights. She lamented that the world has remained silent as India continues to perpetrate atrocities in Indian Illegally Occupied Jammu and Kashmir (IIOJK), leaving the Kashmiri people vulnerable to exploitation and oppression. Malik's query highlights the urgency of the situation, as Kashmiris face dispossession, cultural erasure, and

economic strangulation, their fundamental rights trampled by India's authoritarian grip. She implores the global community to awaken to the Kashmiris' plight and demand accountability from India for its egregious violations of human rights and international law. Mishal Hussein Malik expressed her gratitude towards Pakistan for its unwavering support for the Kashmiri people, adding, Pakistan consistent stance on the Kashmir issue, saying that their diplomatic boycott and pressure tactics have helped bring international attention to the plight of Kashmiris. She appreciated Pakistan's unwavering com-

mitment to standing up for Kashmiris' rights, even in the face of Indian aggression and propaganda. She thanked Pakistan for being a steadfast ally to the Kashmiri people, consistently advocating for their rights and dignity in the face of Indian oppression. She has also spoken out against the Indian government's attempts to change the demographic composition of Kashmir, which she warned would have catastrophic consequences for the region's indigenous population. Mishal Malik has also highlighted the plight of Kashmiri political prisoners and warned against India's attempts to change Kashmir's demographics.



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Global tax negotiations

IN recent decades, the availability of preferential tax regimes and tax havens has deprived governments worldwide of huge amounts of revenue. According to the EU Tax Observatory, multinational corporations shifted US\$1 trillion – the equivalent of 35 per cent of all the profits booked outside their headquarter countries – to tax havens in 2022. Meanwhile, super-rich individuals faced very low effective tax rates, equivalent to just 0.05 per cent of their total collective wealth. The problem is that, rather than cooperating on taxation, countries have been competing to attract big corporations and wealthy people. Fortunately, steps are being taken to change this. The Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) and Group of 20 (G20) agreed in 2021 on an Inclusive Framework on Base Erosion and Profit Shifting, aimed at limiting tax avoidance, ensuring the coherence of international tax rules and establishing greater global tax transparency. But the agreement was far too limited in scope, requiring only very large multinationals to allocate a small share of their global profits to the countries where their customers are located. The convention that would implement even this limited requirement has yet to be ratified. The framework also agreed a low minimum tax rate for multinationals of 15 per cent, well below these countries' current average corporate tax rate of 25 per cent and lower than the 21 per cent minimum rate proposed by the US. Yet another flaw in the framework is that signatories would be required to avoid unilateral measures such as taxes on digital services. Overall, benefits to developing economies were minimal. Today, however, two initiatives are under way that represent important improvements on the framework. First, last week in Rio de Janeiro, G20 finance ministers agreed to work together to ensure that ultra-high-net-worth individuals are taxed more effectively. Brazil made such an agreement a top priority of its G20 presidency. While the details have yet to be decided, one possible approach would be to impose a 2 per cent global wealth tax on the world's billionaires in US dollar terms. That is roughly 3,000 people. The second promising initiative is a United Nations framework convention on international tax cooperation, negotiations for which are now under way in New York. The resolution to negotiate such a convention was overwhelmingly approved by the UN General Assembly last November. According to the "zero draft" released in June, the convention should include commitments on a "fair allocation of taxing rights, including equitable taxation of multinational enterprises" and "effective taxation of high-net-worth individuals". It should also ensure tax measures contribute to addressing environmental challenges, guarantee "transparency and exchange of information for tax purposes" and enable "effective prevention and resolution of tax disputes". How should the final document reflect these commitments? For starters, the convention should reallocate taxation rights fairly among all countries where firms do business. If a company engages in substantial business activity in a country, it should have to pay taxes there. The convention should also include a 25 per cent global effective minimum tax on multinationals' profits, as well as a tax on capital gains. It should introduce minimum standards for the taxation of the richest people globally and each country's wealthiest residents, including anti-avoidance instruments such as a global minimum income tax.

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Zionists on campus

IN recent months, American politicians such as Nancy Pelosi have thrown baseless accusations that pro-Palestinian marches and student encampments were the result of foreign funding from Russia, China, and Iran. It suits a perfect irony where the many well-funded Zionist campus groups and United States-based Zionist organizations are well funded through well-connected political donors and the Israeli regime propaganda arm. Unlike any regime in the world, "Israel" performs one of the most sophisticated, well-funded, and aggressive foreign influence campaigns, specifically in Academia, targeting students who are either ignorant of "Israel's" crimes or those who willfully collaborate with their agenda for financial compensation. Billions of dollars are funneled from pro-"Israel" business and state figures into the Western world to then return political action and tax-payer funds for "Israel's" strategic domination of the Middle East. In the United States, nearly every university has a grassroots-funded chapter of the Students for Justice in Palestine group, along with its Jewish pro-Palestine counterpart, Jewish Voice for Peace, as both groups often fight political battles to retain their status as campus clubs due to Zionist influence on the administrations of their school. Columbia University, where the encampment solidarity campaign began, had both SJP and JVP suspend any campus activities and club recognition due to their effective popularity in mobilizing students against "Israel's" genocide in Gaza. The Table below cites Zionist organizations registered as non-profits, receive tax breaks, and perform partial or complete activities on North American College campuses: A total of \$347,860,310 from only 14 Zionist organizations demonstrates the deep pockets of Zionist donors, which include both state funding routed via non-profit organizations in America and notable donations from the Adelson family, as well as from pornographic business tycoon and majority owner of Only Fans, Leonid Radvinsky, who pledged \$11 million to AIPAC. Since 2020, with the so-called Arab-Zionist normalization project, two goals have been primary to Zionist proxies globally, [the first is in] furthering the "human bond" between "Israel" and the co-signing Arab states to avoid a "cold peace" outcome as seen in Egypt and Jordan, while the second imitative is perhaps most focused in the West, where a darker legacy of antisemitism exists, whereby the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance and as per its Zionist-focused "working definition" of antisemitism states that it is antisemitic to deny "Israel's" "right to exist" and [applies] applying "double standards to Israel" in criticizing the crimes of the Zionist project. IHRA is not an NGO, it is an organization made of government officials from over 35 countries, according to the government of Canada website, which is one of the many governments that send representatives to their organization. After the UAE normalized relations in August of 2020, followed closely by Bahrain, a quiet move by Sudan, and the last move by Morocco in December of the last Trump year, "Israel's" Ministry of Strategic Affairs through its social media accounts, proxies, and funded propaganda have prepared programs such as the "peace" delegations, where Arabic speaking influences from the region are invited on a loaded trip within the Zionist entity, in order to repackage Israeli propaganda to a targeted Arab audience and a western audience naive enough to follow.

What did Israel's recent assassinations actually accomplish?

Jasmine El-Gamal

On April 1, Israel targeted an Iranian diplomatic compound in Syria, killing a senior Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC) Quds Force commander, which led to an unprecedented Iranian attack five days later involving more than 300 missiles and drones launched towards Israel from Iran, Iraq and Yemen. Despite all parties stating throughout the last 10 months that they do not want to start a regional war, every cycle of attack-counterattack-repeat increases the risk of a tragic miscalculation that will set the Middle East aflame. Killing of Hamas's Ismail Haniyeh & Hezbollah commander FuadShukor will likely trigger a response involving Iran & its full array of regional militias. It shifts dynamics & undermines...

