

# Independent

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Quetta

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JEDDAH: Pakistan's Ambassador to the OIC Fawad Sher participating in extraordinary meeting of Organization of Islamic Countries (OIC) called to discuss incident of the Holy Quran's desecration in Sweden.

## Emergency session OIC calls for collective measures against desecration of Holy Quran

*International law should be used to stop religious hatred;  
We must send constant reminders to world community: OIC chief*

Monitoring Desk

CAIRO: The Organisation of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) on Sunday said that collective measures are needed to prevent acts of desecration to the Holy Quran and international law should be used to stop religious hatred.

The statement by the group of 57 member states, most of whose members have a Muslim-majority population, was issued after an extraordinary meeting in Saudi Arabia's Jeddah called to discuss Wednesday's incident in Sweden where the holy book was desecrated in a protest outside a mosque.

"We must send constant reminders to the international community regarding the urgent application of international law, which clearly prohibits any advocacy of religious hatred," OIC Secretary-General Hissein Brahim Taha said.

During the meeting, Mr Taha called for a unified response to such incidents, describing the most recent one as a "despicable act".

The Secretary-General emphasised that such inci-

dents are not mere Islamophobia, but actions that deeply insult and offend the religious sensibilities of Muslims. As such, they require serious international measures to prevent their recurrence.

On Wednesday, a man desecrated the holy book outside Stockholm's central mosque, the first day of the Muslim Eid al-Adha holidays. The act angered OIC member Turkey whose backing Sweden needs to gain entry to the NATO military alliance.

Swedish police had granted permission for a protest to take place. But, after the incident, police charged the man who carried it out with agitation against an ethnic or national group.

The incident has triggered large protests in Baghdad in front of the Swedish Embassy. It has also been condemned by the United States.

Turkey in late January suspended talks with Sweden on its NATO application after a similar incident of desecration of the Holy Quran by a Danish far-right politician near the Turkish embassy in Stockholm.

CM demands fresh NFC Award, maintains:

## Balochistan enduring loss of over Rs. 10 bln annually due to non existence of new NFC Award

*Quddus Bizenjo charges PPL proving itself to be "East India Company" for Balochistan; asserts we may not be forced to give strong reaction; says efficiency of PM's formed parliamentary committee yet to be proven*

Independent Report

QUETTA: The Chief Minister Balochistan, Mir Abdul Quddus Bizenjo has stated that Balochistan has been enduring financial loss of over Rs. 10 billion due to non-existence of new National Finance Commission (NFC) Award, as such fresh NFC Award should be announced at the earliest.

In a policy statement issued here the other day, the Chief Minister regretfully pointed out that the

7th NFC Award has completed its due tenure in 2014, and since then no other NFC Award has been announced yet.

He said that the constitution of Pakistan guarantees the protection of rights of the smaller provinces of country, and added that it is an unconstitutional and undemocratic act to overlook any federating unit in this manner.

The Chief Minister said that attitude of the federal government with



Balochistan is very sorrowful.

He said that the federal government maintained its tradition of abiding by its commitment with the province as neither PPL's arrears were paid nor the due share

of NFC Award could be received till June 30, 2023 as had committed by the Prime Minister.

He regretfully pointed out that the Finance Division and PPL Board didn't pay any heed towards the PM's announcement.

He said that it seems that the Federal Finance Minister doesn't take the PM's directives seriously.

The Chief Minister made it clear that we have no personal grudge with the federal government. We had

also boycotted the NEC meeting and federal budget in compulsion just because of non-implementation on the promises and commitment made by the federal government with the province. The Prime Minister formed a parliamentary committee to resolve the financial issues being faced by the province and we also sent a 11-point stance to the committee for consideration, but to no avail, he

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Foreign Minister Bilawal Bhutto Zardari speaking at a function organized by the Pakistan diaspora in Tokyo

## Three police and one FC cop martyred in attack on check post in Sherani district

Langove grieved over martyrdom of security personnel

Independent Report

QUETTA: Three police and one Frontier Corps (FC) personnel were martyred in a rocket attack and firing at a check post in Dhana Sar area of Sherani district on Sunday morning.

According to the reports reaching here, unknown armed assailants resorted to fire few rockets targeting a check post located in Dhana Sar area in wee hours of Sunday. The rocket attack was followed by extensive firing at the check post. As a result four security personnel

embraced martyrdom on the spot. In the meantime, the security personnels retaliated and exchanged firing with the assailants.

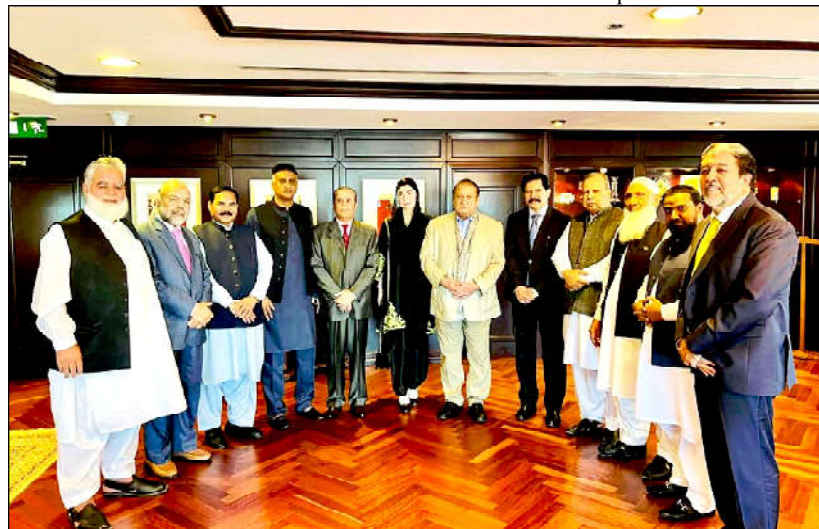
During the exchange of fire, one terrorist was also killed, the sources informed.

Afterwards, the armed assailants fled from the scene. Later, the security forces and area administration cordoned off the area and started hunt of the terrorists.

However, no arrest was made in the terrorism act neither any group or individual claimed responsibility of the incident.

Meanwhile while condemning the terrorists' attack at a check post of security forces in Dhana Sar area in strongest words, the Provincial Minister for Home and Tribal Affairs, Mir Ziaullah Langove has expressed grief and sorrow over the martyrdom of four security personnel in the attack.

In a condemnation issued here on Sunday, the Minister Home paid homage to the martyred personnel of Balochistan police and Frontier Corps.



DUBAI: Leaders of PML(N) United Arab Emirates photographed with former Prime Minister Muhammad Nawaz Sharif and Maryam Nawaz

## After winning elections, PMLN to end inflation on priority basis: Nawaz

Monitoring Desk DUBAI: Pakistan Muslim League-N and former Prime Minister Mian Muhammad Nawaz Sharif has said that after winning the upcoming elections, PMLN will end inflation on a priority basis.

Former prime minister held an important meeting with the Pakistan Muslim League (PMLN) Gulf delegation in Dubai.

PML-N leader was briefed about the high morale of the party workers based in the Gulf countries including the UAE.

During the meeting, the delegation inquired about the well-being of Nawaz Sharif, while PMLN delegation also met PMLN Senior Vice President and Chief Organizer Maryam Nawaz

Sharif.

Meanwhile, Nawaz Sharif and Maryam Nawaz discussed the strategy of the upcoming elections with the delegation.

Nawaz Sharif assured and said that the Muslim League-N will quickly overcome the problems of Pakistan.

Nawaz Sharif said that he saluted his party workers who were facing difficult situations.

PMLN Nawaz Sharif finalized his future travel plans and confirmed his return ticket to London on 4th of July.

Sources claimed that PMLN supreme will return back to London.

He will hold important meetings in Dubai before leaving for London.

## PM Shehbaz to attend SCO summit via video link

ISLAMABAD (INP): Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif will participate in the 23rd Meeting of SCO Council of Heads of State being held in videoconference format on Tuesday.

The invitation to the Prime Minister to attend the SCO-CHS was extended by the Prime Minister of India in his capacity as the current Chair of the SCO.

At the forthcoming CHS, the highest forum of the SCO, the leaders will deliberate on important global and regional issues and chart the future direction of cooperation among SCO Member States.

This year, the SCO CHS will also welcome Iran as a new member of the organization.

## Nation stood by security forces: Chief Minister

Independent Report

QUETTA: The Chief Minister Balochistan, Mir Abdul Quddus Bizenjo has strongly condemned the incident of rocket attack and firing at a check post of security forces in Dhana Sar area on Sunday.

In a condemnation issued here, the Chief Minister expressed deep grief and sorrow over martyrdom of the three police and one FC personnel in the terrorist act.

He also applauded the Police and FC for killing a terrorist in retaliation

against the terrorists.

Mir Abdul Quddus Bizenjo said that terrorists can't down the moral of our security forces by carrying out such cowardly acts.

He said that the sacrifices of security forces are worth following for the nation. The Chief Minister also said that the security forces are ensuring protection of the nation and country with strong resolve and courage.

He said that the entire nation is standing with its security forces to foil the nefarious designs of the enemies.

## Slams Sherani terrorists' attack; Governor calls for showing unity to foil enemies' nefarious designs

Independent Report QUETTA: The Governor Balochistan, Malik Abdul Wali Khan Kakar has directed the concerned authorities to mobilize all available resources to take all those sabotaging the peaceful environment of the province and spreading fear and harassment among the masses to task.

In a condemnation statement issued here on Sunday, the Governor strongly condemned the terrorists' attack at a check post of security forces in Dhana Sar area of Sherani district and expressed grief and sorrow over the martyrdom of four security personnel in it.

The Governor stressed that those sabotaging the peace and spreading harassment and fear should not be spared at all.

Malik Abdul Wali Kakar also stressed that we have to demonstrate national unity to foil the nefarious designs of the terrorists and miscreants.

The Governor prayed for the departed souls of the martyrs. He also expressed best wishes for those injured in the terrorist attack.

It may be mentioned here that four security personnel were martyred in a terrorist attack at a check post of security forces in Sherani district.

## Army kill six terrorists in DIK IBO, ISPR

RAWALPINDI (Online): Army has killed six terrorists in an intelligence based operation (IBO) in Dera Ismail Khan (DIK) district of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.

According to ISPR, on 02 July 23, security forces conducted an Intelligence Based Operation in general area Kulachi, DI Khan District. During the conduct of operation, after intense fire exchange, three terrorists were sent to hell. Weapons and ammunition were also recovered from the killed terrorists.

The killed terrorists remained actively involved in various terrorist activities against security forces, Police and innocent civilians.

They were also highly wanted for conducting a raid on a Police in Kulachi on 11 April 2022, which resulted in Shahadat of five brave police constables.

Sanitization of the area is being carried out to eliminate any terrorists found in the area. Security Forces of Pakistan are determined to eliminate the menace of terrorism.



KARACHI: Governor Sindh Kamran Khan Tessori receiving the pilgrims warmly with flower garlands as first hajj flight landed at Karachi International Airport during post hajj operation

PM summons cabinet session

ISLAMABAD (INP): Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif has summoned the federal cabinet session on Monday (tomorrow), citing sources.

PM Shehbaz Sharif summoned the federal cabinet's session on Monday in which the participants will review the political and economic situation of the country.

Offices open today after Eid vacation

Independent Report QUETTA: The official holiday of Eid-ul-Adha is over and all government offices across the country will be open as usual from today.

According to the details, the official holiday of Eid-ul-Adha is over and all the government offices across the country will be open as usual from today. According to the announcement of the bank, all banks and financial institutions across the country will be closed for public transactions on July 3.

## Pakistan, Japan have full potential to increase bilateral trade: Bilawal

TOKYO (APP): Foreign Minister Bilawal Bhutto Zardari says Pakistan and Japan have the potential to increase bilateral trade in diverse sectors for mutual benefit.

He was speaking at a function organized by the Pakistani diaspora in Tokyo on Sunday.

The Foreign Minister said both countries can benefit from investment in agriculture and livestock.

Bilawal Bhutto Zardari said incumbent government is working on economic diplomacy to bring prosperity in the country.

He said Pakistan can learn from Japan's advancement in Information Technology and other fields.

The Foreign Minister said during his meeting with Japanese leadership and entrepreneurs, he will urge them to enhance trade and

investment in Pakistan. He said Pakistan has over sixty five percent populations of youth and we can exploit this human resource through skills based education and training.

The Foreign Minister urged Pakistani overseas particularly businessmen to play their role for increase in trade between two countries and also strengthening of bilateral relations.

Foreign Minister Bilawal Bhutto Zardari interacted with a number of Japanese business executives and representatives of Japan International Cooperation Agency and Japan External Trade Organization in Tokyo on Sunday.

During the meetings, the matters related to bilateral cooperation in trade and investment came under discussion.



## Muslim world condemns desecration of Quran in Sweden

ISLAMABAD (INP): Muslims across the world have strongly condemned the desecration of the Holy Quran in Sweden's capital during a protest authorised by the police.

Pakistan, Turkiye, United Arab Emirates, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Iraq, Iran and other Muslim countries have strongly condemned the act.

Turkish President Tayyip Erdogan has slammed Sweden over the incident, saying Ankara will never bow down to a policy of provocation or threat.

"We will teach the arrogant Western people that it is not freedom of expression to insult the sacred values of Muslims," he said.

The United Arab Emirates has summoned the Swedish ambassador to protest against the desecration of Holy Quran.

Qatar has also condemned the Swedish authorities' permission to burn copies of the Quran Thursday calling it a "heinous" act to have especially occurred on Eid.

"The Ministry of Foreign Affairs warns that

allowing repeated infringement of the Holy Qu'ran under the pretext of freedom of expression fuels hatred and violence, threatens peaceful coexistence, and reveals abhorrent double standards," its foreign ministry said.

Kuwait's Ministry of Foreign Affairs said the burning was a "dangerous, provocative step that inflames the feelings of Muslims around the world".

It called on the international community and governments "to take responsibility for swift action to renounce feelings of hatred, extremism and religious intolerance".

Iraq summoned the Swedish ambassador to Iraq on Thursday over the incident.

It called the act "racist" and "irresponsible", adding that it condemns "the repeated acts of burning copies of the holy Koran by individuals with extremist and disturbed minds". "They are not only racist but also promote violence and hatred," the Iraqi government said in a statement.



England batsman Jonny Bairstow walks away after being run-out by Australia wicketkeeper Alex Carey in the second Ashes Test at Lord's Cricket Ground

## Only with unity, we can solve problems of citizens: Murtaza

113,035 tons of offals, sacrificial waste removed from city

Independent Report

KARACHI: Mayor Karachi and Spokesperson of Sindh Government Barrister Murtaza Wahab has said that during the days of Eid-ul-Azha, 1,13,035 tons of offals and sacrificial waste were removed from the city, and more than twenty-four thousand staff worked day and night, for which I am grateful to the staff, elected representatives, and concerned officers. Only with unity, we can solve the problems of the citizens, we will work with the same spirit in the monsoon rains, all was done not by the critics or their party but by the hard work of the local bodies.

He was addressing a news conference at Clifton Park on Sunday.



