ر صحیح بخاری: حدیث نبر 362 Barkat Rice Mills (Pvt) Limited

Russia should produce previously banned missiles: Putin

Russian President Vladimir Putin said Friday that Russia should start producing short and intermediate-range missiles that were previously banned under a now-defunct arms treaty with the United States. Putin was referring to missiles with a range of 500 to 5,500 kilometres (300-3,400 miles) that were banned under the Cold War-era Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces (INF) Treaty.



CM Bugti announces austerity measures to diminish unnecessary expenditures

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Meeting



NA regrets US resolution, asserts Pakistan's sovereignty

NA reaffirms Pakistan's commitment to safeguarding, upholding democratic principles as enshrined in Constitution

ISLAMABAD: The National Assembly has passed a resolution regretting the resolution passed by the US House of Representatives, stating that Pakistan, as an independent and sovereign country, will not accept any interference in its internal affairs.

The resolution, moved by Shaista Pervaiz Malik, further asserted that the US resolution reflects an incomplete and erroneous understanding of Pakistan's political and electoral

It highlighted that the US resolution fails to acknowledge the



free and enthusiastic exercise of voting rights by millions of Paki-

Election

The National Assembly reaf-

democratic principles and norms as enshrined in the Constitution, in line with the aspirations of the people and the vision of the country's founding fathers.

The resolution also brought attention to more pressing issues for the US Congress, such as ongoing acts of genocide in Gaza, gross human rights violations in the Indian Illegally Occupied Jammu and Kashmir (IIOJK), and state-sanctioned atrocities against minorities, especially Muslims, in India.

The House called upon the US and the international commustanis in the recently held General firmed Pakistan's commitment nity to take immediate steps to

to safeguarding and upholding—alleviate the suffering of innocent. people in Gaza and IIOJK.

It expressed hope that in the future, the US Congress will play a more constructive role in strengthening Pakistan-US bilateral relations by focusing on avenues of collaboration for the mutual benefit of both countries

The resolution called upon the government of Pakistan to enhance bilateral cooperation with the United States by improving channels of communication to dispel such misperceptions and work towards harmonious relationships for the progress and prosperity of people of both countries.

Pakistan decides to change envoy to US

Staff Reporter

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan has decided to replace Masood Khan and appoint Additional Foreign Secretary (Middle East and SIFC) Ambassador Rizwan Saeed Sheikh as envoy to the United States, Foreign Office Spokesperson Mumtaz Zahra Baloch said on Friday.

Masood Khan has been serving as ambassador to Washington since February 2022. He was nominated for the post by the then prime minister Imran Khan in November 2021.

In another major diplomatic appointment, the government has decided to appoint senior diplomat Asim Iftikhar, who's serving as Pakistan's ambassador in France, as its additional permanent representative to the UN, the spokesperson said.

a suitable time, assume the office of the permanent repre-

sentative, which is currently held by Munir Akram. Akram assumed this position on November 1, 2019.

The spokesperson said the appointments were being cogitated for several weeks and the announcement regarding the appointments was a normal procedure.

Zahra Baloch, commenting on the US House of Representative's resolution. regretted the development, saying Pakistan had resolved to relations based on mutual respect and non-interference with the US.

The US Congress should work for strengthening Pakistan-US relationships, she said adding that Pakistan had apprised America about its serious reservations over the resolution.

"The resolution by the US House of Representatives is She said Iftikhar will, at an unwarranted interference in Pakistan's internal affairs,"

Afghan soil being used for terrorism in Pakistan: Asif

ISLAMABAD: Defence Minister Khawaja Muhammad Asif on Friday said that the Afghan territory was being used for committing terrorism, bloodshed, and destruction in Paki-

evidence that its enemies had sanctuaries in Afghanistan and would take counter measures to defend its citizens, he said while speaking in the National Assembly.

The defence minister recounted his visit to Kabul, during which he had conveyed to the Afghan authorities that fostering good relations would be beneficial for both nations.

He urged the opposition not to do politicking on terrorism as it was a matter of national security and honouring the blood

Contempt of court

SC accepts Vawda,

Kamal's apologies

apology after statements

Both lawmakers issued unconditional



Khawaja Asif highlighted the adverse impacts of terrorism on the country's economy, alleging that some opposition members had links with the Taliban. Such people had facilitated the return of 6,000 terrorists of Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP) to the country, he added.

The minister stressed the importance of national unity in combating terrorism and protecting Pakistan's sovereignty and security. APP

Journalists' issues to be solved on priority basis: Info Minister

Staff Reporter

ISLAMABAD: Minister for Information and **Broadcasting Attaullah** Tarar has assured journalists that problems faced by them will be solved on priority basis. Talking to newsmen

outside Parliament House in Islamabad on Friday, he announced to constitute a committee for protection of rights of journalists.

The Minister said a mechanism will be made and meetings will be held with the provincial governments to investigate the cases regarding the killing of journalists.

 $He \ said \ the \ government$

National Assembly passes Finance Bill, 2024

Staff Reporter

ISLAMABAD: The National Assembly has passed the Finance Bill, 2024 with certain amendments, giving effect to the financial proposals of the federal government for the year beginning on the 1st July

A motion to this effect was moved by Minister for Finance Muhammad Aurangzeb.

Having the total outlay of 18877 billion rupees, the budget focuses on fiscal consolidation.

The gross revenue receipts have been estimated at 17815 billion rupees. These include FBR's revenue collection of 12970 billion rupees rupees. The share of provinces in the federal receipts will be 7438 billion

The growth rate is expected to be

PM to personally review ongoing reforms in FBR

Prime Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif has directed to hire the services of talented and professional lawyers to take up various cases related to Federal Board of Revenue, pending at different courts and tribunals. Chairing a meeting to deliberate on the matters related to Federal Board of Revenue in Islamabad today, he further directed to establish Customs Appellate Tribunals along with Inland Revenue Appellate Tribunals for expeditious disposal

and non-tax revenue 4845 billion year. Inflation is expected to be 12 percent, budget deficit 5.9 percent of GDP and primary surplus will be one percent of GDP.

The development budget has Continued on Page 8 | 3.6 percent during the next fiscal been set at the historic level of 1500

Minister of tax related cases. The Prime Minister said he would personally chair the weekly meetings to review ongoing reforms in the FBR and revenue collection. He said the Federal Board of Revenue has a key role in the country's economy. Shehbaz Sharif stressed the need of collective efforts for development of the country. He directed to formulate a comprehensive policy for honoring the officials and officers of FBR, who would show excellent performance.

billion rupees.

The budget envisages 25 percent increase in the salaries of government employees from Grade-1 to 16 and 20 percent from Grade-17 to 22. Continued on Page 8

PTI conflicts deepen ISLAMABAD: Strife within

the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) continues to escalate as Sher Afzal Marwat demanded resignation from Shibli Faraz, saying that the party will only then be freed from the "qabza mafia".

His demand came after Leader of the Opposition in National Assembly Omar Ayub stepped down as the PTI Secretary General on Thursday, saying there would be more changes in the party's organisational structure.

"I demand resignation of Shibli Faraz from party positions and as leader of the Opposition in Senate," said Marwat, who has been at loggerheads with Faraz and other party leaders.

In May, Marwat also refused to work with Senator Faraz and Omar, saying they didn't allow him to meet incarcerated PTI founder.

ISLAMABAD: The Supreme apology. Court on Friday accepted the apology tendered by Senator Faisal Vawda and Muttahida Qaumi Movement-Pakistan

(MQM-P) lawmaker Mustafa Kamal and withdrew the contempt of court notice issued to them. According to the court's

order, read by Chief Justice Qazi Faez Isa, both the parliamentarians — Senator Faisal Vawda and Member of the National Assembly (MNA) Mustafa Kamal — have realised that the words they used were inappropriate.

"They have now withdrawn their statement and tendered an unconditional apology to the court," read the order.

Vawda, on Wednesday, tendered an unconditional apology to the apex court in the contempt case, saying that he has left himself on the mercy of the apex court. Kamal had, earlier this month, also sought an unconditional apology for his remarks against the judi-

The court further wrote about withdrawing the showcause notice issued to both politicians in view of their reflection on the matter and tendering of

During the hearing, the chief justice remarked: "In Article 66 - freedom of speech to speak in the parliament — of the Constitution, you can stand up and speak in the parliament."

CJP Isa instructed both politicians to "be careful in the future" when mentioning the judiciary. "We respect you and hope you respect us. Demeaning each other will harm the public," said the chief iustice.

CJP told Vawda and Kamal that Article 66 protects lawmakers from speaking in the Parliament and not outside

The court's decision comes more than a month after it had issued contempt of court notices to both politicians after they had done hard-hitting press conferences against the judiciary in May, with Vawda saying that no allegations could be levelled without evidence and Kamal sought to establish ethical standards for the judges as justice could "only be bought".

