



Islamabad POST

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Detailed News On Page-07

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Detailed News On Page-08



Sabalenka starts Cincinnati with convincing win

Detailed News On Page-06



Announces power relief

Nawaz blames Imran Khan-led govt for inflation

Saying the country has rid itself of the IMF grip. "Who brought the IMF back to Pakistan is the same person [Imran Khan] who is currently speaking from jail"

BUREAU REPORT

LAHORE: Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) supremo Nawaz Sharif has attributed the skyrocketing cost of living to the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) government, saying that it was the Imran Khan-led regime that brought the International Monetary Fund (IMF) back to the country. Addressing a press conference flanked by Punjab Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz in Lahore on Friday, the three-time prime minister said that the issue of price hike commenced in the PTI government, adding that he knows about the pain the people of Pakistan are going through. The PML-N's top leader said he recalls the time in 2017 when there was no price hike issue with people living an easy and comfortable life, adding that he became premier in 2013, his government worked on the economy, making it one of the world's best-performing economies. At that time, the world praised the country for its emerging economy, as the PML-N-led government took the US dollar to Rs95, Nawaz said. "However, the government had to keep the greenback pegged at Rs104 for the next four years owing to exports and some other issues." The greenback would have been pegged at Rs104 if he had stayed in power, he added. Earlier, he started his speech by saying that he was evicted from the PM Office because he did not draw a salary from his son, a matter which he called "a joke". "Was this a justifiable reason for de-seating an incumbent prime minister?" he asked. The PML-N government, he also said, is not behind the current price hike, adding that the world reacted to Pakistan's growth, saying the country has rid itself of the IMF grip.

Continued on Page 06

Cabinet committee proposes curtailing vacant govt posts

Recommendations for right-sizing in the federal government departments presented in Cabinet meeting

DNA

ISLAMABAD: The Cabinet Committee on Institutional Reforms Friday recommended for curtailing 150,000 vacant positions, banning contingency recruitment, and outsourcing non-core services like cleaning, janitorial work, which will gradually phase out many positions in grades 1 to 16. In a meeting, chaired by Prime Minister Shabbaz Sharif, for reducing public sector size and expenses, the committee, chaired by the federal finance minister, presented its recommendations for right-sizing in the federal government departments. The Ministry of Finance was asked to oversee the cash balances of other federal ministries. The committee provided a detailed briefing on recommended reforms for five federal ministries:

Continued on Page 06



RAWALPINDI: COAS Gen Asim Munir interacting with family of Olympian Arshad Nadeem during a ceremony at Army Auditorium GHQ to honour his achievement. - DNA

COAS hosts ceremony to honour Arshad

Notable legends included Jahangir Khan, Islahuddin, Shahbaz Senior. The event was also attended by Arshad Nadeem's close relatives, associates and coaches

SPORTS DESK

RAWALPINDI: Chief of Army Staff (COAS) Gen AsimMunir hosted a ceremony at Army Auditorium GHQ to honour Olympian Arshad Nadeem's historic achievement. The event was attended by sports teams and legendary Olympians including 1984 Olympic and National Hockey teams, National Cricket Team, Street Football Team, Army Polo Team, Visually Impaired Cricket and Women Goal Ball Teams, Medal Winners of Common Wealth,

Continued on Page 06

Terms arrest 'a miracle' I am also among the victims of Faiz Hameed: Ishaq Dar

Talking to media, Ishaq Dar Dar blamed the 2014 sit-ins for starting a "dirty political game" that has ravaged the country

KHAYAM ABBASI

ISLAMABAD: Deputy Prime Minister and Finance Minister, Ishaq Dar, on Friday termed the recent arrest of former Pakistan spy chief Faiz Hameed as a "miracle" and a "lesson" to those involved in political manipulation. Talking to media, Ishaq Dar Dar blamed the 2014 sit-ins for starting a "dirty political game" that has ravaged the country. The finance minister stressed that the country's economy has suffered significantly, dropping from the 24th to the 47th position globally. "I am amazed by this miracle of Allah," said Deputy Prime Minister Ishaq Dar. "Such things have happened for the first time." "I was also among the victims of General (r) Faiz Hameed," he said, claiming that Faiz Hameed apologized to him in mid-October.

Continued on Page 06

Jl chief welcomes reduction in Punjab's electricity prices

Jamaat-e-Islami's resistance and struggle are bearing fruit, says Hafiz NaeemurRehman

NAZIR SIYAL

KARACHI: Ameer of Jamaat-e-Islami Pakistan, Hafiz NaeemurRehman, has welcomed the reduction in electricity prices in Punjab, calling it a positive development. In a statement on social media platform X on Friday, Hafiz Naeem said, "Jamaat-e-Islami's resistance and struggle are bearing fruit.

Continued on Page 06

Briefs

'Raof was in contact with foreigners'

Sources say Ryan and Raof had been in contact with each other since January 2024

ADIL SHAHEEN

ISLAMABAD: Law-enforcement agencies (LEAs) on Friday claimed to have found evidence of links of PTI spokesperson Raof Hassan with foreigners. According to sources, the forensic audit of mobile phones of various PTI leaders revealed that they were in contact with foreigners. Spokesperson Raof was in contact with Ryan Grim of the Intercept news organisation that publishes articles and podcasts online via WhatsApp, they added. They said Ryan and Raof had been in contact with each other since January 2024.

Former IG Prisons Baig arrested

The officer has been taken into custody on allegation of having dubious connections

DNA

LAHORE: Punjab Prisons former Inspector General (IG) ShahidSaleemBaig has been arrested by intelligence agencies. According to sources, the former IG has been arrested on the allegation of facilitating Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) founder Imran Khan. He has been arrested in his government residence, IG House, "for having connections with intelligence agencies".

Holiday Notice

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

'PTI nothing to do with arrests'

PTI urges CJP to recuse from cases of Imran Khan

Gohar clarified he has not accepted resignation of PTI Punjab president Hammad Azhar

FAISAL SHEIKH

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) Chairman Barrister Gohar has clarified that he has not accepted the resignation of PTI Punjab president HammadAzhar. Responding to a query on recent arrests of former army officers, Gohar said that he had already given his statement on this issue. Barrister Gohar further said, "Arrests of Faiz Hameed and others have nothing to do with the party and leadership. Our stand on the current arrests is clear." He urged that speculations should not be made on this issue. The PTI chief said that the army has its code of conduct. He asserted that a military trial of a civilian cannot take place. Meanwhile, PTI chairman Barrister Gohar Ali Khan has urged Chief Justice of Pakistan to recuse from cases of PTI founder Imran Khan. Talking to media along with PTI MNA Latif Khosa, Barrister Gohar said that all cases which have been registered against Imran Khan are politically motivated. NAB has also filed new Toshakhana reference.

Continued on Page 06

KP minister resigns over 'corruption, bad governance'

CM Gandapur says he has already sent a summary to de-notify the minister

SHAMIM SHAHID

PESHAWAR: Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Minister for Communication and Works Shakeel Ahmad Khan resigned from his post while levelling allegations of corruption and bad governance against the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI)-backed provincial government. Shakeel said that he had sent his resignation to KP Chief Minister Ali Amin Gandapur. The development came days after incarcerated PTI founder Iman Khan, in a stern message from

Continued on Page 06

3 Mpox cases 'confirmed' in Pakistan

Earlier, surveillance at airports was tightened across Pakistan after confirmation of first case

FAISAL SHEIKH

ISLAMABAD: At least three patients have been diagnosed with the monkeypox virus in Pakistan, health authorities in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa confirmed on Friday. All patients, whose cases have been confirmed by the health department in KP, were detected with the virus following their arrival from an Arab country, the department said. Pakistan has had cases of

Continued on Page 06

Pakistan urges Kabul to avoid unprovoked acts on border

She strongly rejected allegations about Pakistan's role in the ouster of Sheikh Hasina of Bangladesh

MEHTAB PIRZADA

ISLAMABAD: Foreign Office spokesperson Mumtaz Zahra Baloch on Friday warned foreign governments against meddling in Pakistan's internal affairs. During her weekly news briefing here, she denied that the United States has provided any information about Asif Merchant. Instead, "we are waiting for information from the US on Asif Merchant," she added. Asif Merchant was arrested in the United States earlier this week for allegedly plotting the assassination of a political figure, organising rallies and stealing official documents. Ms Baloch also denied that talks are currently taking place with India for resumption of bilateral trade. The Foreign Office spokesperson recalled that following India's illegal and unilateral steps in illegally occupied Jammu and Kashmir on Aug 5, 2019, several measures were taken by Pakistan including the suspension of bilateral trade which has not yet restored. Strongly condemning the killing of four Kashmiri youth by Indian occupation forces in Doda district, the spokesperson said this brutal act is yet another example of India's illegal and oppressive steps against

Continued on Page 06

Pak 'completes 2nd trial of firewall' amid internet slowdown

Internet services will return to normal in three days after completion of firewall's trial, say sources

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Amid an outcry from internet users and digital rights activists over the disruption of digital platforms and slow internet speed, Pakistani authorities have completed 2nd trial run of its much-debated firewall, telecom sources told Geo News on Thursday. The firewall was installed on internet service providers (ISPs) possessing deep packet inspection (DPI)

Continued on Page 06

CDA chairman meets Chinese delegation to discuss capital projects

Chairman CDA Muhammad Ali Randhawa stated that the Chinese Construction Engineering Corporation has played a vital role in infrastructure development in Pakistan

ADIL SHAHEEN

ISLAMABAD: Chairman CDA Muhammad Ali Randhawa met with a delegation of Chinese State Construction Engineering Corporation at the CDA Headquarters. The delegation was briefed about various development projects in Islamabad.

Chairman CDA Muhammad Ali Randhawa stated that the Chinese Construction Engineering Corporation has played a vital role in infrastructure development in Pakistan. Chairman CDA Muhammad Ali Randhawa said that CDA wants to bring innovation in Islamabad's infrastructure with assistance of Chinese State Construction Engineering Corporation. He assured that ongoing projects in Islamabad would be completed with transparency and in accordance with their deadlines. The Chinese State Construction Engineering Corporation showed keen interest in various projects in Islamabad. The meeting also discussed different stages of the projects,

including design, construction work, and funding opportunities. The Chinese delegation highlighted that Chinese State Construction Engineering Corporation is among the world's largest construction and investment companies. They noted that Chinese State Construction Engineering Corporation has completed various construction and engineering projects, including the Sukkur-Multan Motorway section, the Arfa Karim Tower in Lahore, and the JF Thunder 17 aircraft. The Chinese State Construction Engineering Corporation also expressed their interest in various projects of CDA. Meanwhile, Chairman CDA, Muhammad Ali Randhawa, on Friday, presided over a meeting to discuss the ongoing plantation campaign and beautification plan for Islamabad. The meeting outlined the steps taken so far and the future plans to make Islamabad a more eco-friendly and beautiful city. As part of the plantation drive, free saplings are being distributed to citizens through stalls set up in various centers, mar-

kets, and parks. Additionally, door-to-door distribution of free plants is also underway. The Chairman emphasized the importance of involving the business community and civil society to make the drive more successful. To ensure effective implementation, the city will be divided into four zones, with concerned officers and staff responsible for landscaping and beautification work in each zone. The corporate sector is also expected to play a significant role in making Islamabad eco-friendly and beautiful. Renowned architects and landscaping experts will be consulted for the beautification and upliftment of Islamabad. The plan includes beautifying interchanges, flyovers, loops, and highways, as well as planting fruit trees on medians and green belts along roads. Inspiration will be drawn from other cities' horticulture, and adequate lighting arrangements will be made along flyovers and bridges. With this comprehensive plan, Islamabad is set to become a model city for beauty and sustainability.



ISLAMABAD: Director of Agha Khan Foundation for Economic Development Sultan Ali Allana on Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif in Islamabad. —DNA

PTA, NADRA partner to enhance telecom licensing efficiency

ISLAMABAD: The Pakistan Telecommunication Authority (PTA) and NADRA Technologies Limited (NTL) have successfully launched the biometric verification service for telecom companies and license applicants. According to the press release issued on Friday, the initiative is another step towards ease of doing business in Pakistan and this new facility will enable applicants to complete their identity verification process with ease and efficiency.

As of August 14, 2024, the nationwide network of NADRA e-Sahulat franchisees will be used for biometric verification of the officials of telecom service providers. This initiative follows a formal agreement between PTA and NTL, aimed at facilitating the identity verification process of telecom service providers applying for licenses. Under this new mechanism, PTA will create a profile for each applicant, applying for a PTA license. Once the applicant receives their tracking ID, they will visit the nearest e-Sahulat outlet and present the tracking ID along with their original CNIC for biometric verification. The result will then be securely transmitted to PTA, ensuring a seamless and secure process. This collaboration is expected to significantly expedite and simplify the licensing process for telecom services across the country, contributing to a more robust and efficient telecom infrastructure. —APP

Tajikistan Embassy hosts Pakistan Roadshow for tourism opportunities

ISLAMABAD: The Embassy of Tajikistan in Islamabad hosted the event entitled "Tajikistan - Pakistan Roadshow" to present tourism opportunities here on Friday. The event was attended by Tajikistan's Ambassador, Yusuf Sharifzoda, management of the Pakistan Tourism Development Corporation, representatives of travel agencies of Tajikistan, and 150 representatives of the tourism sector of Pakistan, a news release said. The management of almost seventy travel companies and tour operators, airlines, local media, television and

radio, as well as the employees of diplomatic missions of Central Asian countries were also present. Atadjan Movlamov, Ambassador of Turkmenistan to Pakistan and Dean of Diplomatic Corps, specially attended the event. The Tajik delegation presented the tourism potential of their country to the participants of the event. Moreover, ten memorandums of cooperation were inked with Pakistani tourism companies, which were simultaneously invited to the Travel Market in Tajikistan, scheduled for late September 2024. The General Director of Somon

Travel LLC Umedjon Saidzoda said that those present were able to learn about the tourist attractions and opportunities in Tajikistan. He said that future of tourism in Tajikistan is bright. Saidzoda further said they are proud of their country's success in the international arena. He said that from August 8 through August 15, representatives of several travel agencies of Tajikistan visited Pakistan, as well as held business meetings with central and regional public and private structures of the tourism sector in the country. —DNA

