Barkat Rice Mills (Pvt) Limited

US supports 'direct' talks between India, Pakistan: State Dept

The United States support "direct discussions" between India and Pakistan, saying the two neighbouring countries should work out the mode for the talks themselves, State Department Spokesperson Matthew Miller has said. "We value our important relationships with both India and Pakistan," he said in response to a question from a Pakistani TV channel reporter at his daily news briefing on Thursday.

Ahsan Iqbal delivers landmark speech

at China-Pakistan Political Forum The Minister for Planning & Development of Pakistan, Ahsar Iqbal, delivered a significant speech at the China-Pakistar

Political Parties Forum and the Third Meeting of the CPEC Mr. Liu Jián Chao, Minister for International Department Central Committee of the Communist Party of China... (Details on Page 8)

Simultaneously published from Islamabad, Lahore and Multan

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Pak-China Relations Chinese Minister Liu Jianchao met General Syed Asim Munir, COAS at General Headquarters on Friday. Photo: ISPR

Pak-China friendship vital for peace, development of both countries & region: PM

B Spokesman Report

Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif on Friday said that the Pakistan-China friendship was indispensable for peace and development of both the countries as well as the region and beyond.

Emphasizing on historic and unique significance of bilateral relations between the two countries, the prime minister reaffirmed that the Pakistan-China friendship was time-tested and enduring.

He was talking to Minister of International Department of the Communist Party of China (IDCPC) Liu Jianchao who along and the shared desire of both with a delegation called on him at the PM House.

While welcoming the Chinese dignitary and members of his delegation to Pakistan, the prime minister congratulated him as well as political leaders of Pakistan on the successful organization of Pakistan-China Political

Parties Forum and the 3rd round of Joint Consultative Mecha-ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister nism (JCM) of Political Parties on China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC).

> He said it was a matter of great satisfaction that there was complete political consensus in both countries on the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor.

Reflecting on his recent visit to China where he held fruitful and productive meetings with President Xi Jinping and Premier Li Qiang, the prime minister commended the vision of the Chinese leadership for the continued growth of Pakistan-China strategic relations countries to work together to ensure success of the CPEC and

its upgradation to the next phase. He underlined that early completion and implementation of all ongoing and new CPEC projects would contribute significantly towards Pakistan's economic growth and inclusive



Appreciating the role of IDCPC in the deepening of bilateral ties, he stressed the importance of enhanced exchanges between the political parties of two countries for experience-sharing, capacity building and people-centered

He lauded the CPC for its full support to strengthening of China's iron-clad brotherhood

Liu Jianchao, in his remarks, stressed that Pakistan and China were iron brothers, strategic part-

ners and most-trusted friends. He further emphasized that China accorded a special place to Pakistan in its foreign policy and would continue to support Pakistan's economic development and jointly work for the upgraded $\,$ version of CPEC.

The prime minister hosted a banquet in honour of Liu also attended the meeting.

Jianchao and the accompanying Chinese delegation which was also attended by representatives of major political parties.

The prime minister also briefed the Chinese delegation about the Special Investment Facilitation Council (SIFC) which was established through a "Whole of the Government" approach with an objective to attract investment in key areas and has evolved into a useful forum offering one-window facility to domestic and foreign investors.

Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Muhammad Ishaq Dar, Chief of the Army Staff General Sved Aim Munir, Federal Ministers for Finance, Interior, Planning, Petroleum, Power, Privatization, Information, MOS for IT, SAPM Tariq Fatemi and senior officials attended. Chinese Ambassador to Pakistan H. E. Mr. Jiang Zaidong and senior officials of the International Department of the Communist Party of China

'Saudi state did not fail'

The state did not fail, but there was a misjudgement on the part of people who did not appreciate the risks," the official told AFP in the government's first comments

An AFP tally on Friday, compiling official statements put the toll at 1,126, more than half of them from Egypt.

had confirmed 577 deaths for the two busiest days of Hajj: Saturday, when pilgrims gathered for hours of prayers in the blazing sun on Mount Arafat, and Sunday, when they participated in the "stoning of the devil" ritual in Mina.

"This happened amid difficult weather conditions and a very harsh temperature," the official said, while acknowledging that the 577 figure was partial and did not cover all of the Hajj, which formally ended on Wednesday. The Hajj is one of the five pillars of Islam, and all Muslims with the means must complete it at least once before they die.

Saudi officials had earlier said 1.8 million pilgrims took part this year, a similar total to last year, and that 1.6 million came from abroad.

China minister, Army chief discuss CPEC progress, defense of regional peace and stability

Spokesman Report

RAWALPINDI: Mr. Liu Jianchao, Minister of the International Department of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of China (IDCPC), met General Syed Asim Munir, NI (M), Chief of Army Staff (COAS), at General Headquarters today.

During the meeting, both discussed matters of mutual interest, including regional peace and stability, and reviewed progress on the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC).

The COAS reaffirmed Pakistan's unwavering commitment to the strategic partnerimplementation of CPEC, a and projects in Pakistan.

flagship project of China's Belt and Road Initiative (BRI).

Mr. Liu Jianchao highlighted that he is visiting Pakistan as a follow up of the successful meetings between the leadership of the two countries in China. He emphasized the significance of the longstanding brotherly relations between the two nations and expressed satisfaction with the progress achieved on CPEC, reiterating China's commitment to its timely completion. The visiting dignitary also commended Pakistan's efforts in maintaining regional peace and stability, acknowledging the support of the Pakistan ship with China and pledged Armed Forces in providing full support for the successful security to Chinese nationals

Five soldiers martyred as military vehicle blown up in Kurram



👺 City Desk

RAWALPINDI: Five Pakistan Army soldiers embraced martyrdom when an improvised explosive device (IED) hit a security forces' vehicle in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa's Kurram district, said the Inter-Services Public Relations (ISPR)

According to military's media wing, the incident took place in Saddam area of Kurram district when an improvised explosive device (IED) detonated on a vehicle of the security forces, resulting in martyrdom of five soldiers.

The martyrs include Havaldar Ageel Ahmed, Lance Naik Muhammad Tafeer, Sepoy Anush, Sepoy Haroon William and Sepoy Muhammad Azam Khan.

"Sanitisation of the area is being carried out to eliminate any terrorists present in the area, and perpetrators of this heinous act will be brought to justice," the ISPR statement

In a similar incident on June 9, seven Pakistan Army November 2022.

soldiers, including a captain, were martyred after an improvised explosive device (IED) hit the vehicle of the security forces in Lakki Marwat district.

Resultantly, Captain Muhammad Faraz Ilyas, 26, resident of Kasur district along with six other soldiers — Subedar Major Muhammad Nazir, 50, resident of Skardu district; Lance Naik Muhammad Anwar, 34, resident of: Ghanchi district: Lance Naik Hussain Ali, 36, resident of: Ghizer district; Sepoy Asad Ullah, 33, resident of Multan district; Sepoy Manzoor Hussain, 27, resident of: Gilgit district; and Sepoy Rashid Mehmood, 31. resident of Rawalpindi district made the ultimate sacrifice and embraced shahadat, according to the ISPR.

Pakistan has witnessed a surge in terrorist activities, especially in KP and Balochistan, since the outlawed militant group Tehreek-i-Taliban Pakistan (TTP) ended its ceasefire with the government in

Minister Salik visits MCO Madinah, gets briefing on post-Hajj operations

Spokesman Report

MADINAH AL-MUNAWA-RAH: Minister for Religious Affairs and Interfaith Harmony Chaudhry Salik Hussain on Friday visited the Main Control Office (MCO) of the Pakistan Hajj Mission in Madinah and got briefing on arrangements for the post-Hajj operation.

During the month-long post-Hajj flight operation, approximately 160,000 Pakistani pilgrims will be transported from King Abdulaziz International Airport in Jeddah and Prince Mohammad Bin Abdulaziz International Airport in Madinah to major cities in Continued on Page 8

Pakistan's current account deficit drops to \$464mn: SBP

👺 Bureau Report

KARACHI: Pakistan's current account deficit has seen a substantial reduction over the past 11 months, dropping by \$3.3 billion to a mere \$464 million, according to the State Bank of Pakistan (SBP), which is still massively lower than \$3.76 billion in the same period of the previ-

This improvement attributed to a notable decrease in the trade deficit, which fell by 87 percent during the same

In May 2024, the current account deficit stood at \$27 million. The month's trade figures revealed imports worth \$5.93 billion against exports of \$3.69 billion, resulting in a trade deficit of \$2.3 billion. The combined deficit from trade, services, and revenue for 2024 reached \$3.66 billion.

Worker remittances in May amounted to \$3.24 million, contributing positively to the current account balance, while the current account balance for the 11 months remained slightly negative at \$46.40 million.

From July 2023 to May 2024, Pakistan's imports totaled \$48.40 billion, while exports were significantly lower at \$28.67 billion, leading to a trade deficit of

The overall loss from trade, services, and income for the 11 months was recorded at \$29.37 billion. Worker remittances over this period were reported at \$27.9

Centre should have consulted PPP before budget: Bilawal

跨 Bureau Report

KARACHI: PPP Chairman Bilawal Bhutto Zardari has said that the federal government should have consulted them before the annual budget as he vowed to continue the legacy of slain former prime minister Benazir Bhutto.

"We are determined to carry forward the struggle of Bibi Shaheed [Benazir Bhutto]," he said while addressing the PPP rally in Karachi's Lyari on Friday held to mark the birth anniversary of her mother and former PM.

Benazir was the first woman prime minister in the Muslim world. Bilawal made his entry into politics after his mother was assassinated on December 27, 2007, in Rawalpindi. His father and party co-chairman Asif Ali Zardari

led the party affairs after the demise of Benazir. In his speech, Bilawal acknowledged the dire economic situation facing the country, stating, 'The economic conditions of the country are before evervone."

He added that the incumbent government, led by Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif, was making efforts to address the economic crisis. But he also criticised the government for not consulting his party prior to the budget announcement. "The government should have consulted us before the budget, and if our input had Continued on Page 8

after hundreds dead during Hajj: official

№ News Desk

ISLAMABAD: A senior Saudi official defended the Gulf kingdom's management of the Hajj pilgrimage on Friday after various countries reported more than 1,100 deaths, many attributed to high heat.

on the deaths.

and reports from diplomats involved in the response, The senior Saudi official said the Saudi government

SCO leads digital revolution in AJ&K's Capital City Muzaffarabad with New Software Technology Park

跨 Abdul Majeed Tahir

MUZAFFARABAD: In a landmark event, the capital city of Azad Jammu and Kashmir (AJ&K) Muzaffarabad witnessed inauguration of a state-ofthe-art Software Technology Park, established through collaborative efforts of Special Communications Organization (SCO) and Read Foundation. The inauguration ceremony was graced by Major General Umar Ahmed Shah, HI(M), Director General SCO, who officially opened the park in a glittering ceremony.

The newly established Software Technology Park in capital city of AJ&K is set to revolutionize region's IT landscape. The park is expected to to learn niche skills in information and bring prosperity in region.



create job opportunities for youth in technology. It will also contribute AJ&K and facilitate local workforce towards country's economic growth

During inaugural ceremony, Major General Umar Ahmed Shah, HI(M), Director General of SCO shared his

excitement about future of Software Technology Park. He said, "Today marks a historic

day for AJ&K as we inaugurate this advanced Software Technology Park in the capital city.

The project underscores our commitment to fostering innovation and cutting-edge technology in AJ&K. It will help in refining skills of our youth, create jobs for them and elevate AJ&K as a premier IT hub. I am very eager to see its positive impact on local economy and look forward to its success.'

The inauguration of Muzaffarabad Software Technology Park signals a significant leap in regional IT advancement, promising economic growth and positioning the area as a thriving tech hub under SCO's lead-

Called on

ISLAMABAD: The delegation of All Pakistan Fertilizer Dealers Association (APFDA) calls on the Federal Minister for Industries and Production on Friday.