KARACHI: Mayor Karachi and Spokesperson of Sindh Government Barrister Murtaza Wahab addressing a news conference at Clifton Park

Mayor Karachi Barrister Murtaza Wahab further said that on the first day of Eid, he had said on the polo ground that the staff will be seen working and appealed to the citizens to cooperate so that they can serve the public. For the last five days, the civic administration has been working day and night for which I thank them. I am grateful to all the officers of the Sindh Solid Waste Management Board (SSWMB), the District Administration, the Town Chairmen, and the

staff, they all worked together with love and affection. I visited every town and saw the pace of work. Alhamdulillah, the sacrificial waste and offals were collected in a good manner. The process of picking the offals and sacrificial waste started a day before Eid as the Bohri community performs the sacrifice a day before. Perhaps the critics found out for the first time in 75 years when the Bohra community celebrates Eid while the Ahl al-Hadith community is still offering

sacrifices on Sunday.

Mayor Karachi Barrister Murtaza Wahab said that 1,13,035 tons of Eid-specific garbage was disposed of, including the garbage that was picked up from the city daily. More than 24,000 staff were working this year. This year boyscouts also helped us. I am also grateful to all my friends in the media. The media did positive reporting and pointed out the problems. With the help of the media, it was possible to clean up some places immediately.

## Road accidents claim four lives

ATTOCK (INP): Four young men have lost their lives in two different road accidents in various parts of Attock district, police and hospital sources said.

In the first incident, three cousins lost their lives as their car ramed into road side tree near Thalian interchange in the limits of Fatehjang Police Station. Police while quoting the family of the deceased, has said that Majid Ghorani along with his cousins Shahid Ghorani and Imran Ghorani, the residents of Talagang were going to Murree to celebrate the Eid vacations while they met the fatal incident.

Later, their bodies were dispatched to their

native town after fulfilling the legal requirement. Moreover, 18 years old man lost his life when the motorcycle he was riding collided head on with another motorcycle on Pathargarh road in the limits of Hassanabdal Police Station.

Police and hospital sources said that Muhammad Noman was going from Dolian village to Hassanabdal city to celebrate Eid with his uncle when he met an incident. He was taken to THQ hospital from where he was shifted to Rawalpindi where he succumbed to injuries. Respective police registered two separate cases and started further investigations.

## Balochistan enduring loss...

Continued from page 1

added. Mr. Bizenjo said that in addition to the non-payment of the due share of NFC Award and PPL arrears, non-release of desired funds for development projects of the province is also a grave issue.

He said that the effectiveness of parliamentary committee formed by PM has not been proved yet, and the PPL is proving to "East India Company" for the province, adding the CM charged further.

He also pointed out that the Sui agreement between Balochistan and PPL has been expired in 2015. Th PPL has been continuing its operation in the gas

field without any agreement, he claimed adding that the arrears of the province against PPL are above Rs. 60 billion.

The Chief Minister asserted that we may not be pushed towards the wall, nor we may be forced to give strong reaction. The people of Balochistan would not withdraw from their due rights at all, he maintained.

He urged the ruling elite of the country to take notice of the PPL's attitude and help secure right of the province.

He also urged the parliamentary representatives belonging to the province to raise its voice in the federal corridors.

## Monsoon rain spell in country begins from today

ISLAMABAD (INP): The Pakistan Meteorological Department (PMD) on Sunday forecast monsoon rainfall in the country from July 03 and will continue till July 08.

The Met Office, in a report stated that moist currents from the Arabian Sea are likely to penetrate in upper parts of the country, and a westerly wave is also likely to enter the country from July 3 (tomorrow).

Islamabad, Rawalpindi, Murree, Gallyat, Attock, Chakwal and Jhelum, Azad Kashmir and Gilgit-Baltistan and other areas will receive rain with thunderstorm from July 4-7.

Rain, wind, thunder-shower with isolated heavy falls are also expected in Barkhan, Sibbi, Loralai, Kalat, Khuzdar, Zohb, Lasbella and Naseerabad, Bannu, Karak, Waziristan, D.I Khan, Rajanpur, Multan, Bhakkar, Layyah, Kot Addu, Bahawalpur, Bahawalnagar, Sahiwal and Okara from July 5 to 8.

The Met Office also predicted rainfall, wind, thundershower with isolated heavy falls in Sukkur, Jacobabad Ghotki, Shaheed Benazirabad, Larkana, Mithi, Chhor, Paddan, Nagarparkar, Tharparkar, Umerkot, Sanghar, Mirpur Khas, Dadu, Thatta, Badin, Hyderabad, and Karachi on July 07 and 08.

The Met Office has warned that heavy falls may cause flash floods in hill torrent of Dera Ghazi Khan and adjoining areas of northeast Balochistan.

## Australia win fractious 2nd Ashes Test despite stunning Stokes century

English captain Ben Stokes' 155-run innings went in vain

Sports Desk

LORD'S: Australia beat England by 43 runs to win the second Ashes Test at Lord's on Sunday and take a 2-0 lead in the five-match series.

Stokes made a remarkable 155 before he was dismissed with England 70 runs shy of a steep target of 371.

England were eventually dismissed for 327 as holders Australia, bidding for a first away Ashes series win in 22 years, went 2-0 up in the five-match campaign.

But it was the dismissal of Bairstow shortly before lunch on the last day that lit the blue-touch paper on this match and incited the fury of the usually sedate Lord's crowd.

Bairstow, the last of England's specialist batsmen, fell in bizarre fashion for 10 when he wandered out of his ground after ducking a Cameron Green bouncer and quick-thinking wicketkeeper Alex Carey under-

armed the ball onto the stumps.

Bairstow thought he had secured his ground by tapping his bat behind the crease.

Australia captain Pat Cummins could have withdrawn the appeal but the decision was referred to third umpire Marais Erasmus, who ruled Bairstow had been stumped, with England now 193-6.

Spectators at the 'Home of Cricket' reacted in fury with a chant of "Same old Aussies, always cheating" in a reference to a 2018 ball-tampering scandal in South Africa that led to year-long bans for Australia stars Steve Smith and David Warner.

Incoming batsman Stuart Broad told Carey "you'll be forever remembered for that".

But a spokesman for Marylebone Cricket Club (MCC) the owners of Lord's and the guardians of cricket's Laws,

later told AFP Bairstow had been given out correctly.

An Australia team spokesman later alleged players had been "verbally abused" and "physically contacted" by irate MCC members in the Lord's Pavilion during the lunch break.

An angry Stokes, then on 62, hit out and on 77 he slammed a fierce pull back at Cummins which the fast bowler dropped.

Stokes then hooked Green for three sixes off successive deliveries - the second dropped over the boundary by Mitchell Starc - to complete a stunning 142-ball hundred.

At lunch, England were 243-6, with Stokes a remarkable 128 not out.

Australia were booed again as they took the field after the interval.

But the jeers turned to cheers when, off just the second ball of the session, Stokes lofted Josh Hazlewood for a brilliant straight six.

Two balls later, however, he was dropped at deep back-

ward square when Smith grassed a routine chance before he was again missed on 114 by a diving Carey

Left-handed batsman Stokes struck two more sixes off Hazlewood, the second a remarkable one-handed hit.

Australia were without Nathan Lyon after the off-spinner, who had limped out to bat at No 11 on Saturday, was off the field with the severe calf tear he had suffered while fielding Thursday.

Stokes, however, was unable to repeat his heroics of 2019 when the all-rounder's astounding unbeaten century secured a thrilling one-wicket win in an Ashes Test at Headingley, with England reaching a total of 359 - their highest fourth-innings winning chase against Australia.

He fell when he skyed Hazlewood to Carey to end a 214-ball innings including nine fours and nine sixes. Stokes walked off to a standing ovation but at 301-7 the game was all but up for England.

Ollie Robinson and Broad, who had helped Stokes add 108, fell in quick succession to leave England on the brink of defeat.

Last man James Anderson was then hit on the helmet by a Starc bouncer before the express quick bowled Josh Tongue to end the match, with the third Test at Headingley starting Thursday.

Cummins, Starc and Hazlewood all took three wickets apiece to leave England with a mountain to climb if they are to regain the Ashes.

Only once in Test history have a team come from 2-0 down to win a series when the Australia side of 1936/37, inspired by batting great Don Bradman, recovered to win an Ashes 3-2.

Earlier, Ben Duckett fell short of a coveted century at Lord's for the second time this Test, his 83 following a first-innings 98. His second-innings stand of 132 with Stokes kept England in the game after they had been in dire straits at 45-4.

## Financial irregularities found in Irrigation deptt

Independent Report

USTA MUHAMMAD: Disclosure of financial irregularities in the Irrigation Department, Kirthar Canal, Usta Muhammad, Balochistan government has released funds worth crores of rupees in the context of the emergency, of which there is no record and it is alleged that no tenders were made.

Corruption has become visible. A wave of concern has spread in the public circles. The authorities should take immediate notice in this regard.

The public circles of Usta Muhammad expressed great anger and said that the officers of the irrigation department have destroyed the canal system by promoting a culture of corruption. More than 80 million rupees of funds released to clean and remodel the canals have fallen victim to financial irregularities.

The canal system has been destroyed by allegedly strengthening the mega-corruption by doing paperwork. While during the recent monsoon rains and floods, funds of more than

crores of rupees were released by the Balochistan government in emergency for the maintenance of fuel and canals and to give way to flood relays, which is an alleged corruption. And the monkeys fell victim to sharing.

The canal system was destroyed due to which the farmers are forced to stumble for the principle of agricultural water. According to informed sources, three to four crores out of eight crores funds exceeding, no tender has been issued, from which the national treasury of Balochistan has been given a loss of 3 to 4 crore rupees by the Department of Irrigation.

The public circle of Usta Muhammad appealed to the Chief Secretary Balochistan, Secretary Irrigation Balochistan, Director NAB Balochistan, and Anti-Corruption Balochistan and said that they should hold the accountability of Kirthar Canal and officers involved in corruption, including the Audit Officers, accountable and take action against those responsible under the law.

## Moeen winning fitness battle for third Test

LONDON (INP): England all-rounder Moeen Ali should be fit to face Australia in the third Test at Headingley with his finger injury healing well, according to bowling coach Jeetan Patel.

Moeen suffered a cut finger in the opening Test at Edgbaston and was not selected for the ongoing Lord's clash.

"Fingers crossed that in the next couple of days, he gets to rest it and he gets to Headingley and he's ready to go," Patel said. "It was pretty dis-

gusting at the end of the Edgbaston Test we've tried to look after it as much as we can. It's looking in really good shape; it's healed really, really well."

Moeen's long absence from red ball cricket was the cause of his troubles at Edgbaston with the more pronounced seam on the Dukes cricket ball, cutting in to his knuckle. "Moeen hasn't bowled 30 overs [in a day] in a while and that was always going to be part of the risk of bringing him in," Patel said.

Coming at the back of the 2021 T20 World Cup disappointment, and then



FAISALABAD: Deputy Commissioner (DC) Ali Anan Qamar receiving the pilgrims warmly with flower garlands as first hajj flight landed at Faisalabad International Airport during post hajj operation

## 'West Indies' decline pre-dates this group of players': Bishop

LONDON (INP): After West Indies failed to qualify for the 2023 ODI World Cup following their loss to Scotland in the Super Six stage of the ongoing World Cup Qualifiers in Zimbabwe, spoke to Ian Bishop about what the loss means to fans back home, how to manage West Indies' available talent pool, and the changes he would like to see in Caribbean cricket going forward.

As someone who grew up watching an era of West Indies cricket that you did, then going on to play for them with pride, and having since followed them in recent years, what are your emotions on the team not making it to a World Cup? It is a difficult day, and difficult to sum up. To not have West Indies as part of the World Cup is, to me, unimaginable. I can echo the sentiments of many fans and West Indian supporters, of whom there are still many.

Coming at the back of the 2021 T20 World Cup disappointment, and then

not making it into the main round of the 2022 T20 World Cup, it is a stifling reality of where the [West Indies] cricket is at the moment. Not just being with the Associate nations, but that some of those nations are beating you quite convincingly. So there's a lot of work to be done almost immediately, because the talent level, which I know there is, deserves better representation, or certainly a bigger need to express itself.

The results from the recent ICC events you speak of, do they give you the feeling that something like this was on the cards? That this was always a possibility? And does that make you feel like this slide could have been arrested sooner? Yes, it has been a gradual decline. I've always said this pre-dates this group of players. We haven't played consistently good ODI cricket against the top nations for perhaps a decade now. The T20 team, after having been two-time champions, they

have slid. So like big corporations who were at one time at the peak of their powers, and then through, I suppose, a lack of vision or whatever you want to call it, they disappeared off the business scene, [and that is what has happened] for West Indies cricket, two-time world champions, who popularised the field for ODI cricket.

I know there has been some introspection that has been taking place in the Caribbean. But what this does is, it says that we are at a few seconds to 12, and we need all hands on board to get the representation back to where it needs to be.

Will all hands be able to come together to face the big challenge that faces West Indies cricket at the moment? The Shimron Hetmyer situation is one that no one seems to have benefitted from. And it's not as much about Hetmyer alone as it is about the feeling among fans. Are the West Indian players motivated enough to play for West Indies?



QUETTA: Provincial Amir Jamiat Ulama-e-Islam Maulana Abdul Wasey presiding over meeting of Majlis-e-Amla



## Geneva Kashmir moot highlights plight of Kashmiri prisoners languishing in Indian, IIOJK jails

ISLAMABAD (APP): While voicing their grave concern over the continued illegal detention of Kashmiri prisoners in Indian as well as Occupied Kashmir's jails, speakers at a seminar held on the sidelines of the 53rd session of the UN Human Rights Council (UNHRC) in Geneva late Saturday, said that thousands of detainees lodged in different jails in and outside the Valley was getting worse with every passing day.

"The seminar titled 'Plight of Kashmir Prisoners' was attended and ad-

ressed by political activists, parliamentarians, public representatives, law experts and human rights defenders hailing from different parts of the world including Altaf Hussain Wani chairman Kashmir institute of International relations, Faheem Kayani, Hassan ul Bana, Mirza Asif Jarral and others", says a message reaching and released to the media here on Sunday.

The speakers continued that thousands of Kashmiris who were arrested before and after 5th August 2019 have been languishing in India's notori-

ous jails like Tihar, which has become a death trap for Kashmiris.

They said that a sizeable number of Kashmiris who were taken into preventive custody on 5th August 2019 continue to rot in Amphala, Udhampur, Hiranagar, Khatua and Kotbahwal jails.

The speakers said that the Indian government has given a free license to its forces and agencies like NIA and Enforcement Directorate to arrest Kashmiris. They said that dozens of top rank political leaders including Muhammad

Yasin Malik, Musarrat Aalam Bhat, Shabir Ahmad Shah, Nayeem Ahmed Khan, Asiya Andrabi and others were picked up from their homes and whisked off to prisons outside the valley.

"They have been actually abducted by NIA and ED and shifted to Tihar Jail under frivolous and concocted charges," the speakers said, adding that scores of detainees including Dr. Qasim Faktoo, Dr. Shafi Shariati, Ghulam Qadir and many more were rotting in jails serving life terms.



ISLAMABAD: People are arriving back from their villages on the last vacation of the Eid-ul-Adha, to start their daily routine from Monday, in Federal Capital.



ISLAMABAD: Traffic Police Officials issuing challan to Rickshaw owner as rickshaws are ban in Federal Capital.

## Crackdown launched against Rickshaw drivers for entering illegally into Islamabad

**Independent Report**  
ISLAMABAD: The Islamabad Capital Police has launched a special crackdown on rickshaw drivers for illegally entering into federal capital Premises, especially in rural areas, a police public relation officer said.