2,889 closed schools across Sindh re-opened

KARACHI: Schools across Sindh, which were closed due to shortage of teachers, have been re-opened following the education reforms, the provincial government has announced. Sindh Education Minister Syed Sardar Ali Shah has said that 2,889 closed schools were re-opened and now no school will remain closed due to shortage of teaching staff. He stated that a 'Teachers Placement Committee' was formed, which suggested appointing teachers for closed schools, making the teaching and education process active. Under the reforms, a total of 2,587 teachers have been appointed for closed schools. The appointments were made at the taluka level to ensure availability of teachers. However, the case of 169 closed schools in deprived talukas is pending due to a court hearing. Re-opening of these schools will be decided after the court decision. —APP

Effective steps to increase wheat production: Toru

PESHAWAR: KP Minister of Food, Zahir Shah Toru has said that the provincial government has taken effective measures to increase the production of wheat and utilizing all available resources and to store it safely. He expressed these views while presiding over a consultative meeting organized under the auspices of the Food Department here on Friday. Additional Secretary Food Department Ashfaq Khan, Director General (DG) Agriculture Research Department Dr. Abdul Rauf, Director Food Yasar Hasan, Director Technical Dr. Abdul Sattar Shah and other relevant officials attended the meeting. The meeting was given a detailed briefing regarding wheat production and its storage in the province. The meeting was told that Pakistan is among the top ten countries in wheat production worldwide. —APP

LCCI delegation visits Gujranwala Business centre

LAHORE: A delegation from the Lahore Chamber of Commerce and Industry (LCCI), led by its President Kashif Anwar, visited the Gujranwala Business Centre (GBC), here on Friday. LCCI Executive Committee Members Fareeha Younas, Raja Hassan Akhtar and Usman Nawaz were also part of delegation. The GBC, which stands as Pakistan's largest public sector organisation, represents a consortium of 50 prominent companies from Gujranwala. Over the years, the GBC has emerged as a vital platform for businesses to showcase their products, both to enhance their export potential and to capture a larger share of the local market. The centre plays a critical role in facilitating business transactions and fostering economic growth in the region. The LCCI President Kashif Anwar expressed his admiration for the efforts undertaken by GBC to promote local businesses. He informed the participants that LCCI has 40,000 active members. He praised the GBC as a leading initiative in the country. Additionally, LCCI has signed MoUs with hospitals, educational institutions and others

to facilitate its members and is working diligently to establish positive and fruitful linkages between industry and academia. He stressed the importance of regional collaboration in achieving broader economic objectives and reiterated LCCI's commitment to supporting such initiatives. He said that the synergy between LCCI and GBC would be crucial in unlocking new business opportunities and enhancing the economic landscape of the region. The president also pointed out that the LCCI is keen on leveraging its resources and network to assist GBC in expanding its international footprint. Kashif Anwar assured that LCCI would continue to advocate for policies that facilitate trade and investment, not only in Lahore but across all key industrial hubs, including Gujranwala.

During the visit, Chairman GBC Ahmad Ikram Rauf provided a comprehensive overview of the center's operations, highlighting its strategic initiatives aimed at promoting Gujranwala's industrial progress on both national and international fronts. He noted that GBC has become a focal point for international business ac-

tivity, having successfully hosted more than 25 international delegations in last six months. These visits have not only strengthened existing business relationships but have also opened up new markets for local companies, enhancing their export capabilities. One of the key highlights of the visit was the discussion on GBC's export initiatives. Chairman GBC shared that the center's ambitious export plan has already begun yielding positive results, with products now being exported to three countries: Sri Lanka, South Sudan and Uganda. This expansion into international markets underscores GBC's commitment to drive economic growth and positioning Gujranwala as a key player in the global marketplace. He also elaborated on GBC's future plans, stating that the center is actively exploring additional markets in Africa, Southeast Asia and the Middle East. The ongoing success of GBC's export initiatives is a testament to the quality and competitiveness of products manufactured in Gujranwala, and the center is poised to continue its upward trajectory in the coming years.



ISLAMABAD: Independence day celebrated at Islamabad Model school (I-V) G-9/2. —DNA

Malaysia seeks high-tech industrial coop with Pak

Syafik Firdaus Hasbullah - noted that Malaysian exports to Pakistan had mainly focused on the agricultural sector, textiles, and chemical products, with less emphasis on high-tech industry cooperation

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Speaking at the Institute of Regional Studies (IRS), Syafik Firdaus Hasbullah, Deputy Head of Mission for Malaysia, called for increased cooperation between Pakistan and Malaysia in defense and security, science and technology, renewable energy, and climate change besides education, culture, and people to people contact. He noted that Malaysian exports to Pakistan had mainly focused on the

agricultural sector, textiles, and chemical products, with less emphasis on high-tech industry cooperation. While identifying the core areas of cooperation between the two countries, he stressed the need for improving the quality of products to meet the competitive demands. Hasbullah added that the Malaysian government was prepared to assist Pakistan in improving the quality of its goods, including providing training and guidance to Pakistani businessmen through the Malaysian Technologi-

cal Cooperation Program (MTCP). He specifically mentioned that since the establishment of MTCP in 1980, more than 700 people from Pakistan have benefited from MTCP courses which include Islamic tourism, anti-corruption, counterterrorism, palm oil industry, Islamic finance, technical training, and the halal industry, he added. During his presentation, he highlighted the progress in the Pakistan-Malaysia bilateral relationship since its inception in 1957, emphasizing cooperation in

trade, investment, tourism, education, health, and science and technology. Hasbullah also expressed the view that the current bilateral trade volume of around 1.78 billion dollars does not reflect the strong bond between the two countries and its people, and therefore, both countries need to work on high tech industrial cooperation between the two countries, he added. "Being a sectoral dialogue partner of the ASEAN Regional Forum, Pakistan has significant op-

portunities to collaborate with Malaysia, and other members of the organization," he emphasized. He noted that following the Free Trade Agreement, Malaysian palm oil exports to Pakistan surged, alongside imports from Pakistan of agricultural products, textiles, apparel, footwear, fresh or frozen seafood, chemicals, and other manufactured goods., he said. The event drew a large gathering, including foreign diplomats, government officials, academics, journalists, and students.



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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

Hotels & Restaurants



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



Turkish Airlines.....8494949



Emergency

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



Enquiry

Edhi Ambulance.....115
PIA Flight Info.....114
PIA Cargo.....9280979
Railway Inquiry.....117
Railway Exchange 9270831-5
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



ISLAMABAD: Additional Secretary Africa Hamid Asghar Khan posing for a pictures with family and friends after getting award from His Majesty the Moroccan King. Ambassador of Morocco to Pakistan Mohamed Karmoune conferred award on him. —DNA

Pakistan, Russia relations on a positive trajectory

Calling it a stepping stone in bilateral ties, she mentioned the shipment of Russian crude oil to Pakistan and said that Pakistan was also outlining a process to open barter trade with neighboring countries of Russia, Iran, and Afghanistan

ISLAMABAD: The bilateral relations between Pakistan and the Russian Federation are forging ahead on an upward trajectory, with both nations actively exploring multifaceted cooperation opportunities in sectors such as trade, energy, and diplomacy," said Sehar Kamran, Member of National Assembly, on Friday. "Whether in trade, energy, or diplomatic engagements, the relationship between Pakistan and Russia is strengthening across all dimensions. Both countries possess vast untapped potential for collaboration. Russia is a major energy exporter, and Pakistan can benefit from its oil

and gas resources. Similarly, Pakistan can provide regional connectivity and trade corridors to Russia," she said, talking to APP. Sehar Kamran, who has represented Pakistan at numerous international forums in Russia, including BRICS, SCO Women Congress, IPU Assembly, and others in recent years, noted that the past two decades have seen a significant enhancement in Pak-Russian diplomatic ties, driven by consistent high-level interactions. She referred to a congratulatory letter from the Russian Ambassador in Islamabad, Albert Khorev, on Independence Day, which read: "The

Russian Federation attaches great importance to its relations with Pakistan, and I am confident that their steadfast and consistent development serves the best interests of both our peoples. I appreciate your important and constructive role in our bilateral engagements." "It underscores our strong friendship... It was truly heartening to see the colors of the Pakistani flag illuminated in Moscow. This reflects the deepening bilateral ties and the strong bond of friendship between our two nations," she said in her reciprocal letter to the envoy. On her X timeline, Sehar Kamran also

responded to a congratulatory video message by the Russian ambassador on Pakistan's 78th Independence Day, in which she reaffirmed her commitment to continuous efforts for stronger bilateral relations, emphasizing the potential for deeper collaboration in various fields. Ambassador Albert Khorev said in his message, "Russia and Pakistan have already been friends throughout the years, and I am sure that we will see our already robust and fruitful relations reach new heights and help both our countries thrive. Pakistan is home to incredibly talented, hardworking, and open-hearted

people, and I'm confident that they are the nation's greatest asset." The PPP parliamentarian, also the recipient of the Russian State Award in recognition of her efforts to promote bilateral relations, mentioned last year's visit of former Foreign Minister Bilawal Bhutto Zardari to Russia and high-level interactions, which instilled new impetus into bilateral ties. Calling it a stepping stone in bilateral ties, she mentioned the shipment of Russian crude oil to Pakistan and said that Pakistan was also outlining a process to open barter trade with neighboring countries of Russia, Iran, and Afghanistan.

Even after 77 years, independence goals remain unmet

DNA

ISLAMABAD: The Chairman of the FPCCI Advisory Board and National Business Group Pakistan, President of Pakistan Businessmen and Intellectuals Forum, and All Karachi Industrial Alliance, as well as former provincial minister Mian Zahid Hussain, on Friday, said that seventy-seven years have passed since the establishment of Pakistan. Still, the fundamental goals of independence have yet to be achieved. He said the nation has yet to find its destination and is wandering in darkness for apparent reasons. Mian Zahid Hussain said that the East India Company first en-

slaved the Muslims of this region, then they became slaves of Britain; later, after the establishment of Pakistan, incompetent politicians and dictators ruled them. Now we are slaves of IPPs and failed government corporations at the local level and IMF at the international level, he added. Speaking at a function on Independence Day, the veteran business leader said that eliminating IPPs and failed government institutions is impossible without saying goodbye to the IMF. Mian Zahid Hussain said that the standard justice system has not been implemented in the country so far, and the fair distribution of wealth has not been ensured. Even after 77 years of independ-

ence, the economy suffers from wrong policies, and the people's condition is deteriorating rapidly. The failed government institutions are sucking 1200 billion rupees annually while 2100 billion rupees are being paid to IPPs in the name of capacity payment. Terrorism continues, and soldiers are sacrificing their lives for the protection of the motherland. He said that the number of unemployed youth is in the tens of millions, while the literacy rate is shameful and frustrated youth are running away from the country. Those who stay here are raising their voices to get employment within the country. The people's condition can be estimated from the fact

that 74% of the population cannot pay their electricity bills. Electricity bills have become the cause of economic and political crises in the country, while the people are looking to the rulers with hope. Mian Zahid Hussain welcomed Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif's announcement that electricity prices will be reduced in the next few days. He said that this announcement is a ray of hope in the darkness. He said that the reduction in petroleum prices would also reduce inflation and added that since the beginning of the process of accountability in the army, the people's confidence had also increased in this institution.

PDM Chief advises residents to exercise caution

With the urban flooding alert in place, all resources are being mobilized to ensure a swift and effective response to any emergencies that may arise, he added

ISLAMABAD: Chief Meteorologist, Pakistan Meteorological Department Sardar Sarfaraz on Friday forecasted an intense monsoon spell across the region until August 19. He said the concerned authorities strongly advised people living around rivers to exercise extreme caution and remain vigilant to mitigate the impending calamity. Talking to a private news channel, he reminded residents to stay vigilant and take necessary precautions to ensure their safety, adding that people living near nullahs and rivers asked to follow evacuation orders

and prioritize their safety above all. The situation is grave, but with precautions the impact of the disaster can be mitigated, he assured. Chief Meteorologist Sardar Sarfaraz said that monsoon winds are expected to enter lower Sindh from August 16. He said Karachi is likely to experience moderate rain with thundershowers between August 17 and 19. "Heavy rain may occur in some areas," he noted. In anticipation of further monsoon activity, the National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA) has issued an urban flooding alert for parts of Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa

until August 18, he added. The alert of heavy rainfall, flash flooding, and urban flooding in low-lying areas, posed a significant threat to life and property, he said. Residents in affected areas are advised to exercise extreme caution, avoid traveling to flood-prone areas, and stay tuned for updates, he stressed. The NDMA has also directed local authorities to take necessary precautions, including evacuating high-risk areas, setting up emergency shelters, and ensuring the availability of emergency supplies, he mentioned. With the monsoon spell expected to intensify, res-

idents are urged to take necessary precautions to ensure their safety and the safety of their loved ones, he mentioned. He said emergency control rooms are fully operational, and rescue teams are prepared to respond to any disaster situations. The staff in the emergency control rooms and Rescue 1122 disaster response teams should also be kept on high alert, he said. With the urban flooding alert in place, all resources are being mobilized to ensure a swift and effective response to any emergencies that may arise, he added.

CTP finalize traffic arrangements for Pak-BD cricket test

RAWALPINDI: Rawalpindi Traffic Police have issued a comprehensive traffic plan for practice sessions and the first cricket test to be played between Pakistan and Bangladesh at Pindi Cricket Stadium. According to a CTP spokesman, the traffic plan would be followed from August 18 to 25 to facilitate traffic plying with Rawalpindi city and between twin cities. He said that the traffic plan was approved by Chief Traffic Officer Beenish Fatima. A total of 367 officers and wardens would perform duties to regulate traffic on city roads, he said and informed that eight DSPs, circles incharges, 40 inspectors, sector incharges and 318 traffic wardens would be on duty. According to the plan, special car parking facilities at five different locations from the shuttle service would be available to take spectators to Pindi Stadium. During arrival and departure of the teams for the match and practice session, the Murree Road from Stadium Road to Faizabad would remain closed for traffic, he added. The traffic would use 6th Road and Saidpur Road to reach Islamabad. Similarly, traffic coming from 9th Avenue would use route of Faizabad, IJ P road, Pandora Chungi, Katarian Chungi Carriage Factory and Pirwadhai to enter Rawalpindi. Moreover, the Stadium Road would remain closed for all kinds of traffic from August 18 to 25, he informed.—APP

Agha Khan Foundation praises PM

ISLAMABAD: Agha Khan Foundation Director, Sultan Ali Alana on Friday praised Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif's business-friendly policies for boosting local businesses and attracting foreign investment. During a meeting, Sultan Ali Alana praised Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif for his efforts in securing economic stability in the country, according to a press release from the Prime Minister's Office. The prime minister commended the Agha Khan Foundation for its contributions to public welfare in Pakistan and its support and consultancy services in the construction of the Jinnah Medical Complex.—APP

ANF recovers 38 kg drugs; arrests eight accused

RAWALPINDI: Anti-Narcotics Force (ANF) while conducting eight operations across the country managed to recover 38 kg drugs and arrested eight accused, said an ANF Headquarters spokesman here on Friday. He informed that 2.5 kg ice was recovered from two passengers going to Doha at Peshawar Airport. 990 grams heroin was recovered from a parcel sent to UK from a cargo office at Lahore Airport. 65 heroin-filled capsules were recovered from a passenger going to Malaysia at Lahore Airport. 680 grams heroin was recovered from the possession of Saudi Arabia bound passenger at Islamabad Airport.—APP

F.No. 02(23)BFC/Gen/BOI/2024

PRIME MINISTER'S OFFICE

BOARD OF INVESTMENT

EMERGENCY TENDER NOTICE

INVITATION TO BID

- ▶ Board of Investment (BOI) hereby invites sealed bids from reputed IT firms registered with Income Tax and Sales Tax Departments which are on Active Taxpayers List of the Federal Board of Revenue for "Supply, of IT & Electrical Equipment, its installation and commissioning of Equipment for establishment of Business Facilitation Center" with appropriate warranty period from the date of entering in procurement contract followed by SLA of one year in line with the PPRA rules/laws.
- ▶ The detail Tender Document can be obtained from this office during office hours on any working day or Tender Notice can be downloaded from the websites of BOI i.e. www.invest.gov.pk and PPRA www.ppra.org.pk. Tender bids should reach the undersigned latest by 22-08-2024 before 1400hrs which would be opened on the same day at 1430 hrs.