Photo: PID

People's Lawyers Forum South Punjab celebrate 71 Birthday of Shaheed Mohtarma Benazir Bhutto

MULTAN: People's Lawyers Forum South Punjab organized The cake cutting ceremony of former Prime Minister Mohtarma Benazir Bhutto Shaheed 71st birthday was held under the chairmanship of People's Lawyers Forum South Punjab Sheikh Gayyas ul Haq Sheikh Advocate at District Bar Association Hall Multan. Khawaja Rizwan Alam Vice President PPP South Punjab was the chief guest of the event. President People's Lawyers Forum South Punjab Sheikh Gayyas ul haq. Khawaja Rizwan Alam Senior Benazir Bhutto became stronger and city A. D Baloch and People's Lawyers Bhutto Shaheed in wonderful words and said that Shaheed Mohtarma Benazir Bhutto introduced the missile defense of Pakistan was increased. Ms.



Vice President of PPP South Punjab. expanded the nuclear program of the President of People's Party Multan Pakistan. Modern expansion project of Kamra Rebuild Factory. Pakistan Forum paid tribute to Mrs. Benazir Aeronautical Complex. JF-17 Thunder aircraft assembly plant. Completed the expansion project of Pakistan Steel Mill and provided dignified employsystem in Pakistan, with which the ment to the educated people of Pakistan and established Women's Bank

and Benazir Income Support Program for destitute women while his father and the creator of Pakistan's nuclear program was martyred. Zulfiqar Ali Bhutto's idea of Roti Cloth and House was nurtured and implemented which continues even today. Shaheed Benazir Bhutto resisted the vindictive actions of Zia-ul-Haq and Pervez Musharraf during martial law, not only raised

also united and organized the party. Removed abolished black laws, provided employment opportunities at home and abroad, improved bilateral relations with India, their efforts are still a beacon for the workers. Going forward with the mission of Benazir who will play an important role in the construction and development of Pakistan. Hasnain Gilani, Wajid Rizvi, Fayyaz Sukhira, Zal Fatima, Raheela Klasra, Nadeem Qureshi, Arafa Arif, Syed Ishtiaq Shah, Firdous Jamal, Nagina Muzaffar Haraj, Babar Hafeez, Ayesha Ali, Sheikh Shahid Hameed, Miss Asia participate in Birthday celebration, martyred Ms. Benazir Bhutto. He expressed his thoughts about the development and high leadership of Pakistan under the timeless and inspiring leadership and at the end of the ceremony, the 71st birthday cake of the martyred Prime Minister Ms. Benazir Bhutto was also cut.

Railway Prime Union to support Faisalabad railway employee after tragic accident

Majid Majid

FAISALABAD: Sheikh Muhammad Anwar, Central President of Railway Prime Union, along with Chief Organizer Khalid Mahmud Chaudhry, visited the railway employee Muhammad Rafi, who lost both legs in a tragic accident during duty last day, in the hospital and presented him with a bouquet and financial aid to the Prime Union. Munir Chatta, Zonal President Zaheeruddin Babar, Nooruddin, Basit Shafiq, Sajid Imran, Bau Tahiru and others were also with him. Later, talking to the railway employees at the railway station, Sheikh Mohammad Anwar and Khalid Mahmood Chaudhry said that this tragic accident has affected the employees of all



over Pakistan, has been saddened, Prem Union has tried to provide financial support to the injured railway employee immediately according to its own

standards while maintaining its traditions, last night, it met with DS Railway Hanif Gul at his residence, he said. He also expressed deep sorrow over this

tragic accident. He said that the railway administration has promised immediate government treatment and financial assistance which is commendable. The non-recruitment of permanent employees even by the Chairman and CEO of Coreilway is incomprehensible. He has demanded the Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif to immediately allow the recruitment of vacant posts in the railways to avoid such tragic human accidents. Sheikh Mohammad Anwar said that despite the severe shortage of staff, the railway employees are expected to earn a record revenue of 87 billion rupees by the end of this financial year due to the hard work and sincerity of the railway employees, for which the railway officers and employees deserve congratulations.

Nurses protest against arrest of Khanewal nurse in Nishtar Hospital



Asim Tanveer

MULTAN: Nishtar Hospital Multan organized by Young Nurses Association. Apart from Children Complex Hospital Multan and Allied Hospital Faisalabad, protests were held in South and North Punjab against the illegal arrest of Khanewal nurse officer Aqsi Afaq. President of South Punjab Nurses Association Shamim Akhtar from the protests. Young Nurses Association Nishtar Hospital Multan Noreen Kausar and Young Nurses Association Faisalabad Zahida Jameel while addressing the protesting nurses said that wrong injection was provided by Punjab Health Department in Khanewal due to District Headquarters Hospital of Khanewal. Three children died. The nurses leaders further said that after examining the patients, the doctors in the hospitals prescribe medicines and injections to the patients, after that the staff nurses on duty in the hospitals give the medicines and injections prescribed by the doctors $\,$ to the patients. But in the Khanewal government hospital incident, the provincial administration of Punjab and Khanewal called the doctors as evil and blamed the staff nurse Aqsi Afaq for the death of the children without any investigation, which is a complete abuse. Office bearers of Young Nurses Association Miss Noreen Kausar. Miss Shamim Akhtar and Mrs. Zahda Jameel said that the protest of staff nurses in all hospitals of Punjab is going on against the illegal arrest of staff nurse Aqsi Afaq of Khanewal and this protest will continue until the release of staff nurse Aqsi Afaq. The Staff Nurses Association also demanded the immediate dismissal of Secretary Health Medical Education Punjab Ali Jan and said that it has strongly condemned the derogatory statement made by Punjab Information Minister Uzmi Bukhari about nurses across Punjab.

Meanwhile, Khanewal Additional Sessions Judge Amjad Gadhi has granted bail to the arrested staff nurse Aqsi Afaq and has ordered her release on bail.

Punjab minister for Law, Communications and Construction tours Attock district

ATTOCK: Provincial Minister for Law, Communications and Construction Malik Soheb Ahmed Bharat said that Chief Minister Punjab Maryam Nawaz is taking all possible steps for the improvement of the province. Also, provincial assembly Malik Prabi Khan Chauhdry Sher Ali Khan, former provincial minister Jahangir Khanzada, Iftikhar Khan Malik Hameed Akbar Khan and district administration officers were also present. The relevant officers briefed them regarding development schemes and other matters. It was told that 103 schemes across the district will cost 32514 million rupees. These include the maintenance and repair of education and health infrastructure and other schemes. The district heads of the government departments briefed the provincial minister. Sohib Ahmed directed that the relevant officers visit the development schemes regularly along with the local Nawaz League leadership. The Provincial Minister of Law, Construction and Communications later visited the Government Isfandyar Bukhari District Hospital and the relevant officers of the Health Department briefed him. Visited various sections and reviewed the administrative matters. He directed to further improve the administrative and other related matters of the hospital.

Book on History of Sultanabad: A modern village Launched

Kamran Khamiso Khowaia

HYDERABAD: A book on one of Sindh's earliest modern villages, titled "Sultan Ka Sultanabad", has been published. The village, located 50 kilometers from Hyderabad city, is part of Tando Muhammad Khan district and was established in 1936 by Waris Fadu, on the directions of Sir Sultan Muhammad Shah Aga Khan, the first President of the All-India Muslim League and pioneer of the Muslim emancipation movement. The village is inhabited by the Shia Ismaili community, with a current population of around 600.

The book has been co-authored by two young historians, Muzafar Mansoor and Latif Pirwani, who claim it took them around two decades to compile the history of their village and transform it into a book. One of the authors, Muzafar Mansoor, said that the villagers have contributed significantly to the social and economic development of the country. He added that the fruit and vegetable market of Tando Muhammad Khan district, established by the villagers in collaboration with the Aga Khan Development Network around 20 years ago, is considered the cornerstone of the district's economy.

The first private school of the district was established here in 1938, followed by a dispensary and a community training center," said Latif Pirwani. He added that when educating girls was considered a sin, the women of this village led an active social life and went to remote areas of Hyderabad to serve as teachers and nurses. He further said that teachers from this village were selected to train young teachers in other districts of Sindh during the Muhammad Khan Junejo regime.

The authors explained that the book comprises contributions of local villagers to the country's social development, their struggle, dedication, and the city's concept of voluntarism. The book also carries the history of the Aga Khan Family and their journey in the village's development, besides Waris Fadu and other major contributors.

The villagers have assisted government authorities in running their affairs several times, and their efforts have been commended by heads of state, the authors said. The book is written in Urdu.

Professor Abid Arbani, a villager, eulogized the efforts of both authors and termed it a revolutionary move. "This village will always stand as an example for the Sindh government when it comes to social development and uplifting remote areas," he proposed.

CCPO directs Lahore police to launch crackdown against electricity theft

Bureau Report

LAHORE: Lahore Police have registered 15,513 cases and arrested 14,938 suspects in various operations against electricity thieves this year.

The spokesperson Lahore Police stated it in a statement issued today. The spokesperson added that 2,087 suspects were arrested in Iqbal Town, 2,523 in Sadar, 4,437 in Cantonment, 2,398 in Model Town, 2,650 in City and 843 in Civil Lines

CCPO Lahore informed that a vigorous crackdown on electricity thieves is ongoing in the provincial capital. He expressed his determination that Lahore Police is providing full support to the relevant departments to prevent electricity theft. Bilal Siddique Kamyana issued instructions to complete the challans in electricity theft cases in consultation with the prosecutors at the earliest. He emphasized that challans should be timely submitted to the courts and effective follow up on the cases be ensured for their competition. He also appealed to the citizens to promptly inform the police and the relevant authorities in case of electricity theft.





Namaz Timings .. 7:22 pm ..9:06 pm

EMERGENCY

EINIEI/OEI/OI
Rescue (Police) 15
Bomb Disposal 15
Fire Services Rawalpindi/
Islamabad1122 & 16
Emergency Ambulance 1122 &
& Rescue Services 4451122
Motorway Police9266044
Motorway Police9270601-20

Women Police Stations

Islamabad	922259
Rawalpindi	9270601-20

ENQL	JIRY
ni Ambulance	115
Flight Info	114
Cargo	9280979
lway Inquiry	117
lway Exchange	9270831-5

HOSPITALS

Railway Exchange

1100111	~=~
CMH	5611111
MH	561116
MH	561116
Cantt Hospital	9270907-11
DHQ	5556311-4
RGH	9290301-7
Holy Family	9290322-7
PIMS	9261170-79
Polyclinic	9218300-09
Shifa International	4603666

DEPARTMENTS

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

Engro Fertilizers completes largest-ever EnVen Plant turnaround with investment of approx. USD 50 million

Commerce Desk

KARACHI: Engro Fertilizers has completed the largest-ever (55 days) scheduled maintenance activity of the EnVen Plant as

planned on June 18, 2024. Established in 2011 with an investment of USD 1.1 billion, the EnVen Plant has an annual production capacity of 1.3 million tons and is the most energy efficient fertilizer plant in Pakistan, with the lowest consumption of gas per ton of urea.

The project scope of the turnaround included over 5,000 technical activities, including the first-ever replacement of the waste heat boiler, overhaul of the furnace convection section. ammonia storage tank inspection and a comprehensive overhaul of six major turbo trains and gas turbines

At peak, more than 6,000 people were engaged round-the-clock at the Plant site for these turnaround activities. Engro Fertilizers has invested approx. USD 50 million in the Plant turnaround to improve its reliability and operational efficiency.

According to Ali Rathore CEO of Engro Fertilizers. "The safe and successful completion of this major turnaround, despite extreme weather conditions, showcases the engineering excellence of the Engro Fertilizers team in executing large-scale projects within planned schedules and budgets, while prioritizing the safety of everyone involved in the activity. These critical projects were executed in-house by our talented engineers using innovative techniques and global best practices of safety and quality."

He added that, "The meticulous planning and execution ensured that the availability of urea to our hardworking farmers was not impacted, demonstrating the entire Engro Fertilizers team's firm commitment to our purpose of enabling the food security of Pakistan. We would like to thank our employees, contractors, global technical partners, local administration, and all other key stakeholders for their seamless support and guidance that contributed to the success of this major turnaround."

CM Maryam & Nawaz Sharif meet Iranian Ambassador

LAHORE: Chief Minister Punjab Maryam Nawaz Sharif along with President Pakistan Muslim League (N) Muhammad Nawaz Sharif met Ambassador of Islamic Republic of Iran to Pakistan H. E. Dr. Reza Amiri Moghaddam to review cooperation between Iran and Punjab in agriculture, livestock and other sectors. Trade, cultural, social and economic ties between Punjab and Iran were also discussed in the meeting.