Their statements had come after six Islamabad High Court (IHC) judges wrote a letter to Continued on Page 8

Pakistan's economy witnesses positive growth

Staff Reporter

ISLAMABAD: Different sectors of Pakistan's economy have witnessed positive trajectory during the outgoing fiscal year 2023-24 due to prudent policies of the

According to Economic Outlook report

of Finance Division, the agriculture sector witnessed an overall growth of 6.3 percent increased to 13.1 billion dollars this month with strong quarterly growth rates during the fiscal year 2023-24.

The foreign investment during July-May 2023-24 recorded an inflow of 1.2 billion dollars as against 0.5 billion dollars of previous fiscal year.

The total foreign exchange reserves while net federal revenues grew by 51 percent to reach 5627.5 billion rupees against 3715.3 billion rupees last year.

The Consumer Price Index inflation reached its lowest level in 30 months and was recorded at 11.8 percent last month, year.

percent in the same month of last year. Large scale manufacturing sector experienced moderate growth of 0.45 percent

showing a significant decline from 38.0

during July-April of fiscal year 2023-24, marking an improvement of 8.8 percent as compared to same period of last fiscal

Punjab Govt determined to serve masses: CM

Punjab CM pledges intensive efforts for systemic reforms

LAHORE: Chief Minister Punjab Maryam Nawaz Sharif made a commitment to the people of Punjab, assuring them that she will not let them down.

Addressing the concluding budget session of the Punjab Assembly, she pledged to tirelessly work every day, hour, and minute to improve the lives of the citizens and bring about positive changes in the system. She emphasized that no appointments in Punjab have been made against merit, asserting that no other chief minister can make such a claim.

to the opposition, stating, "Let Pakistan progress, opposition members are also my brothers and sisters. I know many of them are patriotic Pakistanis." She expressed hope that the opposition would appreciate the budget as it did not impose any new taxes on the people of Punjab for the first time. ment, she mentioned that after three "The opposition creates noise because months of their performance, they they have nothing substantial to say," claimed, "We were busy," but they she remarked, adding that anyone can were actually busy with vengeance and

Maryam Nawaz Sharif appealed



the opposition would be defeated by the government's performance.

Criticizing the previous PTI govern-

make noise, but true service is a privi-setting new records of incompetence. lege granted to a few. She affirmed that She mentioned that Nawaz Sharif has no objections to installing air conditioners for Imran Khan in jail, highlighting the previous government's focus on retribution rather than service. "I swear that the Punjab government and Nawaz Sharif never ordered the cessation of any facilities for the oppo-

Khan has privileges not afforded to

Maryam Nawaz Sharif expressed pride in the accomplishments of her government in the past 100 days. She noted that unlike previous administrations, she won't complain about the past's corruption and inefficiency. She announced significant measures including the launch of a laptop scheme worth 10 billion rupees, in collaboration with Google International, which will provide digital skills training to over 300,000 children annually. Additionally, new tech education programs, such as Middle Tech, Matric Tech, and Inter Tech, are being introduced for the first time, she added.

The CM also unveiled initiatives in machine learning, artificial intelligence, e-merchandising, and startups skill development programs, aiming to educate 4,000 children in IT across every district of Punjab. Sports competitions will be held in every district, with

sition," she declared, adding that Imran school sports grounds being converted of wheelchairs, subsidized threshers and into community sports grounds. She assured that students excelling academically would have their university fees paid by her. The minimum wage has been increased to Rs. 37,000 and systems are being implemented to ensure workers receive their full wages, she added.

Skill development programs for the children of laborers, including courses in plumbing, nursing, electrician work, and hotel industry skills, will be launched, and the "Maryam Ki Dastak" project will include 65 more services within three months across all districts, she said. Centers of Excellence for differently abled individuals and autism centers were being established in every district. The first pre-school, Nawaz Sharif Children's Library, will be set up in Lahore, offering state-of-the-art facilties and specialized teachers, she said.

She announced the issuance of "Himmat Cards" for disabled and bedridden individuals, the provision

super seeders for farmers, and the initiation of solar-powered agriculture tube wells. Focus is on increasing oil seed production, with a 30 billion rupees green tractor scheme where 70% of the cost will be covered by the government; she said and thanked the acting chief justice of Lahore High Court for ending the young doctors association's strike.

"If anyone disrupts the service to poor patients, I will not sit idle. I will not succumb to any blackmail. If the exploitation of poor patients occurs, I will not stand silently by," she vowed and added that the government is establishing rescue services and trauma centers on all motorways in Punjab. This week, two air ambulances are arriving in Pakistan, which will serve the poor, not the wealthy. "We are building the first Nawaz Sharif Cancer Hospital in Pakistan, with outpatient services starting in a few months. Additionally, we are adding 500 more mobile clinics," she added, APP

B Driving Inclusive Growth

Revamping KoFHA's BODs for Sustainable Maritime Development

Staff Reporter

ISLAMABAD: The second meeting of the committee tasked with assessing and facilitating the reconstitution of the Board of Directors (BoD) for the Korangi Fisheries Harbour Authority (KoFHA) was held today. The meeting was chaired by the Federal Minister for Maritime Affairs, Qaiser Ahmed Sheikh, while the Federal Minister for Industries & Production, Rana Tanveer Hussain, Secretary Maritime Affairs Syed Zafar Ali Shah and other senior officers of the Ministry of Maritime Affairs were in attendance as committee members

The committee has been formed to ensure that the reconstitution of with applicable laws; as the core focus of the committee lies in meticulously scrutinizing the Federal Government's selection of five Board members

During the first meeting, held on June 11, 2024 the committee meticulously reviewed the criteria and guide- 2023. In its second meeting today, the nomination process. He added that we

KoFHA's Board of Directors complies lines for the selection process. The list was reviewed followed by threaddiscussions focused on ensuring that the nominated members would bring a diverse range of skills, experience, and expertise to the board, aligning with the objectives outlined in the KoFHA Ordinance and the SOE Act,

bare discussion and would finalize the names after necessary consultation with stakeholders.

Federal Minister Qaiser Ahmed Sheikh emphasized the importance of transparency and meritocracy in the focus to reconstitute a Board of Directors that upholds the highest standards of governance and is equipped to drive KoFHA towards greater efficiency and

Federal Minister for Industries and Production, Rana Tanveer Hussain added that we are committed to ensuring that the process is conducted with integrity and in full compliance with the relevant laws and regulations, and also dedicated to realizing the Prime Minister's vision of ensuring to reflect the diversity and inclusiveness of our nation.

The committee evaluated potential candidates to finalize the nominations with the aim of completing the reconstitution process efficiently and effectively. This effort ensures that KoFHA's Board of Directors is fully equipped not only to fulfill its strategic objectives but also to strengthen the board and integrate local stakeholders into the mainstream, contributing significantly to the sustainable development of Pakistan's fisheries and maritime sectors.

Final Thesis Display of Fashion Design Students Session 2020-24

Solution Our Correspondent

FAISALABAD: The Fashion Design students of the 2020-24 session proudly presented their final thesis in a vibrant two-day display on 26-27 June 2024. The event highlighted the diverse and innovative talents of 52 graduating students. The exhibition was graced by the presence of the Vice Chancellor of GCWUF, Prof. Dr. Zill-i-Huma Nazli, who served as the chief guest. The Director of Academics array of themes, ranging strongly emphasizing draping Dr. Salma Shahid, the Head of the English Department Saira Akhter, and the Addidery to designs inspired by tional Director of Media Gothic architecture and Amara Javed accompanied



from the revival of traditional Indo-Pak embroi-African jewelry. The primary objective was to create unique the event showcased a wide diversity in embellishments, continuing their tradition of

and cutlines. Each collection was thoughtfully accessorized with headgears, shoes, and jewelry, adding a comprehensive flair to the presentations.

Layllpur Galleria gener-Held at Layllpur Galleria, designs that displayed a rich ously sponsored the event,

unwavering support. Additional sponsors included Cakes and Bakes, Misaq ul Mall, Data Developers, and GuzalKadin, all of whom contributed significantly to the event's success.