FOLLOWING Israel's assassination of Hamas's political leader, Ismail Haniyeh, in Iran in the early hours of July 31, the Middle East is once again bracing itself for the fallout. Iran's supreme leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei has vowed "severe punishment" against what he calls the "Zionist regime." Meanwhile, the United States said it was not aware of the attack beforehand. Given the heightened state of tensions in the Middle East following the October attacks on Israel and the country's subsequent war on Gaza, Haniyeh's assassination could be viewed in one of two ways: either as a power move by Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu to ensure he can end the war on a "victory" note, boosting his dismal ratings at home; or as a sign of Israel's increasing weakness and isolation. "There is a lot of tension across the region right now" Former Middle East Adviser, Jasmine El-Gamal, tells @markaustintv that the killing of Hamas Leader Ismail Haniyeh will mean 'ceasefire negotiations have been jeopardised'. A review of the regional context suggests the latter is more likely. Haniyeh was part of the Hamas negotiating team for a ceasefire and hostage deal. His death at the hands of the other party to the conflict, Israel, is likely to further harden Hamas' position and delay a resolution to the talks, or worse, shut them down altogether. In a press conference after the assassination, Netanyahu did not mention the incident but said he will continue the war and not give into domestic or international pressure to end it prematurely. The prime minister also said Israel was prepared for any scenario that might unfold, suggesting he has no intention of either conceding in the ceasefire talks or winding down a war that has so far cost tens of thousands of Palestinian lives and those

of at least 70 hostages. 'Have heard of threats, prepared for any scenario': Israeli PM pledges to win after #Beirut strike Israel now faces the risk of military escalation—both Iran and Hamas have vowed retaliation for Haniyeh's death and in Lebanon, Hezbollah's leader Hassan Nasrallah said the group would avenge Israel's July 29 assassination of top military commander, FuadShukor. It is also unlikely that assassinating leadership figures of organisations such as Hamas and Hezbollah without addressing the root causes of their existence and appeal would actually weaken the groups' resolve, capabilities and popular support. While individual leaders are replaceable, causes are not quick to die. Meanwhile, other countries have been quick to call for calm, with Japan's deputy United Nations representative warning during an urgent UN meeting following Haniyeh and Shukor's assassinations that the region could be at "the brink of an all-out war." The old rules of engagement in the region have been erased. Because no one is sure about the new ones, each strike risks escalating to all-out war. In the same meeting, Britain's UN ambassador called for a renewed peace process, saying that "the path to peace must be through diplomatic negotiations" and that "long-term peace will not be secured by bombs and bullets." And the deputy US ambassador to the UN said the US would "continue to work hard to prevent a broader regional war that starts with finalising an agreement for an immediate ceasefire with the release of the hostages in Gaza." The current tense standoff between Israel and Iran comes just three months after the two countries had already pushed the region closer to an all-out war. On April 1, Israel targeted an Iranian diplomatic compound in Syria, killing a senior Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC)

Quds Force commander, which led to an unprecedented Iranian attack five days later involving more than 300 missiles and drones launched towards Israel from Iran, Iraq and Yemen. Despite all parties stating throughout the last 10 months that they do not want to start a regional war, every cycle of attack-counterattack-repeat increases the risk of a tragic miscalculation that will set the Middle East aflame. Killing of Hamas's Ismail Haniyeh & Hezbollah commander FuadShukor will likely trigger a response involving Iran & its full array of regional militias. It shifts dynamics & undermines US - Iran back channel that had been trying to contain escalation. Darker days ahead. Should that happen, it is not difficult to imagine a scenario where the situation escalates beyond control, putting millions of innocent people in the region in extreme danger. The ball is now in Iran's court. While it is certain Khamenei and Iran's partners in the region will respond in some way to Israel's twin assassinations, they can choose to do so in a manner that is limited and controlled. A response should be significant enough for Iran, Hamas and Hezbollah to save face while not going so far as to draw Israel in further. Whether they can strike that balance remains to be seen. Now, more than ever, it is imperative for cooler heads to prevail, and for external powers to work with the parties involved to step back from the brink and spare the region's already exhausted and traumatised population from further suffering. Israeli leaders must come to terms with the fact that no number of military offensives will make their country and people safer or more secure in the long-term. Absent a commitment to a political pathway to peace, it can only grow weaker and ever more isolated. The alternative is simply too dangerous to consider.

US-China trade war could be the death knell for advanced economies

Andy Xie

US chip equipment manufacturers have been able to sell more products that existing sanctions don't apply to yet, more than likely compensating for any lost sales. But if the US expands the sanctions list sharply next year, revenues could significantly decline. In response, China is likely to pour more resources into technologies that the US denies it access to. If that strategy is successful, it could mean the permanent loss of the Chinese market and, over time, competition in other markets. When it comes to production...

THE US' China containment strategy and its shift towards re-industrialisation are shrinking the market for competitive industries in high-income economies. Ultimately, these economies could face increasing competition with a technologically independent China, as well as higher prices for raw materials. The squeeze on multiple fronts may push them into middle-income status. Currencies such as the yen, the euro, the won and even the New Taiwan dollar have been on trajectories similar to that of a secular bear market. High-income economies, such as Germany, Japan and South Korea, carved out their competitive niches in the US-centric global economy after World War II. They achieved an edge with pricing power in specific areas such as technology, manufacturing or branding. Pricing power in the right sectors is the key to reaching high-income status. After China launched the reform and opening up policy four decades ago and entered the global economy, the advantages that high-income economies had gained were amplified. Costs were lowered by some of them shifting production to China. This equilibrium has been under stress with China's rapid technological development and improved manufacturing sophistication. The price war in China's car market is a good example. The market is the biggest in the world and has been dominated by multinational companies for decades. They produced cars in China at low cost and sold them at high prices. The rise of Chinese car manufacturers has changed that dynamic. Global carmakers now face a prolonged crisis. The US' containment strategy towards China is another blow to these advanced economies. The US wants to dent or reverse China's tech rise. One method of doing this is cutting off China from the hi-tech supply chain. Restrictions on China's access to the equipment

needed for making chips are perhaps the best illustration. They shrink the market for these high-income powers. As China develops its own supply chain, it will compete in overseas markets, further denting their revenues. US sanctions haven't worked out well so far. China's technological advancements show no sign of slowing down. However, the next US administration, whether it is run by the country's vice-president Kamala Harris or former president Donald Trump, is likely to expand tech sanctions on China. US chip equipment manufacturers have been able to sell more products that existing sanctions don't apply to yet, more than likely compensating for any lost sales. But if the US expands the sanctions list sharply next year, revenues could significantly decline. In response, China is likely to pour more resources into technologies that the US denies it access to. If that strategy is successful, it could mean the permanent loss of the Chinese market and, over time, competition in other markets. When it comes to production, China has lower costs and a larger scale. Middle powers such as Germany and Japan will be at a considerable disadvantage. From economic 'miracle' to cautionary tale: Japan's development and recession. The US has been aiming to re-industrialise for years and there seems to be a sense of urgency among US policy elites. Manufacturing subsidies in the Inflation Reduction Act are a case in point. The next administration is likely to step up measures to support national industries. Subsidies could be expanded, with a continued role for the free market of course. Tariffs could be increased for other countries aside from China. Procurement by the US government and its contractors could become conditional on production localisation. One of the quickest ways for the US to re-industrialise

is by relocating production away from its allies to within its own borders. However, relying on local capacity has not worked and is unlikely to work in the future. The loss of access to China's market, increased Chinese competition and decreased exports to the US could hollow out the economies of middle powers. They could also be pressured into buying energy and minerals from the US. Their terms of trade are on a slippery downward slope. The strength of currencies in high-income economies depends on their terms of trade. When they lose industries with pricing power, they are arguably no different from middle-income economies. In the current geopolitical environment, their currencies are facing a downward trend. What is happening to the yen will expand to other middle power currencies. The US dollar is overvalued, as shown by the US' large current account and fiscal deficits. As the currencies of middle powers decline, the dollar will become more overvalued. The dollar is held up by money inflow. The dollar's dominance in the global currency market makes this possible. East Asia accounts for much of global savings. Some US politicians have discussed the possibility of a war over Taiwan. One effect of this has been scaring rich people in the region to move money out. That potentially leads to more purchases of dollar assets. The US needs a realistic value for the dollar to make its re-industrialisation viable in the long run. That will require China revaluing its currency. However, China cannot be coerced into doing so, as Japan was in the 1985 Plaza Accords. The US would have to make a deal with China to achieve that. China would certainly demand many concessions in return. When the US is willing to properly deal with China, the dollar's value will normalise.