Terms and conditions are as under:

- ▶ Income tax and other government taxes will be deducted at source as per rules.
- ▶ GST and Vendor number should be clearly written on the tender documents. The bids without GST and Vendor number will not be entertained.
- ▶ Earnest Money @ 2% of the quoted bid in the form of bank draft or pay order in favor of DDO /Assistant Director (Accounts), BOI, Islamabad must be attached with the bid. Cheques will not be accepted in any case. The bids without call deposit will be rejected at the spot.
- ▶ Quoted rates should be valid up to June 30th, 2025.
- ▶ The firms who quote the lowest rates will have no right to take back the call deposit or to reduce the same or to withdraw from the tender. Rates should be quoted in Pak Rupees. Price should not be linked with the dollar or any other currency.
- ▶ Bids will be opened by the Technical Evaluation Committee in the presence of the bidders or representatives of the firms who may like to attend at the given time and place.
- ▶ Bids submitted or received after the closing time shall be rejected.
- ▶ Single stage two envelope procedure shall be applied for open competitive bidding.
- ▶ Bids will be evaluated in the light of Public Procurement Rules, 2004 and the instructions issued by PPRA from time to time.
- ▶ BOI reserves the right to accept or reject any or all bids as per PPRA laws.

Sajjad Hussain, Director General

Board of Investment (BOI)

6th Floor, Kohsar Complex, Pak Secretariat, Islamabad.

Tel: 051-9203287 PID (I) NO.1181/24

Briefs

ICCI Tourism Summit in Skardu wins accolades

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry (ICCI) is playing a vital role in promoting Pakistan's tourism potential and the successful organization of the 2nd Tourism Summit in Skardu is a testament to its dedication and hard work. The summit provided a platform for stakeholders to come together, share ideas, and explore opportunities to develop Pakistan's tourism industry. The connections made and discussions held during the summit will lead to tangible outcomes, such as increased investment, infrastructure development, and policy reforms. By highlighting the natural beauty and cultural richness of Pakistan, the ICCI under the leadership of its President Ahsan Zafar Bakhtawari is helping to showcase the country's soft image and attract tourists from around the world. These efforts will not only boost the economy but also promote cross-cultural understanding and people-to-people connections. These were the views expressed by the Ambassadors and diplomats of friendly countries who attended the 2nd ICCI International Tourism Summit Skardu from 13-15. —APP

Three die after chairlift rope breaks

ISLAMABAD: At least three people fell into the river after the rope of the chairlift broke in Upper Kohistan on early Friday. According to the police, the tragic incident took place in Barseen where the tourists were enjoying a ride on the chairlift when the rope broke and the three fell into the river. The police said that as soon as the incident was reported, the operation was started to search for the ill-fated tourists who fell into the river. The bodies of the victims were retrieved by rescue teams, the drowned bodies were identified as Naseeb, Sher, and Fida, police informed.—APP

Options deposits Rs6 million penalty

ISLAMABAD: Following the Supreme Court of Pakistan dismissed its appeal, M/s Options International deposited the PKR 6 million penalties under Section 40(8) of the Competition Act 2010 into national treasury. This Supreme Court decision marks the end of a comprehensive legal battle that began with a formal complaint from STARBUCKS leading to an investigation and enforcement action by the Competition Commission of Pakistan (CCP). In June 2024, the Competition Appellate Tribunal (CAT) dismissed Options International's appeal, increasing the primary penalty from Rs5 million to PKR 6 million and prohibiting the company from illegally using the Starbucks brand name and logo. M/s Options International has filed an appeal to the Supreme Court of Pakistan against the CAT's order, which the court dismissed.—APP

Senator promises swift solution to internet crisis

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) Senator Afnan Ullah Khan Friday expressed serious concerns over the slow internet speed and assured that the government is taking timely measures to restore stable internet connectivity, promising a swift resolution to the issue within a few days. Talking to a private news channel, he stated that the relevant authorities are working diligently to address the technical issues and ensure that internet services are restored to their optimal levels. With the government's proactive approach, Senator Khan expressed confidence that the issue will be resolved within a few days.—APP

Afghanistan embassy celebrates victory Day

Deputy ambassadors and diplomats of Russia, China, Iraq, Iran, Uzbekistan, Qatar, Indonesia, Malaysia, Sudan, Yemen, Kyrgyzstan and many other political representatives participated in these ceremonies



DNA

ISLAMABAD: The Embassy of Afghanistan in Islamabad celebrated the Victory Day during a special event at the Islamabad Serena

Hotel. The Charge d Affaires of the Afghan embassy Ahmed Shakaib addressed the gathering.

In the event, the Federal Minister of Pakistan, Mr. Riaz Hussain Pirzada, Pakistan's Special Repre-

sentative for Afghanistan, Asif Durrani, Maulana Fazlur Rahman, Chairman of Jamiat Ulema Islam Party, Member of Parliament, Mahmood Khan Achakzai, Jamaat-e-Islami Amir Siraj-ul-Haq,

Safran Former Minister and member of the People's Party, Senator Talha Mahmood, Chairman of the Wahdat Muslimeen Party, Allama Raja Abbas Jafari, representatives of the Tehreek-e-Insaf Par-

ty, many other Pakistani officials and members of political parties, famous journalists, academic staff of universities, seminars and academic centers and religious Scholars participated. Also, deputy am-

bassadors and diplomats of Russia, China, Iraq, Iran, Uzbekistan, Qatar, Indonesia, Malaysia, Sudan, Yemen, Kyrgyzstan and many other political representatives participated in these ceremonies.

WASA cracks down on water waste

ISLAMABAD: In a groundbreaking move to harness the power of monsoon rains and combat water scarcity, WASA Lahore's Managing Director Ghufuran Ahmad unveiled an innovative rainwater harvesting project, marking a significant stride towards sustainable water management. In an exclusive interview with PTV News, Ahmad outlined the initiative's citizen-centric approach, emphasizing community engagement and warning of stern penalties for non-compliance, as Punjab gears up to embrace a water-conscious future. With this project, WASA Lahore is taking proactive steps to mitigate urban flooding, replenish groundwater, and ensure a sustainable water supply, he mentioned. Ghufuran Ahmad said that under the directives of the Chief Minister of Punjab, the province is proactively managing monsoon-related risks. He assured that, so far, no alarming situations have been reported

across the province, indicating effective preparedness and response measures. He mentioned that desilting of all drains and sewage lines is being carried out on a priority basis, while under-bridges and roadside drains are being thoroughly cleaned. Additionally, he emphasized the need for special safety precautions at development project sites during the monsoon season to ensure public safety and prevent accidents. He reported that despite Punjab receiving the highest rainfall, no significant damage to properties or loss of human lives was reported indicating effective disaster management and preparedness measures. He also appealed to mosques to conserve and recycle wazu (ablution) water, as part of the water-saving efforts. MD WASA announced that the sanitary system is also being comprehensively upgraded, including the rehabilitation and expansion of existing sewage infrastructure.—APP

IRSA releases 489,500 cusecs water

ISLAMABAD: Indus River System Authority (IRSA) on Friday released 489,500 cusecs water from various rim stations with inflow of 555,900 cusecs. According to the data released by IRSA, water level in River Indus at Tarbela Dam was 1549.00 feet and was 151.00 feet higher than its dead level of 1,398 feet. Water inflow and outflow in the dam was recorded as 313,000 cusecs and 283,500 cusecs respectively. The water level in River Jhelum at Mangla Dam was 1212.30 feet, which was 164.30 feet higher than its dead level of 1,050 feet.—APP

Death anniversary of Ustad Nusrat Fatah Ali Khan

ISLAMABAD: The 27th death anniversary of the renowned musician and legendary Qawwal Ustad Nusrat Fatah Ali Khan was observed on Friday. All the electronic and print media across the country paid homage to his singing career. Born in Faisalabad on October 13, 1948, Nusrat Fateh Ali Khan was the pioneer of fusion music in Pakistan. He was the first musician to blend Eastern and Western musical styles, introducing Qawwali to a global audience. His name is included in the Guinness Book of World Records for most albums by a Qawwali artist, with a total of 125 albums. His famous work includes "Wohi Khuda hai", "Dam mast qalandar mast", "Allah hu Allah hu" and "Mera Brigham Pakistan". Nusrat Fateh Ali Khan was decorated with many awards including the Pride of Performance award conferred by the Government of Pakistan for his outstanding contributions to the field of music. He was also honored with the prestigious UNESCO Music Prize and Legends award at the UK Asian Music Awards in 2005.—APP

Govt must act quickly to resolve IPPs issue

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Former President of the Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry (ICCI), Dr. Shahid Rasheed Butt, said on Friday that an immediate resolution to the IPPs issue is necessary to avoid nationwide turmoil. He said the issue should be prioritized because the public's outrage over inflated bills is steadily growing, and businesses face difficulties. Speaking to the business community, Shahid Rasheed Butt said that things could change suddenly and that authorities may or may not be able to control them; therefore, the matter should be resolved. He asserted that forcing ordinary people to pay electricity rates that exceeded their income would lead to severe problems. The business leader emphasized that capacity payments penalize the public and disrupt business activities. Shahid Rasheed Butt asserted that the government could lower taxes or tariffs and benefit the public because it controls more than half of the IPPs established in the country. He warned that the difficulties of public risk unrest as most people and businesspeople believe the government could resolve this issue. He emphasized that the government should cut its soaring non-developmental spending to ease the anger of those who are furious about their electricity bills.—APP

'Foreign tourists are safe in flood-hit Astore'

ISLAMABAD: The National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA) on Friday informed Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif that the foreign tourists in the flash flood-hit Astore area were safe and away from the affected area. The prime minister had directed the NDMA to ensure the safety of the tourists and protect the locals from any troublesome situation. In a report submitted to him, the NDMA informed the prime minister that the authority took immediate action on his direction to protect the foreign tourists in the flood-affected area. It was told that two Italian and an Argentinian tourist were on safe and at a distant location from the affected area. Besides, the work was underway to ensure the swift restoration of Feena bridge. As per report, the NDMA and other relevant departments were examining the situation and were on alert to deal with any emergency.—APP

Role of Mercantilism in the Foreign Policy of Pakistan

SYED LAIQUE HAIDER

ECONOMIC and political factors have had a profound influence on Pakistan's foreign policy. On the international scene, Mercantilism has always been a decisive and major part of development and trade. According to this economic theory, Pakistan is able to leverage outer world markets through exporting surplus; it stores wealth; and, finally, it is always the protection of the domestic market. All these factors play a huge role in shaping the trade agreements, diplomatic relations, and international economic policies of Pakistan. From the beginning of its existence, Pakistan has always been a promoter of Mercantilism. In this way, the initial economic plans of the country drive to the fast growth of economy and expansion of the export sector, which are necessary to set this vision in or out of the country. During the last seven decades, Pakistan's foreign policy has attached the export-led growth path as its primary priority to increase output flow and promote trade diversification. The government has put in place protectionist measures including tariffs, quotas, and subsidies giving priority to domestic industries. Not only defensive, but these treaties also join hands with the countries from the Middle East like China, Turkey, and the Gulf states who come together in search of resources, markets, and investment. Regional economic cooperation has been realized via a number of trade and economic organizations

like SAARC and ECO.

has been the engine of economic growth in Pakistan, materialising the goal of industrialization and job creation along with the exports. Trading has now been more diversified thereby, to a very big degree, decreasing the dependence in US and EU markets. Hence, Mercantilism has allowed Pakistan the space to engage in responsible, mutually beneficial military partnerships, as well as to pursue an independent foreign policy. However, difficulties like trade deficits, balance of payments issues and over-reliance on some few export commodities have crept in. Pakistan's strength lies in global trade, and it lies in regional economic cooperation and in supporting it also by competitive skills, regional value chains, and regional production networks. The country with the broadest network of good and service exports but not only (low-value products) is more likely to be successful. Moreover, productivity is a major driver of innovation and job creation. The sharing of good practices and experiences among them can accelerate the growth process in the different countries of the region. Along with India, Pakistan is on the same development path with more or less the same levels of development in various sectors. A great deal of infrastructure has been built in the last 70 years, but not much of it can be shared with other sectors rather than have a discussion on whether Mercantilism is responsible for Pakistan's economic growth and its ability to possess strategic autonomy, it would be preferable to

keep away from such traps. For Pakistan to achieve its goals, it is very important to change its current policy and embrace an inclusive trading regime where the benefits cascading from the growth process are distributed pro-poor. Pakistan should diversify its goods and adhere to the Code of Conduct proposed by the United Nations Framework Agreement on the Regional Economic Cooperation in South Asia (India, 1990). Furthermore, multilateral trade pacts such as the South Asian Free Trade Area (SAFTA), the Central Asia Free Trade Area (CAFTA), the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC), the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) or the Kellogg-Briand Pact will definitely be successful. Rigorous policies are the hallmarks of Pakistan's foreign policy which enables a sound economy and a strategic position. However, one can't ignore the difficulties and drawbacks that are a result of these approaches. Through proper reformation in the world, the country could constantly achieve sustainable economic growth and strategic autonomy, as pledged. The main focus of the Mercantilist concept in foreign policy is the use of protectionism. The global economy is a kaleidoscope of both successful and broken countries. Prognosticating the winners from the losers of globalization depends on how the future dynamics of the market economy will evolve. The Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) had even outlived the Biden administration and was still in force.