The public reception

was overwhelmingly positive, with many students receiving orders for their designs on the spot, marking the beginning of their entrepreneurial journey. The exhibition celebrated the culmination of years of hard work and opened up promising prospects for budding designers. This successful event underscores the potential for these students to make significant contributions to the fashion industry, both locally and

ATTOCK: According to the details, according to the vision of the Chief Minister of Punjab, the orders of the IG Punjab and the leadership of District Police Officer Attock Dr. Sardar Ghivas Gul Khan, the Attock Police are working hard against the drug dealers. 2200 grams of Charas was recovered while thwarting the drug smuggling attempt of smuggler Adam Khan son of Zainullah r/o Nowshera. Similarly, the police team of Fateh Jang police station recovered 1500 grams of chars after searching the famous drug dealer Danish Mahmood son of Mahmood r/oFateh Jang, while police of Pandigheb police station recovered 1380 grams of Chars from the possession of Mohammad Hayat son of Dost Muhammad r/o Pandigheb. In another operation, Sadar Hasan Abdal police recovered 570 grams of hashish from Imran son of Aurangzeb r/o Hasan Abdal

Attack police arrest 5 drug dealers

CSOs demand a commission of inquiry on the issue of blasphemy laws

Solution Our Correspondent

LAHORE: The participants of a conference on the theme "Addressing religiously motivated violence" have called on the government to immediately establish a Commission of Inquiry to probe into the factors behind escalating violence, particularly the abuse of Sections 295-A, B, and C and 298-A, B, and C, and determine the scale of abuse, identify contributing factors, propose remedies, and way out of this situation.

The speakers at the conference highlighted the organic link between pervasive religious intolerance and certain lopsided policies and laws, most notably blasphemy laws. The Centre for Social Justice (CSJ) which has been collecting data for several years, presented an assessment of crimes against religious minorities and the recent developments including a factsheet on the abuse of blasphemy laws.

The conference welcomed the



passage of resolutions by the National Assembly, Senate, and Punjab Assembly condemning violence in the name of religion and supporting the right to life, following incidents of mob violence in Sargodha and Swat.

The speakers including Peter Jacob, Nadeem Ashraf, Ijaz Alam Augustine, Arafat Mazhar, Asad Jamal Advocate, Moulana Mehmood Ghaznavi, Samson Salamat, Bishop Abraham Daniel, Maheen Paracha, Salman Farooq, Michelle Chaudhry, Suneel Malik, Kashif Aslam, Tayyaba

Rafiq and Yasar Talib demanded the government introduce safeguards against the abuse of blasphemy laws and prosecute and punish the perpetrators who use allegations of blasphemy to incite violence.

Peter Jacob, the executive director of Centre for Social Justice (CSJ) stated that Pakistan's blasphemy laws have been grossly abused, with many lodging false complaints against innocent individuals to settle personal scores. These incidents have fostered a climate of religiously motiseveral parts of Pakistan.

Ijaz Alam Augustine, Former Minister for Human Rights, said that all stakeholders including academics, religious leaders, politicians, and civil society need to engage in dialogue to address violence in the name of religion. He added that those making false accusations of blasphemy must be brought to justice, with existing safeguards implemented.

Asad Jamad said that the misuse of blasphemy laws instills terror and fear among vulnerable groups. He noted that the infrastructure of violence, involving human power, loudspeakers, and extremist groups, operates at the community level, and must be effectively addressed. Arafat Mazhar stressed that the intention of the accused must be considered during investigations and trials to prevent the continued imprisonment of innocent individuals due to the misuse of blasphemy laws by certain groups which remain unpunished vated violence and persecution in despite making false accusations.

CBD Punjab ready to combat monsoon flooding

Staff Reporter

LAHORE: Punjab Central Business District Development Authority (PCBDDA), also known as the Central Business District (CBD Punjab), proudly announces its comprehensive readiness for the upcoming monsoon season. To combat urban flooding and ensure the timely drainage of rainwater, CBD Punjab has proactively implemented precautionary measures on Walton Road.

As part of the ongoing Walton Road Upgradation Project, CBD Punjab has undertaken initiatives designed to prevent urban flooding during the monsoon season. These efforts reflect the Authority's unwavering commitment to safeguarding the residents and daily commuters

In a strategic move to address potential flooding, CBD Punjab has installed two temporary submersible pumps, each with a capacity of 15 cusecs. These pumps have successfully undergone test runs, confirming their readiness to manage excess rainwater effectively. To ensure their operational efficiency even during power outages, all pumps will be supported by an uninterrupted generator supply.

Both submersible pumps are equipped to handle excessive rainwater and the overflow from ADA Nullah, thereby mitigating the risk of flooding in the area. This proactive approach aims to minimize inconvenience for the public and maintain smooth traffic flow on Walton Road.

Imran Amin CEO CBD Punjab expressed his confidence in the authority's preparedness he said, "As per the directives given by Chief Minister Punjab Maryam Nawaz during her last visit, we are fully prepared for the monsoon and are committed to providing maximum relief to the residents and daily commuters of Walton Road. Our team has worked diligently to implement these measures well in advance of the rainy season."

Ulema, health experts urge govt to increase taxes on sweet drinks

Staff Reporter



ISLAMABAD: Pakistan is grappling with a severe crisis of non-communicable diseases, with millions suffering from diabetes, obesity, heart disease, kidney ailments, and certain types of cancers. 60% of deaths in Pakistan are caused by these non-communicable diseases. The consumption of sweet drinks including carbonated drinks, juices, iced teas, flavored milkare among the major contributing factor to this national health emergency. One small glass of sweet drinks contains 7 to 8 teaspoons of sugar. Increasing

taxes on these drinks is first and most effective evident based policy option to reduce their consumption. Ulema have great respect in our society. They shall play their role to educate public on health harms of sweet drinks and demand government to increase taxes these drinks to save public health. This was said by health experts in an event with religious leaders organized by PANAH at a local hotel in Islamabad.

Col. Dr. Shakeel Ahmed Mirza said that research indicates that sweet drinks including juices are among the major causes of obesity, type-2 diabetes, heart diseases, various cancers, and liver and kidney ailments. These diseases are increasing at an alarming rate in Pakistan. The International Diabetes Federation (IDF) reports that 33 million people in Pakistan are living with diabetes. Another 10 million are pre-diabetic. More than 1,100 people are dying daily due diabetes and its complications. In 2021, the annual cost of managing diabetes in Pakistan was \$2,640 million which is double than the expected

CEO Heartfile Dr. Saba Amjad said that increasing taxes on these drinks is first and most effective policy action to reduce their consumption. More than 106 countries and states in the world has increased taxes on these drinks and reduce the disease burden. Referring to a modeling study of the World Bank about Pakistan he said that a 50% FED on sugary drinks, it will have a health gain of 8,500 DALYs, will generate an economic value of health impact of USD 8.9M and will have an average tax revenue of USD 810M for next 10 years. Government shall allocate this revenue fully or partially for public health programs.

"A country with more than 1100 people dying daily due to diabetes and its complications, over 300 limbs removed every day and the beverage industry is negotiating with Pakistani Finance Minister and Chairman FBR to reduce taxes on juices" said Sana Ullah Ghumman, General Secretary PANAH. He added that the beverage industry has low taxes in Pakistan as compared to many countries regionally and globally. For example, Saudi Arabia, Qatar, Oman, UAE and other gulf states have imposed 50% excise duty on sodas and 100 % on energy drinks. India has 40% tax on sweet drinks. Maldives imposed \$2.25litter levy on each litter of beverage. Government must prioritize public health over corporate interest and increase taxes on sweet drinks in Finance Bill 2024-25.

Dr. Quyyam Awan, senior executive vice president PANAH said that Ulema has a great respect in society and people follow them. He urges Ulema to play their role in educating public on health harms of sweet drinks and demand policymakers to take immediate policy action to reduce their consumption.

Ulema in their speeches assured that they will use their platform to educate public on health harms of sweet drinks. They emphasized government to increase taxes on these unhealthy drinks instead to taxing stationary and other basic necessities of life.

PTCLGroup integrates advanced AI

Staff Reporter

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan's largest telecommunication and ICT services provider, PTCL Group (PTCL & Ufone 4G) has collaborated with STech. ai to integrate an innovative AI-based platform that leverages advanced technologies, including Urdubased Large Language Models (LLMs), Automatic Speech Recognition (ASR), Natural Language Processing (NLP), and Machine Learning (ML) to enhance its customer services system.

The platform aims to enhance quality management systems by providing enriched customer sentiment analysis and valuable insights, driving PTCL's overall customer experience strategy. The strategic initiative underscores PTCL Group's commitment to excellence in customer experience.

Customer centricity is paramount at PTCL $\,$ Group, which inspires the Group's commitment to excellence in both customer experience and services delivery. The company continuously invests, innovates, and refines its business processes. It leverages innovative technologies and customer feedback to enhance every interaction and ensures that each service touch point is seamless, responsive, and efficient to foster a reliable and enriching experience for its valued customers. Looking ahead, the integration of innovative AI will elevate customer experiences to unprecedented heights, setting a new benchmark for the entire industry.

Hatem Bamatraf, President & Group CEO, PTCL & Ufone 4G expressed his enthusiasm for the initiative, saying, "Leveraging contemporary technologies like AI shall be the enabler to improve our customer experience significantly. AI is set to revolutionize the industry, and it is a proud moment for PTCL Group to be at the forefront of this

Ahmad Kamal, Group Chief Customer Care Officer, remarked, "We are thrilled to announce the launch of the industry's first Urdu Language AI-enabled Customer Services platform. This initiative aligns with our vision and underscores our commitment to being the best in customer experience. The use of this program will significantly enhance our customer experience in the days to

Adeel Saeed Chaudry, CEO of STech.ai, (originating from the MENA region) stated, "Partnering with PTCL Group is a proud milestone for us.