Briefs

PM Shehbaz says it's govt's agenda to...

FROM PAGE 01
any reduction in electricity prices owing to the government's decision to make petroleum products and power "sources of revenue generation". In the cabinet meeting today, the premier said the government is aware of the tax on the salaried class. "We have provided Rs50 billion for July, August and September," he said, adding that the government has reduced per unit electricity cost by Rs8.5 for industries. He maintained that his administration protected consumers using up to 200 electricity units, following its concern for the salaried class. PM Shehbaz added that while some taxes are perfectly legitimate, it is not right to impose more taxes on taxpayers. Meanwhile, The Federal Cabinet, chaired by Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif, on Friday approved the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) on Trade Promotion Cooperation to enhance trade between China and Pakistan.

Govt to provide financial...

FROM PAGE 01
families and resolve their problems. The law minister said that there are a lot of "complicated" reasons behind the issue of missing persons, adding that the government has taken strict measures to resolve the issue and most of the cases have been tackled through the Commission of Inquiry on Enforced Disappearances (COIED). The government is committed to resolving all issues of missing persons by tapping into all resources, Tarar added. The law minister claimed last month that "only 23% of missing persons' cases are pending", adding that 10,200 cases of missing persons were registered in the COIED out of which around 8,000 cases have been addressed. The information minister had said that in 2011, the Supreme Court formed an inquiry commission about missing persons which sorted out 7,900 cases out of 10,023 cases and now 23% of the cases are pending.

Gwadar sit-in to end as BYC, govt...

FROM PAGE 01
"Negotiations between the Baloch Yakjehti Committee and the district administration have been successful and the organisers of the committee have agreed to end their sit-ins across the province," Balochistan's Interior Minister Mir Zia Ullah Langov said in a statement. "I appeal to the people to protest, but do not damage the protest site, attack the forces, or hurt the common people," he said, adding that the government would "not allow anyone to take the law into their hands under the guise of protest." The seven-point agreement, a copy of which is available with Dawn.com, was signed by Gwadar Deputy Commissioner Hamood-ur Rehman and Dr Mahrang. The statement said that the BYC would end its protest once all the protesters arrested by security forces in Balochistan and Karachi were released.

PM, cabinet offer funeral prayer in...

FROM PAGE 01
Tarar, high level government authorities offered "Ghaibana Namaz-e-Janaza" of Shaheed Ismail Haniyeh at the Parliament House. Later, special prayers were offered for high ranks of Ismail Haniyeh. Meanwhile, NA on Friday unanimously passed a resolution, strongly condemning the Israeli ongoing state oppression and brutality in Palestine. The House expressed complete solidarity with the Palestinian brothers and sisters and extended condolences to the family of Ismail Haniyeh and the people of Palestine. The resolution was moved by the deputy prime minister and foreign minister Mohammad Ishaq Dar in the House on behalf of all political parties.

Paris Olympics

Carlos Alcaraz qualifies for final in singles

The Spaniard will face one of Novak Djokovic or Lorenzo Musetti in the final

SPORTS DESK

PARIS: Carlos Alcaraz continued his exceptional form and defeated Felix Auger-Aliassime 6-1, 6-1 in the semi-final of men's singles at the Paris Olympics 2024. Alcaraz, 21, became the youngest player to reach the men's singles gold medal match since tennis returned to the Olympics in Seoul in 1988. The Spaniard has already clinched two Grand Slams – French Open and Wimbledon – this year and has secured a medal at the Olympics as well as he will now face one of Novak Djokovic or Lorenzo Musetti in the final. The Canadian stood no chance against the 21-year-old as he could only win two games in two sets. Auger-Aliassime emerged victorious in his first three meetings with the four-time Grand Slam winner but lost his previous four encounters now. If Alcaraz ends up winning the gold medal this year, he will join Rafael Nadal as the only man to win Ro-



land Garros, Wimbledon and Olympics singles gold in the same season. Earlier on Thursday, Djokovic expressed concerns over his knee injury that he sustained at Roland Garros and underwent surgery before playing at Wimbledon. He managed to defeat Stefanos Tsitsipas 6-3, 7-6 (7/3) in the quarters as during the match, needed on-court treatment and a painkiller after slipping on the baseline of Court Philippe Chatrier. He recovered from 0-4 and then 2-5 down in the second set, saving three set points in the ninth game, before racing away with the tie-break. "I'm concerned about the state of the knee. I have to go and examine it with medical staff and then let's see," said Djokovic after the match. "I'm playing at 7:00pm tomorrow, which gives me slightly more time. But I'm hoping I can be ready and be optimistic. I have to be." The 24-time Grand Slam title winner is still looking for a first Olympic gold medal, having so far managed just a bronze in Beijing in 2008.

Paris Olympics: Faiqa Riaz, Kishmala Talat bow out of event

Athletes fail to qualify for next rounds of their respective racing and shooting events

PARIS: Pakistani athletes Faiqa Riaz and Kishmala Talat have been eliminated from the Paris Olympics after failing to qualify for the next rounds of their respective events. Faiqa failed to qualify for the next round in the 100-meter race event after she could

not finish in the top three in the preliminary round of Heat 2. The 100-meter race contest has four preliminary heat rounds and the top three contenders of those rounds qualify for the first round. Five athletes with the next best timings also

obtain a spot in the next round of the women's event. However, Pakistan's Faiqa finished with a timing of 12.49 in Heat 2 of the 100-meter race and ended in the sixth spot, losing her chance to qualify for the next round. As for Kishmala, she competed in the women's 25-meter pistol event and despite having higher expectations, she placed 22nd overall. Her scores in the precision series were 95, 99, and 99, while her rapid series scores were 98, 93, and 99. This gave her a total score of 579, which fell short of the top 8 needed to move on to the next round. This marks the end of the road for Faiqa and Kishmala at the Paris Olympics 2024. Pakistan's athletes have been having a bad run at the Paris Olympics 2024 as two swimmers – Ahmed Durrani and Jehanara Nabi – and shooter Gulfaam Joseph were eliminated from the event. Pakistan has one more shooter who is yet to be in action at the Paris Olympics and that is GM Bashir who will compete on August 4. The country's hopes lie with renowned javelin thrower Arshad Nadeem whose journey in the Olympics will start on August 6th.