Pakistan requires to incorporate environmental protection and social responsibility into its foreign policy so as to guarantee lasting prosperity. The assertion that educating, skill mastering, and research is the key to successful sustainable economic growth and comparative is irrefutable. These obstacles have to be addressed through a cleverly devised and flexible approach that includes the three crucial aspects of sustainable development, social responsibility, and human capital development. The important issues of sustainable development and environmental protection are being educated in Pakistan's foreign policy to reach the point of balance between economic growth and environmental stability. It will also promote a positive global image, attract green finance, and support sustainable developments. A compelling factor of the Mercantilist approach in Pakistan is that the country will focus on its intellectual resources via education and innovation thus sustaining its economy environmentally, increasing efficiency and productivity. All in all, Mercantilism will be the main propeller towards the foreign policy of Pakistan in the future, the engine which will drive the economic growth, the wheel which will ensure strategic autonomy, and the glue which will bind the sustainable development. While, the economy is walking through the storm, the Mercantilism will be the central steering wheel for the dynamic economic growth, the flourishing, and the protection of the national interests.

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Blinding US to its threats at home

NATIONAL security is a serious matter. No one in Hong Kong needs to be reminded of that, given the brouhaha that complicated our decades-long efforts to pass Article 23, and the controversial passage of our national security law. But there is contagion afoot, in the United States in particular, that has bled the concept of national security into virtually everything. As Tufts University's Daniel Drezner wrote recently in Foreign Affairs: "From climate change to ransomware to personal protective equipment to critical minerals to artificial intelligence (AI), everything is national security now." The list of such threats in the 2022 US national security strategy report included energy, nuclear power, terrorism (domestic, international and cyber), drugs, AI, international criminal organisations, critical minerals, food security (from cultivation to consumption), supply chains, the Mexican border and immigration. You can add Chinese port cranes, which might illicitly monitor port activity, biotechnology and all electric vehicles, which US President Joe Biden has described as "smartphones on wheels". For me, the tipping point was when Grindr, the China-owned gay dating app, was accused of being a national security threat. US officials said it had the potential to compromise or blackmail gays in government or the US military. I am not saying this would not have been technically possible, but common sense tells me that if Chinese spooks wanted to track down gays in the military, they have easier ways, like signing up to any one of dozens of other non-Chinese-owned dating sites. I am similarly incredulous that TikTok could pose a national security threat, arising from nameless Chinese organisations mining data or seeding disinformation and misinformation, by providing biased content or censoring content not flattering to China. As William Reinsch at the Centre for Strategic and International Studies, a Washington think tank, wrote: "It is not clear, at least to me, for what nefarious purposes the Chinese could use the data, which is essentially the same as Facebook, LinkedIn and other apps gather." Americans are exposed to media bias all the time, he pointed out: "All involve the purveyance of lies over truth. Whether they are Chinese lies, Russian lies or American lies is not critical." The angst should primarily be over the lies, not that they might come from China. "We've seen this before in the Red Scare of the 1920s, the McCarthy (Joe, not Kevin) era in the 1950s, and on a lesser scale Japan-bashing in the 1980s," he added. "Those did not dignify us as a society, and in practical terms they accomplished very little." The proliferation of threats to national security is making the concept increasingly meaningless. "If everything is defined as national security, nothing is a national security priority," said Drezner. It becomes harder to focus on what matters most and, he added, "makes it easy for a multitude of potential threats to obscure the most imminent danger"—suggesting it contributed to the US government being blindsided by events including September 11, the Taliban's return to power in Afghanistan, the Covid-19 pandemic and the October 7 Hamas attack on Israel.



AI and future of jobs

IMAGINE logging into your work computer to find that half of your daily tasks have been seamlessly automated overnight. Your email responses are drafted, your data is analyzed, and your reports are summarized—all by artificial intelligence. Science fiction? Far from it. A study published in Science in June, titled "GPTs are GPTs: Labor market impact potential of LLMs," suggests this scenario is not just possible—it is on the horizon for nearly half of us. Researchers from OpenAI, the Centre for the Governance of AI, and the Wharton School examined our AI-driven near future, and the view is startling. Their findings? About 1.8 percent of jobs could see over half their tasks affected by AI using current large language models. These include OpenAI, ChatGPT, Anthropic's Claude and Google's Gemini, using simple chatbot interfaces. But here is the kicker: When accounting for likely near-term software developments that complement LLM capabilities, this jumps to a staggering 46 percent. These developments include specialized software that can interface between LLMs and domain-specific tools, AI-powered coding assistants to generate and debug complex software, and advanced data analysis tools that interpret and visualize large datasets based on natural language prompts. This is not about some far-off future or hypothetical breakthroughs. We are discussing integrating existing AI technologies with software developments already in progress or on the immediate horizon. The scale of potential disruption is not just possible—it is probable. Surprisingly, it is not always the jobs you might expect that are most exposed. The study found that occupations requiring extensive preparation—think lawyers, pharmacists and database administrators—are more exposed to AI than those with lower entry barriers. This challenges the common perception that AI primarily threatens people in low-skilled jobs. However, "exposure" does not necessarily mean job losses. The study emphasizes that AI's impact is more about transformation than replacement. When we say a job is "exposed" to AI, we mean that many tasks within that job may be augmented or automated. This often leads to shifts in job roles rather than outright elimination. The critical question is how quickly these changes will occur and how prepared we are to adapt. For workers, the imperative is clear: Adaptability is crucial. Regardless of your field, developing skills that complement AI rather than compete with it will be essential. This might involve focusing on uniquely human capabilities like creativity, emotional intelligence, and complex problem-solving. Businesses need to start planning for an AI-augmented workforce now, not in some distant future. This does not just mean adopting new technologies but rethinking entire business processes and job roles to leverage the strengths of humans and AI. Policymakers face an urgent challenge. The study calls for immediate public investment in tracking AI adoption and its labor market impacts. We need robust policies to ensure the benefits of AI are broadly distributed and to support workers through what could be rapid transitions. This might include reforms in education, upskilling and reskilling programs, and social safety nets. The "50/50" nature of AI's potential impact on jobs underscores a crucial point: While significant disruption appears likely, the specific outcomes are not predetermined.

Army Chief public relation offensive and...

Qamar Bashir



To combat these threats, General Munir has been instrumental in strengthening key legal frameworks including Defamation Ordinance, 2002, Official Secrets Act, 1923, Pakistan Army Act, 1952 and Prevention of Electronic Crimes Act (PECA), 2016. Administratively, he has ensured regulating, slowing, and, when necessary, banned the social media platforms to curb the spread of harmful content

THE Army Chief, General Syed Asim Munir, has identified three major issues—terrorism, digital terrorism, and the slow pace of accountability for the perpetrators of the May 9 riots—as highly detrimental to national security, safety, and the progress and development of Pakistan. To address these issues, he has been working aggressively on two fronts: kinetic and administrative actions on one hand, and an aggressive and effective public relations and public diplomacy offensive on the other. This combination is designed to bring these issues within tolerable ranges by leveraging both direct action and strategic communication to ensure national stability and unity. General Syed Asim Munir, Pakistan's Army Chief, has prioritized obliterating terrorism and its manifestations both within the country and in the region. In his speeches, he identified the Tehrik-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP) as the primary source of terrorism in Pakistan, noting that the TTP, with over 6,000 hardcore fighters, frequently launches attacks from bases in Afghanistan. Between 2007 and 2018, TTP's terrorism resulted in over 20,000 deaths. From 2018 to 2024, there were over 3,000 civilian casualties and more than 1,500 security personnel killed in terrorist attacks and counter-terrorism operations. Economically, terrorism has cost Pakistan billions of dollars, displaced millions, and necessitated extensive military operations that strained resources.

To counter the TTP threat, General Munir has adopted a multifaceted approach involving intelligence-based operations (IBOs) inside Afghanistan, tightening border security, repatriating illegal Afghan residents, and curbing smuggling. He refers to the TTP as "Khariji," likening them to the historical Khawarij, a group known for their extreme beliefs and violent rebellion in the early Islamic period. This label underscores the TTP's radical ideology and violent opposition to the state, emphasizing the need for a strong, unified response. General Munir has intensified counter-terrorism operations within Pakistan, particularly in KP and Balochistan provinces, which are prime TTP targets. During his latest speech, he expressed his resolve to obliterate terrorism and eliminate terrorists decisively and thoroughly. On the Public Relations and Public Diplomacy front, he has engaged in diplomatic and public relations efforts. He

addressed the Ulema and Mashaikh Conference to rally religious leaders against extremism. In his meeting with retired army officers, and officers at the Pakistan Military Academy in Kakul, Abbottabad, he called upon the Afghan government to help Pakistan to completely and decisively eliminate the menace of terrorism from the region. Additionally, he has met with foreign diplomats to seek international cooperation against the TTP. During such interactions, he reminded Afghanistan of Pakistan's sacrifices in hosting millions of Afghan refugees for over three decades and demanded that the Afghan interim government return the favor and help eliminate terrorists and their hideouts within Afghanistan. The second most critical priority outlined by General Syed Asim Munir, Pakistan's Army Chief, is curbing digital terrorism to restore the country's progress and development. He has been particularly mindful of rampant anti-state, anti-government, and anti-army propaganda on social media, which, according to him, aims to create dependency, erode faith in the government, and sow discord between the military and the public.

To combat these threats, General Munir has been instrumental in strengthening key legal frameworks including Defamation Ordinance, 2002, Official Secrets Act, 1923, Pakistan Army Act, 1952 and Prevention of Electronic Crimes Act (PECA), 2016. Administratively, he has ensured regulating, slowing, and, when necessary, banned the social media platforms to curb the spread of harmful content. A firewall has been implemented to eliminate virulent anti-state propaganda, ensuring a more secure and controlled digital space. On the Public Relations side General Syed Asim Munir, has launched an aggressive public relations and diplomacy campaign emphasizing the urgent need to curb digital terrorism. He highlighted in various speeches and public interactions that extremist groups are exploiting digital platforms to create dependency, undermine faith in the government's ability to deliver, and foster despair and hopelessness among the populace. He pointed out that digital terrorism aims to sow hatred and drive a wedge between the army and the people of Pakistan. He also highlighted the role of foreign powers in orchestrating digital terrorism, using online platforms to undermine national security and stability. His comprehensive approach combines legal

action, administrative measures, and strategic communication to effectively counter these digital threats and uphold national unity and security.

The Army Chief, General Syed Asim Munir, is particularly mindful of the slow pace of Pakistan's justice system. During his various speeches, he has highlighted this issue, emphasizing the need for timely justice. In a significant move, three senior officers, including a Lieutenant-General, were dismissed, and disciplinary proceedings were completed against three major generals and seven brigadiers for their failure to protect military installations during the May 9 protests. Recently the former ISI Chief and his three accomplices were arrested. He assured that all individuals involved in the May 9 violence would be punished according to the law, reinforcing that there will be no compromise or deal with those responsible for this dark chapter in Pakistan's history. On the Public Relations front, he stressed the need to bring planners, abettors, facilitators, and sympathizers of the May 9, 2023 riots to justice. In various speeches, including those at the Lahore Garrison and the Ulema and Mashaikh Conference, he emphasized the urgent need for the justice system to effectively deliver justice to those responsible for the violent attacks on military installations and public property. The Army Chief has been vocal about the deliberate indoctrination and organized violence that characterized the May 9 events, describing them as a dark chapter in Pakistan's history. General Munir highlighted that the May 9 perpetrators aimed to create chaos, undermine national unity, and discredit state institutions, including the armed forces. He stressed that such acts provided an opportunity for Pakistan's enemies to mock the nation and its state apparatus. The combined and complementary strategy of intelligently and strategically integrating kinetic and administrative measures with aggressive public relations and public diplomacy tools has shown visible signs of effectiveness. This multifaceted approach is weakening the adversarial elements, marking a promising and positive development for the country.

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

The plight of patriotic Pakistani Bengalis in Pakistan

Haider Ali

Pakistan's history, from its creation to its struggle for independence, is incomplete without mentioning Pakistani Bengalis. Whether it's the 1757 battle with Nawab Siraj-ud-Daulah, the 1857 War of Independence, the 1905 partition of Bengal, the 1906 founding of the All India Muslim League by Nawab Sir Salimullah, or the 1940 Lahore Resolution by Moulvi A.K. Fazlul Huq, Bengali leaders have played a crucial role. Even after the formation of Pakistan, several Prime Ministers were of Bengali origin, including the second Prime Minister Sir Khawaja Nazimuddin, the third Prime Minister Mohammad Ali Bogra, the fifth Prime Minister Huseyn Shaheed Suhrawardy, and the eighth Prime Minister Nurul Amin, whose graves are within...

FOR several days, the situation in Bangladesh has been a topic of discussion in Pakistan. The student movement toppled Sheikh Hasina's government, resulting in over 400 deaths, hundreds of injuries, and millions of rupees property damage. The unrest stemmed from the special quotas and privileges given to those who participated in the 1971 War of Independence, which negatively impacted other students. The government responded with heavy force, labeling the protesters as "Razakars," a term used in Bangladesh to describe traitors and Pakistan-supported armed groups. Both Pakistan and Bangladesh remain entangled in the legacy of the 1971 war. The political leadership, bureaucracy, and establishments of both nations have exacerbated this growing animosity. The Razakars, Al-Badr, Al-Shams, and East Pakistan Civil Armed Forces were comprised of pro-Pakistan and non-Bengali individuals. Currently, according to the Bangladeshi government and the International Red Cross, 147,637 people, cleared by the Pakistani government, are stranded in Bangladesh and awaiting repatriation to Pakistan. However, the Pakistani government is not seriously considering their return. Despite orders from the Bangladesh Supreme Court, these individuals refuse to accept Bangladeshi citizenship, hoping Pakistan will repatriate them—a hope that seems unlikely. In 2024, a resolution for their return was presented in the Sindh Assembly, but it was strongly opposed by the Pakistan People's Party. The Pakistani government does not want to implement the tripartite agreements of August 28, 1978, and April 9, 1974.