Following the direction of Islamabad Capital City Police Officer (ICCP) Islamabad, Dr. Akbar Nasir Khan, to ensure smooth flow of traffic, to keep the citizens safe from accidents and keeping in view the road safety rules, Islamabad Capital Police have launched crackdown against illegal rick-

shaw pullers entering into federal capital Premises especially in rural areas. In this regard several teams have been formed for a special crackdown on rickshaw drivers especially in rural and other areas of the City. During the ongoing crackdown challan tickets have been issued to more than 260 rickshaws, 90 rickshaws have been impounded at various police stations.

On this occasion, CTO Islamabad issued special instructions to zonal DSPs to take action against illegal rickshaw pullers on a daily basis. The Special Squad is operating

and taking action against illegal rickshaw pullers by setting up special roadblocks on Expressway, IJP Road, Murree Road, Seventh Avenue, Ninth Avenue and all other major highways of Islamabad.

The night shift incharge is also taking legal action against them under his supervision and the education Wing is providing awareness to the public about road safety on a daily basis. Special broadcasts were also arranged on ICTP Radio FM 92.4 through which they are informing about the crackdown against illegal rickshaws.

## Payments under BISP to begin today: Kundi

ISLAMABAD (APP): Minister of State for Poverty Alleviation & Social Safety, Faisal Karim Kundi has said that the process of the payment of installments under Benazir Income Support Programme (BISP) will begin from July 03 (Monday). In a message for deserving women under BISP here on Sunday, he urged them to collect their installments from the specified retailers and inform them in case of any complaint. He said that 0.9 million cards of the BISP suspended by the previous

## Public enjoying barbecue parties amid pleasant weather after Eidul Azha

PTI government including 7000 cards of the deserving women of D.I. Khan are being unblocked. He further said that the teams of BISP are formally contacting those people whose cards have been unblocked. So far over 2,50,000 cards have been restored. Mr Kundi said that the holders of blocked cards either contact the local office of BISP or sent message on 8171. For the redressal of the complaints of beneficiaries, he said a new system for direct recovery from banks is being introduced during the current month.

## Mirwaiz pays rich tributes to trade union leader Sampat Prakash

ISLAMABAD (APP): Illegally detained All Parties Hurriyat Conference senior leader Mirwaiz Umar Farooq, expressing profound grief and sorrow over the demise of the well-known trade union leader Sampat Prakash, paid rich tributes to him for his selfless services to the whole Kashmiri society, especially the working class.

## KSA ranked first in Govt. Strategy Index AI

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia was ranked first globally in the Government Strategy Index for Artificial Intelligence. One of the indicators of the global classification of artificial intelligence was issued by Toronto Intelligence, which evaluated more than 60 countries in the world, the Saudi Press Agency reported on Sunday. Germany and China secured the second and third rankings, respectively. The Global Ranking of Artificial Intelligence incorporates more than 100 indicators, categorized into seven sub-pillars. The Kingdom had ac-

complished a remarkable feat, scoring 100 percent in all criteria of the index related to artificial intelligence. This included the establishment of the National Strategy for Data and AI (NSDAI) within the Kingdom, the presence of a dedicated government authority for artificial intelligence, the allocation of funding and budget for AI initiatives, and the formulation and monitoring of national targets for artificial intelligence.

This significant achievement by the Kingdom perfectly aligns with the overarching goals of Saudi Vision 2030.

## River Kabul continues to flow in low flood: FFC

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Federal Flood Commission (FFC) has said that River Kabul continues to flow in low flood at Nowshera while rivers Indus, Jhelum, Chenab, Ravi and Sutlej are flowing normal.

According to the daily FFC report issued on Sunday, the existing Combined Live Storage of the country's major reservoirs of Tarbela, Chashma and Mangla is 7.135 MAF of 13.443 MAF.

According to Flood Forecasting Division (FFD) Lahore, trough of Westerly Wave over Kashmir and adjoining areas has earlier

moved away eastwards, whereas seasonal low continues to prevail over Northwestern Balochistan. Mild Moist Currents from Arabian Sea are penetrating into upper parts of the country up to 3000 feet.

For the next 24 hours, mainly dry weather has been predicted by FFD, Lahore over most parts of the country. However, thunderstorm/rain of Light to Moderate Intensity at isolated places is expected over Islamabad, Punjab, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Balochistan (Kakati Division) and over the upper catchments of all the major rivers during the same period.

## IRSA releases 251,600 cusecs water

ISLAMABAD (APP): Indus River System Authority (IRSA) on Sunday released 251,600 cusecs water from various rim stations with inflow of 409,000 cusecs.

According to the data released by IRSA, water level in River Indus at Tarbela Dam was 1511.27 feet and was 113.27 feet higher than its dead level of 1,398 feet. Water inflow and outflow in the dam was recorded as 218,200 cusecs and 110,000 cusecs respectively.

The water level in River Jhelum at Mangla Dam was 1180.70 feet, which was 130.70 feet higher than its dead level of 1,050 feet.



ISLAMABAD: Youngsters are taking photo graphs with "Golden Man" at Daman-e-Koh during celebrations on the last vacation of the Eid-ul-Adha, in Federal Capital.

## Around 40,000 thousand people thronged 'Lake View' park during weekend

ISLAMABAD (APP): As many as 40,000 thousand people thronged 'Lake View Park' to enjoy barbecue parties after Eidul Azha with their family and friends.

With its spacious location at the shores of Rawal Dam, Lake View Park has started attracting more visitors than other public parks and picnic spots in the twin cities, reported a private news channel.

Traditionally, people used to go to Ayub Park and Nawaz Sharif Park but now both the places seem too crowded and there is little

for enjoyment," there are also other attractions in the federal capital including Japanese Park, the Zoo and the whole track up to Pir Sohawa. However, Lake View Park has all the facilities available in one spot, making it the most attractive place for visitors.

Thousands of merry-makers, including families and groups of youngsters, belonging to the twin cities and surrounding areas thronged the limited public places in Rawalpindi and Islamabad.

Visitors also enjoyed boatrides in Lake View Park on weekend.

## AIOU announces admissions for Autumn 2023

ISLAMABAD (APP): Allama Iqbal Open University (AIOU) has announced the schedule for the admissions in the semester of Autumn 2023. According to the AIOU, the admissions for the first phase of Semester Autumn 2023 will commence from July 15, while the admissions for the second phase will start from September 1 across the country. Vice Chancellor AIOU, Prof Dr. Nasir Mahmood has given the approval to establish information counters, facilitation centers.

## 80,000 Zamzam bottles distributed at Prophet's Mosque daily

ISLAMABAD (APP): Saudi Arabia's Agency of the General Presidency of the Prophet's Mosque has significantly increased its field operations to cater to pilgrims who have arrived in Madinah after completing their Hajj rituals in Makkah. According to the agency, the Suqya Administration is concentrating on

## World Youth Skills Day to be marked on July 15

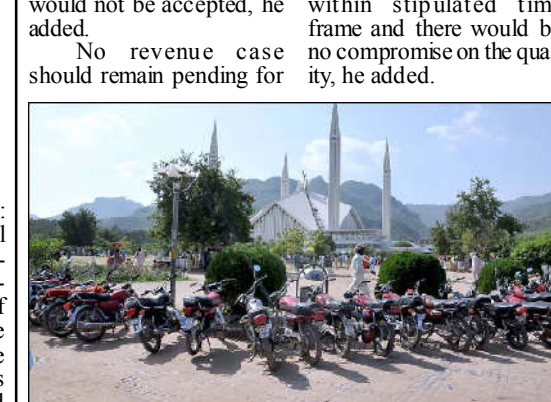
ISLAMABAD (APP): World Youth Skills Day will be marked on July 15 (Saturday) across the globe including Pakistan, aim of the day is to encourage youth to celebrate the value of acquiring skills like building, making, and creating as a way to achieve personal success and fulfillment.

## Indonesia's Lombok, Bali Islands fascinate tourists from Pak

ISLAMABAD (APP): Indonesia's amazingly beautiful islands Bali and Lombok, surrounded by lush green mountains and blue-green waters are emerging as two fascinating tourist destinations that have been gravitating foreign tourists from Pakistan and worldwide again after the Covid-19 pandemic is over.

Both islands have distinctive features with their natural beaches, providing beach lovers with coral reefs for snorkeling and scuba diving, exploring culture and offering people a place for religious tourism including historical mosques and temples.

Lombok, an island in West Nusa Tenggara province, is a majority Muslim destination that is appealing tourists to explore the charming landscape, blue water, beautiful sea sights and scenic valleys that provide unique experiences. Halal services' excellence has led Lombok



ISLAMABAD: A large number of motorcycles parked in the premises of Shah Faisal Masjid as people visit on weekend.



ISLAMABAD: Women are buying jewelry from vendors at Daman-e-Koh, during celebrations in Federal Capital.

## Indonesia's Lombok, Bali Islands fascinate tourists from Pak

to achieve the first rank for the World's Best Halal Tourism Destination, according to the Global Muslim Travel Index in 2019. Lombok would be the next popular destination for Pakistani tourists because of its natural beauty and delicious food. The traditional villages like Sade showcase the island's unique architecture and way of life.

Lombok is not only beautiful in terms of natural beauty and is perfect for travelers seeking a serene escape but also food is similar to Pakistan, said a tourist Hassan Aftab while talking to APP. Another tourist Ms. Lucia from England who was in Lombok for vacation, told APP that the Kuta Beach and Gili Islands were the most eye-catching places which were more peaceful and calmer for enjoying holidays. She said that atmosphere of Gili Island was amazing as the beaches, the sunlight and the people were welcoming.

Nicolo from Italy said that he prefers to stay in Lombok to Italy during his holidays because he likes blue water and pristine sandy shores. Similarly, Bali has no comparison as Legian, Seminyak, and Kuta Beaches are having picturesque landscapes, and vibrant arts scene. From the stunning rice terraces of Ubud to the iconic sea temples of Tanah Lot and Uluwatu, Bali boasts a rich tapestry of cultural and natural wonders, he added.

Bali is a place where adventure enthusiasts can surf the famous waves of Kuta and Uluwatu as well as they can explore the volcanic peaks of Mount Batur. Abdul Zahir Abbasi a travel agent, who came to attend Bali and Beyond Travel Fair in Indonesia told APP that the number of tourists from Pakistan to Bali and Lombok was increasing swiftly and the opening of direct flights would further enhance this

flow of tourists as it would be more economical and convenient. He said that similarly, Indonesian people were visiting Pakistan's northern areas, therefore direct linkages would enhance the tourism economy of both countries.

Both Bali and Lombok offer an immense cultural experience that allows visitors to delve into the rich heritage of the Indonesian people. There are also several similarities between Pakistan's and Indonesia's cultures and tourist sites. Pakistan and Indonesia have distinct identities and cultural characteristics. Both destinations offer a glimpse into vibrant cultures. Pakistan's historic sites like the ancient city of Taxila and the architectural marvels of Lahore showcase its diverse heritage. Indonesia's Bali and Lombok are home to ancient temples and traditional dances.

Explaining cultural similarities, Ambassador of Indonesia to Pakistan Adam Tugot termed distinctive cultural-historic heritage as a treasure trove for the two brotherly countries that have continuously been preserved during history. He said, "Indonesia and Pakistan are heirs of one of the oldest civilizations in the world, with a marked history of religious-cultural communication.

To enhance tourism between both countries, he said that Indonesia and Pakistan are working to start direct flights which ultimately increase linkages among people. Talking to APP, Ni Made Ayu Marthini, Deputy Minister for Marketing, Ministry of Tourism and Creative Economy, Republic of Indonesia, said that there were multiple common characteristics culturally and religiously between Indonesia and Pakistan that could help enhance people-to-people exchanges.



Monday July 03, 2023

**Relief, for now**

The IMF's announcement that it has agreed to extend a lifeline of \$3bn to rescue our crisis-hit economy has come as a relief to all stakeholders: government, business and the public.

Yet the fact that it balked at the idea of approving Islamabad's request to complete the ninth review of the just-expired EFF facility and release the \$1.2bn tranche stuck for months shows that the lender still has trust issues with Pakistan.

The new agreement comes under the IMF's short-term Stand-By Arrangement and is structured for a nine-month period to help save the teetering economy.

Even multiple interventions by Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif, who must be credited for clinching the deal, despite Finance Minister Ishaq Dar's outbursts against the Fund, couldn't bridge this gap.

The IMF, which blames policy 'missteps' and shocks like floods and the Ukraine war for our declining economy, did not think it a good idea to free politicians and their collaborators in the finance bureaucracy from its oversight in the lead-up to the elections.

It wants Islamabad to strictly execute Budget 2023-24 and not cede to pressure for unbudgeted spending and tax exemptions.

After all, an economy plagued with high inflation, drying dollar inflows and macroeconomic instability takes a long time and sustained fiscal discipline to turn around.

The SBA is a better deal as it ends the uncertainty around fiscal discipline before and after the elections, with fears of an immediate sovereign default receding as reflected by the rapidly surging prices of Pakistan's short-duration eurobond debt becoming due in 2024 and 2025.

If Pakistan follows the programme, it can unblock financing from multilateral and bilateral lenders and easily secure bilateral and commercial debt rollovers to shore up its foreign currency stocks.

Moreover, the fear of losing IMF support again will keep fiscal authorities on their toes.

But macroeconomic stability will not come free; the Fund demands that energy and foreign exchange market reforms be implemented, and the State Bank must pursue a proactive monetary policy.

That means interest rates will remain high and base electricity prices rise by a third to over Rs33 a unit.

The home currency may stabilise, even strengthen, in the short run, but further depreciation of the exchange rate cannot be ruled out once the administrative curbs on imports and dollar outflows are lifted.

Politicians and policymakers need to recognise that the deal gives them another chance to implement fundamental, structural reforms for long-term debt sustainability and macroeconomic stability.

If we implement the SBA diligently, it will help us secure a new long-term and less-encumbered bailout after the elections once the arrangement ends.

That is crucial to raise multilateral and bilateral funds to boost reserves, and buy some room to execute basic reforms for overall economic stability.

**Muhammad Amir Rana**

Pakistan has been successful in pulling off a staff-level deal with the International Monetary Fund and securing a \$3 billion stand-by arrangement. Pending approval by the IMF board in July, this pact is expected to provide immediate respite to Pakistan's acute balance-of-payments crisis and serve as a platform for opportunities for further financial support from multilateral and bilateral partners.

Reaching an agreement with the IMF was no piece of cake, as it required extensive political capital from both the civil and military leadership. Undeterred, they embarked upon a relentless diplomatic campaign in major capitals of friendly nations. However, this victory is not the end; it merely marks the begin-

ning of another arduous undertaking — securing additional financial assistance from these friendly countries. Their demands are known, and include issues related to security and terrorism. As Pakistan emerges from the shadow of adversity, one recalls that last year, it had successfully met another formidable challenge: getting off the menacing 'grey list' of the Financial Action Task Force (FATF). This achievement was the product of years of dogged determination and persistent efforts to convince the international community of its strong commitment to tightening its monetary regulations in order to prevent exploitation by terrorists and criminals.

These milestones can be seen against the backdrop of the Indian prime minister's recent visit to the US, where discussions between US President Joe Biden and Narendra Modi led to a joint statement condemning cross-border terrorism and urging the FATF to enhance its anti-money laundering and counterterrorism financing standards. It was aimed at Pakistan which swiftly is-

sued an official demarche to the US envoy in Islamabad.