Conor McGregor banned from driving in Ireland

LONDON: UFC star Conor McGregor has been banned from driving for two years after being convicted of dangerous driving in Ireland. McGregor was caught driving his Bentley Continental GT in a reckless manner on the N4/M50 interchange in Dublin back in March 2022. The former lightweight champion was handed a five-month suspended sentence and fined a total of \$6,493, in addition to the driving ban. This marks McGregor's second driving ban, following a six-month suspension in 2018 for speeding and other offences, including using a mobile phone and parking violations while only holding a provisional licence. The Blanchardstown District Court delivered the verdict, which adds to McGregor's legal troubles. His recent driving offences prevented him from returning to the UFC ring, where he was scheduled to face Michael Chandler. This fight would have been McGregor's first since his loss to Dustin Poirier at UFC 264 in 2021. In response to the court ruling, McGregor expressed his disappointment at having to postpone his return to the Octagon, stating, "The decision to postpone the fight was not made lightly, but one made in consultation with my doctors, the UFC, and my team." He reassured his fans that he is in good spirits and remains confident about his comeback. The UFC has already begun discussions for a new date for McGregor's return, with speculation that the fighter might compete at UFC 310 on December 14. – Agencies

PCB to set up committee to probe player conduct

DNA

ISLAMABAD: The Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) is gearing up to address several disciplinary issues involving players from the national cricket team. The move comes after a media report revealed that the PCB would review three detailed reports on player conduct. These reports have been compiled by the team's head coach, the team manager, and an independent intelligence agency. To tackle these issues comprehensively, the PCB has established a special committee tasked with meticulously examining the reports. The media report further indicates that a former captain of the national team will be appointed as the head of this committee.

IOC defends Imane Khelif's participation in PO 2024

The Algerian made it to the headlines after she defeated her Italian opponent in just 46 seconds

PARIS: The International Olympic Committee defended their decision to allow two female boxers – Algeria's Imane Khelif and Taiwan's Lin Yu-ting – to compete at the Paris Olympics 2024. Khelif made it to the headlines after she defeated Italy's Angela Carini in just 46 seconds as controversy sparked after the Algerian's win with many calling for her disqualification from the tournament. Khelif and Yu-ting were disqualified from the 2023 World Championships after failing International Boxing Association (IBA) eligibility rules. However, the IBA was stripped of its recognition by the IOC last year over governance and finance issues. "These two athletes were the victims of a sudden and arbitrary decision by the IBA," the IOC said in a statement. "Towards the end of the IBA World Championships in 2023, they were suddenly disqualified without any due process. According to the IBA minutes available on their website, this decision was initially taken solely by the

IBA Secretary General and CEO." Some sports allow a limited level of testosterone for female athletes in women's competition while others ban those who have gone through male puberty. The IOC further stated that the eligibility rules were based on the Tokyo Games 2021 and thus, cannot be changed during a competition. "The current aggression against these two athletes is based entirely on this arbitrary decision, which was taken without any proper procedure, especially considering that these athletes had been competing in top-level competition for many years," the IOC said. "The IOC is saddened by the abuse that the two athletes are currently receiving," it added. "Every person has the right to practice sport without discrimination." Meanwhile, the IBA, in a statement, called out the "inconsistencies in eligibility" at the Paris Olympics saying that both the boxers did not meet the criteria to compete within the female category. – Agencies



Pakistani youth teams qualify for semi-finals in Norway Cup

Pak Street Child Football Team defeated Germany's JSG Leintal 3-2 in a breathtaking match

DNA

KARACHI: The Pakistani Youth teams have been unstoppable in the ongoing Norway Cup 2024 as the U15 side, Better Future, and the U17 side, Muslim Hands FC, made their way into the semi-finals of their respective competitions. The Pakistan Street Child Football Team defeated Germany's JSG Leintal 3-2 in a breathtaking match which the Green Shirts won by scoring a last-minute winner. Mohammad Kashif scored a brace while Mohammad Junaid netted one goal as celebrations erupted among the Pakistani community in Norway following the victory. The U17 team will now face Norway's Forde IL in the first semi-final which will be played later today. On the other hand, the U15 team named Better Future Pakistan thumped Norway's Forde IL 1-3-0 in the quarter-final and made their way to the semi-final. Subhan Karim scored twice while Shahbaz Ali found the back of the once as

the Pakistani side qualified for the semis. They will now face Norway's Væggø Fotball 1 in the semi-final in U15 category later today. It is

worth mentioning that in Norway Cup 2023, Muslim Hands FC lost the final on penalties 10-9 against Sola FK. They were undefeated

throughout the tournament and defeated all the teams they faced by big margins. Pakistani team scored a total of 28 goals in Norway Cup

2023 and conceded only three and proved that they are capable of not just winning the matches, but winning them with a high score line.



Senate body seeks IPPs' audit

FROM PAGE 01
power companies, and consumers is the most difficult task. "New electricity generation plants will be installed. By October or November, we will open the commercial market and the consumer will be allowed to get electricity from the company of their choice." The Nepcha chief said that we have all "made mistakes", adding that there was a power crisis in 2007. In 2013-14, power plants were installed with the help of China.

Fawad urges joint protest against govt

FROM PAGE 01
the government if they want to make it a success. "The government is roaming freely while conspiracies are being hatched against the brave judges of the Supreme Court," he deplored. He also lambasted the government for isolating Pakistan on international fronts by saying that Saudi Arabia and China didn't extend any help for Pakistan despite PM Shehbaz Sharif's multiple attempts. He also said that no one called us at the demise of Hamas leader Ismail Haniyeh.

IHC orders govt to produce...

FROM PAGE 01
Shehbaz Gill should be recovered and presented in court by Aug 6. The court directed the registrar office of the high court to ensure that the court order was conveyed to the principal secretary of the prime minister. Justice Aungzeb remarked: "A hazardous situation arises when the institutions say they do not know where the person is." The petitioner's lawyer said Shehbaz Gill uploaded vlogs in support of PTT founder Imran Khan. "Shehbaz Gill has been told by agencies that they have his brother in their custody. Shehbaz Gill was also told to stop making vlogs in favour of Imran Khan," the lawyer said. Justice Aungzeb remarked the Ministry of Defence had the courage to go into these matters.

Martyr Haneyya laid to rest...

FROM PAGE 01
Khalil al-Hayya, led thousands of worshippers in the Qatari mosque in praying for the martyred leader and his slain guard Waseem Abu Shaban. The head of Hamas abroad, Khaled Mishaal, spoke about the martyred leader, noting that he "did not leave Gaza except to continue struggle for the Palestinian cause." The Emir of the State of Qatar, Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad Al Thani, his father Emir Sheikh Hamad bin Khalifa Al Thani, and the Qatari Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Sheikh Mohammed bin Abdulrahman Al Thani, as well as official delegations from Türkiye and other countries, Palestinian factions' leaders, and heads of institutions and organizations, participated in the funeral prayer.

Rainfalls cause 96...

FROM PAGE 01
22 deaths were reported in Sindh, 34 in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, three in Balochistan, three in Kashmir, and one in Gilgit-Baltistan. The report states that 214 people were injured, and 525 houses were damaged due to the rains. The majority of lives lost and property damage was caused by the collapse of roofs and walls. 46 percent of the people died due to the collapse of roofs and 31 percent due to lightning. According to the NDMA report, 5 people lost their lives in the last 24 hours.

2 cops martyred...

FROM PAGE 01
Initial reports indicate that the judges' convoy was attacked by gunfire. In this terrorist action, two officers of the Upper Waziristan Police, Abdullah and Constable Samad Khan, were martyred. There are also reports of two individuals being injured in the incident near Bhagwal. Following the incident, the bodies and injured were transported to the hospital.