According to Google, Wikipedia, and other sources, there are about 2 million Pakistani Bengalis living in Pakistan, with 116 settlements in Karachi alone. Whether in industries, factories, domestic work, fisheries, or other businesses, Pakistani Bengalis play an active role. Pakistan's economy would be incomplete without them. Their presence in Pakistan is the greatest testament to their love for the country. Their ancestors' graves are in Pakistan, and they represent the third generation. In fisheries, Abdul Qadir Bacho Diwan has played a significant role in strengthening Pakistan's economy and has even received an award from the Prime Minister of Pakistan. Pakistan's history, from its creation to its struggle for independence, is incomplete without mentioning Pakistani Bengalis. Whether it's the 1757 battle with Nawab Siraj-ud-Daulah, the 1857 War of Independence, the 1905 partition of Bengal, the 1906 founding of the All India Muslim League by Nawab Sir Salimullah, or the 1940 Lahore Resolution by Moulvi A.K. Fazlul Huq, Bengali leaders have played a crucial role. Even after the formation of Pakistan, several Prime Ministers were of Bengali origin, including the second Prime Minister Sir Khawaja Nazimuddin, the third Prime Minister Mohammad Ali Bogra, the fifth Prime Minister Huseyn Shaheed Suhrawardy, and the eighth Prime Minister Nurul Amin, whose graves are with-

in the precincts of Mazar-e-Quaid. Before 1971, many key positions and ministries were held by Pakistani Bengalis. In modern times, one prominent figure is Kaiser Bengali, who has significantly contributed to Pakistan's economy. Pakistani Bengalis have made immense sacrifices for the defense of Pakistan. In the 1965 Indo-Pak war, the East Bengal Regiment defended the BRB canal in Lahore with their blood, and they crushed India's Poono Horse Tank Regiment in the Chawinda sector by strapping bombs to their bodies, earning the title of "Tiger Regiment."

In 1971, when the mandate of the Pakistani Bengalis was not accepted, and during the brutal Operation Searchlight, which involved enforced disappearances, rape of women, and mass killings of students and teachers, the love of Pakistani Bengalis for Pakistan remained unshaken. "Planting love with bullets, Washing the land's chest with blood, You think the path is being cleared, I am certain the destination is being lost." Despite all the state oppression, these patriotic individuals migrated from East to West Pakistan, unable to accept the existence of Bangladesh.

"When the earth's body became barren, This land was bequeathed to us." In 1978, dictator General Zia-ul-Haq issued a presidential ordinance requiring every Pakistani Bengali to apply for citizenship through the federal government. The doors of the Ministry of Interior in Islamabad have always been closed to the common poor, and thus, this black law was imposed on Pakistani Bengalis.

Zulfikar Ali Bhutto enacted the National Registration Act and issued manual identity cards. In 2000, General Pervez Musharraf founded NADRA, making the situation for Pakistani Bengalis worse. NADRA made it nearly impossible for Bengalis in Pakistan, whether in Chakwal, Narawal, Karachi, or Kashmir, to obtain identity cards. As a result, Pakistani Bengalis were treated similarly to how India treats Kashmiris. A National Aliens Registration Authority (NARA) was established, staffed by racist and prejudiced officials. This authority, with the help of the police, raided factories, fisheries, and Bengali settlements, detaining Bengalis and issuing them NARA cards despite their Pakistani documents, labeling them as foreigners.

"Deprivation, groaning oppression, tyranny, helplessness—These are the five rewards migration has given us." During the government of the Pakistan Muslim League (N), Chaudhry Nisar further complicated these issues by establishing District Level Committees (DLC) consisting of ISI, IB, police, special branch, and NADRA members. Due to a lack of interest from committee members, hundreds of cases are pending, and the DLC has revoked the citizenship of thousands of individuals, now ordering them to reapply for Pakistani citizenship. The third generation of Pakistani Bengalis, born and raised in Pakistan, is still not recognized by the government. "Born, raised, and matured, They were shocked to hear that this land is not ours." Many individuals have been detained due to their NARA

cards. In 2017, this racist authority was merged with NADRA, ending its oppressive practices. However, the NARA records made many Pakistani Bengalis stateless. Obtaining a passport after an identity card remains extremely difficult for Pakistani Bengalis. Despite having ID cards, the passport office, solely due to their Bengali ethnicity, sends their citizenship verification to the Special Branch, which remains pending for years. Pakistani Bengali children and youth are deprived of education due to the lack of B-forms. Many talented athletes and gymnasts cannot represent Pakistan due to the absence of identity documents. Union councils refuse to register the birth of Bengali children. Their job and employment opportunities are limited, and without identity cards, they are employed at minimum wages. Currently, around 160 Pakistani Bengali fishermen entered Indian territorial waters while fishing and are now imprisoned in Indian jails. Human rights activist Advocate Ali Changezi Sindhu is striving for their release in the Lahore High Court. However, due to the blocking of their Pakistani identity cards, the government is not confirming their citizenship, and the Special Branch refuses to work on their documents without bribes. The families of these fishermen are now facing starvation. The author of this article wrote to the Chairman of the Senate regarding these severe human rights violations, leading to the Senate taking suo moto notice in 2017.

However, NADRA Chairman Usman Mubeen dismissed the issue by suggesting amendments to the Pakistan Citizenship Act of 1951. The government made no amendments to the laws, but NADRA made its SOPs even more racist and discriminatory. In 2019, during Imran Khan's government, the Senate Chairman took another suo moto notice, but no progress was made. Organizations representing Pakistani Bengalis, such as PMA Diwan and Muslim League Sher Bengal, have made significant efforts, but the government and opposition showed little interest. In 2023, the PDM government formed a subcommittee for Bengali and Bihari affairs under the Ministry of Interior, but due to a prejudiced NADRA operations director, the committee's recommendations were not implemented. In Karachi, the Nazrul Islam Academy, a cultural heritage site of Pakistani Bengalis, is on the verge of extinction due to government neglect. Currently, there is a very small number of Pakistani Bengali chairmen and councilors in Karachi. According to the latest NADRA report of 2024, NADRA has blocked the identity cards of 192,230 Pakistani Bengalis, halted the issuance of 21,651 cards, referred 5,071 cases to the DLC due to NARA cards, and kept hundreds of cases out of the authorities' sight.

The author is a Pakistani Bengali who has long been a victim of state oppression. As a journalist, columnist, social worker, and human rights activist, they have been working since 2017 to resolve the issues faced by Pakistani Bengalis. Views expressed in the article are writer's own.

Briefs

Nawaz blames Imran...

FROM PAGE 01
"Who brought the IMF back to Pakistan is the same person [Imran Khan] who is currently speaking from jail." The PML-N top leader said that he put an end to the load-shedding before the termination of his five-year term. "We surmounted the power crisis in three years," he said, adding that the power bill of a common man was Rs1,600 in 2017 which has now surged to Rs18,000. He added that the bank's interest rate was around 5% during his tenure however, it went up to 22% under the PTT's rule. The N League supremo, patting the shoulder of Maryam Nawaz, thanked her that she slashed flour prices when she assumed power in the province. The Punjab government has prepared a relief package by cutting the power tariff by Rs14 per unit for people consuming up to 500 units of electricity, Nawaz said. "The relief will be given in the bills of August and September."

Cabinet committee proposes...

FROM PAGE 01
The Ministry of Kashmir Affairs and Gilgit-Baltistan, the Ministry of State and Frontier Regions, Ministry of Information Technology and Telecommunication, the Ministry of Industry and Production, and the Ministry of National Health Services. The committee proposed merging the Ministry of Kashmir and Gilgit-Baltistan with the Ministry of State and Frontier Regions (SAFRON). The proposal involves closing 28 institutions across these five ministries, transferring the Privatization Ministry and some other ministries to federal units, and merging 12 institutions within these ministries. Speaking on the occasion, the prime minister directed that these proposed reforms should be approved by the Federal Cabinet and that a comprehensive plan for their implementation be presented. He emphasized that curtailing government expenditure was his top priority.

Pakistan urges Kabul to avoid...

FROM PAGE 01
The Kashmiri people. She urged the international community to take immediate and decisive action to hold India accountable for its egregious human rights violations in IIOJK and take steps to protect the rights and freedoms of Kashmiri people. The spokesperson strongly rejected allegations about Pakistan's role in the ouster of Bangladesh former prime minister Sheikh Hasina. She said Pakistan believes that the people of Bangladesh have the capacity to settle their affairs and determine their future. About the recent Afghan firing on Torkham border, Ms Baloch regretted the incident saying Pakistani forces responded appropriately in self-defense. She urged the Afghan authorities to exercise restraint and avoid unprovoked acts on Pakistan-Afghanistan border.

Pakistan 'completes'...

FROM PAGE 01
capability, the sources said adding that the firewall has been installed in view of national security concerns. The telco sources also confirmed that mobile signals and internet services slowed down due to the installation of a new firewall aimed at blocking unwanted content. They claimed that all social media services would return to normal speed in two to three days after the conclusion of the firewall's trial period. The first trial period was said to be carried out in July which resulted in the slowing down of social media platforms. The federal government had allocated more than Rs30 billion in the development budget for the acquisition and installation of this filtering system.

Aryna Sabalenka, Zverev start Cincinnati with convincing wins

Sabalenka, who missed Wimbledon and the Paris Olympics with a shoulder injury, has now won six of seven opening matches at the American Midwest venue in the ATP and WTA tuneup for the US Open

SPORTS DESK

CINCINNATI : Aryna Sabalenka polished her opening-match record at the Cincinnati Masters on an overcast Thursday by defeating Italy's Elisabetta Cocciaretto 6-3, 6-4 while men's second seed Alexander Zverev also advanced.

Third seed Sabalenka, who missed Wimbledon and the Paris Olympics with a shoulder injury, has now won six of seven opening matches at the American Midwest venue in the ATP and WTA tune-up for the US Open.

Sabalenka advanced as rain threatened play after three days of summer sunshine, finishing on a third match point for her 15th Cincinnati victory.

"I'm happy with my level in the tough moments," the winner said. "Elisabetta is a difficult opponent. She fought to the last point."

Cocciaretto was treated for a left hip problem midway through the second set and was seen by the trainer for a thigh tape adjustment at changeovers.

Zverev dodged a few raindrops late in the second set before wrapping up an ATP-leading 50th match win this season.

The German, who won the title here in 2021 after losing his first six career matches at the venue,



advanced to the third round 6-3, 6-2 over Karen Khachanov.

The victory in 76 minutes was a repeat of the Tokyo Olympic final won by Zverev. Khachanov committed 26 unforced errors in defeat against a long-time rival whom he now trails 5-2.

Zverev, who confessed to feeling

poorly last week in Montreal despite making the quarter-finals, said his form is now much improved. "I felt well on court. If you feel good in training it's easier to bring it to the match," he said. "I just hope my form can get better. I'm happy I got the win today."

Zverev had no explanation for his

2023 run of success, saying: "It's just been a good year, but I've also had some tough losses."

Spain's Pablo Carreno Busta lined up as the German's next opponent after defeating Australian Max Purcell 6-3, 6-3.

Fifth seed Hubert Hurkacz, who made a surprise comeback from

July knee surgery by reaching last week's Montreal quarter-finals, won his opening match, defeating Yoshihito Nishioka 3-6, 7-6 (7/4), 6-1. The Pole worked for more than two hours, dropping 16 aces against his Japanese opponent and saving 17 of 19 break points.

He will bid for the quarter-finals as he faces Italian Flavio Cobolli, who advanced when compatriot Luca Darderi retired trailing 7-6 (7/4), 3-1 with apparent illness.

SVITOLINA V SABALENKA

In the WTA draw, Elena Rybakina was thwarted in her first match since Wimbledon, going down 3-6, 7-6 (7/3), 6-4 as Canadian Leylah Fernandez saved two match points in an upset of the fourth seed. Rybakina, who missed the Paris Games with acute bronchitis, suffered with 17 double faults - including on match points. Even 20 aces could not save her afternoon. Elina Svitolina, a semi-finalist here nine years ago, saw off Spaniard Jessica Bouzas Maneiro 6-4, 6-1 to next take on Sabalenka. Sabalenka has won her last two matches, including a Roland Garros quarter-final in 2023 and a three-setter in Rome three months ago. Newly minted Armenian Elina Avanesyan, who only recently changed tennis nationalities, stunned eighth seed Jelena Ostapenko with a 2-6, 6-2, 6-2 fightback.

Ponting names batter to break Tendulkar's Test record

Root is currently ranked seventh in the list of players with the most runs in red-ball cricket with 12,027 runs from 143 matches. Ponting backed the English great as he is still young



SYDNEY: Former Australia captain Ricky Ponting named England's Joe Root to break Sachin Tendulkar's record for most runs and appearances in Test cricket. Tendulkar scored 15,921 runs in 200 Test matches before calling time on his legendary career and

Ponting believes that Root, 33, can break the Little Master's record. Root is currently ranked seventh in the list of players with the most runs in red-ball cricket with 12,027 runs from 143 matches. Ponting backed the English great as he is still young.

"He (Root) could potentially do that," Ponting said in the ICC review. "He is 33 years of age... (more than) 3000 runs behind. "It depends on how many Test matches they play, but if they're playing 10 to 14 Test matches a year, and if you're scoring 800 to 1,000 runs a year, then that sort of says he's only three or four years off getting there. So that'll take him to 37 (years of age)," said Ponting, who is second behind Sachin Tendulkar with 13,378 runs from 168 Tests. Ponting added that if Root has the hunger to break Tendulkar's record and with age on his side, he could do it. "If his hunger's still there, then there's every chance that he could do it. He is someone that, in the last couple of years, has gotten better and better," Ponting said. "There's always talk around batters reaching their prime in their early 30s and he's certainly done that. It's been his conversion rates being the big thing."

"Four or five years ago, he was making a lot of 50s and struggling to go on and make hundreds and he's gone the other way recently. "Almost every time he gets to 50 now, he goes on and makes a big hundred. So that's been the real turnaround for him."

PAK VS BAN: Rain likely to play spoilsport in Rawalpindi Test

RAWALPINDI: The first Test between Pakistan and Bangladesh, scheduled on August 21 in Rawalpindi, is at a high risk of being disrupted due to weather conditions. As per the Pakistan Meteorological Department, Rawalpindi is expected to receive rain on all five days of the first Test from August 21 to 25. Additionally, the weather condition has hindered the preparations at the venue, with ground staff yet to begin work on the pitch. According to sources, the decision regarding which pitch will be used for the match is yet to be finalised. As the teams are geared up for the clash, both sides are hoping for improved weather conditions to ensure an uninterrupted Test series.