Madam Chief Minister was briefed by the Ambassador that Iran has agreed to increase import of meat from Punjab from 40% to 70%. He also held a detailed discussion on the commercial role of Punjab in the agreement to increase bilateral trade between Pakistan and Iran up to \$10 billion.

principle to make Pak-Iran border of security, a border of economy. Moreover, various proposals were also considered for the promotion of Persian language in Punjab to further promote people-to-people contact between Punjab and Iran. Iranian Ambassador H. E.

Dr. Reza Amiri Moghaddam presented a written invitation to Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz Sharif to visit Iran. He also invited President Pakistan Muslim League (N) Muhammad Nawaz Sharif to visit Iran, who recalled his earlier visit to Iran in the meeting.

Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz Sharif and President Pakistan Muslim League (N) Muhammad Nawaz Sharif expressed grief over the martyrdom of Iranian President Ibrahim Raisi. They said, "Iranian President Ibrahim Raisi

In the meeting, it was agreed in and his comrades felt the pain of people of Iran from the core of their heart."

Madam Chief Minister said, The meeting with Shaheed Iranian President Ibrahim Raisi was memorable, his personality was impressive." She added,"In a one-on-one meeting with Iranian President Ibrahim Raisi, there was a fruitful discussion on the promotion of trade and cultural relations."

Iranian Ambassador H. E. Dr. Raza Amiri Mughdam said,"We are grateful to Pakistan. Pakistan has a very special importance for Iran, Pakistani people have proved to be Iran's true friends." He added, "Martyred Iranian President Ibrahim Raisi wanted to meet Nawaz Sharif, but could not do so due to his visit to China." He highlighted, "Agreements and MoUs signed during President Chief Minister on successfully



Ibrahim Raisi's visit to Pakistan will continue."

The Iranian Ambassador congratulated Madam

completing 100 days as the first female Chief Minister of Punjab. He also appreciated her peoplefriendly initiatives.

Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz

Sharif thanked the Iranian ambassador, and agreed to further increase cultural links between the twin cities of Isfahan, Mashhad

Pak-Canada Relations

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Interior Mohsin Naqvi presenting souvenir to Canadian High Commissioner Leslie Scanlon on Friday.



103rd Board of Governors meeting of Cadet College Hasan Abdal

👺 Raza Nagvi

ATTOCK: Governor of Haider Khan, stated that Cadet College Hasan Abdal is an institution of excellent and esteemed traditions. He expressed these views while presiding over the 103rd Board of Governors meeting of Cadet College Hasan Abdal. The meeting was attended by members of the Board of Governors, including Chairman POF Lieutenant General Tahir Hameed Shah, Principal of Cadet College Hasan Abdal Brigadier Nasir Saeed Khattak, Muhammad Saeed Mehdi,

Mahfooz-ur-Rehman, Brigadier Dr. Muhammad Khaleeq-ur-Rasheed Kayani, Lieutenant General Najeebul-Ali Chaudhry, Dr. Ijaz Munir, Vice-Chancellor of Fatima



lah Khan, Professor Dr. Zafar Secretary School Educa- er Rawalpindi's represent- matters related to the college tion Government of Punjab ative Director of Develop-Dr. Ehtisham Anwar, Addi- ment and Finance Rawalpin-Jinnah Women University tional Secretary Finance di Nazia Akbar. During the possible steps would be taken Dr. Uzaira Rafique, education Government of Punjab Mir meeting, the annual budget expert Dr. Saima Siddiqui, Raza, and Commission- was approved, and important College Hasan Abdal.

were discussed. The Governor of Punjab stated that all for the development of Cadet

S I Global signs partnership with JFC Marine

跨 Bureau Report

KARACHI: JFC Marine, a leading provider of innovative marine solutions, and SI Global Solutions (Pvt) Ltd, a renowned expert in aids to navigation and aquaculture development, have signed an exclusive distribution agreement (EDA) to collaborate on the promotion and deployment of polyethylene navigation buoys, aids to navigation and aquaculture products in Pakistan.

The Exclusive Distribution Agreement signing ceremony was held at Factory of JFC Marine at Galway, Ireland and it was attended by Dr. Noman Said, CEO of SIGBL and key executives of JFC Marine. "This partnership marks a significant milestone in our efforts to promote safe to navigation in Pakistani Ports and introduce sustainable aquaculture practices in Pakistan," said Mr Colin,



on behalf of the CEO of JFC industry. Our partnership Marine. "We look forward

Ltd also is committed to Global Solutions. delivering innovative solutions for Pakistan's mari-

with JFC Marine will enable to working together to drive us to introduce world-class innovation and growth in the products, services and expertise to the local market,"added "SI Global Solutions (Pvt) Mr Noman Said, CEO of SI

This collaboration is poised to make a significant impact time sector and aquaculture on Pakistan's maritime sector

especially use of Polyethylene Navigation Buoys along with use of intelligent and stateof-the-art aids to navigation and introduction of aquaculture industry, contributing to the country's food security, economic growth, generating employment and environmental sustainability.

Tribute to TMO Jahangira for keeping Nowshera district clean on Eid-ul-Azha

跨 City Desk



JAHANGIRA: On the occasion of Eid-ul-Zhaa, the people of both tehsils paid tribute to Miss Shahana Sikandar and her team for their hard work day and night for providing all the best facilities to the public in Mandi Mall, Cattle, Dryness, Rashkai, Khingi, and Shidu. Miss Shahana Sikandar and

her team played an excellent role in making Jahangira and Nowshera tehsil free of clutter providing all the best facilities in Mandi Moishyan and keeping the traffic flowing and similarly like previous years also in Nowshera district this year. He deserves the first position in terms of cleanliness and provision of facilities in Mandi Mal cattle across the province as his work has been highly appreciated by the public and the district administration. The credit goes to Miss Shahana Sikandar TMO Jahangira and TOR TMA Nowshera. Madam said that no effort will be spared to keep the Nowshera district clean

Spotify Pakistan celebrates World Music Day highlighting global flavor loved by local audiences

Bureau Report

KARACHI: As avid music listeners and fans from across the globe celebrate World Music Day on June 21, Spotify continues to stand out in the local space as a global platform connecting listeners in Pakistan to a diverse array of their favorite music from around the world. With over 100 million of tracks at their fingertips. Pakistani users have shown a strong love for international artists alongside their local favorites. Global Music, Local Trends

On this World Music Day, Spotify is revealing listening data from January to June 2024, showcasing local trends and gravitation towards global music, and treating its fans with a data trove that reveals fascinating insights into the music tastes of Pakistanis. Among the top global most-streamed artists from Pakistani users on Spotify, familiar names like Arijit Singh and Pritam lead the charts, showcasing the country's affinity for Indian music. Shubh, Sidhu Moose Wala and Karan Aujla complete the list of top five most streamed international artists from Pakistan. These artists highlight cross-border musical preferences and Spotify's role in promoting cultural exchange.

Once again, songs from across the border dominate the list of most streamed international tracks by Pakistani music fans in 2024. Leading the list are "Husn" by Anuv Jain and "Pehle Bhi Main" by Raj Shekhar and Vishal Mishra. They are followed by "King Shit" from Shubh, "Ishq" by Faheem Abdullah and Rauhan Malik, and "Ve Haaniyaan" by Avvy Sra, Danny, and Sagar.

Besides these tracks, three local songs including "Wishes" from Hasan Raheem, Talwiinder and Umair, "Sadqay" by Aashir Wajahat, NAYEL and Nehal Naseem and "Tu Hai Kahan" by AUR also feature in the Top 10 showcasing an interesting trend.

AIOU announces schedule for online workshops.

E City Desk

ISLAMABAD: Allama Iqbal Open University (AIOU) has announced workshop schedule for M. A/M. Sc, BS, and B. Ed (ODL programs) offered in semester spring 2024. Workshops for the first batch will be held from June 24 to June 29. Each course workshop will be held for 6 days. It should be noted that workshops will be conducted online on Microsoft teams through AIOU's Aaghi Learning Management System (LMS) portal. According to the Director General Regional Services, Dr. Malik Tauqir Ahmed Khan, login information (username & password) has been shared with the students and they are instructed to participate in these workshops through Aaghi portal. All those students who have not received their username and password are instructed to contact their nearest AIOU regional office.

As per the instructions of Vice Chancellor AIOU, Prof. Dr. Nasir Mahmood, the workshops of remaining batches of these programs will be announced soon. Students of the remaining batches are advised to keep checking the LMS portal and the university website for the schedule of workshops.

Creators of 'The Donkey King' announce their next animated film 'My Daddy My Superhero'

Bureau Report

KARACHI: The makers of the blockbuster animated movie 'The Donkey King' launched the announcement teaser of their next animated movie 'My Daddy My Superhero' featuring the voice of Fahad Mustafa. This was befittingly revealed on Father's Day by Mangu (aka The Donkey King) himself in Geo News.

'My Daddy My Superhero' promises to be an ode to every father with a 70 sec announcement teaser video that left us asking for more. With stunning visuals, natural voice acting and impactful animation this movie is all set to break new ground in the Pakistani animated industry.

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World 'cannot afford Lebanon to become another Gaza'

N Secretary-General Antonio Guterres Friday voiced profound concern over escalating violence and "bellicose rhetoric" between Israel and Hezbollah fighters across the frontier with Lebanon, warning that one false move could trigger a catastrophe for the whole region and beyond.

The situation along the Blue Line, the demarcation between Israeli and Lebanese armed forces, has been deteriorating since Israel launched its offensive in the Gaza Strip on October 7, 2023.

On Thursday Hezbollah leader Hassan Nasrallah reportedly issued a stern warning to Israel amid reports that the Israeli military has approved plans for an offensive on southern Lebanon.

Speaking to the press at the UN Headquarters in New York, the UN chief underscored that a widening of the conflict in the Middle East must be avoided.

"Let's be clear: The people of the region and the people of the world cannot afford Lebanon to become another Gaza," he stressed.

"One rash move – one miscalculation – could trigger a catastrophe that goes far beyond the border, and frankly, beyond imagination," he said.

The UN chief also highlighted that on both sides of the Blue Line, many people have already lost their lives and been driven from their homes and livelihoods.

He urged both sides to "urgently recommit" to the full implementation of Security Council Resolution 1701 and immediately return to a cessation of hostilities.

Adopted in 2006, the resolution set in motion a ceasefire between Israel and Hezbollah, the withdrawal of Israeli forces from southern Lebanon and the establish-

ment of demilitarized zone. "The world must say loudly and clearly: immediate de-escalation is not only possible – it is essential," Gu-

He also underscored the need to protect civilians, ensure that children, journalists and medical workers are not targeted, and ensure the displaced can return to their

The secretary-general also emphasized that the UN is "actively engaging" to promote peace, security and stability, in line with Resolution 1701.

"UN peacekeepers, UNIFIL, are on the ground working to de-escalate tensions and help prevent miscalculation, in an extremely challenging environment" he said, adding that the Organization fully supports diplomatic efforts to end the violence, restore stability and avoid even greater human suffering in the region.

"And we do so as we continue to press for an immediate humanitarian ceasefire in Gaza, the immediate and unconditional release of the hostages and a real pathway to a two-State solution," Guterres added.

Pakistan in Crisis: Navigating Challenges toward a Stable Future

Dr. Muhammad Shahzad **Ashfaq**

he current situation in Pakistan is one that demands careful analysis and strategic planning in order to navigate the challenges the country faces toward a stable future. From political instability to economic challenges, Pakistan is confront with a myriad of issues that require immediate attention and longterm solutions. It is important to explore the various dimensions of the crisis in Pakistan and propose potential pathways to a stable future. However, Pakistan has a history of political instability, characterized by frequent changes in government, military coups, and a lack of continuity in policies and governance. The recent years have seen a rise in political polarization, with competing political parties struggling for power and influence.

The ongoing power struggle between the civilian government and the military has further intensified the political instability in the country. The lack of political consensus and the destruction of democratic institutions have hindered the effective governance of Pakistan, leading to a sense of disillusionment among the public. In order to address this challenge, it is imperative for Pakistan to strengthen its democratic institutions, uphold the rule of law, and promote political inclusivity. A stable future for Pakistan hinges on the establishment of a political system that is transparent, accountable, and representative of the diverse interests of the population.