Briefs

Kashmiri
leaders
meet
Pakistan
envoy in
Ankara

ANKARA : Report Shabana Ayaz A delegation of Kashmiri leaders led by Speaker Legislative Assembly Chaudhry Latif Akbar and senior parliamentary leaders visited the embassy on the invitation of the Ambassador of Pakistan to Ankara, Turkey, Dr. Yusuf Junaid. Briefing about the ongoing activities, he said that the entire nation is deeply committed to the cause of Pakistan and Kashmir, and the support of the Muslims of the subcontinent in the movement of freedom is imprinted on the hearts of every citizen of Turkey. In particular, President Erdoğan has been expressing the Kashmir cause in all forums. The delegation drew the attention of the Ambassador of Pakistan regarding the problems faced by Kashmiri and Pakistani students and made suggestions for creating an effective strategy to expose the sinister intentions of the Modi government, especially Modi's Hindutva in the media and academia, to policies. The Ambassador of Pakistan welcomed the visit of the delegation, assured that it would ensure the implementation of the proposals, and said that such visits by the Kashmiri leadership should be continued. This delegation, consisting of all parties, is the best manifestation of national unity, and this should continue.—APP

10 killed in
Myanmar
airstrikes

BANGKOK: Myanmar military airstrikes hit a hospital in a city controlled by an ethnic minority armed group close to the China border killing 10 people, local media reported on Friday. Military planes carried out at least two air strikes on Laukkai city, normally home to some 25,000 people, late on Thursday night, a resident said, requesting anonymity for security reasons. Local media quoted one resident as saying 10 civilians were killed in the strike. Myanmar's northern Shan state has been rocked by fighting since late June when an alliance of ethnic minority armed groups renewed an offensive against the military along a major trade highway to China. The Myanmar National Democratic Alliance Army (MNDAA) group have held Laukkai since January after more than 2,000 junta troops surrendered there in one of the military's biggest defeats in decades. MNDAA spokesman Li Jiawen said a military airstrike had hit a hospital in Laukkai, but he had no information yet on casualties. The junta has been approached for comment. The junta has bombed Laukkai several times in recent weeks after the MNDAA renewed its offensive in northern Shan state, shredding a Beijing-brokered ceasefire. Pictures taken on Thursday and shared with AFP by the Laukkai resident showed deserted streets.—APP

Turkiye
blocks
access to
Instagram

ANKARA : The Turkish Information and Communication Technologies Authority (TKM) on Friday said it blocked access to Instagram. No reason was given for the move, but it came after the country's Communications Director Fahrettin Altun criticized the social media platform, saying it "is actively preventing people from posting messages of condolences for the passing of Hamas leader [Ismail] Haniyeh without citing any policy violations." "This is censorship, pure and simple," he said in a post on X on Wednesday after Haniyeh's assassination in Tehran. "We will defend freedom of speech against these platforms that have showed many times that they are primarily in the service of global exploitative system of injustice," he added. Haniyeh was assassinated on Wednesday in the Iranian capital Tehran. While Hamas and Iran blamed Israel for the killing, Tel Aviv has not confirmed or denied its responsibility.—APP

ECC approves import
of 100,000 MT of Urea

Finance Minister Aurangzeb chaired the meeting of the ECC today

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Minister for Finance and Revenue Muhammad Aurangzeb on Friday chaired a meeting of the Economic Coordination Committee (ECC) of the Cabinet which approved the import of 100,000 Metric Tons (MT) urea. The committee decided on a proposal submitted by the Ministry of Industries and Production aimed at ensuring sufficient supplies of urea in the market. "This will also ensure stability of prices of fertilizer during the cropping season," a Finance Division news release said. Among others, the meeting was attended by Minister for Industries and Production Rana Tanveer Hussain, Minister for Petroleum Masood Malik, Minister for Power Sardar Awais Ahmad



Khan Leghari, Minister for Economic Affairs, Ahad Khan Cheema, Governor SBP, Chairman of the Planning Commission, MD PASSCO, Chairman SECP, Deputy Chairman of the Planning Commission, MD PASSCO, Chairman TCP, Federal Secretaries and other senior officials of the relevant ministries.

Student leader release
fails to quell BD protests

WEB DESK

DHAKA: Demonstrations in Bangladesh after Friday prayers demanded justice for victims of nationwide unrest and police crackdown, after the release of protest leaders failed to quell public anger. Student rallies against civil service job quotas sparked days of mayhem that killed at least 206 people last month, according to an AFP count of police and hospital data. The violence was some of the worst of Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina's 15-year tenure, and the actions of her government's security forces provoked widespread rancor at home and international criticism abroad. A day after police freed six top members of the group which organized the initial protests, its leaders urged their compatriots to once again return to the streets. "We want justice for the murders of our sisters and brothers," Students Against Discrimination said in a statement. Thousands of young men in the capital Dhaka and the port city of Chittagong heeded the call after midday worship in the Muslim-majority nation, defying torrential monsoon rains. "Why are

our brothers in graves and the killers outside?" one crowd chanted outside the country's largest mosque in central Dhaka, a teeming megacity of 20 million people. Students Against Discrimination had demanded the release of its detained leaders, three of whom were forcibly checked out of a hospital and taken away by plainclothes police last week. Their release was a sign the government was hoping to "de-escalate tensions" with protesters, University of Oslo researcher Mubashar Hasan said on Thursday. But other demands by the students remain unmet, including a public apology from Hasina for the violence and the dismissal of several of her ministers. They have also insisted that the government reopen schools and universities around the country, all of which were shuttered at the height of the unrest. Many protesters have gone further, demanding Hasina step down altogether. "She must go," writer and activist Arup Rahee said from a rally in the capital. "There will be no justice for the student murders if she remains in power." Internet outage monitor Netblocks reported that service providers had again

restricted access to Facebook, WhatsApp and Telegram, all used last month to organize protests. "We were instructed by the authorities to block Facebook," said an official from one phone company, speaking on condition of anonymity. Hasina, 76, has ruled Bangladesh since 2009 and won her fourth consecutive election in January after a vote without genuine opposition. Her government is accused by rights groups of misusing state institutions to entrench its hold on power and stamp out dissent, including the extrajudicial killing of opposition activists. Demonstrations began in early July over the reintroduction of a quota scheme — since scaled back by Bangladesh's top court — that reserved more than half of all government jobs for certain groups. With around 18 million young Bangladeshis out of work, according to government figures, the move upset graduates facing an acute employment crisis. Critics say the quota system was used to stack public jobs with loyalists to the ruling Awami League. Last month's protests had remained largely peaceful until attacks on demonstrators by police and pro-gov-

ernment student groups. Hasina's government eventually imposed a nationwide curfew, deployed troops and shut down the nation's mobile Internet network for 11 days to restore order. European Union foreign policy chief Josep Borrell this week condemned the police clampdown that followed for "excessive and lethal force against protesters and others," urging an independent investigation into their conduct. Home Minister Asaduzzaman Khan told reporters last weekend that security forces had operated with restraint but were "forced to open fire" to defend government buildings. At least 32 children were among those killed last month, the UN children's agency said Friday. Diplomats said Hasina's government had approached the United Nations to assist with its own probe into the unrest but had been rebuffed. "The UN called for an impartial, independent and transparent investigation into all alleged human rights violations," a United Nations official said on condition of anonymity. "The UN, however, does not support national investigations in the way that is being suggested."