The strategic community in Islamabad believes that the US and its allies are employing the IMF and FATF as geopolitical tools. This perception is further bolstered by the view that Pakistan's close strategic proximity to China and its role in Afghanistan make it an unfortunate target of coercive politics, with India emerging as the principal beneficiary.

While acknowledging the existence of such geopolitical factors, it is essential to avoid falling into the trap of victimhood that saps the nation's energy and compromises its ability to stay the course.

Externalising the issue will not yield a solution. Economists and security experts have long warned of the looming economic crisis and the ramifications of leniency towards any militant group in the country. When the consequences of policies are well known, clinging to the status quo, without making the necessary course correction, would leave little room for justifiable complaints.

Pakistan now stands at a critical juncture where

it must harness its resilience and determination to not only navigate the challenges imposed by global politics but also take transformative measures to ensure long-term solutions.

The allegation of militants infiltrating India-held Kashmir from Pakistan lacks substance. Pakistan has successfully subdued militant groups in compliance with FATF. Major groups, like the Jamaatud Dawa and Lashkar-e-Taiba, are having an internal debate but are unwilling to go to public with it due to their mistrust of and fear of exploitation by India. Friendly nations also have concerns about militant groups and extremism in Pakistan.

The way out for Pakistan is obvious. The institutions should focus on countering terrorism financing and fulfilling international obligations. Efforts to neutralise the militant infrastructure should prioritise core national interests — and any temptation to use them for internal politics must be avoided. Pakistan has established mechanisms to check the illicit financial flows under FATF compliance. Effective oversight from parliament and legisla-

ture cover will increase legitimacy and gain international trust.

In the grand tapestry of global affairs, the presence of strong institutions to combat illicit financing is not merely a matter of international trust, but a crucial factor in maintaining geopolitical equilibrium. Recognising the significance of this paradigm, Pakistan must strategically position itself as a member of esteemed international bodies, such as the FATF, to bolster its influence on the geopolitical stage.

Securing this coveted position within the FATF, Pakistan has earnestly attempted to meet the watchdog body's stringent criteria and elevate its standards.

The FATF places particular emphasis on fostering transparency, understanding beneficial ownership, and ensuring that criminals are unable to conceal their nefarious activities behind a veil of opaque corporate structures.

In the journey towards membership, Pakistan's inclusion lies in the hands of member countries engaged in the intricate process of mutual evaluation. It is within this evaluative framework that the final verdict will be rendered, determining Pakistan's destiny in the ranks of the world's foremost financial warriors.

However, lurking in Pakistan's geopolitical landscape is a formidable challenge, one that tarnishes its global image and threatens its strategic interests. This challenge emanates from the terrorist groups operating across the Afghan border.

Even as Pakistan navigates the complex web of relations with the Afghan Taliban regime, the nation steadfastly supports its regime. On the other side, the Taliban, in their unwavering stance, continue to end support to the Tehreek-i-Taliban Pakistan. -- Courtesy Dawn

**Ah, but there's the rub****Ghazi Salahuddin**

An 'Alhamdulillah' moment it was for Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif when Pakistan reached a nine-month \$3 billion staff-level agreement with the IMF on Friday, the second day of Eid. And it certainly lifted the spirits of the ruling coalition's supporters. There had been great suspense about it, with the threat of a default looming on the horizon. It was more real for some than others. Like in a thriller, the happy ending was delivered at virtually the last minute. The lead role in this 'chase sequence' was played by the prime minister. Obviously, his vindication bodes well for his party's prospects in the expected elections later this year.

But what does it mean for Pakistan and what happens in the country in the

immediate context? In the first place, of course, the bailout that has to be formally approved by the IMF Board by the middle of this month has grave economic implications.

That, obviously, is not my territory. However, comments made by independent experts and commentators suggest that this deal is a good sign for our economy. Miftah Ismail, the former finance minister of the present political arrangement, has called it good news for Pakistan during Eidul Azha. He graciously congratulated the prime minister for his personal commitment and for speaking to the IMF MD multiple times. For business and economy journalist Khurram Husain, this is a "ray of hope after a year of economic chaos".

Altogether, there is a sense of relief that Pakistan has earned an economic breathing room. At the same time, there is increased awareness about the challenges that lie ahead in the economic domain. As it is, the acquisition of a loan or financial assistance is not something to be jubilant about.

For that matter, the thought of our economic

management remaining the same cannot be reassuring. But we have generally remained prisoners of the business-as-usual mindset. It is repeatedly asserted that economic stability demands political stability — and it is politics that has forever been the source of our disorders.

This observation should allow me to turn to politics that has entered into its most treacherous and violent phase. There is the spectre of May 9 to contend with. Nothing has ever been so disruptive and so testing in our political history. While it is hard to grasp the extent and depth of what has already happened after that day of infamy, some very pertinent issues are still in the process of being resolved. Naturally, a number of questions relating to the ongoing developments in the political arena were posed to the prime minister when he addressed the press conference on Friday.

Eid has been some kind of an interlude in these proceedings. For instance, speculation about when Imran Khan would be taken into custody had rested on this premise: before Eid or

after Eid? That is how a festival like Eid becomes a marker also in our personal business.

Anyhow, the before Eid option is now dead. We are entering into the after-Eid segment of time. There have been these five holidays and the action, in a sense, begins tomorrow — on Monday. The pace of events is likely to be hectic, under the dark shadow cast by that momentous press conference of the director general of the ISPR on Monday June 26. Its easily deciphered message was that the game for Imran Khan and his party was over.

How this ending is to be scripted is the cause of tension that is now gripping the nation. There are various dots that are yet to be connected. Surely, the IMF deal is woven in this story, giving the coalition government much confidence in playing its cards. Shehbaz Sharif has explained the government's position on who will be tried in the military courts while the issue is still before a divided Supreme Court of Pakistan.

Against this backdrop, Pakistan has clearly a very welcome opportu-

nity to make a new beginning. If the preliminary IMF deal can facilitate the necessary economic reforms and the anticipated closure of the May 9 disaster can restore some harmony in the political arena, what can now impede Pakistan's gradual advancement?

Ah, but there's the rub. Apart from the fact that old ideas do not a new beginning make, our rulers have congenitally ignored or paid little attention to an entire area of national activity that is crucial for any movement in any direction. I am referring to the social sector and the building of social capital. This is something that cannot be imported or borrowed. Nor can any judgment made in whichever court can change or modify our human development indicators.

There is this simple point that should be present to the rulers when they sit on the table of authority to make policies for this nation. No crisis, whether it is economic or political, can be resolved when there is a human capital crisis in the country. The truth of this statement is manifest in the quality of

our performance and behaviour at all levels of society.

Though we did not need those reminders, international agencies and research organizations have constantly been trying to rouse us from our deep slumber, though in a careful and diplomatic nudge. We are not waking up. What opium has been administered to the rulers and the populace of Pakistan?

Almost exactly two months ago, the World Bank had released the Pakistan Human Capital Review in Karachi and Islamabad. One focus of the report was our population growth and the state of health and education. Pakistan's Human Capital Index is below the South Asian average. We can only compare it with some countries in Sub-Saharan Africa.

In his IMF deal press conference on Friday, PM Shehbaz Sharif confessed that "this is not a moment of pride but of contemplation". He would do well to hold a meeting of all high functionaries, and do some contemplation on what this World Bank Review is telling us. -- Courtesy TheNews

**Eat, pray, cancel****Muna Khan**

What is literature's purpose and should it be different in times of war? I was left wondering about this after reading Elizabeth Gilbert's decision to postpone the publication of her novel *The Snow Forest* "out of respect" for her Ukrainian readers who expressed their disappointment that her book was set in Russia. Although the book was set to be released in February 2024, reviewers left one-star reviews on Goodreads, having read only the description about it being set in 1930s Russia.

*The Snow Forest* is a historical novel based loosely on the Lykov family, Russian Christian fundamentalists who moved to a remote part of Siberia to avoid religious persecution. They lived in isolation from the 1930s to 1970s when they were discovered by a group of geologists. Gilbert said she was inspired by their story during the pandemic, her period of isolation.

"It is not the time for this book to be published," Gilbert said in a video statement she published on Instagram a few days after announcing the publication of *The Snow Forest*. "And I do not want to add any harm to a group of people who have already experienced, and are all continuing to experience, grievous and extreme harm."

I wonder if she'd have done this if her story was set in Palestine, or Kashmir, or Xinjiang or any other conflict-riddled territory. Gilbert is arguably

most known for *Eat Pray Love* — a memoir cum self-help book cum travelogue, which stayed on the New York Times bestseller list for 187 weeks. She has laid open her life bare for readers, so I can understand why she'd feel like she owes them something. But she has received a lot of censure from them.

She has also been criticised for being bullied into postponing her novel and how such actions pose a threat to freedom of speech. When will it be OK to publish *The Snow Forest*: when the war is 'over' or will Ukrainian readers — how do you quantify this — decide this?

I wonder if her act of self-cancellation is an act of boycott and non-violent resistance that has often led to success — albeit at painful costs: non-violent protests in the subcontinent to British rule, sanctions against apartheid in South Africa and the BDS movement against Israeli occupation of Palestine.

That was then and it was collective. Today, it is easier to organise on the internet, as we saw with the case of the Ukrainian reviewers on Goodreads. Protest takes different forms — be it street art, music, scathing journalism, or diaspora in India standing up for WSJ reporter Sabrina Siddiqi who faced a torrent of abuse from Modi supporters after she asked the Indian prime minister about human rights abuses at a press conference in D.C.

I return to the question: what is literature for in times of conflict? Kate Malby in *I News* offered a possible answer: "If literature is not about the cultivation of human empathy, it is nothing."

History teaches us how aggressors attempt to wipe out their victims' culture and identity in wars. Putin is no exception. But

as many have pointed out, Ukrainians are doing the same in their attempt to erase Russia. Malby writes how Ukrainian writers are refusing to share space with Russian dissident writers like Mikhail Shishkin who is in exile because of his open criticism of Putin. I'm not questioning calls to boycott Russian music productions, art, literature but to ask who joins in those calls, and when they do, are they endorsing one group's nationalistic endeavours?

Socialists have noted how support for the Ukrainian war effort comes from a group "whose rabid hatred of Russia is historically rooted in Cold War anti-communism" and that Russia won't be forgiven for its socialist, Bolshevik ties. Without such questions that allow for reflections, I fear we're headed to an era of book burning. (We're already living in an era of book bans.)

Nationalism is problematic especially when myths are peddled as fact to legitimise policies and power. Writers — fiction and non-fiction — have an important role to play in challenging myths, lies and various groups' assertions. I believe that is art's purpose. The anger at the atrocities of war should be redirected at corporations and industries that support those efforts, not artists who set their novels in, this case, Russia.

Journalists challenge nationalist, military, hyper religious narratives every day in Pakistan, often at great cost. But many also practise self-censorship out of fear. Soon they may be joined by artists who will feel they have to create for popularity rather than purpose. Literature and art should not be weaponised. You may not want to read Gilbert's new book but that should be your choice, not one made for you by a mob. -- Courtesy Dawn

**Focus on food****Aisha Khan**

COP27 saw a step change in the focus on food systems as a vital sector for climate action, but investment and policies continue to fall far short. In the lead-up to COP28, the June discussions in Bonn made significant progress in the first week but encountered a breakdown regarding the establishment of a coordination group for collaborative efforts on agriculture and food security. The negotiations concluded with a procedural outcome that is expected to be followed with a draft text in Dubai for delivery of food system transformation that ensures sustainable food security.

The latest Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) report highlights the huge impact of climate change on food systems and warns that, without urgent action, millions more people will be at risk of hunger. At the same time, industrial food production systems and ultra-processed foods are fuelling an obesity pandemic. Food systems (across the whole food supply chain) are responsible for 34 per cent of global GHG emissions, and food energy systems are fundamentally intertwined. The challenges to reforming food systems include climate change constraints on pollinators, soil quality, water availability, and crop variety feasibility. However, the threats of unsustainable agriculture as the greatest driver of biodiversity loss (responsible for 80pc of deforestation and 70pc freshwater use) are undermining resili-

ence, increasing fragility in food systems and hampering adaptation efforts. As the world grapples with food shortages, with more than 250 million people facing acute food insecurity, exacerbated by the climate crisis, it is time to change the rules of international finance that are stacked against the world's poor, and accelerate momentum for fit-for-purpose food systems.

COP28 must set clear goals, laying out pathways and identifying priority policies and investments to deliver food system transformation. The benchmarks for defining pathways and ambition at sub-national, national, regional and multilateral food systems transformation must be guided by a just transition. This will require taking into consideration food sovereignty, equitable food distribution and protection for farmers, farm workers, processors as well as marginalised communities, placing small-holder and family farms at the heart of food system transition plans.

Moving beyond benchmarks that are already embedded in international agreement and commitments, the new contours require clear goals from governments and the private sector to address food systems reform in an integrated way, including meeting Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), commitments under UNFCCC and the CBD Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework.

For the Global South, meeting SDG 2.1 to end hunger and ensure access by all people to safe, nutritious and sufficient food all year round, is becoming a distant dream. This is less a problem of global food supply and more due to food systems that prioritise profits over public health and the environment. Without a massive investment in food systems and wider develop-

ment needs, large populations in the Global South will face a daily struggle to secure sufficient food for themselves and their families.

The agriculture methane emissions by industrialised countries also need clear, time-bound targets for reducing and implementing policies that focus on the harmful impacts of industrial livestock farming and damage to ecosystems, water quality and health, labour rights and animal welfare. Globally, the use of inorganic fertilisers has increased tenfold since the 1960s. This has been a key driver of industrialisation of agriculture, increasing yields in many places but with knock-out impacts on soil, health and ecosystems.

In Pakistan, 81pc of farm holdings are less than five hectares in size. While smallholders and family farmers are ideally suited for embracing agro-ecological and regenerative practices, they often face investment structures that limit their access to finance and exclude them from supply chains dominated by larger businesses. Pakistan ranks 92 out of 107 countries with 43pc of the population food-insecure and 18pc facing severe food shortages. With rapid urbanisation and greater quantities of food consumed and wasted in cities, Pakistan needs to revisit policies, repurpose agricultural subsidies and align objectives with initiatives like the Milan Urban Food Policy Pact.

The FAO roadmap for food systems announced at COP27 with the first output due at COP28, can help Pakistan improve sustainability whilst also enhancing resilience and improving food security. It is critical to plan and set milestones now for different sub-sectors for the agri-food system to 2050. -- Courtesy Dawn



# Pakistan will come out of all problems: Tessori

**Governor Sindh committed for welfare of people**

KARACHI (APP): Sindh Governor Mohammed Kamran Khan Tessori on Sunday said that a political party, carried out attacks on May 9, was criticizing a recent agreement with International Monetary Fund (IMF) and it would fail in all its nefarious designs.

He said that the country was facing economic challenges and hoped that it would come out of all problems.

The Governor said that all-out efforts were being made to make the country strong at all levels.

He said that Information Technology (IT) course entry test would be conducted soon.

Kamran Tessori said he had asked IT minister to provide 100,000 laptops for the youth.

He said that Hujjaj had returned with prayers for their children. He said that their prayers also saved the country from the clouds of default.