Main problem of Pakistan faces significant economic challenges that have contributed to the overall crisis in the country. High levels of inflation, unemployment,

and a growing debt burden have strained the economy, leading to social unrest and economic hardship for many Pakistanis. The lack of sustainable economic growth and development has further worse the situation, creating a sense of uncertainty and instability. It is essential to implement comprehensive economic reforms that prioritize inclusive growth, job creation, and poverty alleviation. Investing in infrastructure development, promoting entrepreneurship, and enhancing the business environment are critical steps toward achieving economic stability and prosperity. Additionally, Pakistan must focus on diversifying its economy, reducing its dependence on a few key industries, and promoting sustainable development practices.

The security situation in Pakistan linked to the regional dynamics of South Asia. The ongoing conflict in Afghanistan, the longstanding tensions with Hindustan and the presence of extremist groups pose significant security challenges for Pakistan. The spillover effects of regional conflicts, crossborder terrorism, and internal security threats have contributed to a sense of insecurity and instability within the country. Pakistan must prioritize national security, counter-terrorism efforts, and regional cooperation. Strengthening border security, enhancing intelligence capabilities by using AI, and promoting dialogue and diplomacy with neighboring countries are essential steps toward achieving stability and security. Addressing the root causes of extremism, promoting social cohesion, and fostering a culture of tolerance and inclusivity are critical in countering the threat of extremism and violence.

Pakistan extends beyond political and economic dimensions to encompass social and human development challenges. Issues such as poverty, illiteracy, healthcare access, and gender inequality continue to impede



the overall development of the country. The lack of access to quality education, healthcare, and social services has perpetuated social disparities and hindered the potential for progress and prosperity. In order to address the social and human development challenges, Pakistan must prioritize investments in education, healthcare, and social welfare programs. Promoting gender equality, empowering marginalized communities, and enhancing social safety nets are essential in fostering a more inclusive and equitable society. The underlying social determinants of health, such as access to clean water, sanitation, and nutrition, is critical in improving the overall well-being of the population.

In this crisis, Pakistan demand comprehensive governance and institutional reforms to address the systemic challenges that have hindered the country's progress. Weak governance, corruption, and a lack of institutional capacity have undermined the effectiveness of public institutions and eroded public trust in the government. Strengthening the rule of law, promoting transparency and accountability, and combating corruption are essential in building resilient and effective governance structures. In order to achieve a stable future, Pakistan must prioritize institutional reforms that enhance the efficiency, transparency, and accountability of public institutions. Investing in capacity building, promoting merit-based appointments, and streamlining bureaucratic processes are critical steps toward improving the overall governance framework. Fostering a culture of peace, ethical leadership, and public service excellence is essential in rebuilding public trust and confidence in the government.

The country has a large population living below the poverty line and services such as education and healthcare are few. Gender inequality is also a serious problem: Women is differentiate in both the public and private sectors. A comprehensive approach to solving social problems would include investing in social programs, improving education and health services, and empowering women and disadvantaged families. To address governance issues, Pakistan needs to strengthen anti-corruption measures, improve service delivery, and promote transparency and accountability in government affairs.

Pakistan stresses a holistic approach that addresses the political, economic, security, social, and governance challenges facing the country. Navigating toward a stable future requires concerted efforts to strengthen democratic institutions, promote inclusive economic growth, enhance national security, and prioritize social and human development. By addressing political, economic, security, social and governance challenges together, Pakistan can pave the way for a better, more prosperous and inclusive future for its people. Only through full and united efforts, Pakistan overcome its challenges to realize its potential as a nation.

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Cartoon by Amjad Rasmi. (Courtesy of Asharq Al-Awsat)

Water Stress Myth or Reality

Nagash Taj Abbasi

akistan is the fifth most climate change, witnessing erratic monsoon, and multiple seasonal climatic disasters. In the year 2022, fi 175% increase in rainfall was witnessed in altering precipitation patterns, making various regions. In the year 2024, country northern areas experienced faster glacier melt and increased small glof events due to high temperatures. Situation has caused alarm for scientists and disaster management authorities as the nation is already facing economic challenges, coupled with low disaster resilience. Foreseeing the coming months Pakistan is likely to face flood disaster for year 2024 as predicted by climatic models and projections. Despite large inputs of water from nature, the country is transitioning from a water stressed phase to water scarce. Multiple anthropogenic activities, and trans-boundary pollution activities have contributed to the worst scenario. In Groundwater Depletion: Over-extracthis article we have highlighted various facts that explains why "Pakistan will be a Water Scarce country". 1. Temporal and Spatial Variability: a) Seasonal Distribution: Water availability fluctuates seasonally. Monsoon rains provide and poorly maintained infrastructure significant water during the rainy season, results in substantial water losses. b) but dry periods lead to water scarcity. b) Geographic Disparities: Certain regions receive more rainfall than others. For instance, the southern parts of Pakistan are much drier compared to the northern regions. 2. Water Management Issues: a) Inefficient Irrigation:

irrigation practices lead to significant water wastage. b) Storage and Distribution: Lack of sufficient water storage vulnerable country to facilities and poor distribution infrastructure means, much of the water from rainfall and glacial melt cannot be effectively utilized. 3. Climate Change: a) Changing Patterns: Climate change is rains more erratic and unpredictable. Glacial melt may increase in the short term but is not a reliable long-term source as glaciers continue to shrink. b) Extreme Events: Increased frequency and intensity of extreme weather events, such as floods and droughts, exacerbate water management challenges. 4. Population Growth: a) Rapid population growth increases the demand for water for domestic, agricultural, and industrial use, outstripping the available supply. 5. Pollution and Over-Extraction: a) Water Quality: Pollution from industrial, agricultural, and domestic sources contaminates water supplies, reducing the amount of clean, usable water. b) tion of groundwater for irrigation and other uses leads to the depletion of aquifers, which are crucial during dry periods. 6. Infrastructure and Governance: a) Poor Infrastructure: Inadequate Governance Issues: Inefficient water management policies, lack of coordination among different sectors, and political challenges hinder effective water resource management. 7. International Factors: a) Transboundary Water Issues: Pakistan relies on rivers Pakistan's agriculture heavily relies on that flow from neighbouring countries.

irrigation, but outdated and inefficient Disputes and lack of cooperation over shared water resources can impact availability. 8. Reduction in Infiltration: a) Paved surfaces like roads, sidewalks, and parking lots prevent water from seeping into the ground. Instead of infiltrating the soil, rainwater and meltwater run off these surfaces rapidly. 9. Increased Runoff: a) The increase in surface runoff due to impervious surfaces leads to water flowing directly into storm drains, rivers, and lakes, rather than slowly percolating through the soil to recharge groundwater aquifers. 10. Urban Heat Island Effect: a) Paved surfaces absorb and retain heat, contributing to the urban heat island effect. This can increase evaporation rates, further reducing the amount of water available for infiltration. These multiple factors altogether create a complex situation where, despite eriods of abundant water from rainfall and glacial melt, Pakistan still faces significant challenges in managing its water resources sustainably and equitably, thus leading to water stress. In the context of Pakistan, rapid urbanization and the expansion of paved surfaces in cities exacerbate water stress by reducing the natural replenishment of groundwater. This is particularly concerning in regions where groundwater is a primary source of water for agriculture, industry, and domestic use. To mitigate these effects, strategies such as implementing green infrastructure, promoting permeable pavements, and enhancing urban planning practices that incorporate water-sensitive design can help improve infiltration and groundwater recharge.

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Kashmir in the Mirror of Reality - III

outcry and calls for their prohibition, pellet guns continue to be used indiscriminately, causing devastation and hopelessness. One of the most troubling aspects of the atrocities in IIOJK is the prevailing culture of impunity that shields perpetrators from accountability. Legal frameworks like the Armed Forces Special Powers Act (AFSPA) grant blanket immunity to Indian security forces, allowing them to act with impunity. The absence of impartial investigations, prose-

cutions, and avenues for redress exacerbates the suffering of victims and their families, perpetuating a cycle of injustice and impunity. Kashmir

region has long **Abdul Basit Alvi** been a focal point of

geopolitical tensions and territorial disputes, divided between India and Pakistan and enduring decades of conflict and instability, resulting in significant suffering for its residents. Amidst calls for independence and conflicting claims to sovereignty, the possibility of Kashmir's integration with Pakistan merits careful consideration. Exploring the potential advantages of a unified Kashmir under Pakistani governance reveals compelling arguments that transcend mere political rhetoric to address socio-economic, cultural, and strategic aspects of regional integration. Integrated a prominent benefit of Kashmir's

espite international union with Pakistan. Through coordinated economic policies, infrastructure development, and investment initiatives, a unified Kashmir could leverage synergies to foster growth and prosperity. Pakistan's strong industrial foundation and economic assets have the potential to strengthen Kashmir's economy, facilitating the creation of jobs, fostering entrepreneurship, and reducing poverty. Furthermore, tapping into Pakistan's extensive market could improve trade prospects for businesses in Kashmir, opening up avenues for exporting and

broadening economic activities. By utilizing Pakistan's knowledge and experience in sectors like agriculture, tourism, and technology, Kashmir could unleash its complete economic capacity, paving the way for sustainable

growth and prosperity. The deep cultural and historical ties between Kashmir and Pakistan provide a compelling basis for their unification. Shared language, customs, and heritage foster a sense of kinship that transcends geographical boundaries. Through uniting under a common banner, Kashmiris can reaffirm their cultural identity and safeguard their linguistic and religious heritage from external influence. Furthermore, integration with Pakistan could facilitate cultural exchange programs, educational endeavors, and collaborative artistic ventures, enriching the economic development emerges as cultural fabric of both regions. By

cultural inclusivity, a unified Kashmir could promote social cohesion and unity, creating the groundwork for a dynamic and welcoming society.

From a strategic standpoint, the integration of Kashmir with Pakistan carries significant benefits for regional stability and security. By aligning defense capabilities and security protocols, Pakistan could bolster deterrence against external threats and ensure the protection of Kashmir's territorial integrity. Additionally, unified governance structures could streamline administrative procedures, enhance law enforcement efforts, and fortify border security, reducing the risk of cross-border incursions and insurgency. Moreover, strategic collaboration between Pakistan and Kashmir could facilitate regional connectivity initiatives like the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC), opening up new trade routes and promoting economic integration throughout

By promoting peace, stability, and cooperation, a unified Kashmir could emerge as a linchpin for regional devel-

opment and prosperity. The situation in AJK stands in stark contrast to that in IIOJK and other regions of Pakistan, reflecting the deepseated affection and mutual respect between Pakistan and Kashmir. For many Kashmiris, the most viable and desirable option is to live alongside Pakistan rather than under Indian rule or as an independent entity. The majority of Kashmiris recognize this reality, yearning for the right to self-determination, seeking liberation from Indian control, and expressing a desire embracing diversity and promoting to unite with Pakistan.

The Spokesman 5

ISSI hosts Roundtable on 'Astana Summit2024: Solidifying SCO's Partnerships'

Naveed Ahmad Khan

ISLAMABAD: China Pakistan Study Centre (CPSC) at Institute of Strategic Studies Islamabad (ISSI) hosted a Summit2024: Solidifying SCO's Partnerships". The event was moderated by tions for regional peace and prosperity, Dr Talat Shabbir, Director CPSC. The reflecting its proactive role in advancing speakers at the roundtable included Ambassador Sohail Mahmood, Director General ISSI; Ambassador Khalid Mahmood, Chairman BoG, ISSI; regional stability and prosperity through HE Yerzhan Kistafin, Ambassador of Republic of Kazakhstan to Pakistan; economic collaboration, and cultural Ambassador Babar Amin, Pakistan's first National Coordinator of Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO); Dr. Syed Hussain Shaheed Soherwordi, Professor, University of Peshawar; and Mr. Marghoob Saleem Butt, Pakistan's National Coordinator for SCO, MOFA.