S.Korea says no
response from
North on flood
relief offer

SEOUL: South Korea said Friday it had received no response after trying to contact the North to offer humanitarian aid following reports of deaths and heavy damage caused by recent flooding. Seoul's unification ministry said in a statement Thursday that it was willing to "urgently provide" humanitarian assistance to "North Korean disaster victims" impacted by the downpours. The ministry attempted to contact the North to make an offer of aid via the Korea's liaison office communication channel, but Pyongyang has not responded, Seoul said Friday. "We will not make assumptions about the situation and look forward to a prompt response (from the North) to our proposal," Kim In-ae, the deputy spokesperson for the ministry, told reporters. North Korea said earlier this week that a "record downpour" hit its northern border areas near China, resulting in "a grave crisis in which more than 5,000 inhabitants were isolated in the zone vulnerable to flooding." On Wednesday, Pyongyang said many "public buildings, facilities, roads and railways, including more than 4,100 dwelling houses and nearly 3,000 hectares of farmlands" were flooded in its northern regions of Sinuiju and Uiju. That same day, North Korean state media said leader Kim Jong Un "proposed to strictly punish" officials who neglected their disaster prevention duties, which had caused unspecified deaths or injuries "that can not be allowed." A report by South Korea's TV Chosun said hundreds of people could have been killed. Kim has been shown in multiple videos this week traversing flood waters in a rubber boat, overseeing rescue operations involving military helicopters. Natural disasters tend to have a greater impact on the isolated and impoverished North due to its weak infrastructure, while deforestation has left it vulnerable to flooding. Relations between the two Koreas are at one of their lowest points in years, with the North bolstering military ties with Russia while sending thousands of trash-carrying balloons to the South. In response, Seoul's military blasts K-pop and anti-regime messages from border loudspeakers and recently resumed live-fire drills on border islands and near the demilitarised zone that divides the Korean peninsula.—DNA

13 killed in
India floods

DEHRADUN, India: Monsoon downpours caused flash floods that killed 13 people in India's Himalayan foothills, officials said Friday, with helicopters rescuing hundreds stranded near a renowned Hindu shrine. Flooding and landslides are common and cause widespread devastation during India's treacherous monsoon season, but experts say climate change is increasing their frequency and severity. Thirteen deaths have been reported across the northern state of Uttarakhand so far, disaster official Vinod Kumar Suman said. District officials said around 700 people were rescued by airlift while traveling to Kedarnath temple, a popular pilgrimage destination dedicated to the Hindu deity Shiva. "We are flying multiple choppers to bring down the pilgrims who were on their way," Suman said. The temple sits nearly 3,600 meters above sea level and access is only possible in the summer via a grueling 22-kilometer uphill trek. It is thronged by thousands of pilgrims each year at a time when the annual monsoon downpours are at their peak.—APP

California's
wildfire
claims
one life

WASHINGTON: A fast-moving wildfire has killed at least one person in the Rocky Mountain foothills of Colorado, one of a handful of blazes burning across the state, while thousands of firefighters in California struggled to contain the largest fire in the country. The individual killed in the Stone Canyon Fire, burning about 20 miles (32 km) north of Boulder, Colorado, was found on Wednesday in one of five homes destroyed near Rocky Mountain National Park, officials said. "We did also today discover human remains in one of the residences," Boulder County Sheriff Curtis Johnson told journalists. "So, I can confirm for you that we do have one fatality associated with the fire." Johnson did not provide details on the individual's identity. The Stone Canyon Fire, near Lyons, a community of about 2,000, has burned more than 1,500 acres (600 hectares) since Tuesday afternoon. It was 30% contained as of Thursday evening, according to Nathan Hallam, the fire incident commander on scene, who added that he hoped to see the fire begin to shrink significantly by Sunday or Monday. Evacuation orders were lifted for all of Lyons on Thursday afternoon, along with some outlying areas to the south and west of the blaze. Wildfire activity in California is 2,816% higher than at this time last year, with 29 times the amount of acreage burned, said the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection, or Cal Fire, in an X post on Tuesday. California's Park Fire, the largest, has burned more than 600 square miles (1,550 square km) as of Thursday morning, an area bigger than the city of Los Angeles, state fire officials said. It ranks as the fifth largest fire in the state's history and could soon become the fourth. Nearly 6,000 firefighters are battling the blaze in a wilderness area in the state's Central Valley, about 90 miles (145 km) north of Sacramento, the state capital. It has destroyed 437 structures and damaged 42, Cal Fire said. One of those homes belonged to Mike Wittenberg, 41, of Forest Ranch, close to where the Park Fire started. He said his newly renovated five-bedroom house was destroyed soon after he fled with his fiancée Andrea and three children. When they were given the evacuation orders last week, he said he hesitated but eventually the family departed. "I honestly didn't think the fire would take our home," Wittenberg said on Thursday. "We lost our cars, bikes, motorcycle, my kids' toys and clothes. We have virtually nothing. It's hard to take in." The family is now sleeping on the floor of his father's home in nearby Paradise, a town that was largely wiped off the map in 2018 by a wildfire that killed 85 people, the deadliest blaze in California's history. The man charged with starting the Park Fire, allegedly by pushing a flaming car down a Butte County gully last week, was formally charged with arson on Monday.—APP

Paris protesters
demand Olympics
ban for Israel

PARIS: Protesters gathered outside the Olympics headquarters in Paris to demand that the Israeli participants be sent back over the genocide in Gaza. Campaigners made plenty of noise and used graphic images to highlight their concerns over Israel's participation in the 2024 Olympics. They gathered outside the headquarters of the games in North Paris, accusing organizers of turning a blind eye to Israel's atrocities. Many French (citizens) are with Palestine but the media, the French media, and also in England or in the United Kingdom, they are supporting genocide. This is not correct. Activists say it is hypocritical of the International Olympic Committee to ban Russia and Belarus from the games but not genocidal Israel. One protester, who had painted her face in red like blood, was insistent that the Israel team go home, and be banned. Yes, like blood, like blood, red like blood, like blood of the children of Palestine, like the blood of the women of Palestine. There is genocide in Palestine, in Gaza specifically. And we are all here for eight weeks and we will continue until Israel is banned from the Olympic Games. Israel has killed more than 39,000 Palestinians since October and thousands more are currently dying due to a lack of food and medical care. Those taking part insist they will continue to protest throughout the entire Olympic Games up to and including the closing ceremony on the 11th of August.—APP



ISLAMABAD: Senator Rubina Khalid Chairperson Benazir Income Support Programme (BISP), met with the Chairman of NADRA Lieutenant General Muhammad Munir Afsar at the NADRA Headquarters today.—DNA

Fidan to visit Ethiopia for reconciliation process with Somalia

Hakan Fidan is expected to discuss bilateral relations and other regional issues with Ethiopian Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed and Foreign Minister Taye Atske Selassie