He further said that the prays of Hujjaj resulted in deal with IMF.

The Governor hoped that the coalition government would do something for the development of the country.

Meanwhile, Sindh Governor Mohammed Kamran Khan Tessori has said that when he took the charge of Governor, he

committed himself to do whatever he could do for the welfare of the people.

He stated this in a reception held in recognition of his services by businessman and CEO unity foods Farrukh Amin at his residence.

The Governor said that he was thankful to God for providing him a chance to serve the people on the occasion of Eidul Azha.

Kamran Tessori also thanked the people, who cooperated with him while serving the people.

On the occasion, famous industrialist Aqil Karim Dhedhi, and other businessmen were also present.



MUZAFFERABAD: A destructive view of the warehouse as burnt after fire due to short circuit, near Tanga stop at the Capital of AJK.

## Int'l seminar will organize on completion of 10-year of CPEC

PESHAWAR (APP): Preparations for holding an International Seminar on the completion of 10 years of China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) kicked off in the provincial capital Peshawar which would be scheduled on July 5.

The Chinese Cultural Center China Window in Peshawar is going to present papers on the usefulness of CPEC in the seminar organized in collaboration with the Higher Education Commission, KP Investment Board and IM Sciences.

The seminar will have four sessions in which prominent personalities from different fields of life will express their views on this

great project of Pakistan-China friendship.

During the seminar to be held on July 5, awards will also be given to those Pakistani and Chinese companies who have invested a lot in CPEC projects and besides providing employment to a large number of people, have contributed to the economic development of Pakistan.

Played a prominent role, according to the organizers of China Window, this will be the first and unique seminar of its kind in Peshawar, in which the speakers will express their views on the project on the completion of ten years of CPEC, while videos of various projects will also be shown.

## Positive activities stressed for healthy personality, development of youth

DERA ISMAIL KHAN (APP): Station Commander Brigadier Rashid Khan has underlined the need for promoting positive activities among the youth for their healthy personality development.

He expressed these views while speaking as the chief guest on the occasion of the Wrestling Competition organized with the support of the Pakistan Army at Haq Nawaz Park.

He opined that youth had to play a key role in national development and they should be attracted towards healthy activities like wrestling for a healthy society's development.

He said All-Pakistan Wrestling Competitions would be organized with District Wrestling Association to provide opportunities in sports to citizens.

Famous wrestlers and

a large number of citizens were present in Haq Nawaz Park to watch the wrestling competitions.

As many as 20 wrestlers aged 15 to 35 years participated from across the country.

Those who were declared winners included Hamad wrestler, Qadir wrestler, Dildar wrestler, Tariq wrestlers and Amar wrestler and the chief guest awarded them cash prizes and trophies. The station commander, Brigadier Rashid Khan was apprised about the historical status of the Dasi Wrestling game and the problems being faced by the wrestlers.

The station commander assured them of his full cooperation in this regard and added that all possible help would be provided to enable them to brighten the name of the country not only at the national level but also at the international level.



LAHORE: Visitors viewing displayed artworks at Lahore Museum.

## Desecration of Holy Quran condemned

LAHORE (APP): A political party head has strongly condemned desecration of holy Quran in Sweden recently.

Pakistan Markazi Muslim League President Khalid Masood Sindhu said in a statement on Sunday the incident was unacceptable and painful for the Muslims.

He said that allowing pages of the holy book to be set on fire by the Swedish authorities on Eidul Azha in front of Muslims was intolerable. He said it was a conspiracy to hurt the sentiments of billions of Muslims in the name of freedom of speech.

He said the desecration incident was the second tragic incident of Islamophobia of the West during the current year. He demanded the government register strong protest on the incident after summoning the Swedish ambassador at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

## Rain predicted from July 3 to 8 in KP

PESHAWAR (APP): The Regional Meteorological Department on Sunday predicted five days rains starting July 3 to 8 in most parts of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.

According to a notification issued by Provincial Disaster Management Authority (PDMA) in which Regional Met Office Peshawar has informed that a new spell of rains is starting for which people are urged to take all precautionary measures to avoid any loss of life, damages to infrastructure and crops and animals.

Furthermore, all concerned authorities asked to take the safety measures. Tourists to be informed about weather forecast, ensure availability of all emergency services staff and machineries and other resources, and all concerned line departments to remain vigilant in restoring road.



PESHAWAR: Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Governor Haji Ghulam Ali in a group photo with people during Eid greeting at Governor House.

## State minister says: Efforts on to give maximum relief

SARGODHA (APP): Admitting that the country was facing price-hike, triggered by external factors, State Minister for Production and Industries Tasneem Ahmed Qureshi urged people on Sunday to take special care of those who have no resources to make ends meet.

Talking to APP here, he said the coalition government was utilising all resources to provide relief to the public. It provided relief to the salaried class, pensioners and labourers in the current budget, he added. The minister prayed for peace and prosperity of

the Muslim world and for alleviation of sufferings of Muslims across the world, particularly the oppressed brothers and sisters in the Indian Illegally Occupied Jammu and Kashmir and Palestine.

Tasneem Qureshi said that peace, tolerance, brotherhood and obedience to the commands of Allah Almighty were the messages conveyed through sacrifices and performance of Hajj. Meeting such requirements through practical measures would fulfill real objectives of the recently concluded Eidul Azha event, he added.

## Nasir Shah lauds efforts of LG representatives on Eidul Adha

KARACHI (APP): Sindh Minister for Local Government (LG) Syed Nasir Hussain Shah while appreciating the efforts of all elected local government representatives of PPP and other parties on Eid-ul-Azha, said on Sunday that the enthusiasm and passion of all local body representatives for public service was praiseworthy.

He said that the Sindh government believed in support and cooperation of all the elected local body representatives, who had the passion to serve the people.

He said that Solid Waste and Management along with elected local government

representatives made possible efforts to provide relief to the people.

Nasir Shah said that all the local bodies representatives should be active in their respective areas until the garbage and complete cleaning. He said that arrangements should be made to immediately remove the garbage from the areas.

The Minister said that the people should register their complaints on solid waste management helpline number 1128 regarding waste and sanitation. He said that action would be taken against the officers concerned, who did not address public complaints.

## GCU adopts HEC's new UG policy

LAHORE (Online): Government College University (GCU) Lahore has made a groundbreaking announcement, signaling a monumental shift in the undergraduate education system on offer at this circa 160 years old Institution of higher education. Starting from the Fall 2023 semester, the University will implement the Higher Education Commission's (HEC) new undergraduate (UG) policy, revolutionizing the university experience and aligning it with the esteemed well rounded education standards of top universities of the world.

One of the most exciting aspects of the new UG policy is the opportunity for GCU students to learn from General Education courses. For example, all students will need to study courses

of Natural Sciences; Arts and Humanities; and Social Sciences irrespective of your subject of specialisation. They will all study ICT Applications; Entrepreneurship; Community Engagement as well as Ideology and Constitution of Pakistan within the first two years. As before, they will need to study Islamic Studies and English.

Moreover, they will be able earn an Associate Degree after just two years of study. This accelerated path not only grants them a recognized qualification but also allows for quicker entry into the job market or further studies.

GCU's UG programs will now also offer a double-major option, enabling students to pursue degrees in two different disciplines.



HYDERABAD: Children enjoying the mechanical swing ride at Fan Land Park.

## Climate change-induced sizzling temperature poses threat to ecological balance

PESHAWAR (APP): Highly vulnerable to climate change vulnerabilities, Pakistan was also facing a looming threat to an ecological and socioeconomic balances besides shortage of water resources owing to rising of temperature and fast melting of glaciers, affecting people.

The rise of global temperatures and greenhouses gas emissions have put Pakistan under a heightening risk of disasters, including heatwaves, droughts, floods, and melting glaciers.

"Pakistan is highly susceptible to climate change-induced weather patterns including rising temperatures,

unpredictable rains and floods besides fast melting of glaciers in Gilgit Baltistan and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa that could be tackled through whopping plantation," said Tauheedul Haq, former conservator of KP Forest Department while talking to APP on Sunday. He said Pakistan was a unique country where over 7,253 glaciers were providing fresh water supplies to millions of people for irrigation, drinking and industrial purposes and its preservation was imperative for agriculture growth and economic prosperity.

Mostly located in Himalaya, Hindu Kush and Karakorum regions of Gilgit Baltistan and

## Radio Pakhtunkhwa role in sharing joys with people is commendable, Feroze

Independent Report PESHAWAR: Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Caretaker Minister Information, Hajj and Aduq/Barrister Feroze Jamal Shah Kakakhel has said that the spirit of sacrifice should be throughout the year and not just on Eid. He said Eid-ul-Azha is an opportunity for the entire Muslim world to celebrate and share happiness collectively.

On the contrary, he said, if we always keep fresh the spirit of eternal self-sacrifice as demonstrated by Hazrat Ibrahim and Ismail (peace be upon them) and follow

it in the true sense, then Muslims all over the world can get rid of divisions and become united and develop by leaps and bounds. He was speaking as chief guest at the special Eid show De Akhtar Mulghaire on the occasion of Eid-ul-Adha at the studio of Pakhtunkhwa Radio Peshawar FM 92.2. Secretary Information and Public Relations Mukhtiar Ahmed and station director Pakhtunkhwa Radio Ghulam Husain Ghazi also participated in this Eid show while Prof Dr. Abasin Yousafzai and producer Fitrat Bunerli hosted it.

Barrister Feroze Jamal Kakakhel hailed the

innovation and public acceptance of Pakhtunkhwa Radio and said that the media as a whole can light the candles of hope in the society by pulling the society and people from the morass of growing anxieties and despair. On a question of Dr. Abasin, the Minister said that Eid is not only for children but also for adults. On Eid, he said, most of the families get together after a long separation away from their city or homeland, while the pilgrims also return to their homes after the obligation of Hajj and share the joys with each other.

## 'Robber' killed in police encounter

FAISALABAD (APP): Punjab Highway Patrol (PHP) police claim to have killed an alleged robber in an encounter in the area of Baluchini police station.

Police spokesman Inspector Rizwan Bhatti said here on Sunday that a PHP team had received information that two armed bandits were on their looting spree near Asghar Abad patrolling post late Saturday night.

The team, headed by Assistant Sub Inspector (ASI) Maqsood Shahid, rushed to the spot and signalled two suspects riding a motorcycle.

## Mega sewerage project to be completed in two months: Rana Amir

BUREWALA (APP): Secretary Coordination to Chief Minister of Punjab Rana Amir Karim Khan said that the mega sewerage project of the city would be completed in the next two months and the major issues would be resolved.

Talking to local people and journalists at his residence on Sunday, he said that the mega sewerage project was started in 2014 and initiated in collaboration with World Bank but was delayed in the past due to negligence.

He said that special focus was being paid on the project and it would be completed in the next two months.

"No negligence would be tolerated in this context as the cost of the project has already reached over Rs 500 million due to delay," he added.

Rana Amir said that he himself and the local parliamentarians striving hard to get the required funds for development projects in the city at the earliest.



KARACHI: A view of the sea shells at Sea View after the recent storm in Arabian Sea in Provincial Capital.

## 9 girls among 10 abducted from Faisalabad

FAISALABAD (APP): Ten people including nine girls were abducted from different parts of Faisalabad during the past 12 hours.

A police spokesman said here on Sunday that 19-year-old Asma Tahira and her 18-year-old cousin Muqaddas were abducted from Data Colony Raza Abad whereas Nafeesi Bibi was kidnapped from Nallaywala Chak Jumra.

Similarly, a youth Atif was kidnapped from Roza Park Mansoorabad, Mehnaz Munir from Chak No. 197-RB, Shakeela Umar Daraz from Ali Town, Maria Rabnawaz from Chak No. 241-RB and Saira was kidnapped from Chak No. 228-GB whereas Iqra and her sister Aleena.

## Rescue 1122 extends its services in 26 emergencies during Eid-ul-Azha

ABBOTTABAD (APP): The Emergency Rescue Service 1122 Abbottabad Sunday has responded and provided assistance in 26 emergencies throughout the Eid-ul-Azha vacation.

According to the spokesperson of Rescue 1122 Abbottabad Sajid Iqbal, the District Emergency Officer Muhammad Arif Khattak canceled the holidays of all staff members to ensure efficient and timely services for the general public during Eid-ul-Azha vacations.

Additionally, instructions were given to establish medical camps at various tourist

destinations. The Emergency Officers of Rescue Stations Fahad Ali Masood conducted visits and celebrated Eid with their colleagues in the camps.

Rescue 1122 Abbottabad delivered services of international standards in response to 26 emergencies during the three days of Eid. These emergencies consisted of 3 traffic accidents, 22 medical incidents, and 1 event related to recovery or animal rescue.

During this time, Rescue 1122 provided on-site medical assistance to over 24 persons involved in different incidents.

## Climate change-induced sizzling temperature poses threat to ecological balance

Swat, Panjokra, Kabul and Indus throughout the year.

He said Pakistan contains more glaciers than any other parts of earth outside of the polar region. "Our irrigation network has largely depended on these glaciers that continuously re-charge our irrigated system in all provinces," said Tauheedul Haq. He said Pakistan was heading towards a situation of water shortage and food insecurity due to fast melting of glaciers, poor investment in agriculture, flooding, rapid population growth and water loss.

According to National Water Policy 2018, the per capita surface water availability has declined from 5,260 cubic meters per year in

1951 to around 1,000 cubic meters in 2016 and this quantity was likely to further drop to about 860 cubic meters in next few years, marking our transition from a "water stressed" to a "water scarce" country.

The policy disclosed that the minimum water requirement to avoid food and health implications of water scarcity was 1,000 cubic meters per capita per year and the situation underlined the need for rapid development and management of the country's water resources especially completion of construction of dams of Mohmand and Diamir Bhasha to conserve the precious commodities for future generation.



## KSA, UAE keen to invest in Pakistan: Musadiq Malik

ISLAMABAD (APP): Minister of State for Petroleum Dr Musadiq Malik on Sunday said that Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, and United Arab Emirates are taking keen interest in Pakistani information technology, agriculture and mining sectors.

KSA has planned to fix funds of 24 billion dollars for investment purposes, while U.A.E allocated 22 billion dollars funds for exploring opportunities in three sectors of Pakistan, he stated in an interview with a private television channel. The heavy investment in three major sectors of Pakistan would open many job opportunities for young people, he added. Our young people having knowledge of advanced technology are fully capable to show the world about their skills, he said. We are hopeful to bring business opportunities

here in this country, he said. He said the government has recently constituted committees for One-window operations to facilitate the investors. Commenting on Nawaz Sharif's arrival in Pakistan, he said, after the announcement of the date by the election commission of Pakistan, the former prime minister will come Pakistan to lead the election campaign. He said the incumbent government's tenure will be finished by August mid and the caretaker set-up will invite ECP to announce the schedule for general elections.

He said it is the responsibility of ECP to hold the next elections in a transparent manner. He said the PML-N under the guidance of Nawaz Sharif would sweep the general elections. To a question about the next leadership role in this country, he said the PML-N will decide

about the leadership role. To a question about relief to poor people, he said despite economic challenges, the government has provided maximum relief to employees, and pensioners besides the people working in the private sector. About load-shedding of gas and electricity, he said, we have issued directives to the department concerned to ensure energy supply during cooking breakfast, lunch and dinner timing. He said that a discussion has been made with Azerbaijan regarding the provision of LNG cargo to Pakistan before next winter. To a question about IMF, he said a nine-month relief through an agreement has been made to run the economic affairs in a proper manner. He hoped that heavy investment from the Gulf region would boost business activities besides open job opportunities in Pakistan.