DG ISSI Ambassador Sohail Mahmood stressed the significance of the upcoming Astana Summit within robust counterterrorism mechanisms the SCO framework, underscoring SCO's role as a pivotal trans-regional platform scored Kazakhstan's commitment to committed to stability, economic development, and cooperative multilateralism. Emphasizing SCO's expansive regional connectivity. Additionally, he reach covering 60% of Eurasia, encompassing 40% of the global population, and a significant portion of the world's opment, economic collaboration and GDP, he underscored its evolution into connectivity, affirming a shared vision a vital platform for stability and multilateral cooperation. Ambassador Sohail Mahmood highlighted SCO's commitment to non-alignment, non-confronta-sized the significant role of cooperation tion and inclusivity, offering an alterna- within SCO member states, stressing tive perspective in international relations also the importance of people-to-people

the internal and external challenges facing SCO, urging coordinated efforts amidst complex regional and global realities. Pakistan's active engagement with roundtable discussion titled, "Astana SCO, he noted, aligned closely with its national development goals and aspira-SCO's objectives.

Earlier, Dr. Talat Shabbir highlighted the pivotal role of the SCO in fostering robust security mechanisms, enhanced exchanges. Emphasizing the significance of the Astana Summit 2024, he highlighted the SCO's commitment to promoting peace and cooperation on a global scale

Ambassador Yerzhan Kistafin highlighted Kazakhstan's role in the SCO's development, emphasizing its contributions to regional stability through and economic cooperation. He underfostering deep ties with SCO countries, promoting global peace, and enhancing discussed bilateral efforts with Pakistan in geopolitical dimensions, digital develfor peace, prosperity, and environmental security in the region.

Ambassador Babar Amin empha-

polarized world. He also acknowledged highlighted SCO's evolving visibility and potential for enhancing development dynamics, suggesting it could surpass BRICS in certain aspects. Addressing challenges such as terrorism and security, he stressed the imperative of collaborative efforts to foster connectivity and mitigate obstacles, including the involvement of groups like TTP.

Professor Dr. Syed Hussain Shaheed Soherwordi underscored the interconnectedness of security and economics in global affairs, emphasizing the recent Gaza and Ukraine conflicts as examples. Prof. Dr. Soherwordi proposed key measures including diversifying regional ties, establishing mutual non-aggression agreements among powers, and jointly combating terrorism to ensure regional stability and resilience against foreign intervention. His remarks emphasized the urgent need for collective action to safeguard the region's economic and security interests.

In his address, Dr. Marghoob Saleem Butt, Pakistan's National Coordinator for SCO, underscored the significant contributions of the SCO in various domains, including food security, climate change, and counter-terrorism. He emphasized the expanding scope of cooperation within the SCO, highlighting initiatives such as joint border operations and enhanced cyber cooperation. Dr. Butt also outlined Pakistan's priorities during its chairmanship, focusing on connectivity, poverty alleviation, and youth empowerment through digital initiatives. He also noted that Pakistan would be hosting the meeting of SCO Minisand a different cooperation model in a connections and media engagement. He ters of Trade/Commerce in September



he expressed Pakistan's commitment to adopt the documents which would reflect shared values of good neighbourliness, trust, and partnership, alongside commitments to initiatives such as safe drinking water, sanitation, and strategies for development, anti-drug efforts, and energy cooperation.

Ambassador Khalid Mahmood,

2024 and the Council of Heads of in his concluding remarks, said that expansion of SCO membership to 10 Government (CHG) in October 2024. the Shanghai Cooperation Organi-Looking forward to Astana Summit, zation (SCO) stands committed to its core mission of fostering security and economic cooperation among member states. He added that SCO is an organization focused on addressing diverse security challenges including terrorism, extremism, separatism, and non-traditional threats such as climate change and food security. Highlighting the upcoming Astana summit and the community and the media.

states with the inclusion of Belarus, he underscored the organization's evolving role and effectiveness in regional stability and development efforts.

The roundtable discussion concluded with a comprehensive question and answer session. The event was attended by a large number of diplomats, practitioners, academics, think-tank experts, students, representatives of the business

Palestine welcomes statehood recognition by Armenia

Spokesman Report

RAMALLAH: The Palestinian Presidency and the Palestinian Liberation Organization (PLO) on Friday with the principles of the two-state welcomed Armenia's decision to recognize the State of Palestine.

reported by the official Palestinian utes positively to preserving the news agency Wafa, "the Pales- two-state solution, which faces tinian Presidency has commended systematic challenges, and promotes the Republic of Armenia's decision security, peace, and stability for all to officially recognize the State of parties involved," said the presi-Palestine as an independent and sovereign nation."

The presidency expressed deep

as a "pivotal step towards enhancing bilateral relations and fostering peace and stability in the region."

"Armenia's wise decision aligns solution, a strategic choice that upholds international will and legit-According to a statement, imacy. This recognition contribdency, according to Wafa.

The Palestinian leadership urged "other nations, particularly Euroand significant decision," viewing it recognize the State of Palestine, to legitimacy resolutions based on the the West Bank, and East Jerusalem."



appreciation for "this courageous" pean countries that have yet to follow suit based on international 1967 borders, which include Gaza, the latest country to do so during the urgent aid to the blockaded terri-

Meanwhile, Hussein Al-Sheikh, more than 37,000 Palestinians since Committee, praised Armenia's

"We welcome the friendly state of Armenia's recognition of the State of Palestine in accordance with international law and international legitimacy," wrote Sheikh on X.

"This is a victory for truth, justice, legitimacy, and the struggle of our Palestinian people for liberation and independence. Thank you, friendly Armenia," he added.

Earlier on Friday, Armenia said it recognized the state of Palestine, war in Gaza, where Israel has killed tory.

secretary of the PLO Executive Oct. 7, 2023 Hamas incursion that claimed 1,200 lives. Yerevan said it recognition of the State of Palestine. was against violence towards civilian population.

Spain, Norway, Ireland and Slovenia have all recently recognized the Palestinian state.

Over eight months into the Israeli war, vast tracts of Gaza lay in ruins amid a crippling blockade of food, clean water and medicine.

Israel also stands accused of genocide at the International Court of Justice, which has ordered Tel Aviv to ensure unhindered provision of

Beeline and ZTE unveil Giga City project in Kazakhstan

Spokesman Report

ASTANA: ZTE Corporation (0763. HK / 000063. SZ), a global leading provider of integrated information and communication technology solutions, in partnership with Beeline Kazakhstan, a leading player in Kazakhstan's telecoms industry and a subsidiary of VEON Group, has successfully completed the modernization of the Beeline's network in the Akmola and Turkestan regions, which lead in traffic consumption and cover 25% of the population of Kazakhstan.

This milestone was celebrated with an official launch event in Astana, titled "Giga City: Accelerating the digitalization of Kazakhstan".

The project encompassed the Kazakhstan." modernization of the Beeline's nology has been introduced in major throughput growth for subscribers,

significantly enhancing services quality. demands while delivering a better user Notably, the modernization project using ZTE equipment was completed ahead of schedule.

Mr. Kaan Terzioglu, Chief Executive Officer of VEON Group, said, "I truly believe that with our strategy of digital operators, we will not only delight our customers with our telecom services like in the GIGA City project, but we will also provide them financial services, entertainment, education, health care and we will not stop there. We would like to thank ZTE for the successful partnership with Beeline Kazakhstan in this radio high-quality results will help achieve the digitalization goals we have for

"As an important participant in the mobile network in the Akmola region digital transformation in Kazakhstan, (including Astana) and the Turkestan Beeline has always been at the forefront region (including Shymkent), involving of introducing innovative products and more than 1,800 base stations. Addi-solutions to improve connectivity and tionally, FDD Massive MIMO tech- empower people in the digital world. Rapid growth in data traffic consumpcities. The implementation of this tion continues in Kazakhstan. This solution resulted in substantial 4G requires a more efficient 4G network to meet increasing network capacity

experience. The FDD Massive MIMO solution is a right way to optimize the modern 4G network," said Mr. Evgeniy Nastradin, Chief Executive Officer of Beeline.

"Kazakhstan is an important market for ZTE Corporation," said Mr. Xu Ziyang, Chief Executive Officer of ZTE Corporation. "The Giga City project, implemented in collaboration with Beeline in the Akmola and Turkestan regions, demonstrated our capability to effectively solve complex technical problems on a live network. We organized a comprehensive modernization network modernization project. The of the radio network infrastructure, including preparation for its future evolution. This will enable the operator to significantly reduce operating costs due to more energy-efficient equipment and the capability for remote site management. We are committed to accelerating the digitalization of Kazakh society, bringing more digital services to all Kazakh people, and accelerating the country's digital economic growth in partnership with Beeline."

The event was also attended by representatives of the Ministry of



Digital Development, Innovation, and Aerospace Industry of the Republic of Kazakhstan.

World Bank to loan Pakistan \$535 million to support Ambassador Amna meets Deputy CEO two climate-smart projects after 2022 floods

Spokesman Report

million in financing for Pakivulnerable households, Transformation (LIVAQ- and contingency planning." UA) Project will promote and aquaculture sectors in Pakistan's social protection the Project. "The additional strengthening the capacity of

Sindh. "The catastrophic floods ISLAMABAD: The World that hit Pakistan in 2022 Bank's Board of Executive were a tragic reminder of Directors approved \$535 the importance to build resilience to such disasstan to support two projects. ters, including by strength-The additional financ- ening both social protection ing for the Crisis Resilient and sectors that support Social Protection (CRISP) economic growth and Program aims to strengthen recovery," said Najy Benhasthe country's social protec-sine, World Bank Country tion system and build shock Director for Pakistan. "It is resilience among poor and also imperative to help the vulnerable absorb climate while the Sindh Livestock shocks through innovative and Aquaculture Sectors climate-smart technology

The additional financing climate-smart and compet- for CRISP (\$400 million) itive small and medium will build on the program's producers in the livestock on-going efforts to equip

delivery system foundations necessary for more effective and rapid responses to future crises. The program will focus on longer-term policy actions to further improve the national cash transfer program's effectiveness, coverage and Federal-Provincial coordination.

"Since its inception. the CRISP program has achieved significant results with regular safety net support to more than 9 million families and a demonstrated capability of quickly reaching 2.8 million policy and strategic framefamilies during the recent floods," said Amjad Zafar

system with the policy and financing would not only assist families in becoming more resilient to climate and economic shocks, but also encourage the use of provincial capacities to take up a larger role in social assistance.

LIVAQUA (\$135 million) will finance interventions to promote climate-smart production, value addition, and inclusive access to markets, and help create opportunities for growth in the livestock and aquaculture sectors. These will include improving sector works, as well as evidencebased decision making. Khan, Task Team Leader for It will also contribute to

public and private providers to deliver essential knowledge, inputs, and services such as disease surveillance and control, diagnostic laboratory services, breeding programs, food safety, and the development and transfer of green technologies.

LIVAQUA will cover all districts in Sindh using a phased approach. It is expected to directly benefit more than 940,000 farm families, including 930,000 households livestock and 10,000 aquaculture producers. The project also includes measures to ensure female farmers' participation in the project and narrow gender gaps.

Luxembourg Space Agency



BRUSSELS: Ambassador of Pakistan to Belgium, Luxembourg, and the European Union Amna Baloch on Friday met with Deputy Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of Luxembourg Space Agency Dr. Mathias Link and discussed potential collaborations in space related matters.

Bull & Bears PSX 100-Share

Index Fluctuation				
Pakistan: PSX 100-Share Index				
Current	Prev. Close			
78,810.49	78,801.53			
Day's High	Day's Low			
80,059.87	78,169.02			
Index Value	Change			
15,054,633,137	+8.96			
Percentage	Time			
+0.01%	21 Jun, 2024 5:00 pm			
Europe: FTS	E 100 Index			
Index Value	Change			
8,237.72	-34.74			
Percentage	Time			
-0.42%	21 Jun, 4:35 pm GMT+1			
USA: Dow Jones	Industrial Average			
Index Value	Change			
39,145.08	+10.32			
Percentage	Time			
	21 Jun, 1:11 pm			

0.000,0	GMT+9
Open Market	Forex Rates

Asia Pacific: Nikkei Stocks Average

Index Value

38,596.47

Percentage

-0.095%

GMT-4

Change

-36.55

Time

21 Jun, 3:15 pm

Currency	Buying	Selling
Australian Dollar	182.2	184
Bahrain Dinar	740.98	748.98
Canadian Dollar	202	204
China Yuan	38.4	38.8
Danish Krone	40.15	40.55
Euro	294.3	297.9
Hong Kong Dollar	35.68	36.03
Indian Rupee	3.34	3.45
Japanese Yen	1.9	1.98
Kuwaiti Dinar	908.7	917.7
Malaysian Ringgit	59.07	59.67
NewZealand \$	170.98	172.98
Norwegians Krone	26.38	26.68
Omani Riyal	723.75	731.75
Qatari Riyal	76.53	77.23
Saudi Riyal	72.85	73.6
Singapore Dollar	202	204
Swedish Korona	26.68	26.98
Swiss Franc	315.21	317.71
Thai Bhat	7.59	7.74
U.A.E Dirham	75	75.8
UK Pound Sterling	352	355.5
US Dollar	277.8	280.7

CCP approves acquisition of Luxembourg Firm with presence in Pakistan's solar market



Commerce Desk

ISLAMABAD: The Competition Commission of Pakistan (CCP) has approved the 100% acquisition of M/s. Actis Holdings S.a.r.l (Actis Holdings), a Luxembourg-based company having a presence in Pakistan's solar power market, by M/s. General Atlantic Partners, L. P. (GA), a US-based firm.