Romina advocates action against climate disasters

Chairs a meeting of task force on global warming and heat waves

ISLAMABAD: Coordinator to PM on Climate Change and Environmental Coordination chaired a meeting of task force on global warming and heat waves here on Friday.

Addressing the meeting, she emphasized the urgent need for protective measures against the severe threats of heat waves and floods to food, health, and the economy.

She noted that the upcoming monsoon rains could lead to devastating floods, and relief camps established in vulnerable areas should be widely advertised to ensure access for potential victims.

Alam stressed the importance of utilizing all available media platforms, including digital, electronic, radio, and mosque loudspeakers to effectively communicate information about the relief camps.

She also highlighted the need for collaborative efforts to face these calamities, stating that "hazards cannot be stopped but can be handled".

Furthermore, she urged the authoritiesto address the pressing issue of tree cutting and the dumping of trees in nullahs, as these actions can lead to damage to bridges during floods in KPK and Kashmir.

The decisions made in the earlier two meetings of the task force held on 7th and 14 June were reviewed in detail.

She said the departments contributing



in my efforts to overvome socio-economic impacts are my team and assured of Ministry's all possible support at all levels so as the country's disaster vulnerability is lessened through coordinated efforts among the federal and provincial departments including national and provincial disaster management authorities, health, education, agriculture, water and energy depart-

She said well-coordinated disaster risk mitigation or prevention measures are required to overcome socio-economic impacts of the disasters.

The meeting took stock of the measures being taken on the current heat wave and to avoid any untoward incident in the upcoming monsoon season in the country.

Representatives of the National Disaster Management Authority, Ministry of Science and Technology, Ministry of Climate Change, Ministry of National Health, Services, Regulations and Coordination, Pakistan Meteorological Department, Ministry of Information and Broadcasting participated in the meeting while officials from the provincial governments joined through video link.

Indonesian Embassy, COMSTECH host seminar

"Sustainability of Palm Oil Industry and its Derivative Products"

Staff Reporter

ISLAMABAD: The Embassy of the Republic of Indonesia in Islamabad in collaboration with COMSTECH jointly organize the international seminar on "Sustainability of Palm Oil Industry and its Derivative Products" at COMS-TECH Auditorium, Islamabad

The international seminar aimes to raise more awareness of the sustainability of the palm oil from Indonesia to the Pakistani public and maintain the and its derivative products are beneficial for the well-being. of palm oil for Indonesia as it tials are expected to explore Country's GDP, which absorbs the untapped potential of palm oil derivatives beyond culinary application.

In his remarks, COMS-TECH Adviser Prof. Dr. Syed Khurshid Hasnain mentioned that COMSTECH have strong commitment to support the natural products coming from the OIC member countries and expect more applied research on more application of the natural products for the industrial purposes that could benefits to the OIC member countries. He believed that science and technology should be applicable and give economic



benefits to the people.

more than 17 million direct its significance, the Government of Indonesia successfully improved the approaches on palm oil production to be more eco-and-labour-friendy.

"Please keep up with the Indonesian palm oil in our bilateral trade relations, and let us make it as milestone to improve more trade volumes between the two countries," CDA said, inviting the Pakistani business community to participate Trade Expo Indonesia 2024 this October.

minerals contained in the On his turn, the Indonesian palm oil are very beneficial for awareness that the palm oil Chargé D'Affaires (CDA), Mr. the industry, compared with Rahmat Hindiarta Kusuma another vegetable oils and $not \, harmful \, to \, the \, health \, even \quad underlined \ \, the \, \, importance \quad could \, be \, used \, for \, raw \, material \,$ of cosmetics, daily appliances, By this seminar, more poten-contributes to 4.5 percent to the pharmaceuticals, paints, plastics and even biofuel. Palm oil is also considered very efficient and indirect workers. Given in cost since it provides a high yield at a very affordable cost.

The seminar also showcases the scientific and academic research about the health benefits for the palm oil consumers and discloses the palm oil from Indonesia as having sustainable farming standards by putting human rights, deforestation, and environment as the core of the production process, even contributes to the fulfilment of the Sustainable Development Goals.

The speakers of the seminar The seminar discloses the are Prof. Dedi Budiman

Hakim, Bogor Agricultural Institute; Mr. Rashed Jan Muhammad, President BQATI; Prof. Muhammad Asim Shabir, University of Faisalabad; Mr. Djono Albar Burhan, Indonesia Palm Oil Association; Dr. Humaira Quaid-e-Azam Fatima, University; and Mr. Shahid Pervez, Secretary General of PVMA; and the moderators are Ms. Iqra Munawar, PIDE and Mr. Shams Abbasi, APP.

The event was attended by a significant number of participants from entrepreneurs, scholars, students, and journalists in Pakistan All participants received goodie bags from Indomie Pakistan, the world largest instant noodle brand based in Faisalabad, which is also a palm oil-based product.

The government of Indonesia and COMSTECH have a successful history of collaboration in advancing science and technology among the OIC member countries. The COMSTECH research fellowship program in virology and vaccine technologies has been annually held since 2022. Both parties are also expected to co-organize an exhibition focusing on nutraceuticals and cosmetics made with natural and halal ingredients later this

Olive Market Study for Pakistan launched

≅ Staff Reporter

ISLAMABAD: The European Union fundproject-Growth for Rural Advancement and Sustainable Progress (GRASP), implemented by the International Trade Centre, today launched, in collaboration with the Italian Agency for



Cooperation and Development, the Pakistan Olives Market Study report. This comprehensive report provides an in-depth analysis of the current landscape, consumer preferences, and growth opportunities in Pakistan's olive market.

The study reveals that, despite global production challenges such as extreme adverse weather conditions and pests, the global olive oil market continues to exhibit remarkable resilience. In Pakistan, the olive oil sector has seen significant expansion from a fledgling 19 kg production in 2016 to 121,000 kg by 2023, with a cultivation area now reaching almost 3,800 hectares, reflecting considerable potential for growth within the domestic market.

The report highlighted consumer preferences as a critical driver in shaping the market. For example, the study found health benefits as $% \left\{ 1,2,\ldots ,n\right\}$ a key purchasing criterion, responsible for a 31% increase in olive oil consumption among Pakistani consumers in 2022. Furthermore, the study indicated a strong preference for olive products among younger demographics, with 40% of surveyed consumers under 29 years old.

GRASP aims to develop the olive value chain in Pakistan through strategic interventions. Through initiatives such as Farmer Field Schools (FFS) and the establishment of demo plots, GRASP provides direct support to SMEs in applying Climate Smart Agriculture (CSA) technologies and Good Agricultural Practices (GAP). These efforts enhance the sustainability and productivity of olive cultivation. Training programs on advanced processing techniques, such oil extraction and curing table olives, are integral to improving post-harvest management and product quality, simultaneously ensuring that Pakistani olives meet high market standards.

Moreover, GRASP's focus on trade and market linkages has facilitated the participation of olive growers in international exhibitions and trade fairs, significantly increasing their market visibility and opportunities. These efforts not only open new markets for Pakistani olive products but also provide invaluable networking opportunities for local producers. Amongst the study's strategic recommendations, increasing private sector investment, to meet both domestic and inter-

national demands, is highlighted.
Secretary of the Ministry of National Food Security and Research, Dr. Muhammad Fakhre Alam Irfan, affirmed the government's commitment to supporting the olive oil sector. He emphasized the impact of climate change on Pakistan, the cultivation and consumption of olive oil aligning with Pakistan's goals for sustainable agriculture and envi-

"We believe this report will serve as a critical tool for stakeholders in the olive sector, providing valuable insights to retailers, wholesalers, and producers. The growing preference for olive oil among Pakistani consumers presents a tremendous opportunity for local cultivation and production," said ITC representative, Mr. Irshad Ali (GRASP Project Management Unit Lead)

Welcoming the report's findings, Dr. Stephen Langrell, Head or Rural Development and Economic Cooperation at the European Delegation to Pakistan, commented "We hope the support as provided via our EU funded GRASP project will both guide and catalyse the further development of the olive industry in Pakistan, in particular in the most rural and marginal areas where olive cultivation is so well suited, and development assistance most needed".

The GRASP project is working to improve the business atmosphere for SMEs in horticulture and agriculture, in 22 rural districts across the Sindh and Balochistan province, as well as policy support to the federal and provincial governments of Pakistan.