**KARACHI:** Workers are peeling the "Siri Paye" outside their shop at nanakwarha area, the paye and Siri is the one of the favorite and famous dish in Pakistan.

## Speakers say: 5G has the potential to revolutionize industries

LAHORE (Online): It is evident that 5G has the potential to revolutionize industries and drive economic transformation on a global scale.

Speaking at a seminar on "The role of 5G in Economy" held here today under the aegis of Gold Ring Economic Forum, a strategic think tank, Coordinator to Federal Tax Ombudsman Meher Kashif Younis Sunday said that the impact of 5G on the economy is expected to be significant, with numerous potential benefits across various industries. He said 5G technology will open up new possibilities for innovation and entrepreneurship. Startups and businesses will be able to leverage the high-speed and low-latency capabilities of 5G to develop and deploy new applications, services, and business models. This will spur economic growth,

create jobs, and drive technological advancements, he added.

He said this improved connectivity will enable faster and more reliable communication between devices, leading to increased productivity and efficiency across industries. He said the low latency and high reliability of 5G networks will enable real-time monitoring and control of machinery, improved supply chain management, and overall operational efficiency. He said this will fuel the growth of mobile-based services, such as mobile gaming, streaming platforms, e-commerce, and mobile advertising. Meher Kashif Younis said the widespread adoption of 5G is expected to contribute significantly to economic growth and productivity gains. According to estimates by the World Economic Forum,

## PFC to take part in 2<sup>nd</sup> Intl Expo, Trade Fair Kabul starting on July 16

ISLAMABAD (APP): Pakistan Furniture Council (PFC) will take part in the 3-days Imam Abu Hanifa 2<sup>nd</sup> International and National Expo and Trade Fair Kabul starting from July 16 to discover business opportunities and explore new market access for Pakistani products.

Chief Executive Officer PFC Mian Kashif Ashfaq talking to a delegation of industrialists led by Ch Zeeshan Elahi Arain CEO Marvel Cables here on Sunday said that PFC along with Chenone will be participating in this mega event, said a news release. "Chenone will also exhibit its high-quality

international standards products to capture their share in the global market besides it's an excellent opportunity to showcase Pak products and develop business deals with international buyers", he added. Mian Kashif Ashfaq said that around over hundreds of Pak companies will be exhibiting their products which included furniture, textile, garments, leather garments, sportswear, sports goods engineering, etc. He said this expo will also offer professional buyers a sourcing platform with a wide variety of products ranging from basics to the most creative and qualitative.



**FAISALABAD:** Workers preserving sacrificial animal hides at their warehouse.



**FAISALABAD:** A worker is busy in his work at Tissue making factory, to earn daily wages for the livelihood of his family.

## Pakistan is now firmly back on right track, says Miftah Ismail on IMF agreement

**Monitoring Desk**  
KARACHI: Reacting to the International Monetary Fund (IMF) agreement, former finance minister Miftah Ismail on Friday said, "Pakistan is now firmly back on the right track".

Pakistan and the IMF reached a long-awaited staff-level agreement (SLA) on a \$3 billion "stand-by arrangement" (SBA), the global lender announced today.

The \$3 billion funding, spread over nine months, is higher than expected for Pakistan. The country was awaiting the release of the remaining \$2.5 billion from a \$6.5 billion bailout package agreed in 2019, which expires on Friday (today).

Taking to Twitter, Miftah said that the signing of the \$3 billion agreement was "great

news" for Pakistan. He also congratulated Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif, who ensured that the deal went through because of his "personal commitment and intervention".

"As I have been saying, a deal with the Fund is the best insurance we have against default. Now InshaAllah the clouds of default will recede, demand for hoarding dollars will slowly decrease, and there will be renewed hopefulness and vibrancy in the business climate," said Miftah.

The former Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) leader noted that Pakistan lost nine months in reaching the agreement. He also acknowledged the efforts of his successor Ishaq Dar, State Minister for Finance Aisha Ghaus Pasha, special assistant to the prime minister on

Finance, secretaries of finance, revenue and power and their teams in securing the deal.

"We must recognise that this IMF deal gives us yet another chance for making fundamental reforms. Unless we undertake these reforms, Pakistan will remain at the mercy of multilateral lenders and the people of Pakistan will continue to pay for the structural and governance failures of their governments," said Miftah.

The former finance minister was part of the ruling PML-N. However, he recently decided to step down as the party's Sindh general secretary and all other positions after months of bitterness over his removal and the subsequent appointment of Ishaq Dar as the finance minister in September last year.

## Actions needed to make northern regions a center of tourism: Ahsan Bakhtawari

ISLAMABAD (INP): Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry President Ahsan Zafar Bakhtawari met Chief Secretary Gilgit-Baltistan Mohiuddin Ahmed Wani.

During the meeting held at Gilgit-Baltistan House, Islamabad, he briefed about the first ICCI International Tourism Summit to be held in Skardu from July 7 to 9 next month. On this occasion, arrangements and measures regarding the tourism conference were also discussed in detail.

President Islamabad Chamber while speaking said that the tourism sector is the easiest source of foreign investment for Pakistan. There are probably no other tourist destinations in the world like our northern regions. However, our

problem is that unfortunately tourism has never been given priority in our country and due to lack of concrete measures in this regard, tourists are turning to other countries.

Along with the completion of the CPEC project and the construction of Skardu International Airport, more steps need to be taken to promote tourism. International flights should be launched in Skardu. Flights from all over the world should come to Skardu.

Apart from this, special attention should be paid to the construction of infrastructure for the promotion of tourism in Skardu. For the promotion of tourism, new restaurants, hotels and guesthouses should be built to attract tourists.

## Brazilian analysts upgrade GDP's growth forecasts

BRASILIA (Xinhua/APP): Brazilian financial analysts raised their projected GDP expansion in 2023 from 2.14 to 2.18 percent, the seventh consecutive weekly upgrade, and upped the 2024 forecast from 1.20 to 1.22 percent, the Central Bank of Brazil.

Analysts lowered the forecast inflation for the year from 5.12 to 5.06 percent, and for next year, from 4.00 to 3.98 percent, according to the bank's weekly Focus survey of the country's top financial institutions.

Brazil's target inflation is 3.25 percent for 2023 and 3 percent for 2024, with a 1.5 percentage point margin of tolerance in both cases.

Market analysts maintained the forecast for the benchmark Selic interest rate at 12.25 percent for this year.



**HYDERABAD:** Female farmers are busy in seeding rice crops in their fields at the bypass.

## Farmers stressed need for switching over to "Inter cropping"

LAHORE (Online): Chairman Rice Research and Development Board Punjab Shahzad Ali Malik Sunday stressed the need for switching over to "Inter cropping," for growing two or multiple crops simultaneously in the same field for bumper agricultural production to achieve food autarky besides boosting profitability of farmers across the country.

Talking to a delegation of progressive farmers led by Pir Saddam Hussain Shah of Pindi Shaikh Musa district Faisalabad here today he said Inter cropping can significantly enhance overall crop productivity.

By growing different crops together, farmers can maximize the use of

available resources, such as sunlight, water, and nutrients, he added. He said the complementary nature of different crops helps in better utilization of the growing space, resulting in higher yields per acre. The added income from inter cropping can improve farm profitability and financial stability.

He said Inter cropping provides a form of insurance against crop failure. If one crop is susceptible to pests, diseases, or adverse weather conditions, the other crops in the mixture can compensate for the losses, he added. This diversification of crops reduces the risk of complete crop failure and helps farmers maintain a more stable income.

## Stocks push higher as investors track China

NEW YORK (APP): Global stocks advanced as China's growth reassurances and solid economic data in the United States helped reduce recession worries.

US consumer confidence surged unexpectedly to an 18-month high in June, fueled by an uptick in the outlook for family finances.

Meanwhile new home sales surged in May to reach the highest rate in over a year, while orders of big-ticket manufactured items rose again last month, fueled by a sharp jump in orders for transportation equipment.

"There was a lot of US economic data released today and the key takeaway was that the economy is not breaking just yet," said Oanda's Edward Moya.

## Ahsan calls for increasing exports

NAROWAL (INP): Minister for Planning and Development Ahsan Iqbal has stressed the need for increasing exports of the country by utilising all available resources.

Addressing a news conference in Narowal on Sunday, the federal minister said five main fields of economy including agriculture, IT, manpower, minerals and industries could play a vital role in increase of exports and to deal with the economic crisis.

The Planning Minister said Pakistan has the lowest GDP growth rate in the region and by

paying special attention to SMEs we can achieve the set target. He said that we must increase the tax to GDP ratio for self-sufficiency. He also urged the nation to adopt the tax culture for the development of the country.

Iqbal said Pakistan is now on a right track after its agreement with the IMF and this Stand by Arrangement will be helpful in economic turnaround of Pakistan.

He regretted that the PTI has tried to sabotage the IMF's agreement with Pakistan but could not succeed.



**QUETTA:** An elderly man pushing his handcart full of coconuts for selling to earn livelihood for his family.

## BMP says: IMF financing good Dev. but reforms must to end economic crisis

ISLAMABAD (Online): The Federation of Pakistan Chambers of Commerce and Industry's Businessmen Panel (BMP) has termed the agreement with IMF as a positive development for the economy but warned that the multilateral donors financing might not bring any significant impact on struggling economy, as the sustainable solution to Pakistan's economic issues lies in the structural reforms and consistent policies.

FPCCI former president and BMP Chairman Mian Anjum Nisar said the deal would end speculation of a possible default, but the country's debt troubles won't end there, as the more IMF aid will be

needed in 2024, he added. He said that the rupee will strengthen which will reduce inflation, so, the IMF agreement is overall a good development.

The BMP Chairman expressed his opinion on the agreement with the International Monetary Fund and said that there is positive news at the beginning of the new fiscal year, as it was not expected but the agreement was reached.

Now the rupee will strengthen, which will reduce inflation. He said that there is a 9-month agreement which is very positive, as the caretaker government will remain in the facility, however, the IMF conditions have increased the cost of production.



**RAWALPINDI:** Shopkeepers are packing the Charcoal for customers at their shop in Ganjmandi area as due high demand because of Bakra Eid.

## MEPCO nabbed 16985 power pilferers during 2022-23

MULTAN (APP): Multan Electric Power Company (MEPCO) caught 16985 power pilferers across the 13 districts of South Punjab and imposed a Rs 534.2 million fine on them during the fiscal year 2022-23.

Rs 11.9 million fine was imposed on 343 commercial consumers and 90 FIRs were registered. Rs 12 million fine was imposed on 42 industrial consumers (industrialists) and 16 cases were registered. Rs 69.2 million fine was imposed on 337 agricultural tubewell users (farmers) and 128 FIRs were registered.

Rs 4.6 million fine was imposed on 37 other consumers and six cases were registered during fiscal year 2022-23.

## Apple's market value ends above \$3tr for first time

**Monitoring Desk**  
O A K L A N D / BENGALURU: Apple Inc's stock market value ended a trading session above \$3 trillion for the first time on Friday, lifted by signs of improving inflation and bets that the iPhone maker will successfully expand into new markets.

Shares of the world's most valuable company jumped 2.3% to \$193.97, giving it a market capitalisation of \$3.05 trillion, Refinitiv data showed.

It was Apple's fourth straight record high close. The Cupertino, California company's market

capitalisation briefly peaked above \$3 trillion in intra-day trading on January 3, 2022, before closing the session just below that mark.

Heavyweight growth stocks including Apple, Nvidia Corp and Tesla Inc rose sharply after a Commerce Department report showed the Personal Consumption Expenditure price index advanced less in May than in April, reflecting progress in the Federal Reserve's fight against inflation.

Apple has surged 49% so far in 2023 in a rally by several of Wall Street's most valuable companies.



## UN chief says Haiti urgently needs international security force and humanitarian aid

**Monitoring Desk**  
PORT-AU-PRINCE: U.N. Secretary-General António Guterres visited Haiti and again called on foreign governments with strong security forces to help the struggling country fight a surge in gang violence.

The appeal was made after Guterres met with Prime Minister Ariel Henry, civil society leaders, U.N. staff and the heads of various political parties during his one-day trip.

"Now is not the time to forget Haiti or weaken our solidarity with its people," he said.

Guterres met with reporters at Haiti's international airport in Port-au-Prince, who pressed him on whether an international security force would be deployed as requested by the prime minister last October.

Guterres said he spoke about the issue with Henry, as well as the need

to hold credible elections. "I am not here to tell Haitians what to do. I am here to listen to them and to encourage them to build consensus as broadly as possible to move the transition process forward," he said.

Henry, who has been running the country since the July 2021 assassination of President Jovenel Moïse, has been under pressure to hold elections. But experts have noted it is impossible to do so given the current level of violence in the country, with gangs controlling an estimated 80% of the capital.

There are no democratically elected institutions left in Haiti, with the country failing to hold legislative elections since October 2019.

"Haiti must return to democratic order as soon as possible," Guterres said.

He also said Haiti urgently needs more humani-

tarian aid as poverty deepens and starvation cases spike. Gangs are preventing the movement of goods and people and controlling access to water, food and health care as civilians attempt to fight back via a violent uprising.

"I felt all the exhaustion of a population that has been facing for too long a cascade of crises and unsustainable living conditions," Guterres said. "One in two people in Haiti live in extreme poverty, face hunger and lack regular access to drinking water."

Guterres' visit came just days after the U.N.'s human rights expert in Haiti visited the country and also called for an international security force and a weapons embargo.

Guterres is scheduled to attend a summit Sunday in Trinidad and Tobago held by Caricom, a Caribbean trade bloc.



**DILI:** East Timor's President Jose Ramos Horta (right) witnesses the inauguration of the country's new Prime Minister Xanana Gusmao at the presidential palace.

## Leader of Russia's Wagner helped boot UN peacekeepers from Mali, US says

**Monitoring Desk**  
WASHINGTON: The United States said on Friday it was concerned about the Russian Wagner Group's destabilizing activities in Africa and accused the leader of the mercenary force of helping to engineer the departure of U.N. peacekeepers from Mali.

The U.S. has information indicating Mali's transition government has paid more than \$200 million to Wagner since late 2021, White House national security spokesmen on John Kirby told reporters. Kirby said Wagner Group leader Yevgeny Prigozhin, who led an aborted mutiny against the

Kremlin last weekend, helped engineer the departure of the United Nations peacekeeping force, known as MINUSMA, "to further Wagner's interests."

"We know that senior Malian officials worked directly with Prigozhin employees to inform the U.N. secretary general that Mali had revoked consent for the MINUSMA mission," Kirby said.

The U.N. Security Council voted on Friday to end the mission. Earlier this month, Mali asked the U.N. peacekeeping force to leave "without delay", citing a "crisis of confidence" between Malian authorities and the decade-

long U.N. mission. Two days before, the country's interim president, Colonel Assimi Goïta, said on Twitter he was very satisfied with a phone call he had with Russian President Vladimir Putin, which he described as "direct and sincere."

Kirby said that despite the money paid by Mali to the Wagner Group, which a week ago launched an aborted armed mutiny in Russia, the security situation in the country has not improved.

Kirby's comments marked another step in the U.S. effort to push back against Wagner's influence in Africa.