Actis Holdings is a sustainable infrastructure investor with a diverse portfolio in energy infrastructure, long-life infrastructure, digital infrastructure, real estate, and private equity sectors. Funds managed by Actis hold a majority interest in Solis, which is a majority shareholder in Yellow Door. Yellow Door is actively engaged in the solar electricity business in Pakistan.

The acquirer General Atlantic Partners, L. P. (GA), founded in 1980 and headquartered in New York, is a growth equity firm that provides capital and strategic support for global growth companies. GA boasts an impressive portfolio of 225 companies across six global sectors: climate, consumer, financial services, healthcare, life sciences, and technology.

The CCP's Phase-I competition assessment identified 'Power Generation - Solar' as the relevant product market. The assessment revealed Actis Holdings indirect presence in Pakistan via Yellow Door which has a market share of less than 1%, remaining unchanged post-transaction. Ultimately, the proposed acquisition will not result in GA gaining dominance in the relevant

This move is expected to bring enhanced expertise, technology, and capital to the local market, fostering competition and innovation in the renewable energy sector.

Pakistan facing critical period since its founding: Dr. Murtaza Mughal

Spokesman Report

ISLAMABAD: Dr. Murtaza Mughal, President of Pakistan Economy Watch (PEW), said on Saturday that the country has been going through a critical period for the masses since its creation.

Since the 1970s, families ruling Pakistan have claimed to serve the masses but have become billionaires, while the people began to crave bread, he said.

For the last 25 years, Pakistan has been adjusting its budget according to the terms and conditions of the IMF. Still, he added that the country's conditions continued to deteriorate instead of improving.

Dr Murtaza Mughal said in a statement issued today that we have been facing problems like reduced net tax, uncontrolled expenditure, and unnecessary incentives and subsidies for the last 25 years because their resolution is limited to announcements. like external debt, limited revenue, deficit, tion systems.

He said that in the last twenty-five years, the neighbouring countries have made fantastic progress, while Pakistan has seen three short periods of artificial growth during which hefty loans were acquired.

However, the elite took the benefits or growth while people were left high and dry.

He said that even in the year 2000, Pakistan had signed an agreement with the IMF on strict terms, and presently, we are in the process of signing another harsh agreement with no signs of real economic improvement.

The IMF has created a single formula to get all countries out of the crisis in which the ground realities of a country are not considered. The IMF only pressures countries to cut spending, raise taxes, sell national assets, and devalue the currency.

lems of many countries, including Pakistan. ment to the growing youth population, food the people. The country's system constantly Even in 2000, Pakistan faced problems



The lender formula increases the probdecayed energy and service system, employsecurity, water scarcity, and health and educa-

After 25 years later, we are still facing these issues. In the last twenty-five years, no serious attempt has been made to remedy the problems affecting the economy, but no budget has been introduced that would cause any fundamental changes in the country's system.

Dr Murtaza Mughal said that the country's population is multiplying, along with the unemployment and malnutrition crisis, and millions of children are not able to go to school. Still, no attention is being paid to this.

Nothing is being done to equip people with skills to make them valuable citizens. Employment opportunities are such that millions of educated people are fleeing the country, and there is no effort to stop this brain drain.

The alliance between the rulers and the capitalist class has made the country hell for transfers capital from the poor to the rich, a perfect recipe for disaster.

Eid holidays continue

ISLAMABAD: A view of deserted fruit and vegetable market due to Eid Al-Adha holidays at sector I-11 in the Federal Capital.



Photo: Online by Sultan Bashir

FPCCI holds FBR's top anomalies committee meeting, says Atif Ikram Sheikh

Example 2 Commerce Desk

KARACHI: Mr. Atif Ikram Sheikh, President FPCCI and Dr. Gohar Ejaz, former federal commerce minister - who are jointly chairing FBR's Anomaly Committee 2024 from the business side - called a high-profile meeting of all chambers, trade bodies and associations at FPCCI; and, discussed the glaring anomalies in the Finance Bill and federal budget 2024 - 25 in detail on a sector-to-sector basis.

It is pertinent to note that Mr. Atif Ikram Sheikh, President FPCCI, will be presenting the dossier of anomalies from the entire business, industry and trade community of Pakistan to the federal minister for finance and revenue to be reviewed by federal government's economic team and the prime minister to remove or resolve anomalies from the federal budget 2024 - 25.

Dr. Gohar Ejaz stressed that it is imperative to amend the finance bill to take out its regressive and contractionary measures to keep the economy afloat, curtail inflation, keep current account deficit in control, enable exporters to grow, create jobs and



Dr. Gohar Ejaz added that Pakistani trade and industry is already at a disadvantage as compared to the region due to unbearable cost of doing business; which has been driven up due to electricity and gas tariffs; inflationary pressures in the economy and inconsistencies in economic policymaking.

Mr. Saquib Fayyaz Magoon, SVP FPCCI & Focal Person for anomalies in federal budget 2024 - 25, said that imposition of enhanced taxes on salaried class will further fuel the brain drain from Pakistan; which is already suffering from the shortage of skilled workforce for its industry. In view of fairness, the government should not tax the already taxed even further, he added.

Scammers can crack almost half of the passwords in less than a minute

E Commerce Desk

ISLAMABAD: Kaspersky experts conducted a largescale study on the resistance of 193M English passwords, compromised by infostealers and available on the darknet, to brute force and smart guessing attacks. According to the research results, 45% of all analyzed passwords which is almost 87M could be guessed by scammers within a minute. Only 23% (44M) of combinations turned out to be resistant enough and cracking them would take more than a year.

Kaspersky telemetry indicates more than 32 million attempts to attack users with password stealers in 2023. These numbers show the importance of digital hygiene and timely password policies. The results of the Kaspersky majority of the reviewed compromised by using smart guesses an attacker will try.

guessing algorithms.

Besides, the majority of the examined passwords (57%) contain a word from the dictionary, which significantly reduces the passwords' strength. Among the most popular vocabulary sequences, several groups can be distinguished. Popular names include "ahmed". "nguyen", "kumar", "kevin", "daniel". While popular words in passwords are "forever", "love", "google", "hacker" and "gamer". Standard passwords are "password", "qwerty12345", "admin", "12345" and "team".

In order to strengthen passwords, users should use a different password for each service. That way, even if one of your accounts is stolen, the rest won't go with it. It's better $not\,to\,use\,passwords\,that\,can$ be easily guessed from your study demonstrate that the personal information, such as birthdays, names of family passwords were not strong members, pets, or your own enough and could be easily name. These are often the first

70 % approved schemes part of Balochistan PSDP: Bugti

👺 Bureau Report

QUETTA: For the first time in Balochistan's history, the provincial Public Sector Development Programme (PSDP) for the fiscal year 2024-2025 includes 70% of approved uplift schemes.

"About 70% of approved schemes are included in the provincial PSDP in an effort to enhance good governance, and 100% of schemes will be included by the following year," Chief Minister Balochistan stated on Friday,

"Our goal this time is to spend 70 to 80% of the PSDP as the utilisation rate of development budget money has been relatively low in the past," he said while talking to the media outside

the Balochistan Assembly premises following the budget session. chief minister The

mentioned that the provin-

cial coalition administration

had set a target of 70 percent for spending money on PSDP projects as in the past, the ratio of money spent on PSDP had been extremely low. He said, "There would be a

healthy competition among lawmakers, the bureaucracy, and other parties concerned for the timely completion of the development schemes."

CM Bugti also issued a warning, stating that development funding would be transferred from those PSDP schemes that were not meeting expectations to those that were moving quickly.

Ahsan Zafar Bakhtawari takes pride in enhancing ICCI performance

Spokesman Report

ISLAMABAD: Ahsan Zafar Bakhtawari, President Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry has said that he has gone all out to enhance the performance of this prestigious body and that it is because of his and his team's tireless efforts that today its membership tally has crossed eight thousand.

Speaking to a media group, here on Friday, he said that for ease of doing businesses by addressing the grievances of the community, meetings with relevant government functionaries like CDA, Police, IESCO, IMC high-ups' are a routine matter, that's why the traders are getting enrolment in large number which is a crystal clear proof that they are placing their confi-

To a question he said that to attract

meetings with Ambassadors of friendly countries in the Chamber and in the Embassies are trait of the ICCI. Moreover, ICCI delegations' visits to other countries and meetings with the relevant Chambers have also proved beneficial for the country.

Answering a question about promotion of industry-academia linkages, Ahsan Zafar Bakhtawari said that ICCI has inked MoUs with almost all the leading Universities to enable the educated youth to emerge as job provides instead of job seekers.

for the first time during his Presidency that traders belonging to remote areas of the capital city like Tarnol, Bara Kahu etc. have also obtained the membership in large number because of the outclass performance of the Chamber.

He said that by acknowledging his Corporate Social Responsibilithe foreign investment in the country, ties, he has launched a campaign to



To another query he replied that it is install water filtration plants and water coolers in different commercial hubs of the capital city to ensure the provision of clean and cold drinking water to traders, customers as well as the residents. Moreover weekly medical camps, provision of computers, laboratory equipment etc. to different educational institutions are also part of the

He further said that ICCI is trying its Moreover, a NADRA facilitation centre level best to establish a new industrial estate in the outskirts of the twin cities for the promotion of businesses and investments and in this connection is in touch with the concerned authorities.

He proudly mentioned that ICCI has also inked a MoU with the Gulberg Greens Management for the constriction of a state of the art expo centre to boost commercial activities in the twin cities, adding that the forthcoming 2nd All Pakistan Chambers Presidents Conclave on June 25, 26 will also go a long way in highlighting and addressing the business community's problems for the economic wellbeing of the country.

Ahsan Zafar Bakhtawari went on to say that because of the commitment and hard work of his team under his command a Mediation Council Office has been established in the ICCI premises to amicably settle the rent matters.

and a Police Service Centre are about to commence their working within couple

He further said that traders are availing discount from top-class hospitals and Diagnostic Centres owing to the endeavors of the ICCI, added that he and his team is working hard to materialize the dream of the business community to have its own hospital, a School, a College and a University and a is also utilizing all options to resolve the residential problems of the business community.

Ahsan Zafar Bakhtawari added that ICCI also works shoulder to shoulder with the government for the promotion of education, awareness about IPRs, promulgation of religious values, creating awareness about climate change, sustainable development of the country etc. by holding seminars and conferences.

Pakistan CC moved in to Final of Jamshed Omar Cricket Tournament. "

Final at KCCA Stadium

Scores in Brief:

& Industry (FCCI).

rules of the game.

get FCCI membership.

Sports Desk

with the Permission of PCB.

Abdul Moiz (rls) 4/25, Saim Ayoub 3/31.

FCCI arranges technical

course for Kabaddi officials

FAISALABAD,: Kabaddi is the most popular sport of Punjab

which not only encourages healthy competition among youths but also plays a key role in promoting rural culture, said Dr Sajjad

Arshad, Senior Vice President Faisalabad Chamber of Commerce

Addressing a 2-day technical course for Kabaddi officials organ-

ized by the FCCI Standing Committee on sports, he said that it is a

game of strength, courage, perseverance and tolerance which has

potential to attract big crowds despite the indulgence of youths in

He was critical of successive governments which failed to patronize the game and said that the FCCI was making strenuous efforts to keep alive this cultural sport at the local, regional

He also underlined the role of Kabaddi officials in the sponsor-

ship of this game and said that the refresher course would help promote the game on scientific lines. He also stressed the need

to support Kabaddi players and said that they must be offered

Prof Ghulam Muhammad Chattha delivered a lecture on ethics and justice while Muzammil Hussain spoke on the rescue of players.