Meanwhile, two ICC World Test Championship fixtures will be played between Pakistan and Bangladesh in Rawalpindi and Karachi from August 21 to 25 and August 30 to September 3, respectively. Earlier on Tuesday, Bangladesh men's cricket team arrived in Lahore from Dhaka to play a two-match Test series against Pakistan. The team was taken to a private hotel under strict security arrangements from the Allama Iqbal International Airport in Lahore.

Squads: Pakistan: Shan Masood (captain), Saud Shakeel, Aamir Jamal (subject to fitness), Abdullah Shafique, Abrar Ahmed, Babar Azam, Kamran Ghulam, Khurram Shahzad, Mir Hamza, Mohammad Ali, Muhammad Hurraira, Mohammad Rizwan, Naseem Shah, Saim Ayub, Salman Ali Agha, Sarfaraz Ahmed, Shaheen Shah Afridi.

Bangladesh: Najmul Hossain Shanto (captain), Mahmudullah, Zakir Hasan, Shadman Islam, Mominul Haque, Mushfiqur Rahim, Shakib Al Hasan, Litton Das, Mehidy Hasan Miraz, Taijul Islam, Nazmul Hossain, Nurul Hasan, Ebadot Hossain, Hasan Mahmud, Taskin Ahmed and Khaled Ahmed.

Series schedule:
1st Test: August 21 - 25 @ Pindi Cricket Stadium
2nd Test: August 30 - 4 Sept. @ National Stadium

Arshad's victory boosted Pakistan's reputation: Faiqa

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan's Olympian sprinter Faiqa Riaz said Arshad Nadeem's gold medal victory has boosted the country's reputation among athletes at the Paris Olympics. Speaking to the media reporters on Friday, Faiqa expressed her sadness over criticism the Pakistani athletes faced in the 2024 Olympics. "If someone else was better, they should have gone. We were good in Pakistan, which is why the IOC approved our names," the 24-year-old athlete lamented. "Going to the Olympics is an honour, learning there is an honour, but it was painful to see the ridicule directed at the athletes." Considering herself fortunate enough to compete in the Olympics, Faiqa said she rose from Punjab Stadium to compete in the Paris Olympic Stadium, which is a huge achievement. "The Paris Olympics were only the second international event of my career. I first participated in the 2018 South Asian Junior Athletics, but due to COVID, there were no events afterward. I suffered from injuries for two years, and when I fully recovered, I didn't get to compete in any events before the Olympics. I went straight into the Paris Olympics," Faiqa told media reporters. On August 2, Faiqa did not qualify for the next round of 100-metre as she finished sixth in the preliminary round of Heat 2, resulting in the elimination from the mega event. - DNA

Basit Ali declares ICC as Babar Azam's 'enemy'

"Babar's last ODI was at the last year's World Cup. We saw the likes of Rachin Ravindra, Quinton de Kock, Travis Head, and Virat Kohli at the World Cup. They scored three to four hundreds in the tournament," Ali added

LAHORE : Former cricketer Basit Ali expressed serious concerns on the latest ICC ODI rankings, questioning on what basis Pakistan's white-ball skipper Babar Azam and India's Shubman Gill are the top-ranked batters. Azam, 29, is the top-ranked ODI batter with 824 rating points and he is followed by Rohit Sharma, who has 765 rating points. The third and fourth on the rankings list are Gill and Virat Kohli with 763 and 746 rating points respectively. Basit disagreed with the rankings, asking who gives these rankings. He further stated that Azam will be happy with his number one and the ICC does not want him to perform. "When I saw the ICC ranking (ODI bat-

ters), Babar Azam was at the top, Rohit Sharma was number two, Shubman Gill was number three, and then there was Virat Kohli at number four. I did not find it necessary to read the remaining names because I couldn't see Travis Head and Rachin Ravindra," Basit said. "I think the ICC wants that Babar doesn't perform. He would be happy with being the number one-ranked batter in ODIs. Who gives these rankings? On what basis are Babar Azam and Shubman Gill there." Basit then talked about the latest ODI tournament which was the 2023 World Cup and said that players like Travis Head, Rachin Ravindra were outstanding performers but they are not placed higher in the rankings.

"Babar's last ODI was at the last year's World Cup. We saw the likes of Rachin Ravindra, Quinton de Kock, Travis Head, and Virat Kohli at the World Cup. They scored three to four hundreds in the tournament," Ali added.

"For Pakistan, Mohammad Rizwan and Fakhar Zaman scored a century each. Babar Azam did not score a single hundred. His last hundred came against Nepal in the Asia Cup. What kind of ranking do they give?"

"The people at ICC are Babar Azam's enemies. If you asked Babar who is the current number one, he would also pick Travis Head or Virat Kohli. Even he wouldn't say that he is the number one," he concluded. - DNA

Pak Shaheens continue winning run in Top End T20 series

Mohammad Haris' side recorded its third successive win in the series

SYDNEY: Pakistan Shaheens continued their winning run in the ongoing Top End T20 series after beating Bangladesh 'A' by three wickets on Friday in Darwin. The Shaheens recorded their third consecutive win in the series by beating Bangladesh A as they had earlier defeated Tasmania and Melbourne Renegades by five and four wickets, respectively. Chasing the target of 142 runs, the Shaheens were given a brilliant start by their opening of skipper Mohammad Haris and Sahibzada Farhan as the two combined for a 47-run partnership on just 34 balls. Haris returned to the pavilion after playing an 18-ball 32 runs knock which included two fours and three sixes, Farhan soon followed the wicketkeeper after contributing 17 runs on 21 balls. Abdul Faseeh was the third Pakistani batter to get dismissed



as the Shaheens were 65 for three wickets loss in 8.3 overs. However, Omair bin Yousuf and Usman Khan's 46-run stand for the fourth wicket was crucial as it led the team near to the target. The Shaheens lost wickets but Muhammad Irfan Khan and Jahanad Khan guided the team home with eight balls to spare. Earlier, Bangladesh A opted to bowl first after winning the toss and were restricted to 141 for five as the Shaheens' Faisal Akram dominated their batting lineup. Mahfuzur Rahman Rabby and Shamim Hossain formed an unbeaten sixth-wicket 83-run partnership after losing wickets in the early overs. The former scored 41 off 32 while the latter top-scored for his team with 44 runs on 38 balls. Pakistan Shaheens will play the ACT Comets in their next match on Saturday at the DXC Arena. - Agencies

PTI urges CJP to recuse...

FROM PAGE 01
He said Chief Justice of Pakistan's remarks in ToshkaKhana Reference are against law and the principles of Supreme Court of Pakistan. He said PTI was committed to uphold rule of law. MNA Latif Khosa on the occasion said that Chief Justice of Pakistan's wife used to write against Imran Khan. He said CJP snatched election symbol from PTI and committed injustices with PTI. Khosa said instead of providing level playing field, PTI was deprived of it.

KP minister resigns...

FROM PAGE 01
Adiala Jail in Rawalpindi, warned members of his party's government in KP that they would be held accountable for corruption and governance issues in their departments. In line with the directions of Khan, the PTI constituted a three-member committee to monitor corruption and governance in KP, where the party formed government after the February 2024 general elections. It should be noted that Khan decided to constitute the committee after provincial minister Shakeel, during a meeting with him in jail, complained about embezzlement in various departments of KP.

I am also among the...

FROM PAGE 01
The deputy prime minister also announced a ban on foreign tours for parliamentary delegations, citing a recent incident where five individuals 'went missing' during a trip. Dar stressed that such actions bring shame to the country. "No relatives or friends of parliamentarians will receive visas through government facilitation," he announced. This week, the military announced that Hameed had been taken into custody by the army on charges of land grabbing and forcibly taking valuables from the owner of a private housing society, as stated by the Inter-Services Public Relations (ISPR).

JI chief welcomes...

FROM PAGE 01
After Punjab, the federal and provincial governments must extend this relief across the entire country," He demanded that the relief should not be temporary but permanent, urging other provincial governments and the federal authorities to make similar progress in reducing electricity prices. His remarks followed an announcement by PML-N President and former prime minister Nawaz Sharif during a press conference with Punjab Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz. They announced a relief of Rs14 per unit for consumers using up to 500 units of electricity in Punjab.

COAS hosts ceremony...

FROM PAGE 01
SAF and Asian Games and participants in Paris Olympics 2024. Notable legends included Jahangir Khan, Is-lahuddin, Shahbaz Senior, Sohail Abbas, Muhammad Asif and AisamulHaq. The event was also attended by Arshad Nadeem's close relatives, associates and coaches. The COAS appreciated Arshad Nadeem's remarkable achievement of winning Pakistan's first-ever gold medal in a 'singles' event and setting a new Olympic record, attributing it to his commitment, perseverance, and passion for excellence.

3 Mpox cases...

FROM PAGE 01
Mpox previously and it was not immediately clear which variant was detected in the patients. Meanwhile, the Border Health Services (BHS) and provincial authorities have also been put on high alert in the wake of the case's detection in the country's north-western province. Authorities have issued instructions to establish isolation wards in designated hospitals, stocking antiviral medications and ensuring the availability of personal protective equipment (PPE) for healthcare workers and all healthcare facilities and points of entry.

Briefs

UNICEF
warns of dire
situation for
children in
Sudan

GENEVA : Children in Sudan are facing an increasingly perilous situation as the ongoing civil war and climate crisis converge, potentially leading to tens of thousands of child deaths in the coming months, warns a UNICEF spokesman. James Elder, speaking to Anadolu from Sudan where he is recently assigned, described the situation as "critical," highlighting that Sudan is experiencing the "largest child displacement in the world." "We talk about 10,000 girls and boys displaced every day," Elder said, emphasizing that the war has been impacting five million children for nearly 500 days. The displaced children often end up in camps that lack clean drinking water, medical supplies, and adequate sanitation. Severe food shortages, health risks Elder reported severe food shortages across the country, worsened by warring parties frequently blocking access to aid. "Children are under threat from many fronts," he stated. "I recently saw children killed while playing football because of attacks. But they are also under attack from disease, famine, and floods. It's a catastrophe." Climate change exacerbates crisis On the effects of climate change, Elder noted that "children in Sudan now experience twice as many heat waves as their grandparents did 50-60 years ago." He urged, "Children don't have the resilience to endure this level of consistent, exhausting heat."—APP

Japan deploys
AI to tackle
student
absenteeism

TOKYO : Japan is leveraging artificial intelligence (AI) to address student absenteeism and improve school attendance. The city of Toda in Saitama Prefecture, near Tokyo, has been utilizing AI since March to analyze student data and combat school refusal. This AI system, trialed over the past year, aims to assist teachers in identifying and supporting students who are struggling, according to Kyodo News. The AI evaluates various metrics, including attendance records, academic performance, health conditions, school nurse visits, and reports of bullying. Makiko Nakamura, a professor of education economics at Keio University, commented, "By using objective data, we hope to prevent students from rejecting school." During its trial phase at 18 primary and junior high schools, the AI system identified 1,193 students as being at high risk. Based on these findings, teachers prioritized assistance for 265 students, considering their behavior and other relevant factors, as reported by the Toda education board.—DNA

China
greenlights
new mRNA
vaccine
targeting
tumors

BEIJING : China's pharmaceutical regulatory authority has approved a new mRNA vaccine designed to target Epstein-Barr virus (EBV) positive tumors for Phase I clinical trials. Developed by WestGene Biopharma, based in Chengdu, Sichuan Province, the vaccine had earlier received approval from the US Food and Drug Administration in May, according to Chinese state-run Xinhua News. The vaccine has also successfully completed early trials for nasopharyngeal carcinoma and lymphoma, which are among the cancers linked to EBV, a Group-I carcinogen associated with over 10 types of cancer, including gastric cancer. WestGene Biopharma plans to conduct further clinical trials to explore the vaccine's potential in advancing tumor immunotherapy.—Agencies

Borrell proposes sanctions
on Israeli settler enablers

Josep Borrell called for the immediate cease of Israeli attacks against Palestinians in West Bank

NEWS DESK

BRUSSELS : The EU's top diplomat Josep Borrell said Friday he would propose sanctions against Israeli government "enablers" of Jewish settler violence, following a deadly attack on a village in the occupied West Bank. "Day after day, in an almost total impunity, Israeli settlers fuel violence in the occupied West Bank, contributing to endanger any chance of peace," Borrell posted on X. "The Israeli government must stop these unacceptable actions immediately," he wrote, vowing to "table a proposal for EU sanctions against violent settlers' enablers, including some Israeli government members". Any such sanctions would require unanimous approval from the EU's 27 member states, who are divided over the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. The White House has condemned as "unacceptable" Thursday's attack on Jit, near Nablus, in which the Palestinian Authority said one Palestinian was killed and another wounded. Israeli President Isaac Herzog called it a "pogrom". Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's office meanwhile said he "takes seriously the riots" and

Norway to support Palestine
amid Israeli hostility : FM

OSLO : Norway's foreign minister on Friday said his country would continue supporting the Palestinian people amid the Israeli hostility his country faces. In an interview with the Qatari news outlet Al Jazeera, Norwegian Foreign Minister Espen Barth Eide said: "The message we received from Israel was clearly directed at both the Palestinians and the world. Israel no longer supports the two-state solution." The official added: "Israel has canceled our diplomatic status and, despite this, we continue to support the Palestinian people." Norway and Israel have been in conflict for months due to Oslo's decision to recognize Palestine as a state. This move was met with strong opposition from Tel Aviv, leading Israel to take several retaliatory actions against Norway and the Palestinians. Recently, Israel revoked the accreditation of Norwegian diplomats working with the Palestinian Authority and reportedly withdrew and canceled some bank deposits in Norwegian accounts. "We were compelled to shut down our office temporarily; it has become impossible to operate in Ramallah under the current circumstances," added the foreign minister. Israel, flouting a UN Security Council resolution demanding an immediate cease-fire, has faced international condemnation amid its continued brutal offensive on Gaza since an attack last October by the Palestinian resistance group Hamas. Since then, an ongoing Israeli offensive against the Gaza Strip has killed over 40,000 Palestinians. Over 10 months into the Israeli war, vast tracts of Gaza lie in ruins amid a crippling blockade of food, clean water, and medicine. Israel stands accused of genocide at the International Court of Justice, which ordered it to immediately halt its military operation in the southern city of Rafah, where more than 1 million Palestinians had sought refuge from the war before it was invaded on May 6.—APP

pledged to catch and prosecute the perpetrators. Violence in the West Bank, a Palestinian territory occupied by Israel since 1967 and separated from the Gaza Strip by Israeli territory, has surged since the Gaza war started on October 7. Since then, hundreds of Palestinians have been killed in the West Bank by the Israeli army

or settlers, according to an AFP count based on official Palestinian data. Israeli settlement in the occupied West Bank - considered illegal under international law - has also hit new records. Netanyahu, head of the conservative Likud party, has governed Israel since December 2022 with the support of far-right formations advocating

more Israeli settlements in the West Bank or even outright annexation. Meanwhile, More than 100 illegal Israeli settlers attacked a Palestinian town in the occupied West Bank, killing one person and setting fire to a home and several vehicles, according to multiple sources. According to the witnesses, the settlers stormed the town

of Jit, situated along the main road between Nablus and Qalqilya. The attackers opened fire at residents, pelted stones at homes, and set fire to at least one house and several vehicles, they added. The witnesses also said that Israeli forces provided protection to the illegal settlers and prevented Palestinian civil defense vehicles from entering the town. Citing an Israeli security source, the Israeli army radio reported that more than 100 settlers stormed the town. The source said that the settlers set fire to four homes and six vehicles owned by Palestinians, while hurling stones and Molotov cocktails at residents and their property. "The incident ended without any arrests, while several Palestinians suffered from inhalation of tear gas" fired by Israeli soldiers, it added. Over the past few years, the Israeli military has conducted regular raids in the West Bank, which have escalated with the beginning of the war on Gaza on Oct. 7, 2023. At least 632 Palestinians have since been killed and nearly 5,400 others injured by Israeli army fire in the occupied territory, according to the Health Ministry.