FOREIGN DESK

ANKARA : Turkish Foreign Minister Hakan Fidan is set to visit Ethiopia on August 3, 2024, to hold talks with Ethiopian Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed and Foreign Minister Taye Atske Selassie, the Turkish Foreign Ministry has announced. During the visit to Ethiopia, Foreign Minister Fidan is expected to discuss bilateral relations, the reconciliation process with Somalia, and other regional issues. Last month, Hakan Fidan hosted both his Ethiopian and Somali counterparts in Ankara where the three signed a joint statement following "candid, cordial and forward-looking" talks on their differences. During the July

meeting, the Somali and Ethiopian ministers discussed ways to address their differences "within a mutually acceptable framework" and agreed to hold another round of talks in Ankara on September 2. Türkiye's diplomatic ties with Ethiopia, which hold significant importance in Türkiye's Africa Partnership Policy, date back to pre-Republic times, specifically 1896. The Turkish Embassy in Addis Ababa was established in 1926, while Ethiopia's Embassy in Ankara opened in 1933. Although Ethiopia's Ankara Embassy was closed in 1984 due to a regime change, it was reopened in 2006. Relations between Türkiye and Ethiopia have deepened through regular contact and reciprocal

visits, grounded in a positive and friendly context. Trade volume between the two nations, which was approximately \$27 million in 2000, reached around \$345 million in 2023. There is an ambitious target to increase this figure to \$1 billion within the next five years. Türkiye is among the top four countries in terms of Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) in Ethiopia, with growing interest from Turkish companies. Ethiopia and Somalia Tensions Ethiopia, the most populous landlocked country in the world, lost its access to the sea following Eritrea's de facto independence in 1991 and de jure independence in 1993. Access to the Red Sea remains a critical economic issue

for Ethiopia. On January 1, 2024, Ethiopian Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed and Somaliland President signed a Memorandum of Understanding. During the signing ceremony, the Somaliland President declared that Ethiopia would be the first country to recognise Somaliland, a statement that drew significant backlash from Somalia and the international community. Türkiye's support to solve the conflict on May 8, 2024, Ethiopian Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed's Special Envoy Mulatu Teshome Wirtu, accompanied by Ethiopia's Foreign Minister, was received by Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan. During the meeting, Ethiopia sought Türkiye's support regarding its conflict with Somalia. As a trust-

ed intermediary, Türkiye, under President Erdoğan's directives, initiated mediation efforts. Foreign Minister Fidan held discussions with both Ethiopian and Somali counterparts, hosting their foreign ministers in Ankara on July 1, 2024. This marked the first time in months that both nations' foreign ministers appeared together in a photograph, and they issued a joint statement expressing their intent to resolve their disputes peacefully. They also committed to reconvene in Ankara on September 2. The international community has commended Türkiye's efforts to establish a sustainable dialogue channel between the parties amidst rising regional tensions.

Briefs

Bushra Bibi withdraws LHC plea

COURT REPORT

LAHOR: The Lahore High Court dismissed a plea filed by Bushra Bibi, wife of PTI founder Imran Khan, after she withdrew her petition challenging her arrest in the third Toshakhana case. The petition also sought action against the superintendent of Adiala Jail and female staff for allegedly mistreating her following her re-arrest after acquittal in the Iddat case. The court's registrar raised objections, stating that the Lahore High Court was not the appropriate forum for such a plea. Bushra Bibi, represented by senior lawyer Sardar Latif Khan Khosa, requested the court declare her arrest illegal and dismiss any further investigations, FIRs, or detention orders related to the case. In her petition, she named several respondents, including the Inspector General of Police Punjab, Superintendent of Adiala Jail, the Government of Punjab, and the Federation of Pakistan. She claimed she was physically assaulted by female jail staff upon her re-arrest and that her detention was part of a broader campaign to target her husband, Imran Khan, through fabricated cases.

TLP activists booked for inciting violence

DNA

RAWALPINDI/TOBA TEK SINGH /SAHIWAL: Thirty-one activists of the TLP, including the administrator of a madrassah and a district emir of the party, were booked under sections of ATA and Pakistan Penal Code (PPC) in three cities of Punjab for inciting violence and planning protests against Chief Justice Qazi Faez Isa. In Rawalpindi, a case was registered by the Airport Police Station against 28 people on the report of the Sub-Inspector Jiaz Hussain Ghuman. In the FIR, the officer said he was on night patrol on the High Court Road when he received information that some people were gathering at the Jamia ZiaulAloom in Eastridge Housing Society run by Syed Inayatullah Sultanpuri. The report alleged that the suspects, including Mufti Umair, Dr Shafiq Amin, Allama Muhammad Shafiq Qadri, Chaudhry Rizwan Ahmad Safi, Pir Syed Irfan Hameed Shah, Allama Rub Nawaz Farooqi and Advocate Chaudhry Taimoor, were planning to stage protests and processions against the CJP across the country.

Ji sit-in continues at Rawalpindi

Two rounds of negotiations have finished fruitless between the government and the Ji leadership

KHAYAM ABBASI

RAWALPINDI: The Jamaat-e-Islami sit-in against inflated electricity bills and rising inflation has entered its eighth day at Liaquat Bagh, Rawalpindi. The protest includes 10 demands from the government, including significant reduction in electricity prices, elimination of unnecessary taxes, renegotiation of contracts with Independent Power Producers (IPPs), and cuts in government expenditures. Two rounds of negotiations between the government and the Jamaat-e-Islami leadership have ended fruitless. Ji leader Hafiz Naemur Rehman has left to attend the funeral prayer of Hamas leader Ismail Haniyeh but will return the sit-in at night. Earlier, the Ji emir criticised the former governments for approving IPP agreements, calling them criminal. He urged the government to make the IPP contracts public, warning that the public might stop paying electricity bills if the agreements realities are not revealed.

US working to counter emerging terror threats from Afghanistan

"...we're working vigilantly to prevent re-emergence of external threats from Afghanistan," says State Dept

NEWS DESK

WASHINGTON: US State Department said Friday it is working to ensure that Afghanistan never serves as a launching pad for terrorist attacks against the US or its allies in the wake of the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) report's revelation about the use of Afghan soil for terrorism. State Department Principal Deputy Spokesperson Vedant Patel, while addressing a presser on Thursday, commented on the matter after being questioned about the US's views on the UN report. Patel said: "So we've spoken a little bit about this before. [Daesh]-K is a transnational terrorist network that has the ambition and capacity to launch international terrorist attacks." He added that the US is taking a "whole-of-government approach to our Afghanistan counterterrorism efforts". "We are cooperating with partners and allies, including in the immediate region; and we're working vigilantly to prevent the re-emergence of external threats from Afghanistan, including by working with partners to counteract terrorist recruitment efforts as well," said the spokesperson. In its report, the UNSC has endorsed Pakistan's view regarding terrorists of the banned Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP) taking refuge within hideouts and sanctuaries in Afghanistan. It also revealed that TTP operatives and its new recruits are



being trained in Afghanistan. The Analytical Support and Sanctions Monitoring Team, which produced the UNSC report, said Pakistan suffered more than eight hundred attacks in the past several months. It added that the terrorist threat emanating from Afghanistan is causing heightened concern in many UN member states. The report underscored that there is increased support and collaboration between TTP and the Taliban, sharing manpower and training camps in Afghanistan and conducting more lethal attacks under the banner of Tehreek-e-Jihad Pakistan. "According to the report, Al-Qaeda seeks to strengthen cooperation with regional terrorist organizations of non-Afghan origin, such as ETIM/TIP, the Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan and Jamaat-Ansarullah for expansion to Central Asia," a Radio Pakistan news report stated. When asked if any conversation was taking place between US and India about the successive assassination plans targeting

Sikh separatist leader Gurbatwant Singh Pannun, the State Department spokesperson told the reporter to refer to the "Canadian Government to comment on issues that are happening within their law enforcement system". Patel, in response to the question, said that the US expects accountability from the Indian government with regards to the matter. "As we have said before, we continue to expect accountability from the Government of India in relation to the alleged role of an Indian Government employee and the failed attempt to assassinate a US citizen on US soil that occurred last summer, and we continue to raise our concerns directly with the Indian Government at senior levels," said the spokesperson. According to Bloomberg, five men were arrested on firearms charges on November 3, 2023, near Brampton, Ontario, a day before the son of a prominent member of the Sikh independence movement was to be married in the Toronto-area city. Prominent personalities, including New York-based lawyer Gurbatwant Singh Pannun, were set to attend the event. Those arrested included Amandeep Singh, who was later charged in the murder of Hardeep Singh Nijjar, the Sikh leader killed in British Columbia in June 2023. It should be noted that Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau had accused Narendra Modi-led government in New Delhi of directing the assassination.