## Xanana Gusmao inaugurated as East Timor's prime minister

**Monitoring Desk**  
DILI: East Timor independence fighter Xanana Gusmao was inaugurated as prime minister of Southeast Asia's youngest democracy, marking his return to power almost a decade after he left the government.

More than two decades after independence, the country is still struggling to develop its economy, with more than 40 per cent of its 1.3 million citizens living in poverty.

"My vision for the people is for them to be more prosperous, educated, qualified and innovative, to create more job opportunities and to prioritise productive sectors so we can build a better economy," Gusmao said during his inauguration speech.

His National Congress for Timorese Reconstruction (CNRT) led with 41.6pc of votes in the parliamentary election in late May, while the party's main rival and incumbent coalition leader Fretilin got 25.7pc, according to the electoral commission. The 77-year-old former rebel leader on Saturday also vowed to fix the country's laws and develop a gas pipeline project. "The government will prioritise reviewing the judicial system as well as development, starting from the villages, also to bring the Greater Sunrise pipeline to Timor Leste," he said.

The former Portuguese colony's budget is heavily dependent on oil revenues, but earnings from existing fossil fuel projects are soon expected to run dry.

## 25 killed, 8 injured after bus catches fire on Indian expressway

**Monitoring Desk**  
NEW DELHI: A bus that caught fire overnight on an expressway killed 25 people and left eight injured in western India. The bus was reportedly travelling to Pune, a city in the Indian state of Maharashtra.

While driving on the expressway, the bus hit a pole and overturned after midnight, causing its diesel tank to catch fire, according to senior police officer Baburao Mahamuni.

"There were about 30-35 people in the bus. 25 people have died and eight others are injured," he said.

In Maharashtra state, about 400 kilometres (250 miles) east of Mumbai, the financial capital of India, the injured, including the bus driver, have been admitted to a hospital close to the crash site.

The police announced that an investigation into the collision was underway.

"The priority at this moment is to identify the bodies and hand them over

to their family members," local media quoted police superintendent Sunil Kadasane as saying.

Images showed the bus engulfed in flames, and later the charred remains of the vehicle overturned on the highway.

According to police reports, three children were also among the dead.

"Deeply saddened by the devastating bus mishap in Buldhana," Prime Minister Narendra Modi said on Twitter.

"My thoughts and prayers are with the families of those who lost their lives. May the injured recover soon," he tweeted.

Maharashtra Chief Minister Eknath Shinde expressed "deep grief" over the incident and announced a compensation of INR500,000 (\$6,100) to the families of those killed.

NDTV quoted him as saying that the bodies were charred "beyond recognition" and that DNA testing could be employed to identify the victims.

## China warns against 'confrontation and division' as US regains Unesco seat

**Monitoring Desk**  
BEIJING: China has warned the United States against creating "confrontation and division" at Unesco as it resumes full membership this month, state media reports said.

This came as a US proposal to rejoin the 193-nation United Nations heritage, education and science agency was passed by a huge majority on Friday.

China was one of 10 members that voted against the motion, while a "very large majority" of 132 were in favour, according to a Unesco press release.

Do you have questions about the biggest topics and trends from around the world? Get the answers with SCMP Knowledge, our new platform of curated content with explainers, FAQs, analyses and infographics brought to you by our award-winning team.

He was referring to the US' main reason for seeking to rejoin Unesco, that is, to gain an edge in its tech rivalry with China, especially global rule-setting on artificial intelligence.

The passing of the motion will see the US make a full return to Unesco this month, some five years after it exited under then president Donald Trump.

China's permanent representative to Unesco, Yang Jin, raised concerns about the return, saying the US had skipped the membership fee for years due to "controllable factors" like its own legislation.

"The aim for member states to join the Unesco is to strengthen cooperation and contribute to peace, but neither for confronting nor resisting the influence of a specific country," Yang was quoted as saying by Chinese state broadcaster CCTV.

He was referring to the US' main reason for seeking to rejoin Unesco, that is, to gain an edge in its tech rivalry with China, especially global rule-setting on artificial intelligence.

## Myanmar's Supreme Court to hear appeals of ousted leader Suu Kyi in cases brought by the army

**Monitoring Desk**  
BANGKOK: Myanmar's Supreme Court scheduled hearings for this month to consider appeals from ousted leader Aung San Suu Kyi against her conviction in cases that saw her receive a total of 33 years in prison, legal officials said.

The cases against her are mostly brought by the military that seized power from her elected government in February 2021.

The 78-year-old Suu Kyi was arrested following the military takeover and tried on a variety of charges that supporters and rights groups say were concocted to legitimise the usurpation and discredit her so she could not resume an active role in politics.

She has not been seen or allowed to speak in public since she was arrested, and her lawyers have been barred from speaking to the press about her cases since late 2021. Two legal officials familiar with the cases filed against her said the Supreme Court planned to hear Suu Kyi's appeals on

July 5 in two cases in which she was convicted of election fraud and breaching the country's official secrets act. She received a three-year sentence for each case in September last year.

The officials spoke on condition of anonymity because they are not authorized to release information about Suu Kyi's cases.

They said the court was due on July 12 to hear appeals against her conviction on five corruption charges where she was found guilty of abusing her position and causing a loss of state funds by neglecting to heed financial regulations. She received seven years of prison time in total for the five cases, which involved granting permission to Win Myat Aye, a Cabinet member in her former government, to hire, buy and maintain a helicopter. The court set July 18 for a hearing on whether to accept special appeals for reducing the sentences against her in cases where she was convicted of sedition, illegally importing.



The European Space Agency's (ESA) Euclid space telescope launches on a SpaceX Falcon 9 rocket from Kennedy Space Centre.

## Hundreds arrested on fifth night of France unrest after teen laid to rest

**Monitoring Desk**  
PARIS: French authorities deployed reinforcements to flashpoint cities and had made hundreds of arrests by early Sunday, on the fifth night of unrest sparked by the fatal police shooting of a 17-year-old who was laid to rest the day before.

A total of 486 people had been arrested across France as of 3am (0100 GMT) on Sunday, the interior ministry said, though the level of violence appeared to have declined since rioting first broke out over the death of Nahel M. in the Paris suburb of Nanterre on Tuesday.

"A calmer night thanks to the resolute action of the security forces," Interior Minister Gerald Darmanin tweeted early on Sunday.

Darmanin had told reporters earlier that 45,000

members of the security forces would be deployed overnight — the same number as the night before.

But extra forces and equipment were sent to Lyon, Grenoble and Marseille, which had previously seen intense rioting. In Paris and its nearby regions, where around 7,000 officers were out in force, 194 people had been arrested as of 3am on Sunday.

In Marseille, police dispersed groups of youths on Saturday evening at Canebiere, the main avenue running through the centre of the city, AFP journalists said.

By midnight, the authorities in Lyon and Marseille were reporting fewer incidents than the previous night, with 77 people arrested as of around 1:30am in the two cities.

## The US flies nuclear-capable bombers in a fresh show of force against North Korea

**Monitoring Desk**  
SEOUL: The United States flew nuclear-capable bombers to the Korean Peninsula in its latest show of force against North Korea, days after the North staged massive anti-U.S. rallies in its capital.

The long-range B-52 bombers took part in joint aerial drills with other U.S. and South Korean fighter jets over the peninsula, South Korea's Defense Ministry said in a statement. The bombers' flyover is the latest in a series of temporary U.S. deployments of strategic assets in South Korea in response to North Korea's push to expand its nuclear arsenal.

Two weeks ago, the U.S. deployed a nuclear-powered submarine capable of carrying about 150 Tomahawk missiles to South Korean waters for the first time in six years. The USS Michigan's arrival came a

day after North Korea retested missile tests to protest previous U.S.-South Korean drills that it views as an invasion rehearsal.

The South Korean Defense Ministry said the B-52 bombers' deployment boosted the visibility of U.S. strategic assets to the peninsula. It said the allies have been demonstrating their firm resolve to strengthen combined defense postures and will continue joint drills involving U.S. strategic bombers.

On Sunday, more than 120,000 North Koreans participated in mass rallies in Pyongyang to mark the 73rd anniversary of the start of the Korean War. During the rallies, officials and residents delivered speeches vowing "merciless revenge" against the United States over the war while accusing the U.S. of plotting an invasion on North Korea.

## Telescope launched on mission to explore 'dark universe'

**Monitoring Desk**  
KENNEDY CENTRE: A European-built orbital satellite was launched to space from Florida on a mission to shed new light on the mysterious cosmic phenomena known as dark energy and dark matter, unseen forces scientists say account for 95 per cent of the known universe.

The telescope dubbed Euclid, named for the ancient Greek mathematician called the "father of geometry," was carried aloft in the cargo bay of a SpaceX Falcon 9 rocket that blasted off around 11am from Cape Canaveral Space Force Station. A livestream of the liftoff was shown on Nasa TV. New insights from the \$1.4 billion European Space Agency (ESA) mission, designed to last at least six years, are expected to transform astrophysics and perhaps understanding of the very nature of gravity itself.

Following a short flight to space, Euclid was to be released from the Falcon for a month-long voyage to its destination in solar orbit nearly 1 million miles (1.6 million km).

## Israel no closer to attack on Iran nuclear sites, official says

**Monitoring Desk**  
JERUSALEM: Israel is not nearing an attack on Iran's nuclear sites, Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's national security adviser said, as talks between Tehran and Washington have sought to cool tensions.

Tzachi Hanegbi said it was still unclear what will come of talks Israel's main ally the United States has held with Iran in recent weeks in an effort to outline steps that could limit Tehran's nuclear program and de-escalate tensions.

Nonetheless, no agreement would obligate Israel, which views a nuclear-armed Iran as an existential threat, Hanegbi told Channel 13 television.

## Kenya in shock as road crash toll hits 52

**Monitoring Desk**  
NAIROBI: The death toll from a horrific road crash in western Kenya rose to 52, officials said, as rescuers worked to clear the wreckage from one of the deadliest traffic accidents in the country in recent years.

A truck carrying a shipping container veered out of control and ploughed into multiple other vehicles and people thronging a busy roadside junction on Friday evening, plunging the nation into shock and mourning.

Erick Mutai, governor of Kericho county where the accident occurred, gave an updated death toll of 52 and said it included 31 men, 18 women and two children.

Transport Minister

Kipchumba Murkomen said during a visit to the crash site at Londiani junction that new safety measures would be introduced after what he described as a "terrible" and "painful" tragedy.

"Investigations have been launched to establish the cause of this accident but we urge drivers to be cautious and follow the rules," he told reporters.

In a later statement, he also gave a death toll of 52 and said 32 people had been injured, adding that the truck involved was registered in Rwanda.

Kenyan station Citizen TV reported that the vehicle's driver had died, but this could not be immediately confirmed independently.

## Sri Lanka approves domestic debt plan

**Monitoring Desk**  
COLOMBO: Sri Lanka's parliament approved a domestic debt restructuring plan that is crucial to continue a \$2.9 billion bailout from the International Monetary Fund (IMF).

The plan passed with a majority of 122 votes in the 225-member parliament. Sri Lanka tumbled into its worst financial crisis in more than seven decades last year after the country's dollar reserves shrank to record lows, triggering mass protests, a foreign debt default and the resignation of its former president. To put its debt on a sustainable footing and pass an IMF review, Sri Lanka unveiled a much-anticipated domestic debt restructuring framework.



At the rallies in the capital of Baghdad and the southern city of Basra, Swedish flags were burnt.

## Thousands protest in Iraq for a second day over burning of Quran in Sweden

**Monitoring Desk**  
BASRA: Thousands of followers of a firebrand Iraqi Shiite cleric rallied in major cities in Iraq, condemning the burning of a Quran during a protest in Sweden earlier this week. Some of the demonstrators called for expulsion of the Swedish ambassador from Iraq.

At the rallies in the capital of Baghdad and the southern city of Basra, followers of Muqtada al-Sadr, a cleric with a large grassroots following and political leader, burned Swedish flags and rainbow LGBTQ+ pride flags and chanted "Yes, yes to Islam"

and "No, no to the devil." Addressing the crowds in a speech in the Baghdad suburb of Sadr City, Friday prayers preacher Sayyid Sattar Batat, called on Iraqi authorities to "if necessary, expel the Swedish ambassador and cut all diplomatic relations with them."

The protests came a day after hundreds of protesters briefly stormed the Swedish Embassy in Baghdad. On Wednesday, a man who identified himself in Swedish media as a refugee from Iraq burned a Quran outside a mosque in central Stockholm.

## South Korea's Yoon tells unification ministry to be less soft on North

**Monitoring Desk**  
SEOUL: Having appointed a new unification minister days earlier, South Korean President Yoon Suk Yeol said on Sunday that the ministry had focused too much on providing aid for North Korea in the past and needed to change. The new minister Kim Yung-ho is a conservative scholar and outspoken critic human rights abuses in North Korea, which Yoon has sought to spotlight amid rising tensions on the Korean Peninsula.

## Seven killed in building collapse in Ivory Coast

**Monitoring Desk**  
ABIDJAN: A six-storey building collapsed while under construction in Ivory Coast's commercial capital Abidjan, killing at least seven of the builders on site, firefighters at the scene said.

Around midday local time, the workers heard cracking sounds and the building started to crumble around them, said caretaker and builder Jourdin Yoro.

"In a rush, we started to run," Yoro said. "Within about 45 seconds, the building collapsed." Rescue efforts were ongoing at the site in Abidjan's upscale Riviera Palmeraie district with emergency workers searching through a vast pile of shattered concrete and debris.

## Syria says air defences intercept Israeli missile strike

**Monitoring Desk**  
AMMAN: Syria said on Sunday its air defences intercepted what it called an Israeli missile strike across central parts of the country and downed most of the missiles, according to state media.

An army statement said missiles that flew over parts of Lebanon's capital Beirut hit locations in the vicinity of the city of Homs, resulting only in material damage.

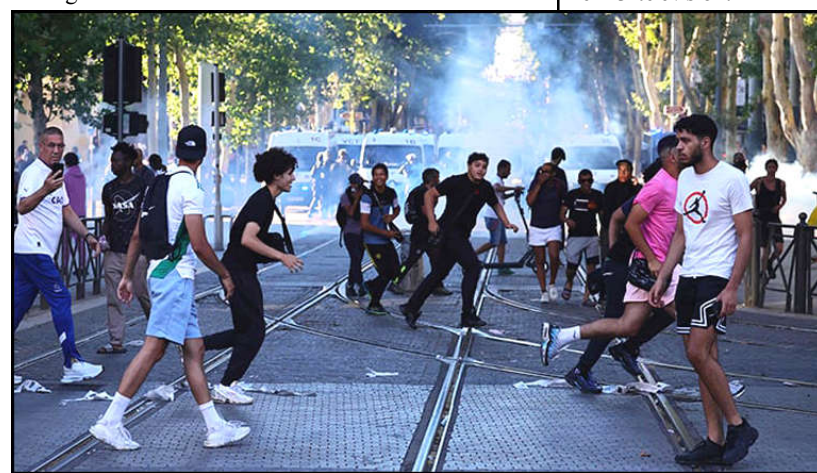
Reuters could not immediately confirm the report. An Israeli military spokesman said Israeli warplanes targeted a Syr-

ian air defence battery from which an anti-aircraft missile was launched towards Israel.

The warplanes also attacked other targets in the area, while no casualties were reported from the Syrian missile that exploded in mid-air, said the spokesman, Avichay Adraea.