Similarly, Abdul Hakeem elucidated the history of Kabaddi

Kabaddi officials from all over Punjab participated in the course while Rana Sikandar Azam Khan, former President FCCI, Syed

while Syed Muhammad Tayyab Gillani explained in detail the

Shafique Hussain Shah, executive member, Shabbir Sindhu,

convener standing committee, and Tanvir Tarar advocate assured

Rana Sikandar Azam also urged the business community to

Cycling gold medalist Ali Ilyas receives grand welcome

full cooperation for the encouragement of Kabaddi.

maximum jobs in government departments.

KARACHI: Due to brilliant Century 124 by Test Cricketer Saud Shakil and all round Performance by young International Cricketer Saim Ayoub first he scored 45 and then capturing 3 wickets for 31 runs helped Pakistan Cricket Club to moved into Final of All Karachi Jamshed Omar Invitation Cricket Tournament after beating Nazimabad Gymkhana Blues by 149 runs in the First Semi

The Tournament is being Organized by Pakistan Cricket Club

Pakistan Cricket Club $300/7\,\mathrm{in}\,40$ overs. Saud Shakil $124\,13x4$

Nazimabad Gymkhana Blues 151 all-out in 34.3 overs. Zafar Ali

Khan 50 6x4 1x6 not out, Mehmood Shah 23, Ghana Subhan 20.

1x6 (in 100 balls), Saint Ayoub 45 6x4, Former Captain Pakistan

Cricket team 24. Najeeb ur Rehman (rmf) 3/55, Naeem Gull

Mahnoor Ali takes home her 2nd gold medal at the Penang Malaysian Junior Open 2024

Sports Desk

LAHORE: Mahnoor Ali, an 11-year-old Pakistani squash sensation, has once again made headlines for her exceptional talent and achievements. The young star won a gold medal in the PBA 20th Penang Malaysian junior Open 2024 U-13 category with an astounding score

The tournament was generously supported by The Bilquis and Abdul Razak Dawood (BARD), which has been a steadfast pillar behind her achievements and growth.

The PBA 20th Penang Malaysia Junior Open, an ASF Platinum tournament in the Asian Junior Super Series, is recognized as one of the toughest competitions in Asia. This is the second time she has secured gold in the Penang Junior Open 2024 U-13 category, marking another significant milestone.

In the past, she also received the gold medal in the Australian Junior Open 2024, took home the U-11 title at the Penang (Malaysian) Open Squash Championship in 2022, and secured a



bronze medal in the U-13 category at the 7th Borneo Junior Open 2023.

Abdul Razak Dawood says, "Mahnoor has been an asset to our foundation. Her success in the Penang Junior Open 2024 underscores the foundation's commitment to nurturing young Pakistani athletes in sports. Her achievement highlights the transformative impact of our support, empowering promising talents like Mahnoor to excel on international stages. We believe in cultivating a future where dedication and opportunity converge, inspiring more young athletes to reach their full potential."

The young athlete has consistently brought pride to both the foundation their potential as champions in their and the nation, accumulating a total of 15 medals and now holding 5 international titles.

The tournament gathered some of the world's top young squash players. This

win stands as a remarkable achievement for Pakistan in the international squash circuit, further promoting the country's burgeoning talent in the sport.

Mehreen Dawood shared her thoughts on Mahnoor's recent gold medal win, emphasizing its significance and Mahnoor's impact: "Mahnoor's success is a shining example of perseverance and the foundation's commitment to supporting extraordinary talent. Her achievements resonate far beyond the squash court, inspiring a new generation of young athletes to dream big and reach for greatness."

The Bilquis and Abdul Razak Dawood (BARD) Foundation has always played a vital role in promoting talent and paving the way for successful careers for many. The initiative undertaken by the Foundation believes in changing fortunes by helping competent individuals realize

The purpose of the Foundation is to develop strong and confident individuals, with a special emphasis on skill construction and improvement.

Shaheen Afridi will get Pakistan captaincy again: Wasim Akram

LAHORE: Pakistan's legendary pacer Wasim Akram predicted that leftarm pacer Shaheen Shah Afridi will get the leadership of the national team again.

Akram, in an interview, with an international sports media outlet, was asked to share his views on the ongoing captaincy saga of the national men's cricket team.

The legendary pacer did not mince his words and lambasted the sudden changes in the team's leadership, stating that such things would never result



chairman came, who ordered added. to change the captain and the captain was changed," stated

"This is not on. People in consistent performances. make fun of us in world "Babar 【Azam】 was cricket. They don't get it. If removed and Shaheen was you made [Shaheen] Afridi [anything] but it's good brought in. He then lost one captain, then should have that we're away from Paki-

Akram then termed his distance from the Pakistan cricket set-up a blessing in disguise, considering the criticism involved.

"They don't ask us es and at that time, a new given him at least a year," he stan cricket. It's a blessing in

icism and politics," Akram

Wasim Akram then went on to reveal what he likes the most about Shaheen Afridi before asserting that he would get the captaincy

"He's a wicket-taking bowler. He goes for wickets. He attacks with the new ball in the T20 format. Everyone knows that he'll pitch it up but he still gets them out and that's what I love about him,' stated Akram.

"He's an aggressive cricketer and he's only 23 or 24 years old, maybe younger. Got a bright future ahead. He'll get the captaincy again but should focus on his game until he doesn't get it," he

Azhar Mahmood reveals reason



LAHORE: Pakistan men's cricket team's assistant head coach Azhar Mahmood revealed the reason behind backing Shadab Khan despite his struggles during the ICC Men's T20 World Cup 2024.

Speaking to media in Houston, the former all-rounder said that Khan was kept in Pakistan playing XI for all the matches lue to the failure of the batting order.

According to Azhar Mahmood, Shadab Khan was a complete player and could not be dropped from the team during the T20 World Cup 2024. Mahmood was accompanied by senior

manager and member selection committee Wahab Riaz who mentioned that the all-rounder was selected in the team based on experience.

Riaz revealed that he had told Usama Mir that there was no place for him in the team for the T20 World Cup 2024.

For the unversed, former champions Pakistan had a disastrous T20 World Cup 2024 campaign as they were, in a first, knocked out of the tournament from the group stage.

The Green Shirts had a disapponting start to their T20 World Cup 2024 campaign as they suffered a shock loss against the USA in the Super Over.

Pakistan then succumbed to a frustrating six-wicket defeat against arch-rivals India at a jam-packed Nassau County Interna-

tional Cricket Stadium on June 9. The back-to-back defeats put Pakistan on the verge of an early exit from the tour-

The former champions then finally got on the winning track when they registered a hard-fought seven-wicket victory over

Pakistan then edged past Ireland in

another stiff challenge to bow out of the T20 World Cup 2024 with a win.

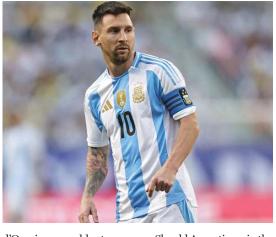
Lionel Messi becomes most capped player in Copa America history

Sports Desk

LAHOE: Argentina star Lionel Messi became the most-capped player in Copa America history on Thursday as he reached 35 appearances in the opening match of the tournament against Canada.

The 36-year-old had shared the record with Chilean goalkeeper Sergio Livingstone (34 caps) since appearing in the final of the 2021 Copa America in Brazil, where Argentina triumphed.

The eight-times Ballon scorer with 17 goals.



appearances d'Or winner could set more have been spread across records in this year's compe-tournament, Messi would seven editions of the Copa tition — he needs four goals America, starting with the to tie compatriot Norberto 2007 tournament in Vene- Mendez and Brazil's Zizinho ments. as all-time Copa America

Should Argentina win the also become the first captain to win back-to-back tourna-

Notably, the ongoing Copa America is set to be Messi's

final edition of the continental championship as he is set to turn 37 on Monday.

Meanwhile, winger Angel Di Maria, 36, is approaching the end of his career, signalling an era's conclusion for

Argentina coach Lionel Scaloni has urged his compatriots not to worry about when Messi and Di Maria will hang up their boots and to instead just enjoy watching them in the Copa America.

"It doesn't make much sense to think about when they're gone. Let's enjoy them now, we'll see what happens later. Messi is fine, he's happy. I'm with renewed ideas and strength. It's a nice challenge to defend the title,

behind backing Shadab Khan in T20 World Cup



😂 A Sports

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan's first-ever cycling gold medalist, Ali Ilyas, was given a grand welcome at Karachi Airport last night, following his historic victory in the Asian Road Cycling Cham-

pionship in Almaty, Kazakhstan. The celebration was attended by a large gathering of dignitaries, including Sui Southern Gas Company (SSGC) management, coaches, players, Sindh Cycling Association members, and enthusiastic fans, all united in honoring

his outstanding achievement, said a press release Ilyas, a two-time gold medalist, made history by leading Pakistan to the top of the South Asian ranks, surpassing India and showcasing the exceptional skills and abilities of Pakistani cyclists.

This monumental achievement has been hailed as a source of national pride and a bright future for Pakistani cycling in the region. Syed Azhar Ali Shah, President of the South Asian Cycling Federation, commended Ilyas for achieving a prominent position for Pakistan and expressed hope that other athletes will follow in his

footsteps with dedication and hard work. Ilyas's victory serves as an inspiration to future generations, demonstrating the heights that can be achieved with determina-

South Africa beat holders England in high-scoring thriller

GROS ISLET: Quinton de Kock's swashbuckling half-century, followed by a combined bowling display led South Africa to beat defending champions England in a high-scoring ICC Men's T20 World Cup 2024 thriller on Friday.

Chasing a daunting 164-run target, England managed 156/6 in the allotted 20 overs despite Harry Brook's half-century.

The defending champions had a dismal start to the pursuit as Kagiso Rabada removed in-form Phil Salt (11) in the second over with 15 runs on the board. Jonny Bairstow, who was promoted to bat at No.3, put together

a cautious partnership with skipper Jos Buttler. Buttler (17) and Bairstow (16) added 38 runs off 30 deliveries

before both fell victim to Keshav Maharaj.

England then sustained another blow to their pursuit as Moeen Ali walked back after scoring a mere nine, resulting in them slipping to 61/4 in 10.2 overs. Following the slump, Harry Brook and Liam Livingstone knitted

a fighting partnership and glimmered a ray of hope for England. The duo added a quickfire 78 runs to the total until Livingstone fell victim to Rabada in the 18th over. He scored 33 off just 17 balls, laced up with three fours and two sixes.

Livingstone's dismissal dented England's march towards the total and also the flow of runs. The defending champions then needed 14 runs off the final over. South Africa had a perfect start to the eventful final over as

Anrich Nortje removed England's batting mainstay Harry Brook on the first delivery.

Brook top-scored for England with a 37-ball 53 with the help of seven boundaries.

England's bowling all-rounder Sam Curran fought valiantly with an unbeaten 10-run cameo but his efforts went in vain as Nortje held his nerves calm under pressure to steer South Africa to glory. For South Africa, Kagiso Rabada and Keshav Maharaj bagged

two wickets each while Ottneil Baartman and Anrich Nortje struck Sent into bat first, South Africa registered a decent total on the board, courtesy of de Kock's half-century and David Miller's late

The Proteas had a flying start to their innings with de Kock dominating England bowlers from the word go.

tion and hard work.

Hat-trick may not spare Pat Cummins from T20 World Cup 2024 chop and Hazlewood getting the nod.

Sports Desk

hat-trick of the T20 World Cup play and the bowling line-up may not save him from the axe

The veteran fast bowler the rain-hit win over Bangladesh on Thursday.

with Afghanistan is taking place on the spin-friendly wicket of Kingstown in St Vincent.

That could mean Cummins,

favour of another slow bowler.

"Yes, potentially. We've been LAHORE: Pat Cummins pretty open with that, that admits that even taking the first anyone in the squad's ready to might change at different when Australia tackle Afghan- times," said Cummins who has istan in their next Super Eights played in three of his team's five games so far.