Indonesia's Prabowo wins
parliamentary majority

FOREIGN DESK

JAKARTA: Indonesia's president-elect Prabowo Subianto has secured a parliamentary majority after the party that backed his rival in the February elections announced it was joining his big-tent coalition. The NasDem party, which accounts for about 10% of parliament, announced late on Thursday that it would support the incoming administration of Prabowo. The move will give the Prabowo government control over parliament, boosting its stake from 43% to 52%. The parliamentary majority is expected to smooth legislative processes, including approval of the 2025 budget, which outgoing President

Joko Widodo, widely known as Jokowi, will announce on Friday. Ex-commander Prabowo, and vice-president-elect Gibran Rakabuming Raka, who is Jokowi's eldest son, will be sworn into office on October 20. Nasdem chief Surya Paloh told reporters on Thursday that his decision to join Prabowo would foster a "calmer and more optimistic" atmosphere and ease the work of the incoming administration. "We agree to cooperate and collaborate to face challenges in the future," said Prabowo, after meeting Paloh, "Unity is the key to a nation's success." Prabowo, whose coalition includes five political parties, is also in talks with the country's largest Islamic party, which has

a 10% parliamentary share. NasDem previously backed Anies Baswedan, a former Jakarta governor and vocal government critic, who was defeated by Prabowo in this year's presidential election. The party's decision to join Prabowo has led it to withdraw support for Anies's bid for Jakarta governor this November. Jokowi's youngest son Kaesang has in recent weeks been touted as a possible candidate for the post of governor in Jakarta or Central Java. Anies, who polls show is the frontrunner in the Jakarta race, has been struggling to find enough parties to support him. Anies told media reporters, this week that "despite the pressure" he was op-

timistic he would ultimately secure the backing of parties with the required threshold of 20% of seats in the regional parliament. The developments follow the shock resignation at the weekend of Airlangga Hartarto as head of Golkar, Indonesia's second-largest political party, which is also in Prabowo's camp. It was expected that Airlangga, a Jokowi and Prabowo ally, would retain chairmanship of the party until its planned December congress. Instead, that congress will be held next week, when a new party chair will be elected. After a decade in office analysts say Jokowi is seeking control over Golkar to retain influence after he steps down.

Marcos signs law
expanding Shariah
jurisdiction in Philippines

MANILA: Philippine President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. has signed a law expanding Shariah jurisdiction and creating new Islamic courts in the Catholic-majority country. Shariah, or Islamic law, is partially implemented in the Philippines, applicable only to the Muslim community - about 10 percent of the 120 million of the country's predominantly Catholic population. Established under the 1977 Code of Muslim Personal Laws, the Islamic law courts are under the administrative supervision of the Supreme Court and until now had jurisdiction over the Bangsamoro Autonomous Region as well as other parts of the southern Mindanao island, which have significant Muslim populations. The new law creates three additional Shariah judicial districts - beyond the country's south - and an additional 12 courts. "The new law also increases the number of (Shariah) circuit courts from 51 to 63. The 12 new (Shariah) circuit courts will serve the newly created (Shariah) Judicial Districts," the Office of the President said in a statement on Thursday. The Shariah judicial system used to have five districts, all in Mindanao. The new ones expand the reach of Islamic law to the most populous Luzon island - including Metro Manila - and the islands of Mindoro, Marinduque, Romblon and Palawan island, where Muslims are in the minority. The president's decision was welcomed in the Bangsamoro Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao.—APP

Algeria
begins early
presidential
election
campaign

LONDON : The election campaign for Algeria's early presidential elections, scheduled for September 7, has officially begun. According to the Constitutional Council, three candidates are competing for the presidency. Incumbent President Abdelmadjid Tebboune is running as an independent candidate, while Yousef Aouchiche represents the Socialist Forces Front (FFS), and Cherif Boufflika stands for the Movement for Society and Peace (MSP). The campaign will focus on their respective platforms and visions for Algeria's future as they vie for the role of head of state. The presidential candidates have kicked off their campaigns by detailing their programs designed to "drive development and ensure security and stability in the country," as per local media outlets. Each candidate has unveiled their plans to guide Algeria over the next five years, setting the stage for a pivotal electoral battle. Current President and candidate Abdelmadjid Tebboune has pledged to continue his social support policies, improve the purchasing power of Algerians, and enhance economic development in various aspects. He has committed to reviewing local municipal and provincial laws, expanding the powers of elected officials in local elections to strengthen democracy, and revising administrative divisions.—Agencies

Uganda
garbage
landslide
death toll
rises to 34

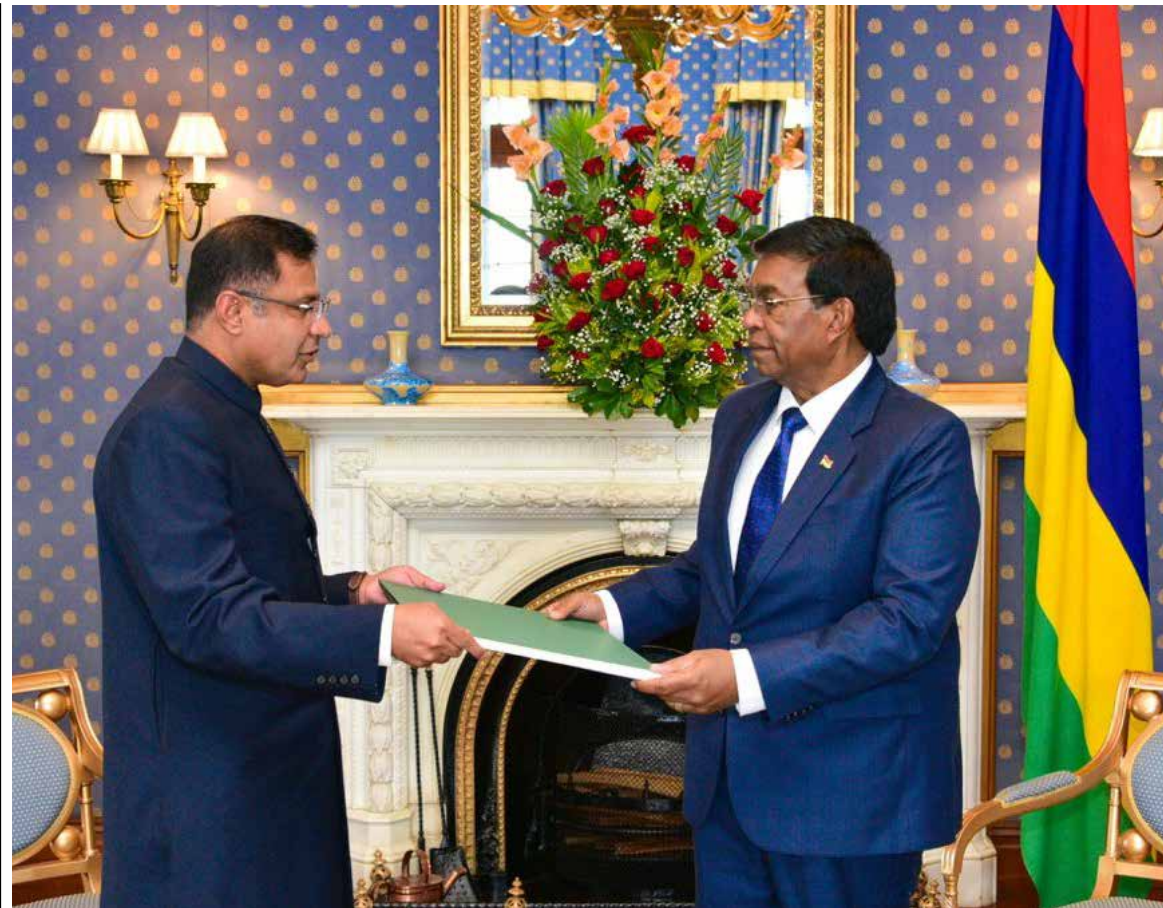
KAMPALA: Four more bodies have been recovered from the site of a massive garbage landslide in the Ugandan capital Kampala, bringing the death toll to 34, police said Friday. The collapse at the landfill in the northern district of Kiteezi at the weekend buried people, homes and livestock in mountains of fetid waste. An MP for the area has warned that the number of those missing could still rise. "With the recovery of four bodies on Thursday, the death toll has reached 34," Kampala Metropolitan police spokesman Patrick Onyango said. The recovery of victims was continuing, he said, despite part of the landfill site flooding, preventing the use of excavators. He added that one of the bodies discovered on Thursday was a man who had been missing since 2022 called Abdul Nasir. With the discovery of the bodies, the total number of those missing has decreased to 35, from an earlier official toll of 39.—APP

Europe must
prepare for
more mpox
cases

STOCKHOLM: The European Union health agency on Friday urged its member states to get ready for more cases of a deadly strain of mpox, a day after Sweden announced the first case outside Africa. In a risk assessment, the European Center for Disease Prevention and Control (ECDC) said the overall risk for the general population in the EU and European Economic Area (EEA) - 30 countries together - remained "low." However, it "recommends that public health authorities in the EU/EEA maintain high levels of preparedness planning and awareness-raising activities to enable rapid detection and response." The Stockholm-based health body said more imported cases to Europe were "highly likely." "Due to the close links between Europe and Africa, we must be prepared for more imported clade 1 cases," ECDC director Pamela Rendi-Wagner said in a statement. The World Health Organization (WHO) this week declared the rapid spread of the new, more dangerous mpox strain, dubbed Clade 1b, a public health emergency of international concern - the highest alarm the UN agency can sound. The virus has swept through the Democratic Republic of Congo, killing 548 people so far this year, the country's government said.—

WHO backs African
efforts to combat
mpox spread

UNITED NATIONS : The World Health Organization (WHO) said Friday is supporting African countries to scale up response to curb mpox, which is now an international global health emergency. The outbreak that affected the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) and spread to neighbouring countries continues to grow. On Thursday afternoon, WHO member Sweden became the first country outside Africa to record a case of the mpox Clade 1 variant that is believed to be driving the latest outbreak. And on Friday, according to media reports, Pakistan detected 2 mpox cases in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province. "We are hard at work on the frontlines of the response, collaborating closely with governments and communities to strengthen mpox control measures and are ramping up efforts to curb the widening trend of the virus through coordinated action with partners and national authorities," said Dr. Matshidiso Moeti, WHO Regional Director for Africa. Mpox - formerly monkeypox - is a viral disease that can be transmitted through physical contact with an infected person, animal, or contaminated objects. It was first detected in humans in 1970, in the DRC, and is considered endemic to countries in Central and West Africa. Outbreaks are caused by different mpox viruses called clades, and the clade 1 strain has been circulating in the DRC for years, WHO said. The emergence of a new offshoot - clade 1b - and its rapid spread, including to nearby countries, is among the main reasons why WHO declared on Wednesday that mpox constitutes a public health emergency of international concern (PHEIC). So far this year, more than 2,100 laboratory-confirmed cases of the disease, and 13 deaths, have been reported in the DRC and 11 other countries: Burundi, Cameroon, Central African Republic, Congo, Cote d'Ivoire, Kenya, Liberia, Nigeria, Rwanda, South Africa and Uganda.—DNA



Port Louis : Syed Zahid Raza, High Commissioner of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan presented Letter of Credence to the Honourable President of the Republic of Mauritius, Prithvirajsing ROOPUN, at State House, Reduit, today.—DNA

Paetongtarn Shinawatra elected youngest Thai PM

Paetongtarn is the fourth member of the Shinawatra family to assume the role of prime minister amid the country's political instability

WEB DESK

BANGKOK : Thailand's parliament elected political neophyte Paetongtarn Shinawatra as its youngest prime minister on Friday, only a day after she was thrust into the spotlight amid an unrelenting power struggle between the country's warring elites. The 37-year-old daughter of divisive political heavyweight Thaksin Shinawatra sailed through a house vote and now faces a baptism of fire, just two days after ally Srettha Thavasin was dismissed as premier by a judiciary central to Thailand's two decades of intermittent turmoil. At stake for Paetongtarn could be the legacy and political future of the billionaire Shinawatra family, whose once unstoppable populist juggernaut suffered its first election defeat in over two decades last year, and had to do a deal with

its bitter enemies in the military to form a government. She will become Thailand's second female prime minister and the third Shinawatra, opens new tab to take the top job after aunt Yingluck Shinawatra, and father Thaksin, the country's most influential and polarising politician. In her first media comments as prime minister-elect, Paetongtarn said she had been saddened and confused by Srettha's dismissal and decided it was time to step up. "I talked to Srettha, my family and people in my party and decided it was about time to do something for the country and the party," she told reporters. "I hope I can do my best to make the country go forward. That's what I'm trying to do. Today I'm honoured and I feel very happy." Paetongtarn won easily with 319 votes, or nearly two-thirds of the house. Her response after winning was posting on Instagram a



picture of her lunch - chicken rice - with the caption: "The first meal after listening to the vote." Roll of the dice Paetongtarn has never served in government and the decision to put her in play is a roll of the dice for Pheu Thai and its 75-year-old figurehead Thaksin. She will immediately face challenges on multiple fronts, with the economy floundering, competition from a rival party growing,

and Pheu Thai's popularity dwindling, having yet to deliver on its flagship cash handout programme worth 500 billion baht (\$14.25 billion). Thailand's benchmark index was up about 1.1% by 0900 GMT on Friday, having after lost nearly 9% this year. "The Shinawatras' gambit here is risky," said Natthaborn Buamahakul, Managing Partner at government affairs consultancy, Vero Advocacy. "It puts Thaksin's daughter in the crosshairs and a vulnerable position." The fall of Srettha after less than a year in office will be a stark reminder of the kind of hostility Paetongtarn could face, with Thailand trapped in a tumultuous cycle of coups and court rulings that have disbanded political parties and toppled multiple governments and prime ministers. The Shinawatras and their business allies have borne the brunt of the crisis, which pits parties with

mass appeal against a powerful nexus of conservatives, old money families and royalist generals with deep connections in key institutions. High stakes for Shinawatra Nine days ago, the same court that dismissed Srettha over a cabinet appointment also dissolved the anti-establishment Move Forward Party - the 2023 election winner - over a campaign to amend a law against insulting the crown, which it said risked undermining the constitutional monarchy. The hugely popular opposition, Pheu Thai's biggest challenger, has since regrouped under a new vehicle, People's Party. The upheaval in the past few days also indicates a breakdown in a fragile truce struck between Thaksin and his rivals in the establishment and military old guard, which had enabled the tycoon's dramatic return from 15 years of self-exile in 2023 and ally Srettha to become premier the same day.