Chairman PRCS meets with US Ambassador in Pakistan

Staff Reporter

ISLAMABAD: Chairman Pakistan Red Crescent Society (PRCS), Sardar Shahid Ahmed Laghari, held a productive meeting with His Excellency Ambassador of the United States, Donald Blome, at the US Embassy in Islamabad. The meeting, which took place on Wednesday, aimed to explore avenues of collaboration between PRCS and the United States in the realm of humanitarian assistance.



The USAID Pakistan Senior Advisor, Humanitarian Assistance James Fleming and Secretary General PRCS Muhammad Abaidullah Khan were also present on the occasion.

Expressing gratitude for the steadfast support extended by the United States during times of disaster and emergencies, Chairman Laghari underscored the pivotal role played by the United States in aiding PRCS's relief efforts. He highlighted the significant contributions made by the United States in addressing various calamities, including earthquakes and floods, which have afflicted Pakistan in recent years.

Chairman Laghari engaged in discussions with Envoy Blome about potential areas where the United States can support PRCS's humanitarian initiatives. He informed the US Envoy about his previous meeting with US Deputy Chief of Mission Andrew J. Schofer, which laid a solid foundation for today's discussions. Chairman PRCS gave a detailed briefing on the organization's key programs and interventions, highlighting their ongoing work to support vulnerable communities across Pakistan.

Chairman Laghari expressed optimism regarding continued commitment from the United States, particularly in the recovery phase following the devastating Monsoon 2022 floods in Pakistan. He outlined key areas where support from the United States could significantly bolster PRCS's humanitarian efforts, including healthcare, water sanitation & hygiene, and women's empowerment through livelihood assistance, maternal and child health initiatives, and leveraging innovation, technology, Climate change and Research for capacity building and community welfare projects.

Chairman PRCS also emphasized on increasing the humanitarian program funding for PRCS through the partnership and collaboration of USAID and the Pakistani diaspora based in the United States and through the American Red Cross as well. He also acknowledged the support of USAID for the ongoing PRCS Local Led Adaptation project in districts Thatta, Badin, Sajjwal and Karachi.

In response, US Envoy Donald Blome lauded PRCS humanitarian efforts under the leadership of Chairman Sardar Shahid Ahmed Laghari, in extending aid to the vulnerable, particularly amid crises. He also commended PRCS's exemplary humanitarian services during floods and other calamities, emphasizing the importance of collaboration with both national and international humanitarian actors in alleviating the sufferings of vulnerable communities in Pakistan. He said the dialogue between the leadership should be continued in future. On this occasion, Chairman Laghari presented a souvenir to US

Envoy Mr Donald Blome along with PRCS Crescent Magazine and book to commemorate the occasion and symbolize the shared commitment to humanitarian endeavors. He also invited H. E Donald Blome to visit the PRCS National Headquarters in Islamabad.

Workshop on 'An Insight into Thai Hospitality' held

Staff Reporter

ISLAMABAD: Miss Kamolwan Sriposil, Charge d'Affaire and Pornarong Buddhavadhana, First Secretary of Cultural Affairs from the Royal Thai Embassy in Islamabad organized a training and workshop titled "An Insight into Thai Hospitality" in collaboration with College of Tourism & Hotel Management (COTHM), Rawalpindi campus.

Specially for this workshop, the Royal Thai Embassy had invited lecturers and chef from Wandee Culinary Art School and Wandee Culinary Technological College, a renowned culinary school accredited by the Ministry of Education of Thailand. The school has also been approved to be the "National Testing Center" in Thai cuisine chef qualification by the Ministry of Labor of Thailand. Mr. Pasit Sriyaphai, Deputy Director, Miss Chounchom Songkraopan, Chef and Miss Sukanya Saisuwan, media personnel graciously traveled from Thailand to impart their knowledge, expertise, skills and wonderful tips to more than a hundred COTHM's students in the arts of Thai hospitality and Thai cooking.

Mr. Pasit began with an in-depth lecture on the principles and practices of Thai hospitality. He emphasized



the cultural values that underpin Thai hospitality, such as respect, humility, attention to details and a genuine desire to make guests feel at home. These values are seamlessly woven into every aspect of Thai service, from the welcoming gestures to the meticulous preparation of food. He also demonstrated the service character for food and beverage students.

One of the highlights of the day was the culinary workshops, where the students had the opportunity to prepare traditional Thai dishes under the guidance of experienced chefs. The workshops included the preparation of two iconic Thai dishes: Golden Cup

and Creamy Red Curry with Chicken. The "Golden Cup" is a Thai Appe-

tizer found in Thai heritage since King Rama V. During his trip to Penang, there was a gathering event with a wealthy person. There were various appetizers so called "peranakan top hat". It was made into crispy cup in European hat shape with yam, shrimp, crab, cucumber, and corn mixed with sauce. Later on, people brought this cooking back to Thailand and cooked this dish widely by adding more ingredients. The second dish, "Creamy Red Curry with Chicken" has unique characteristic with condensed texture and salty sweet taste. In addition to the culinary work-

shops, the Royal Thai Embassy also featured a display of delicate fruit and vegetable carvings, which is an integral part of Thai cuisine. This traditional art form involves transforming ordinary fruits and vegetables into intricate and beautiful sculptures. In addition, there was also a display of Thai products and ingredients. Many of these ingredients can be found in supermarkets all over Pakistan. From fragrant herbs and spices to specialty sauces and fresh produce, the display highlighted the quality and variety of ingredients that form the backbone of Thai cuisine. This showcase not only enriched the culinary experience, but also provided insights into the cultural and economic aspects of Thai cuisine.

In addition, the Royal Thai Embassy is pleased that COTHM and Wandee Culinary Art School are in talks for further academic collaborations. The event has also paved the way for future collaborations between the Royal Thai Embassy and COTHM. Plans are already underway for similar workshops and training programs that will continue to explore the rich cultural heritage of Thailand and its contributions to the global tourism and hospitality industry. Such initiatives are expected to further enhance the skills and knowledge of hospitality professionals in Pakistan, fostering a spirit of innovation and excellence.

The training and workshop on "An Insight into Thai Hospitality" at Group Chairman/Chief Editor: Almas Ayoub Sabir Vice Chairman: Managing Editor:

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Decisive action against terrorism

rrorism has long plagued Pakistan, leaving an indelible mark on the nation's socio-political landscape. Over the past two decades, the country has faced numerous attacks on its cities, military installations, educational institutions, and places of worship. The government's response to terrorism has seen ebbs and flows, ranging from military operations to sporadic peace talks. However, the current state of affairs demands a more decisive and coherent strategy.

Intelligence agencies need to be equipped with advanced technology and training to preempt terrorist activities. Coordination among various intelligence bodies must be seamless to avoid lapses.

The judicial system must expedite the trial of terrorism-related cases. Special anti-terrorism courts should be empowered to deliver swift and fair justice, ensuring that perpetrators are duly punished.

Addressing the root causes of terrorism is crucial. The government must invest in the socio-economic upliftment of affected regions, providing education, employment, and healthcare. This not only undermines the recruitment base of terrorist organizations but also integrates marginalized communities into the national fold.

Pakistan must foster better relations with neighboring countries to combat cross-border terrorism. Collaborative efforts with Afghanistan and Iran, supported by international stakeholders, can significantly disrupt terrorist networks.

The role of civil society in countering terrorism cannot be overstated. Public awareness campaigns, coupled with community policing, can help identify and neutralize extremist elements at the grassroots

The international community must recognize Pakistan's sacrifices in the fight against terrorism. While constructive criticism is welcome, it should be coupled with support in terms of technology, training, and intelligence sharing. Economic aid targeted towards development projects in terrorism-hit areas can also make a substantial difference.

The fight against terrorism is far from over in Pakistan. It requires a sustained, multi-pronged approach with unwavering political will and public support. The government must ensure that its actions are not just reactive but proactive, aiming for a long-term solution that ensures peace and stability. In this existential battle, failure is not an option; the stakes are too high, and the cost of inaction too grave.

Olive Branch By PM and US **Resolution - I**

developments occurred in Pakistan's political landscape. First, the Prime Minister extended an olive branch to the PTI, offering to engage in dialogue to ease the situation for the incarcerated PTI founder, who the leader of the opposition in the National Assembly referred to as their prime minister. Second, the U. S. Congress passed a resolution urging the Pakistani government to rectify the alleged electoral wrongdoings from the 2024 elections, which reportedly brought to power a party that only won 17 seats while the opposition, which won 180 seats, remained sidelined.

These developments, while seemingly unrelated, are indeed interconnected. The Prime Minister's sudden willingness to negotiate with the PTI raises several questions, particularly about the scope and mandate of such negotiations. The PTI's demands include the release of their founder and other leaders, supporters, and workers; the re-allocation of National Assembly and Punjab Assembly seats based on Form 45 results; the restoration of PTI's party status and appropriate seat allocation in legislative bodies based on Form 45; ensuring all institutions operate within constitutional confines; and the restoration of fundamental rights for the people of Pakistan.