Reuters could not immediately confirm whether the two incidents were related.

Israel has in recent months intensified strikes on Syrian airports and air bases to disrupt Iran's increasing use of aerial supply lines to deliver arms to allies in Syria and Lebanon.



Protesters run from launched tear gas canisters during clashes with police in Marseille, southern France.



# Samina, Naila create history by scaling world's second highest peak K2

The Pakistani trailblazers and 28 other mountaineers from around the world summited the peak early Sunday morning

**Monitoring Desk**  
ISLAMABAD: High-altitude mountaineers Naila Kiani and Samina Baig made history on Sunday as they became the first Pakistani women to successfully ascend the perilous peak of Nanga Parbat, the world's ninth highest mountain. The announcement was made by the Alpine Club of Pakistan (ACP) and the Karakoram Club, marking this achievement as a significant milestone in the history of Pakistani mountaineering.

Nanga Parbat solidifies her reputation as a pioneering woman in Pakistani mountaineering, as she is now the first woman from the country to have successfully summited seven global peaks that rise above 8,000 meters.



Overcoming a series of formidable challenges that included severe weather conditions and treacherous terrain, the two women, along with their team, made their successful ascent. Joining them in this daring feat were other Pakistani mountaineers including Rizwan Dad, Eid Muhammad, Ahmed Baig, Waqar Ali, Saeed Karim, Liaqat, Wajid Nagri, and Shah Dault, confirmed ACP secretary general Karar Haidri, who further mentioned that all of the mountaineers on the team had successfully scaled the peak.



KARACHI: Activists of Majlis Wahdat-e-Muslimeen Pakistan holds protest outside Press Club against the burning of Quran Pak in Sweden.

## No one will be allowed to worsen Balochistan's situation: Sana

**Independent Report**  
USTA MUHAMMAD: Central leader of the Balochistan National Party, Member Balochistan Assembly, Sanaulah Baloch has said that he will not allow anyone to worsen the situation in Balochistan adding that "Don't test the patience, now the patience of the Baloch has been exhausted."

Sardar Akhtar Jan is the leader of the Baloch nation, theroads of Pakistan's development pass through Balochistan. All the available resources will be utilized to take Kharan on the path of justice.

He expressed his views while talking to media persons on the occasion of meeting with the district organizer of BNP District Usta Muhammad, Muhammad Hanif Bakhtiar Zai Baloch at his residence Baloch House Kharan.

He said, "Balochistan National Party is a name of thought and concern. The oppressed people of Balochistan consider BNP as a ray of hope. People are joining the BNP one by one. We are treating the public service as worship." He further added that development works have been laid in Kharan. All the available resources will be used for prosperity.

He said that the young generation should focus all their attention on education. He expressed his anger and said that the Naseerabad division was the green belt and granary of Balochistan, but unfortunately, under a deliberate conspiracy, the green belt has been turned into a desert and the canal system has been destroyed.

The farmers have been left in need of agricultural water and they yearned for a drop of agricultural water. Irrigation Naseerabad Division has become a center of corruption. It was not possible to supply agricultural water to the farmers, but all the funds were seen to be corrupt.

## Govt. utilizing all resources to provide relief to poor: Jabbar

**Independent Report**  
USTA MUHAMMAD: Director General Benazir Income Support Program Abdul Jabbar, has said that under the three-month installment of Benazir Income Support Program in April-June 2023, 511451 families of Balochistan 657634 will be distributed and till now 40% of people have been distributed to 144 campsites established by Benazir Income Support Program. More than 250 employees of the Benazir Income Support Program, including the Zonal Director General and Directors South and North have been performing monitoring duties to ensure transparent

payment of money at more than 350 retail shops and the district administration is also providing appreciable help in achieving the above target.

Director General Abdul Jabbar further said, "All the deserving women are once again informed that HBL can go to the respective retail shops and collect their money and in case of any kind of deductions or complaints, Benazir Income Support Program, that concerned zonal district tehsil or zonal director general office established complaint cell should be immediately reported on this number 0156 287 081."

## Sardar Khetran condemns attack on police and FC check posts in Sherani

**Independent Report**  
QUETTA: The Provincial Minister for Communications, Sardar Abdul Rehman Khetran has strongly condemned the terrorist attacks at police and FC in Sherani district.

In a condemnation issued here on Sunday, the Provincial Minister Communications paid homage to the martyred security personnel on the sacrifice of their lives. He said that the Police and FC have rendered great sacrifices for the country's stability. He said that the terrorists' attacks can't demoralize us. He said that we salute all those who are rendering sacrifice of their lives for the cause of country. Sardar Khetran prayed for the departed souls of security personnel and expressed sympathy with the bereaved families.

## Talha strongly flays Holy Quran desecration in Sweden

**MAKKAH MUKARMA** (APP): Minister of Religious Affairs and Interfaith Harmony Senator Talha Mehmood vehemently denounced the desecration of the Holy Quran in Sweden.

In a resolute statement, he emphasized that mere condemnation is insufficient.

Talha strongly stated, "Islamophobia is a stigma on the face of the Western world," stressing that freedom of expression cannot be shielded by such heinous acts that have deeply hurt the sentiments of over 1.5 billion Muslims.

## Husband kills wife over domestic issues

**QUETTA (INP):** A man, in a fit of rage, opened fire and fatally shot his own wife over domestic issue in Sohbatpur district of Balochistan province.

## Consul General Chengdu visit Pakistan pavilion at West China Intl Fair

**BEIJING (APP):** Acting Consul General, Pakistan Consulate General, Chengdu, China, Agha Hunain visited Pakistan national pavilion at the 19th West China International Fair (WCIF) in Chengdu, the capital of southwest China Sichuan province.

## Hamza strongly condemns desecration of Holy Quran

**LAHORE (APP):** Pakistan Muslim League Nawaz (PML-N) Leader Hamza Shehbaz on Sunday strongly condemned desecration of the Holy Quran in Sweden which severely hurt the sentiments of Muslims across the globe.

## Govt to save Rs438bn annually with energy plan applicable from July 1

**ISLAMABAD (INP):** The government expects to save Rs438 billion annually through the implementation of the energy conservation plan from July 1.

## Samina Zehri says: Desecration of Holy Quran very sad & intolerable act

**QUETTA (APP):** The desecration of the Holy Quran in Sweden with government support was a highly condemnable and intolerable act.

These views were expressed by Central Vice President of Balochistan Awami Party (BAP) Senator Samina Mumtaz Zehri in her condemning statement issued here on Sunday.

She said that the growing hatred against Muslims and anti-Islam in Europe was increasing day by day.

She has expressed deep anger over the incident of burning the Holy Quran by the cursed Silwan Momika in Sweden and said that no matter how much this heartbreaking incident was condemned.

We condemn this incident in the strongest terms and demand from the Swedish government that the person involved in the incident and the elements behind him should be severely punished, she said.

She said that this incident has hurt the sentiments of Muslims all over the World and it was very disgusting and condemnable.

It is an intolerable act which should be condemned by every intelligent person. Such incidents are an attempt to inflame the sentiments of Muslims. Such incidents cannot be ignored. Such an incident under the permission and patronage of the Swedish government is a moment of concern for the whole world, she maintained.

## 3 injured in Mastung road mishap

**QUETTA (APP):** At least three people were injured in road mishap near khada-Kochar area of Mastung district on Sunday.

## Fresh wave of inflation to further expose Shehbaz's govt: Rashid

**RAWALPINDI (INP):** Awami Muslim League (AML) chief and former interior minister Sheikh Rasheed Ahmed on Sunday said the cash-strapped Shehbaz-led government's downward countdown is expected to begin from July 12 [the start of new wave of inflation including increasing power tariff].

Taking to Twitter, he asked what was the difference between the IMF decisions of former finance minister Miftah Ismail and his successor Ishaq Dar except they are relatives.

"Dar's tone was aggressive initially and then he started bowing before the [International Monetary Fund] to get the loan approved for nine months."

He said a new wave of inflation would engulf the masses from July 12, leading to downward countdown of the incumbent government, adding the three governments the sitting government, the caretaker government and the new government—had to fulfill the IMF's strict conditions in nine months and pay back \$11 billion in six months.

The former minister said the time would tell if the deposit assurances given by the friendly countries would reach any practical conclusion, adding there was no room for errors in the IMF agreement as an environment of now or never had been created. He was of the view that the government had wasted 10 months, signed [staff level] agreement with [the IMF] on the last day [June 30].

"Is it fair that diesel has become expensive by Rs7.50 even on the arrival of Russian oil in the country, the AML leader questioned. He said the foreign minister of PPP made more than 50 foreign tourism trips but is a silent spectator on the IMF agreement. Nawaz Sharif's coming or not depends on his health and not on politics and the decision of the case.

According to Levies sources, the victims were on way to Mastung from Quetta on a motorbike when their bike slipped on National Highway near Amanullah Kariz due to over speeding.

As a result, they received injuries on the spot.

The injured were shifted to Ismail Baloch Welfare Society Rescue Center where they were referred to Quetta Civil Hospital for further treatment processes after provision of first aid.



MURIDKE: Federal Minister for Education Rana Tanveer Hussain talking with mediamen

## IMF standby agreement to help economic stability of country: Ch. Naem

**QUETTA (APP):** Senior central leader of Pakistan Muslim League-N (PML-N) Chaudhry Naeem Karim on Sunday said that the credit of the 9-month standby arrangement with the IMF went to Prime Minister Mian Shahbaz Sharif, Finance Minister Ishaq Dar and the entire team of the Ministry of Finance.

He said that the new IMF program would give Pakistan an opportunity to make fundamental reforms saying that this would improve the economic situation in Pakistan, which was suffering from severe balance of payments crisis and falling foreign exchange reserves. He said that there was an urgent need for an IMF stand by agreement which would help the country to achieve economic stability but nations were not built on debt. We should just pray that this program from IMF is Pakistan's last program, he mentioned. He said that the Prime Minister of Pakistan Mian Muhammad Shahbaz Sharif took tough decisions by putting the politics of

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## Newly constructed Levies HQ Thana inaugurated in Ziarat

**Independent Report**  
QUETTA: The newly constructed Levies Headquarter Thana was inaugurated in Ziarat city on Sunday.

The Deputy Commissioner Ziarat, Shabbir Ahmed Badini inaugurated the newly built Levies Thana.

Also present on the occasion were the tribal elder, Sardar Qasim Khan Sarangzai, others besides the officers of Levies force.

Special prayer was offered for the country's stability and peace on the occasion.

Speaking on the occasion, Deputy Commissioner Ziarat said that Levies force has always played vital role in elimination of crimes and establishment of peace in the areas of their control.

He pledged that we have to put the Levies force on modern lines by providing it necessary resources.

He said that the trust of Saudi Arabia and China has been restored by the current government and now the staff-level agreement with the IMF was actually the rubbish of the previous Imran government from which we have brought the country out.

## Karot HPP contributes 3.64 billion units of clean electricity

**ISLAMABAD (INP):** The 720 megawatts Karot hydropower plant contributed around 3.64 billion units of clean and low-cost electricity to the National Grid in one year of its commercial operations.

This was disclosed by CTG Int'l, which marks the completion of the first year of the commercial operations of the Karot hydropower project.

Karot was the first hydropower project completed under the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) initiative, which started commercial operations on June 29,

According to a Gwadar Pro's report, that Karot contributed Rs 4 billion worth of electricity to the National Grid free of cost during its testing and commissioning phase.

Karot is a steady source of clean and affordable electricity for Pakistan. According to the latest energy purchase data released on June 15 by the National Electric Power Regulatory Authority (NEPRA), Karot contributed more than 509.86 million units of electricity in May 2023 at a cost of Rs 115.02 million.

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## Govt to save Rs438bn annually with energy plan applicable from July 1

**ISLAMABAD (INP):** The government expects to save Rs438 billion annually through the implementation of the energy conservation plan from July 1.

The implementation of the previously announced plan will save 8,000 megawatts of electricity.

According to the documents obtained, the duty imposed on substandard fans will get the government tax worth Rs15 billion.

Moreover, banning the manufacturing and import of substandard bulbs will fetch Rs23 billion in revenue, Rs86 billion will be generated from e-bikes, and Rs23 billion will be saved by using LED lights instead of bulbs.

According to the plan, closing the markets four hours earlier will save Rs62 billion, while allowing 20% of the staff to work from home will save Rs56 billion, the documents say.

Using conical baffles in geysers will save 25% gas, and Pakistan save Rs92 billion annually under this head.

## ANF arrests 1652 drug smugglers

**RAWALPINDI (INP):** Anti-Narcotics Force (ANF) Pakistan in their operations conducted across the country managed to net 1652 drug smugglers during last 12 months and registered 1678 cases against the accused.

According to an ANF Headquarter spokesman, ANF recovered over 157,551 metric tons drugs during the period.

He informed that as the premier anti-narcotics agency, the ANF, along with other law enforcement agencies, continued to be at the forefront of national anti-narcotics efforts.

## Indian troops committing systematic HR abuses in IIOJK

**SRINAGAR (INP):** Political experts and analysts have said that systematic human rights violations committed with impunity by Indian troops are daily witnessed in Indian illegally occupied Jammu and Kashmir (IIOJK).

The political experts and analysts in their interviews and statements in Srinagar said human rights situation in the occupied territory has further deteriorated since August 2019 when the Modi-led fascist Indian government repealed Kashmir's special status and imposed military siege in the territory.

They said the international rights bodies have repeatedly raised alarm about the worsening rights situation in IIOJK, adding several United Nations reports have documented massive human rights violations by Indian troops in the occupied territory. They said killings, arrests, torture and molestations have become a routine as the Modi regime is blatantly violating every human rights principle in IIOJK.

The political experts and analysts said HR violations in occupied Jammu and Kashmir are directly connected to unresolved Kashmir dispute and the global powers must demand that India respect its rights obligations.

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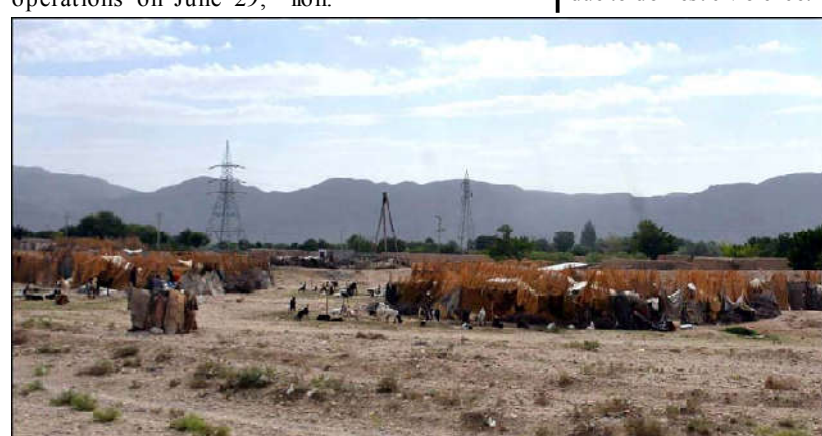
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According to the plan, closing the markets four hours earlier will save Rs62 billion, while allowing 20% of the staff to work from home will save Rs56 billion, the documents say.

Using conical baffles in geysers will save 25% gas, and Pakistan save Rs92 billion annually under this head.



QUETTA: Gypsy family spends their life under the open sky.