Briefs

Imran moves IHC to stop proceedings

COURT REPORTER

ISLAMABAD: PTI founder Imran Khan filed an application in the Islamabad High Court requesting to stop the 190 million pound reference case. Counsels Salman Safdar and Khalid Yousof Chaudhry filed a separate petition on behalf of Imran Khan to stop the 190 million pound reference proceedings. Chairman NAB, DG NAB, and Prosecutor General have been made parties in the petition. Imran Khan requested to provide the records of the 343rd executive board meeting of NAB and said it was decided to close the case in the NAB executive board meeting of April 2020. Former PM Khan also challenged the August 12 order of the trial court in the Islamabad High Court. The investigating officer stated that the closure of the case was approved in the 343rd board meeting of NAB, as it was said in the petition. It is said in the petition that if the record of the executive board meeting of NAB is not presented, there will be a big loss in the defense of Imran Khan.

5 injured in Peshawar IED blast

SHAMIM SHAHID

PESHAWAR: Five people, including two policemen, were injured in a Friday morning blast in Peshawar, according to a police official. "A police van was on patrol when a remote-controlled IED (improvised explosive device) exploded," Warsak Superintendent of Police (SP) Arshad Khan told media. The incident occurred at around 9am, according to the police official. "Four to five kilograms of explosives were used in the blast," SP Arshad noted. "Six to seven suspects have also been detained for investigation," he added. Senior Superintendent of Police (SSP) Operations Kashif Zulfiqar told media that evidence has been collected from the crime scene. "There has been an increase in terrorist attacks on Warsak Road," SSP Zulfiqar said. "A few days ago, a grenade was thrown at the Mathura police station." SSP Zulfiqar said that police are working with the counter-terrorism department (CTD) in the area. "A joint operation will be conducted in the areas of Warsak Road." "The group involved in terrorist activities will soon be exposed," he added.

PTI MNA objects to female KE official's dress

MEHTAB PIRZADA

ISLAMABAD: PTI MNA Iqbal Afridi objected to the dress of a female KE official, saying that there should be a dress code for women in the meetings. In a controversial statement during the National Assembly's Standing Committee on Energy, Iqbal Afridi said that the KE official's dress was objectionable. He said "The national assembly is a place of decorum, and it is essential that all participants, irrespective of gender, adhere to a dress code that reflects the seriousness of the discussions taking place." The PTI MNA's remarks were met with criticism from committee members, including Senator Sherry Rehman, who said that the SOPs are for every member of the parliament. She said that women should be respected regardless of their attire. Rehman pointed out that the basic dress code applies to both men and women and that Afridi's comments were uncalled for. PML-N leader Tariq Fazal Chaudhry also expressed disappointment over Afridi's remarks, saying that the woman had worn appropriate clothing and that there was nothing objectionable about it. Chaudhry accused Afridi of seeking cheap publicity and advised him to correct his behavior.



ISLAMABAD: PM Shehbaz Sharif chairs a meeting regarding development of gemstone sector. – DNA

Korean ambassador stresses boosting trade with Pakistan

In his address, Ambassador Park highlighted Korea's strong interest in deepening trade and economic relations with Pakistan, emphasizing the potential of Pakistan as a significant market for business and trade

DNA

SIALKOT: Ambassador Park Ki Jun of the Republic of Korea has called on Sialkot exporters to seize opportunities in Korea's international trade markets to enhance bilateral trade between Pakistan and Korea. He made these remarks during a meeting with exporters at the Sialkot Chamber of Commerce and Industry (SCCI) on Friday. The meeting was attended by Abdul Ghafoor Malik, President of SCCI; Wahub Jahangir, Senior Vice President (SVP) of SCCI; Yeonjeong Yoo, Assistant Public Diplomacy Officer; and members of the Sialkot business community. In his address, Ambassador Park highlighted Korea's strong interest in deepening trade and economic ties with Pakistan, emphasizing the potential of Pakistan as a significant market for business. He proposed further promoting bilateral trade through the exchange of trade delegations and expressed his commitment to strengthening trade relations between the two countries. Ambassador Park also stressed the importance of enhancing people-to-people contacts between Korean and Pakistani business communities. He underscored that economic cooperation between Korea and Pakistan is crucial for boosting trade ties and noted the cordial relationship enjoyed by both nations. The ambassador praised Sialkot for its role as a key export hub in Pakistan and recognised its contributions to the national economy and infrastructure development. He expressed enthusiasm for exploring new opportunities for collaboration between South Korea and Sialkot, promising full support in faci-

Australian High Commissioner visits NARC

ISLAMABAD: The Australian High Commissioner to Pakistan, Neil Hawkins on Friday visited National Agricultural Research Centre. The High Commissioner held a meeting with Chairman Pakistan Agriculture Research Council (PARC), Dr. Ghulam Muhammad Ali (S.I) and discussed matters relating to agriculture sector research and development, said a press release. Dr Ali briefed the envoy about PARC and its ongoing high tech research activities. Following the meeting, he also visited National Institute for Genomics and Advanced Biotechnology (NIGAB) and Plant Genetic Resources Institute (PGRI). – DNA

tating business matchmaking for delegates visiting South Korea. Ambassador Park lauded the unique export culture of Sialkot and the self-help-driven socio-economic development achieved by its exporters. He also showed interest in the SCCI documentary "Sialkot, the City of Progressive

People," which was screened during the meeting. In his remarks, President Abdul Ghafoor Malik described Ambassador Park's visit as a testament to the enduring relationship between Pakistan and Korea. He highlighted that 2023 marks the 40th anniversary of diplomatic relations between the two countries, emphasizing the milestone as a commitment to future growth and cooperation. President Malik noted that the bilateral trade between Pakistan and Korea currently stands at USD 1.77 billion and expressed optimism about increasing this figure. He suggested that exchanging trade delegations could create new business opportunities and collaborations. Malik also mentioned plans for a Sialkot delegation to visit South Korea later this year and requested support for visa processing and business matchmaking events. He advocated for stronger ties between the Chambers of Commerce in both countries and recommended issuing long-term business visas for Pakistani exporters. Additionally, Malik outlined various Sialkot Chamber projects, including the Sialkot International Airport Limited (SIAL), the Sialkot Dryport Trust, the Sialkot City Development Program, the Sialkot Export Processing Zone, the Sialkot Business and Commerce Centre, the Sialkot Tannery Zone, the Child Social Development Organization, and AirSial. Ambassador Park Ki Jun appreciated President Malik's suggestions and acknowledged the global reputation of Sialkot's products for their quality and durability. The meeting concluded with the Sialkot business community offering valuable suggestions for increasing trade cooperation between the two countries.

State counsel grilled for lack of info on internet disruptions

Court reserves verdict on plea seeking immediate restoration of internet access across country

BUREAU REPORT

LAHORE: The Lahore High Court (LHC) on Friday expressed displeasure over the state counsel's non-seriousness and "lack of knowledge" on the matter of the nationwide internet service disruptions that have been a burning issue in the country for weeks. Justice Ahmad of the LHC took up a petition, seeking the immediate restoration of internet access across the country, filed by a citizen named Noman Sarwar against the "nationwide internet shutdown". Millions across the country continue to face trouble accessing internet services due to limited connectivity, particularly while using mobile data in

some regions. The government has attributed the issue to the purported testing of an internet firewall to rein in social media which is equipped with filters that will block unwanted content from reaching a wider audience. The federal government, Pakistan Telecommunication Authority (PTA), and other entities were nominated as respondents in the case. At the outset of the hearing, the federal government's prosecutor Rana Noman sought time from the court to present a detailed report on internet disruption. The court had directed the state counsel to take instructions from the relevant authorities and appear before the court today. Taking the public official to task at his response, Justice Ahmed replied that it was a matter of public interest and the prosecutor's "seriousness" in it reflected through his "lack of knowledge". Later, the court reserved its verdict, with the LHC judge saying that the court would issue appropriate orders for the internet disruptions was a matter of public interest. According to the petition, the internet and social media applications were shut down in the country without the authorities giving any notice or reason. "Businesses and every sphere of life are being affected because of the internet's closure. Shutting down the internet is also a violation of fundamental rights," the plea said. The plea, filed in the LHC, also demanded revocation of the federal government's "decision" to shut down the internet. It may be noted that users of the widely used messaging application WhatsApp in Pakistan have also reported frustratingly long delays and failures when uploading and downloading content of all types.

PTI is witnessing downfall in KP

ADIL SHAHEEN

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan Muslim League Nawaz (PML-N) leader, Daniyal Chaudhry asserted that Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf's (PTI) fall has been started in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. He gave response on the resignation of KP Minister for Communication and Works Shakil Ahmed from his post on Thursday following differences with the Chief Minister Ali Amin Gandapur. Talking to the media at Islamabad Press Club, Daniyal Chaudhry alleged that everyone was involved in corruption in KP. He reiterated that Shakil Ahmed resigned from his office due to corruption in KP Assembly. PML-N leader berated KP CM Ali Amin Gandapur's performance in the province, saying there was no example found in the past like CM governance. He claimed that the accountability institution was closed in the KP province. Chaudhry stressed that soldiers sacrificed their lives to defend the motherland and martyrs' families questioned about the action taken after May 9. He asserted that perpetrators of the May 9 riots incident must be penalised. Talking about accountability in the Army institution, he hailed the Armed forces institution's decision to initiate an accountability process.

03 terrorists killed in N. Waziristan

STAFF REPORT

PESHAWAR: Security forces Friday conducted an intelligence based operation in general area Razmak, North Waziristan District, on reported presence of terrorists, said a statement issued by Inter Services Public Relations. During conduct of the operation, intense fire exchange took place between own troops and terrorists, as a result of which, 3 terrorists were sent killed, while one got injured. Weapons and ammunition were also recovered from killed terrorists, who remained actively involved in terrorist activities against security forces as well as target killing of innocent civilians. Sanitization of the area is being carried out to eliminate any other terrorist found in the area as security forces are determined to wipe-out the menace of terrorism from the country.

3 drown as chairlift falls into Indus River

DNA

MANSEHRA: At least three people drowned after a chairlift collapsed and fell into the Indus River in Seo Tehsil of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa's Upper Kohistan District on Friday, officials said. Rescue 1122 spokesperson Abdur Rehman told media that the chairlift fell into the river after the foundations supporting the aerial lift collapsed on both sides. The foundations of the manually operated cable car had become weak due to a very high flow of water in the river over the last two days, he explained. Dasu Station House Officer (SHO) Khalilur Rehman also confirmed the incident, stating that "three persons drowned in the river after the fall". He said the chairlift was being used by the residents of Kama village and it was connected with Dasu city. Rescue 1122 identified the victims as Muhammad Sher, Fidaur Rehman, and Mir Alam – all of whom were residents of Kaiga – and continued searching for the bodies. The victims' relatives told police they were returning to the village from Dasu via the cable car when it fell. Kohistan administration also called a Rescue 1122 team from Shanglea to participate in the search, while the high flow of water in the Indus River hampered the rescue operation. Make-shift cable cars are commonly found in many parts of KP and Gilgit-Baltistan, connecting different towns and villages where roads or bridges cannot be built due to the terrain. People use these cable cars as a means of transport. Last month on July 23, a man drowned in the river Indus in the Bisham area while trying to rescue his son, who was stranded on a chairlift. Eyewitness Mansoor Ali Khan told that a 13-year-old boy was stranded in the chairlift over the Indus river and his father, Muhammad Aziz, was trying to rescue his son through a rope.

India protests intensify over doctor's murder

NEW DELHI: Protests have intensified in India after a mob vandalised a hospital where a female trainee doctor was raped and murdered in West Bengal state. The hospital was attacked on Wednesday during the massive Reclaim the Night march held in Kolkata city to protest against the brutal crime. Smaller protests were also held in many other Indian cities like Delhi, Hyderabad, Mumbai and Pune. The Indian Medical Association (IMA) - the country's largest grouping of doctors - has announced a nationwide strike of non-emergency services on Saturday. Doctor's associations in other cities and political parties in West Bengal have also planned marches on Friday and over the weekend to protest against the attack. Tens of thousands of women across the state participated in the Reclaim the Night march on Wednesday night to demand "independence to live in freedom and without fear". Though the protests were largely peaceful, clashes erupted between the police and a small group of unidentified men who barged into the RG Kar Hospital - the site of the crime - and ransacked its emergency ward. Videos circulated online showed the men smashing beds and equipment with sticks. Protesters told the BBC that some doctors and hospital staff were injured in the attack. Some police vehicles were also damaged in the chaos and tear gas had to be used to disperse the crowd. The Kolkata police have arrested 19 people in connection with the incident so far. On Thursday, the IMA condemned the attack, calling it "hooliganism unleashed on protesting students" and announced the withdrawal of non-emergency services for 24 hours starting at 06:00 local time [00:30 GMT] on Saturday. "Doctors, especially women, are vulnerable to violence because of the nature of the profession. It is for the authorities to provide for the safety of doctors inside hospitals and campuses," the IMA said in a statement. "The IMA requires the sympathy of the nation with the just cause of its doctors." The Federation of Resident Doctors' Association (Forda) - another top doctors' association - has also resumed its strike after calling it off on Tuesday. – Agencies

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