In this scenario both the governments and parliaments are in a dire and difficult situation. The pressure against their alleged illegitimacy was never more stronger than it is now domestically, and now this pressure is mounting internationally as well. The recent example is the passing of Human Rights Resolution 901 by the US congress. The strongly worded resolution is enough to give sleepless

n June 27, 2024, two nights to all those who allegedly manipulated the elections results and its words were like pouring honey in one's ears for those who are claiming that their mandate was stolen by the state operatives.

The resolution is rare, as it involves one sovereign country passing a resolution against another in support of democracy and human rights. It calls upon the U. S. government to ensure that any memory, but the people of Pakistan do alleged electoral wrongdoing in Paki-

stan is addressed. The resolution demands that, failing this, the U. S. government withhold recognition of any government formed as a result of manipulated elections until an independent investigation verifies that the elections were free and fair,

ensuring that the outcome reflects the true will of the Pakistani people.

Qamar Bashir

The resolution urges the U.S. government to use its influence to secure the release of individuals detained for political activities or free speech, allowing jour $nalists, candidates, and \, activists \, to \, operate$ without fear of detention or violence.

Most importantly, the resolution states that until the alleged electoral wrongdoings are addressed, U.S. security assistance to Pakistan's military should be contingent on adherence to human rights standards, including the respect for free speech and political freedoms.

Pakistan's Foreign Affairs responded with a standard statement, criticizing the resolution, viewing it as interference in Pakistan's internal affairs. emphasizing Pakistan's commitment to democratic processes and sovereignty, asserting that the election was conducted fairly and in

Minister reacted strongly stating that Pakistan does not need external validation for its electoral processes and highlighted the importance of non-interference in domestic affairs while reaffirming Pakistan's commitment to democratic principles and processes. Perhaps, Khawaja Asif had a short

not. He was the same Khawaja Asif who

when the Cypher case was initiated against Imran Khan, criticized Khan for jeopardizing Pakistan's indispensable relationship with the U. S., emphasizing the critical importance of maintaining strong ties with the world's only superpower. However,

in response to the US resolution on electoral integrity in Pakistan, he adopted a defiant tone, rejecting the resolution as undue interference in Pakistan's internal

The brushing aside of the resolution without appreciating that though non-binding, the resolution has served as a diplomatic signal to Pakistan would not be proper, as for the U.S. government, it underscores the need for ensuring accountability and transparency in Pakistan's election process and using diplomatic, financial, economics and business tools to ensure compliance of the resolution. For the American people, it reflects public concerns about the democratic practices in Pakistan and their support for human rights advocacy. Internationally, it sets a precedent for other countries to pass similar resolutions in their respective countries to mount pressure on Pakistan to adhere to democratic standards and

Khawaja Asif, Pakistan's Defence ensure upholding of fundamental rights of the individuals, civil society, political parties and the media, besides emphasizing due process of law, equal justice and fair treatment.

> Let us assume a hypothetical scenario, where the U.S. and Europe have suspended financial, economic, trade, commercial, and security ties with Pakistan until election-related issues are resolved. In such a scenario, politically, Pakistan would face increased diplomatic isolation, weakening its influence in international forums and exacerbating internal instability. Economically, the loss of access to vital loans and financial aid would exacerbate Pakistan's existing economic challenges, leading to skyrocketing inflation and potential default on international

> In the worst case scenario, foreign investment would dry up, causing significant capital flight and a decrease in foreign direct investment leading to further depreciation of PKR, inflating import costs and exacerbating economic instability culminating in widespread unemployment, business closures, and severe disruptions in supply chains. This would push many into poverty and potentially cause a humanitarian crisis. In terms of security and defense, the suspension of ties would critically weaken Pakistan's defense capabilities by cutting off access to advanced military technology and equipment.

> The choice rests with the government to resolve the Election Related issues in a transparent and verifiable manner acceptable to all stakeholders to forinstal any possible domestic turmoil, and international isolation.

The author is former Press Secretary to the President, former Press Minister to the Embassy of Pakistan to France and Former MD, SRBC.



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

Deployment of Frontier Constabulary in ĀJK - III

he collaboration between Pakistan and China on various develthe China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC), has attracted Chinese workers to Pakistani territory. However, alongside the prospects of advancement, these endeavors have also been marred by instances of terrorism aimed at Chinese workers. One of the most devastating assaults on Chinese workers occurred in July 2021 when a roadside bomb struck a bus transporting Chinese engi-

neers and laborers in the Dasu region of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province. The attack claimed the lives of nine Chinese nationals and left several others wounded. Although the precise perpetrators of the attack remain elusive, it highlighted the susceptibility of Chinese workers to terrorism in Pakistan. In May 2019, gunmen launched an attack on the Pearl

where Chinese and other foreign guests were lodging. The assault, attributed to the Baloch Liberation Army (BLA), resulted in the deaths of at least five individuals, including one soldier and four hotel staff. Although no Chinese nationals were reported among the casualties, the incident raised concerns regarding the safety of Chinese workers in sensitive areas such as Gwadar. In December 2017, a suicide bombing targeted a bus transporting Chinese language instructors from the Confucius Institute at the University of Peshawar. The assault, attributed to the Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP), resulted in the deaths of at least six individuals, including two Chinese nationals, and injured several others. This incident brought to light the engaged in development projects within the state. dangers faced by Chinese workers and educa-

tors participating in cultural and educational exchange programs in Pakistan. In April 2018, opment projects, including armed militants targeted a coal mine in the Mach area near Quetta, Balochistan, claiming the lives of at least ten laborers, including nine Pakistani nationals and one Chinese worker. Attributed to the Islamic State (IS) militant group, the attack specifically targeted Chinese and Pakistani workers involved in mining operations. This event underscored the difficulties associated with securing remote project sites and safeguarding workers in volatile regions.

These acts of terrorism against Chinese workers in Pakistan have profound implications for bilateral cooperation and investment. They not only jeopardize the safety and security of Chinese nationals but also raise concerns about the feasibility and sustainability of ongoing and future development projects. The deliberate targeting of Chinese workers

Continental Hotel in Gwadar, Balochistan, undermines confidence in Pakistan's ability to provide a secure environment for foreign investment and cooperation, potentially leading to project delays and reevaluations of strategic

Abdul Basit Alvi

Considering the potential future security threats and past incidents, it was imperative to implement stricter security measures to ensure the safety of Chinese workers working in AJK. The government's decision to do so was commendable. However, some elements have chosen to interpret this move negatively and spread false propaganda. In response to the government of Azad Kashmir's request, the deployment of Frontier Constabulary was sanctioned to enhance the security of foreign nationals The objective of this deployment in Azad Jammu

and Kashmir is to safeguard facilities such as the Neelum Jhelum Power House, Mangala Power House, Gulpur Power House, and the Chinese nationals working therein. Initially, six platoons of Frontier Constabulary will be stationed for a period of three months. It is noteworthy that the Frontier Constabulary operates as a subsidiary of the Police and will fulfill its duty to protect foreign nationals in Azad Kashmir. Despite baseless propaganda circulated by India and certain factions on social media, the deployment of Frontier Constabulary is grounded in factual necessity and is not motivated by any malicious intent.

Pakistan is not unique in taking special measures to ensure the security of foreign nationals. In an era defined by globalization and international cooperation, safeguarding foreign workers within a nation's borders has become a paramount concern for governments worldwide. To confront security challenges and guarantee the welfare of foreign nationals, numerous nations employ specialized military units known for their exceptional training and operational prowess. Saudi Arabia, a central destination for expatriates from diverse backgrounds, utilizes its elite special forces to ensure the protection of foreign residents and employees within its borders. The Saudi Arabian Special Forces, which encompass entities like the Royal Saudi Land Forces Special Operations Command (SF), are deployed for safeguarding critical infrastructure, diplomatic premises, and foreign compounds. These units execute security evaluations, offer close protection services, and swiftly respond to security risks to uphold the safety and welfare of foreign laborers in the kingdom. Similarly, the United Arab Emirates (UAE) acknowledges the significance of safeguarding its extensive expatriate community and foreign workforce, particularly in industries like construction, hospitality, and oil and gas.

To be continued

AI risks from an Arab world perspective - I

Mohammed A. Al-Oarni

magine a future where machines work alongside us and make decisions that shape our societies, economies and even our daily lives. This is the promise and peril of artificial intelligence as it stands at the brink of transforming our world.

AI is offering unprecedented advancements across various sectors. However, this rapid development also brings significant risks. As the Arab world steps into this new era, it is crucial to understand these risks and their direct implications for our region's unique context.

Unlike traditional software, which operates within predefined parameters set by developers, making its behavior more predictable and easier to control, AI systems, especially advanced ones, have the potential to make autonomous decisions that can significantly impact human lives, societies and ethical standards.