At least 13 killed in Nigeria protests

NIGER: Nigeria's security forces have killed at least 13 people protesting against economic hardship, rights groups say. Security forces reportedly killed six protesters in the city of Suleja near the capital, four in the northeastern city of Maiduguri and three in the northwest city of Kaduna on Thursday. Police in Maiduguri said four people were killed in blasts, without elaborating. On Thursday, the national police chief rejected reports that officers had attacked peaceful demonstrators. Inspector General Kayode Egbetokun said in a statement on X that he had "placed all units on red alert" to respond to "further threats to public safety and order." Nigeria, one of Africa's top oil producers, has been engulfed by protests over the high cost of living and corruption. More than 300 protesters were arrested in the protests that also triggered curfews in several states. At least five states, including Kano, Yobe, Katsina, Borno and Jigawa, remained under curfew on Friday. At the same time, security forces used tear gas against small groups of protesters who took to the streets of the capital Abuja for a second day of rallies.

Imran's negotiator has backed out of establishment talks

MEHTAB PIRZADA

ISLAMABAD: Federal Defense Minister Khawaja Asif in a message on X, formerly known as Twitter, said Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) founder Imran Khan's nominated person for negotiations - Mehmood Khan Azakhzai in negotiations with the establishment, has refuted claims of PTI founder. "PTI founder's proposal is nothing but frivolous and political maneuvering as always," Khawaja Asif said. "According to founder PTI, Mehmood Khan Azakhzai will represent him in the negotiations with the establishment. "I had said that in my knowledge it is not possible," he said. "I asked Mahmood Khan Achakzai in the National Assembly session today wherein he replied in negative that he could not play negotiations role," Khawaja Asif said.

Bangladesh bans Jamaat-e-Islami following deadly protests

Jamaat condemns Awami League-led ruling alliance's decision as "illegal, extrajudicial and unconstitutional"

FOREIGN DESK

DHAKA: Bangladesh on Thursday banned right-wing Jamaat-e-Islami party, its student wing Islami Chhatra Shibir and other associate organisations under anti-terrorism law, Anadolu Agency reported citing an official order. The ban will come into effect immediately, according to a gazette notification issued by the home ministry. The government move came as the South Asian nation has been witnessing massive student protests since last month, which have led to the death of at least 150 people. The move, decried as "unconstitutional and illegal" by the Jamaat-e-Islami, comes after Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina blamed it and the main opposition Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP) for violence that forced her to impose curfew. In a statement issued earlier, the Jamaat had condemned the Awami League-led ruling alliance's decision as "illegal, extrajudicial and unconstitutional". "Using state machinery, they are playing a blame game against Jamaat and other opposition parties," said Shafiqur Rahman, chief of the party, which, along with the opposition, had denied the government's statement that they stoked violence. Jamaat was effectively banned from contesting elections by a 2013 court decision that its registration as a political party conflicted with the South Asian nation's secular constitution. Bangladesh shut down the internet and sent the army to enforce a nationwide curfew as the demonstrations spread after they began in universities and colleges in June. Thousands were injured as security forces fired rubber bullets, tear gas and lobbed sound grenades to disperse tens of thousands of protesters who flooded into the streets. The violence was the biggest test Hasina, 76, has faced since winning a fourth straight term in elections in January that were boycotted by BNP and also marred by deadly protests. She first led her party to victory in elections in 1996, serving one five-year term before regaining power in 2009, never to lose again.

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ATC Islamabad gives Raouf's custody to CTD for day

FAISAL SHEIKH

ISLAMABAD: The anti-terrorism court of Islamabad has approved one-day physical remand of Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) leader Raouf Hassan in the explosives recovery case. Judge Tahir Abbas Sipra of the Anti-Terrorism Court heard the remand request of PTI leader Raouf Hassan by prosecution in the explosives recovery case. At the beginning of the hearing, the prosecutor Raja Naveed, while reading the text of the case against Raouf Hasan, requested for another 7-day physical remand of Raouf Hasan. He said that they needed to investigate about some names and details of the accounts. He further said that raid had also been conducted in Tarnol on Raouf Hasan's identification, but it was also unsuccessful. Raouf Hasan did not help in the investigation on the pretext of illness. On this, Raouf Hassan's lawyer Ali Bukhari said that he was taken for physical remand for 2 days. He said Raouf Hassan had been with the CTD a day before physical remand as well which add up to become three days since the CTD had Raouf's custody. No explosive have still been recovered from Raouf Hassan, said Bukhari. The lawyer further said that Raouf Hassan had no role in the case. If the court felt that the police wrongly arrested him in the case, then he can be discharged from the case. On Raouf's medical condition Ali Bukhari said that Raouf Hasan would die, if he does not take medicine for two days. The prison doctor refused to examine Raouf Hasan and he had to be taken to PIMS Hospital, Bukhari continued. Along with this, lawyer Ali Bukhari completed the arguments requesting Raouf Hasan to be discharged from the case.



KARACHI: Chief of Staff Turkish Navy Vice Admiral Ibrahim Ozdem Kocer laying wreath at Mazar e Quaid during his visit. - DNA

Dar vows to implement privatization programme with transparency

The CCOP was presented with a phased Privatization Programme (2024-29) by the Ministry of Privatization, based on the recommendations of the PC Board, in terms of Section 5(b) of the Privatisation Commission Ordinance 2000



ADIL SHAHEEN

ISLAMABAD: The Cabinet Committee on Privatization (CCOP) Friday approved 24 entities for the Privatization Programme (2024-29) and decided that the inclusion of other State Owned Entities (SOEs) in the privatization programme will be taken upon completion of the review by the Cabinet Committee on State-Owned Enterprises (CCoSEs) regarding categorization of Strategic/Essential SOEs. After deliberating on the privatization policy guidelines, the CCOP considered 84 SOEs reflected in the federal footprint SOEs consolidated report FY2020-22 in detail in light of the SOE Act and Policy. The meeting of the committee was held here with the Deputy Prime

Minister and Foreign Minister Senator Mohammad Ishaq Dar in the chair. The meeting was also attended by other members of the committee including the Finance Minister, Minister for Privatization, Minister for Commerce, Minister for Power, Minister for Industries & Production, Minister of State Finance and Revenue besides Federal Secretaries of various Ministries and Division. The CCOP was presented with a phased Privatization Programme (2024-29) by the Ministry of Privatization, based on the recommendations of the PC Board, in terms of Section 5(b) of the Privatisation Commission Ordinance 2000. The CCOP recommended that priority should be accorded to reducing the federal footprint in commercial space and limiting it to the strategic and essential SOEs only. CCOP emphasized that even SOEs making profits would also be considered for privatization. The entities not categorized as strategic or essential will be placed before CCOP for the decision regarding their inclusion in the Programme. The CCOP also considered the proposal for the transfer of shares of OGDCL lying with the Privatization Commission to sovereign wealth fund or Ministry of Energy (Petroleum Division). It was decided that the status quo may be maintained for the time being. In addition, the CCOP also granted approval for the budget estimates of the Commission for the fiscal year 2024-25, amounting to Rs. 8,169 million. The chairman while concluding the meeting re-affirmed the government's commitment to implementation of the Privatization Programme with transparency, efficiency and whole of government approach. He emphasized the importance of support and cooperation from all stakeholders in the implementation of the programme.

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