"It's got to be adaptable. became just the seventh man We feel like we've got all bases to claim a hat-trick in the covered. So yeah, we'll rock history of the tournament in up there. And I mean, the best thing of all this is I'm not captain or selector or anything, However, Saturday's clash so I just turn up and have no

Australia played just one frontline fast bowler in the as Ashton Agar providing spin first-round T20 World Cup Josh Hazlewood or Mitchell 2024 win over Scotland with Starc might sit out the game in Adam Zampa, Glenn Maxwell Cummins, Starc and Hazle-



In the victory over England,

wood all played just as they did against Bangladesh. Starc sat out the match

against Namibia with Cummins

Pat Cummins said he had been unaware he was on a hat-trick in the game against Bangladesh. After removing Mahmud-

ullah and Mahedi Hasan, his hat-trick ball was the first delivery of his next over when he had Towhid Hridoy caught at fine leg.

"I didn't know I was on a hat-trick. I did the previous over, I saw it come up on the screen and by the time my next over came around I totally forgot about it," said Cummins.

"So, I think Marcus Stoinis ran in from the deep, was cheering and I was like, oh yeah, forgot about that. So, yeah, nice

The Spokesman

President pays tribute to Shaheed Benazir Bhutto on her 71st birthday anniversary

Mushtaq Chandio

LARKANA: President Asif Ali Zardari on Friday paid tribute to Shaheed Benazir Bhutto on her 71st birth anniversary and termed her as a symbol of democracy.

Celebrating her life and legacy at a ceremony held at the President House in Naudero, the president cut a cake to mark the occasion.

The president hailed Benazir Bhutto's courageous struggle for the party and the nation after the martyrdom of her father, Zulfikar Ali Bhutto.

ical mentor, saying he learned politics from her and considered himself President Zardari also vowed to continue the mission of the martyrs,

He acknowledged her as his polit-

and work towards a democratic and prosperous Pakistan. The ceremony was also attended

by President Zardari's sister, Faryal Talpur, and other party leaders. On the occasion of the President's arrival in Garhi Khudabakhsh,

MPA Jameel Ahmed Soomro, MPA Sahail Anwar Syal, MNA Khursheed Ahmed Junejo welcomed the President.

Bbirth Anniversary

LARKANA: President Asif Ali Zardari cutting cake on the 71st birth anniversary of Shaheed Mohtarma Benazir Bhutto at Garhi Khuda Baksh Bhutto on Friday.



Pakistan has special place in China's foreign policy, says senior Chinese minister

E City Desk

International Department of Communist Party of China (IDCPC), Liu Jianchao on Friday said as its "iron brother and time-tested friend", China accorded a special place to Pakistan in its foreign policy and desired to strengthen the all-weather strategic cooperative partnership.

The senior Ch Minister and Foreign Minister parties of Pakistan. Mohammad Ishaq Dar, held

here in Islamabad.

Liu expressed satisfaction ISLAMABAD: China's Minis- at the steady pace of China ter of Central Committee of the Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) and said China would extend full cooperation to Pakistan for the timely implementation of all ongoing and new CPEC projects.

He also lauded the political parties of Pakistan for their steadfast support to CPEC and China-Pakistan friendship.

He reiterated China's keen desire to further enhance link expressed these views in a ages between the Communist

Deputy Prime Minister and bution of CPEC to Pakistan's



meeting with Deputy Prime Party of China and the political Foreign Minister Ishaq Dar socio-economic development, appreciated the positive contri- and progress and prosperity.

He underscored that as the and global issues.

flagship project of President China's Belt and Road Initiative, CPEC had led to major transformation in energy secu-

Lauding the unanimous political consensus on CPEC in the two countries, Dar expressed Pakistan's firm resolve to building upon the achievements of CPEC and for its high quality development in its Phase-II.

The two sides agreed to naintain the momentum of high-level engagements and to further enhance communication on important regional

Rana Sanaullah meets with KP governor to discuss matters relating to province's welfare

City Desk

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Inter-Provincial Coordination Rana Sanaullah on Friday met with the Governor of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP) Faisal Karim Kundi to discuss matters related to KP provinces. The minister said that the federal government will provide full support to the KP provincial govern-



be resolved amicably through tional right of every citizen, dialogue and mutual consul- but no political agenda can be tation. He said that protest is allowed to be pursued under

not be allowed to diminish government is challenging the anywhere in the country. The anarchy and chaos will prevail if crime of challenging state writ goes unpunished. "Action should be taken against those who are trying to stand against the state". Faisal Karim Kundi said that the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP) province has lagged behind all other provinces due to mismanagement over the past decade. He said launched as soon as possible, ment, adding that all issues can a fundamental and constitution its cover. The writ of state will that the present provincial he added.

writ of the state for nefarious purposes. He urged to support the provincial government for the welfare of the people. He further said that there is a need to introduce youth games in KP universities and to revive first-class cricket, which has been dormant for the last 15 wa Cricket League will be

Ahsan Iqbal delivers landmark speech at China-Pakistan Political Forum

News Desk

ISLAMABAD: The Minister for Planning & Development of Pakistan, Ahsan Iqbal, delivered a significant speech at the China-Pakistan Political Parties Forum and the Third Meeting of the CPEC Political Parties Joint Consultation Mechanism. The event, attended by high-ranking officials and dignitaries, including H. E. Mr. Liu Jian Chao, Minister for International Department Central Committee of the Communist Party of China, and Honorable Mr. Mohammad Ishaq Dar, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs of Pakistan, underscored the enduring strength of the Pakistan-China relationship and the pivotal role of the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC). Ahsan Igbal expressed profound gratitude to the Chinese leadership for their steadfast support in fostering bilateral cooperation and advancing the CPEC initi-

He emphasized the unique nature

relations and CPEC, transcending domestic political divisions. Ahsan Iqbal appreciated the Chinese leadership for hosting the Prime Minister of Pakistan during his recent visit.

The visit resulted in a strong consensus on bilateral matters, with both sides agreeing to enhance the strategic partnership and economic cooperation. The 13th session of CPEC's Joint Coordination Committee (JCC) was successfully held on May 24, 2024. Pakistan and China agreed to upgrade CPEC by introducing five w corridors: Growth Corridor, Livelihood Enhancing Corridor, Innovation Corridor, Green Corridor, and Opening Up/Regional Connectivity Corridor.

These new corridors align with Pakistan's 5E framework, prioritizing export-led growth, digital development (e-Pakistan), environmental sustainability, energy and infrastructure development, and equity and empowerment. Ahsan Iqbal highlighted the importance of Pakistan-China cooperof the meeting, which demonstrated ation under CPEC amidst global uncer-

as a beacon of stability, regional integration, and economic interdepend-

The development of Gwadar Port, a crucial component of CPEC, was noted for its strategic significance, providing China direct access to the Arabian Sea and promising economic revitalization for Pakistan.

CPEC is envisioned as part of a broader vision for regional prosperity, fostering economic cooperation with neighboring countries. Phase II of CPEC aims to enhance Pakistan's manufacturing capacity through industrial cooperation, attracting Chinese investment, and relocating industrial units to Special Economic Zones.

Both sides have agreed to expedite initiatives for modernizing Pakistan's agricultural sector with advanced tech-

Cooperation will also extend to B2B links, industrial cooperation, science and technology, artificial intelligence, and exploration of offshore oil and gas resources. The Government of Paki- regional prosperity and development.

national consensus on Pakistan-China tainties. He stressed that CPEC serves stan is committed to ensuring the security of Chinese personnel working in Pakistan. Measures have been implemented to provide foolproof security, and continuous updates are shared with the Chinese Embassy regarding these actions.

Regardless of political changes, Pakistan remains committed to its relationship with China. Over the past decade, substantial progress has been made across various CPEC projects, reaffirming this steadfast dedication. Ahsan Iqbal recounted the recent launch of Pakistan's satellite through a Chinese rocket, symbolizing the soaring heights of Pakistan-China friendship.

Ahsen Iqbal concluded by expressing sincere gratitude to the Chinese leadership for their continuous support and unwavering commitment to the high development of CPEC. This event marks a significant milestone in the ongoing collaboration between Pakistan and China, highlighting the shared vision and mutual commitment to

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Govt announces fixed charges for electricity consumers

Commerce Desk

ISLAMABAD: The National Electric Power Regulatory Authority (NEPRA) has introduced new electricity tariffs that will come into effect on July 1, 2024. These tariffs include fixed monthly charges for domestic, commercial, and industrial consum-

Domestic consumers will now face fixed charges ranging from Rs200 to Rs1000 per month, depending on their monthly consumption.

Consumers using between 301-400 units will pay Rs200, while those using 401-500 units will pay

Similarly, Consumers using between 501-600 units will pay Rs600, while those using 601-700 units will pay Rs800.

Commercial consumers will see a significant increase in their fixed charges, with a 300% hike for those using less than 5kW and a 355% increase for those using 5kW or more.

Industrial consumers will also face increased fixed charges, with those using up to 25kW paying Rs1000, B2 category consumers (up to 500kW) paying Rs2000, and B3 and B4 category consumers (5000kW and above) also paying Rs2000.

These fixed charges are intended to help Distribution Companies (DISCOs) increase their revenue. However, the move will further inflate electricity bills that are already burdened by record-high unit prices.

ADB, EAD sign agreement worth \$250 mln policy-based loan



Example 2 Commerce Desk

ISLAMABAD: Asian Development Bank (ADB) and Economic Affairs Division (EAD) on Friday signed an agreement worth \$250 million policy based loan.

According to the ADB official 'X' handle, the agreement aimed at assisting Pakistan drive sustainable investment in infrastructure and services through Public Private Part-

ADB Country Director for Pakistan Yong Ye and Secretary EAD Dr Kazim Niaz signed the agreement.

"ADB Country Director for Pakistan Yong Ye and Secretary EAD Kazim Niaz today signed the agreement for \$250 million policy-based loan to assist Pakistan drive sustainable investments in infrastructure and services through public-private partnerships (PPPs)", ADB said.

Punjab govt enforces **Section 144 for next** 7 days after PTI announces protests

👺 Bureau Report

LAHORE: The Punjab Home Department has declared Section 144 in the province for the next seven days due to security issues in the province.

Punjab Home Department Secretary Noor-Ul-Amin Mengal has issued a notification to implement Section 144 to protect human lives and property. The administration will ensure the implementation of the order till June 27.

The Home Department also banned meetings, processions, rallies, sit-ins and protests across Punjab.

According to the notification, the ban was imposed due to receiving

The government has also banned public gatherings as they can be considered to be a soft target of terrorists and miscreants.

Punjab Home Department has instructed to publicize the information about Section 144 implementation.

Meanwhile, Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaaf (PTI) party has called for protests today, and the provincial police in the area have become active, raiding the homes of PTI leaders and workers.

Lahore police started raiding homes when PTI announced the protest.

PTI had called for protests after Friday prayers today, but the police have cracked down on the homes and offices of PTI assembly members. Raids were conducted on the homes of PTI leaders like Hafiz Zeeshan Rashid, MPA Mian Haroon, and Sheikh Imtiaz.

Homes of other PTI leaders like Usman Hamza, Hammad Azhar, and the brother of Aslam Igbal were also raided. Due to the fear of arrests, many opposition assembly members did not even reach the Punjab Assembly today.

The PTI has now decided to go to court against these police raids on their workers' homes.

Rashid has stated that the government has become fearful of the peaceful protest call and has started cracking down.

The PTI has not withdrawn the protest call.

Centre should have consulted ...

better," Bilawal said. Despite the differences, he noted ment. "Even today, our represent-

Continued from Page I ment," he stated, reaffirming the party's commitment to finding solubeen there, it would have been tions for the country's economic

Bilawal expressed hope that the that the party's representatives were prime minister would fulfil his still engaging with the govern- promises, saying: "We hope that PM Shehbaz Sharif will fulfil his atives are sitting with the govern- commitments."

Minister Salik visits MCO ...

Pakistan. Director Zia-ur-Rehman of Madinah MCO briefed the minister on the arrangements made to facil-

Continued from Page I Mina, Arafat, and Muzdalifa. The director emphasized the priority of facilitating pilgrims' visits to Riazul-Jannah.

The minister took round of various sections of the MCO, including the itate Pakistani pilgrims visiting the Lost and Found Cell, Madinah Prophet's city after performing Hajj Departure Cell, Complaint Centre at holy sites in Makkah, including and the adjacent main hospital.