Therefore, we need to talk about AI values in a way that we do not typically discuss software

AI systems, particularly those involving machine learning and neural networks, can evolve and learn from data, leading to behaviors that are not explicitly programmed. Data is a significant factor in the peril of AI systems, particularly regarding value misalignment.

However, it is not the only factor. The overall alignment of AI systems with human values also depends on designing and implementing algorithms, training processes and other technical and ethical considerations.

Most AI systems are developed outside the Arab world, primarily in regions with different other regions. cultural, social and ethical values. This can lead to a significant misalignment between the values embedded in these systems and those of the Arab very evenly distributed."

The social and cultural fabric of the Arab world is deeply rooted in community values, ethics and traditions. Introducing advanced AI systems raises questions about their alignment with these values.

Systems developed in the West or in East Asia may not fully understand or respect the cultural norms and values of the Arab world. This can result in AI behaviors or culturally insensitive or inappropriate decisions. Moreover, AI applications require a deep understanding of local contexts to function effectively and ethically. Without this, systems might make decisions that overlook important regional nuances.

The ethical frameworks guiding AI development in other regions might differ significantly from those in the Arab world. This can lead to AI systems that make decisions based on ethical principles not fully aligned with local values.

To address the potential misalignment, the Arab world needs to invest in local AI research and development to create systems aligned with regional values and contexts. This includes training local talent and establishing research

institutions focused on culturally aware AI. We are not advocating for decoupled AI development. On the contrary, working with international AI developers is paramount to ensure that the systems they create are adaptable to different cultural contexts.

This collaboration can help integrate local values and norms into global AI systems. Such collaboration would require developing ethical guidelines for AI development and deployment that reflect the values and priorities of the Arab world. Such guidelines can serve as a benchmark for evaluating and adopting AI technologies from

As the science fiction writer William Gibson said: "The future is already here — it's just not

To be continued

Democrats in disarray after Biden's shaky debate against Trump

US president's performance heightens voter concerns that he might not be fit to serve another four-year term

Joe Biden's allies scrambled on Friday to contain the damage from a feeble debate performance with Republican rival Donald Trump that prompted some of his fellow Democrats to wonder whether they could replace him as their candidate for the November US election.

verbal stumbles Biden's and occasionally meandering responses in the debate heightened voter concerns that the 81-year-old incumbent might not be fit to serve another fourvear term.

Hakeem Jeffries, the Democratic Party leader in the US House of Representatives, avoided answering directly when asked by reporters if he still had faith in Biden at the top of the ticket. "I support the ticket. I support the Senate Democratic majority. We're going to do everything possible to take back the House in November. Thank you, everyone," he said.

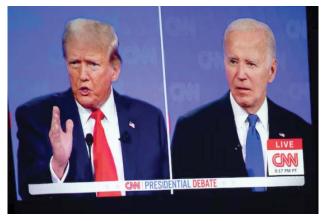
Democratic Representative Jim McGovern told reporters: "I'd be lying to you if I told you I thought it was a great debate." Asked if it was time for the party to consider another nominee, he responded, "I haven't come to any conclusion

The Biden campaign said it raised \$14 million on Thursday and Friday and posted its single best hour of fundraising immediately after the Thursday night

Biden, already the oldest American president in history, faced only token opposition during the party's months-long nominating contest, and he has secured enough support to guarantee his spot as the Democratic nominee for the November 5 election.

Former President Trump, 78, likewise overcame his intraparty challengers early in the year, setting the stage for a long and bitter general election fight.

One Biden donor, who asked



for anonymity, called his perfor-"disqualifying" and predicted that some Democrats would revisit calls for him to step aside. That would give the party time to pick another nominee at its national convention, which starts on August 19.

Democratic officials played down that possibility. "It's not likely to happen," Biden campaign

co-chair Mitch Landrieu said on

Other Biden aides and allies, speaking on condition of anonymity, said they did not think the blowback would threaten his chances of winning the nomina-

Nancy Pelosi, Jeffries' predecessor, told reporters she did not think Democrats needed another presidential nominee.

California Governor Gavin Newsom-who could be a leading Democratic alternative-dismissed the notion that Biden could be replaced. Pennsylvania Governor Josh Shapiro, another possible replacement, urged Democrats to stop worrying.

"Joe Biden had a bad debate, right, but Donald Trump was a bad president," Shapiro said.

Interviews with undecided voters confirmed that it was a bad night for Biden. They described his showing as feeble, embarrassing and difficult to watch.

The Trump campaign released a video on Friday highlighting Biden's stumbles. "Last night the world saw who he is. He is unfit to serve," spokeswoman Karoline Leavitt said.

One adviser, speaking on condition of anonymity, said the debate would help them compete in Democratic-leaning states like Virginia and Minnesota.

Ed McMullen, a Trump fundraiser, said three donors called him after the debate to say they were ready to back the campaign. "Anyone who raises money knows there's a time to go to donors, and this is one of those watershed moments," he said.

Questions about Trump's fitness for office have also arisen over his conviction last month in New York for covering up hush money payments to a porn star, his efforts to overturn the 2020 election and his chaotic term in office.

But despite a litany of falsehoods and deflections from Trump during the debate, the focus after-

wards was squarely on Biden. The 90-minute debate at CNN headquarters in Atlanta took place far earlier in the campaign than any modern presidential debate, more than four months before the

performance fades and news play in November. Reuters

events generate fresh headlines. Trump, for instance, is scheduled to be sentenced in New York on July 11, just days before his party convenes to formally nominate him. He still faces three other criminal indictments, though none appears likely to reach trial

before November. At a Waffle House restaurant in Atlanta after the debate, Biden told reporters he did not have concerns about his performance. "It's hard to debate a liar," he said.

Biden was headed for a Friday rally in Raleigh, North Carolina, a state that Democrats hope to win back from Republicans this November, before flying to New York for a fundraiser and the opening of a monument dedicated to the 1969 Stonewall riot for LGBT rights.

Trump will hold a rally on That could mitigate the damage Friday in Virginia, a state he has for Biden, as the memory of his lost twice but hopes to put into

Iran's presidential election

Iran's Supreme Leader Ali Khamenei casts his ballot for Iran's 14th presidential election at a polling station in Tehran, Iran, on Friday. Voting for Iran's 14th presidential election started at 8 a.m. (0430 GMT) on Friday, after President Ebrahim Raisi died in a helicopter crash last



Zelensky says preparing 'plan' to end war with Russia

KYIV: Ukraine's President Volodymyr Zelensky on Friday said he was drawing up a "comprehensive plan" for how Kyiv believes the war with Russia should end.

There are no public talks ongoing between Ukraine and Russia and based on public statements by Zelensky and Russian President Vladimir Putin, the two sides appear as far apart as ever when it comes to the terms of a potential peace settlement.

international summit in Swit- he said at a press conference zerland earlier this month invited — to rally support for Ukraine's position.

us to show a plan to end the war that will be supported by the majority of the world,"



Zelensky said on Friday.

"This is the diplomatic Zelensky hosted a major route we are working on," in Kyiv alongside Slovenian

> More than 90 countries sent leaders and senior offiwith Zelensky in Switzerland.

The vast majority of whom

Ukraine's "territorial integrity" to be respected in any settlement.

But some key countries — to which Russia was not President Natasa Pirc Musar. that attended, like India, did not agree and others, like Russia's ally China, boycotted "It is very important for cials to the two-day summit the summit in protest at Moscow not being invited.

Ukraine has repeatedly agreed to a final communique said Russia must pull its

troops out of its internationally recognized territory, including the peninsula of Crimea that Moscow annexed in 2014, before peace

talks can start. Meanwhile Putin, who launched the full-scale invasion of Ukraine in February 2022, is demanding Ukraine effectively capitulate by evacuating even more territory

across its east and south In Brussels on Thursday, Zelensky said he would put forward a "detailed plan" in a matter of months.

'We don't have too much time," he said, pointing to the high casualty rate among soldiers and civilians.

Russia's troops are slowly advancing on the battlefield, claiming to have seized another small frontline village

Turkiye's removal from FATF grey list boosts its global standing

ANKARA: The international crime watchdog Financial Action Task Force (FATF) removed Turkiye from its "grey list" of countries that require special scrutiny on Friday, in a boost to the country's economic turnaround plan.

Turkiye was downgraded to the 'grey list" in 2021 due to concerns about money laundering and terrorist financing. The latest move came after an FATF team recently held meetings with Turkish authorities to assess progress in addressing those worries.

Turkiye has made "significant progress" in improving its regime of anti-money laundering and combating the financing of terrorism, the Paris-based body said in a statement after its plenary meeting in Singapore.

Turkish officials welcomed the move, which is seen as improving its international standing and noten tially drawing in fresh investment.

"With this development, international investors' confidence in our country's financial system has become even stronger," Turkish Vice President Cevdet Yilmaz said on the social media platform X.

"The decision will have extremely positive consequences for both our financial sector and our real sector," he said.

There was little market reaction to the move, which was widely expected, with the lira firming slightly to 32.8845 against the dollar. Istanbul's main share index was 0.5% higher.

"The good news around Turkiye, and the reforms from (Finance Minister Mehmet) Simsek just keep on coming," said Tim Ash, a strategist at Bluebay Asset Management.

There are some two dozen nations that are on the "grey list" and considered risky by the FATF, a body that groups countries from the United States to China to tackle financial crime. In February, it removed the United Arab Emirates from the list.

Turkiye was put on the "grey list" in October 2021 for failing to supervise banking, real estate, and other sectors vulnerable to money laundering and financing groups such as Islamic State and al Qaeda on the

UN warns of risk of famine in 14 Sudanese areas

KHARTOUM: The United Nations on Thursday warned of the risk of famine in 14 locations across Sudan.

The risk of famine threatens residents, people uprooted by the war and refugees in no less than 14 areas covering Greater Darfur, Greater Kordofan, and Al Jazira states, as well as hotspots in Khartoum," the UN said on its website, citing the latest report by the UN-backed Integrated Food Security Phase Classification, a multi-partner initiative for improving food security and decision-making.

"Even worse, 755,000 people face phase-five 'catastrophic' conditions in 10 states, including in Greater Darfur as well as South and North Kordofan, Blue Nile, Al Jazira and Khartoum," it said.

It noted that 8.5 million people, or 18 percent of Sudan's total population, now suffer from the phase-four "emergency" level of food inse-

11 Palestinians killed in Israeli bombing in W. Rafah

GAZA: At least 11 Palestinians were killed on Friday by an Israeli attack on tents housing displaced individuals in western Rafah, Gaza's southernmost city, Palestinian security and medical sources said.

The Israeli army fired artillery shells and bullets at the tents in the Al-Mawasi area. The shelling began on Thursday overnight following the advancement of Israeli tanks near the area, security sources told

The bombing operations led to a state of panic and fear among the displaced people, who left their tents and fled towards the areas in southwest of Khan Younis, according to local sources and eyewitnesses. Medical sources told Xinhua that 11 Palestinians were killed and

more than 40 others sustained varying injuries as a result of the bombing, all of whom were transferred to the hospital. Al-Mawasi is an open sandy area on the seashore extending from

the southwest of the city of Deir al-Balah in the center of the Gaza Strip through western Khan Younis to the west of Rafah. Xinhua

Princess Anne discharged from hospital after head injury



LONDON: Britain's Princess Anne, King Charles' younger sister, has been discharged from hospital, Buckingham Palace said on Friday, after a five night stay due to a minor head injury believed to have been caused by a horse.

The palace said that the 73-year-old, the only daughter of the late Queen Elizabeth,

had returned home to Gatcombe Park in southwest England and would be recuperate there and return to public duty when her medical team allow. "I would like to extend my warmest thanks to all the team at Southmead Hospital for their care, expertise and kindness during my wife's short stay," her husband Tim Laurence said.

Anne was hurt on Sunday while she was out walking in the grounds of her estate. There were horses in the vicinity at the time of the incident and her medical team said the head injuries were consistent with impact from a horse's head or legs.

A royal source said Anne, a former Olympic equestrian, had suffered a concussion and had been unable to recall what happened.

The Palace had said on Monday that she was expected to make a full recovery from the injury. Reuters

Uzbekistan on way to fight against corruption

Spokesman Report

signed the Resolution "On measures to introduce a system of continuous improvement of knowledge of the population and civil servants in the fight against

corruption". The legal and institutional framework for preventing and combating corruption has been improved in Uzbekistan in recent years. At the same time, there is a need to raise to a new level the system of developing an intolerant attitude towards corruption among the population and civil servants, immunizing them with 'integrity vaccine', as well as increasing knowledge and skills in

on the requirements of the time. In this regard, the President of he President of Uzbekistan has signed the Resolution "On measures to introduce a system of continuous improvement of knowledge of the population and civil servants in the fight against corruption".

The Resolution will introduce a system of continuous improvement of knowledge of the population and civil servants in combating corruption.

For this purpose, from January 1, 2025, the Virtual Anti-Corruption Academy electronic platform (Virtual Academy) will be launched.

The Anti-Corruption Agency and the Law Enforcement Academy are in charge in organization and conduct of educational activities at the Virtual the fight against corruption based Academy. The Agency forms a

are subject to training, in agreement with the Academy, approves the annual training schedule, and monitors the quality organization of the educational process. The Agency submits annually information on the activities of the Virtual Academy to the National Anti-Corruption Council.

The key is that any citizen will have the opportunity to voluntarily study at the Academy's basic courses. In particular, educational programs of various formats will be developed for preschool and school children, students, entrepreneurs, and representatives of nongovernmental organizations, taking into account their age, level of development and field of

Increasing knowledge and skills in combating corruption at

contingent of civil servants who the Academy is mandatory for all civil servants.

This, undoubtedly, is of great importance in increasing the legal consciousness and culture of the population and civil servants, creating legal immunity from corruption in society, and cultivating the integrity values in the vounger generation.

Training at the Virtual Academy in basic courses is organized free of charge for all users, and advanced training in special courses is

The Agency formulates recommended annual research topics in the field of anti-corruption for higher education institutions and research organizations. All higher education and research organizations will annually submit to the Agency the results of research they conducted in the area. The



Academy will maintain an elec- Road Map is approved to ensure tronic database on achievements, domestic and foreign experience, scientific, methodological and practical developments and research work.

Based on the Resolution, a

the effective functioning and strengthening of the material and technical base of the Virtual Anti-Corruption Academy electronic platform.

According to it, the Virtual in the fight against corruption.

tronic platform and its mobile app will be launched by January 1, 2025. Special programs and content organized in the Virtual Academy for pre-school and school children, and students will be developed by October 1, 2024. As part of the Global Resource

Anti-Corruption Academy elec-

for Anti-Corruption Education and Youth Empowerment (GRACE) Initiative, measures will be taken to create high-quality animated films, video and audio materials intended for students.

The launch of the Virtual Academy will serve to accelerate the formation of an intolerant attitude towards corruption in society, as well as the introduction of a system of continuous improvement of the knowledge and skills of the population and civil servants

Bull & Bears PSX 100-Share

'`` Index Fluctuation				
Pakistan: PSX 100-Share Index				
Current	Prev. Close			
78,444.96	78,528.25			
Day's High	Day's Low			
78,784.23	78,312.36			
Index Value	Change			
8,738,594,041	-83.29			
Percentage	Time			
-0.11%	28 Jun, 2024 5:00 pm			
Europe: FTS	Europe: FTSE 100 Index			
Index Value	Change			
8,164.12	-15.56			
Percentage	Time			
-0.19%	28 Jun, 4:35 pm GMT+1			
USA: Dow Jones I	ndustrial Average			
Index Value	Change			
39,187.52	+23.46			
Percentage	Time			
+0.060%	28 Jun, 12:48 pm GMT-4			

+0.61%	GMT+9		
Open Market Forex Rates			

Asia Pacific: Nikkei Stocks Average

Change

+241.54

Time

28 Jun, 3:15 pm

Index Value

39.583.08

Percentage

Open Market Forex Rates		
Currency	Buying	Selling
Australian Dollar	182.2	184
Bahrain Dinar	740.56	748.56
Canadian Dollar	203	205
China Yuan	38.32	38.72
Danish Krone	39.87	40.27
Euro	293.5	297
Hong Kong Dollar	35.66	36.01
Indian Rupee	3.33	3.44
Japanese Yen	1.9	1.98
Kuwaiti Dinar	907.51	916.51
Malaysian Ringgit	59.13	59.73
NewZealand \$	169.22	171.22
Norwegians Krone	26.38	26.68
Omani Riyal	723.24	731.24
Qatari Riyal	76.5	77.2
Saudi Riyal	73	73.8
Singapore Dollar	202	204
Swedish Korona	26.34	26.64
Swiss Franc	311.34	313.84
Thai Bhat	7.58	7.73
U.A.E Dirham	74.9	75.7
UK Pound Sterling	349	352.55
US Dollar	277.7	280.6

MSME Day 2024

Alibaba.com Commits to Scaling AI Tools for *MSMĔs*



Staff Reporter

LAHORE: Alibaba.com, a leading platform for global business-to-business (B2B) e-commerce and a unit of Alibaba International Digital Commerce Group, today honored businesses in their pursuit of success and global growth ahead of Micro-, Small and Medium-Sized Enterprise (MSME) Day on June 27. Reaffirming its dedication to supporting MSMEs, Alibaba.com said it has been rolling out artificial intelligence (AI) tools for global suppliers, which have so far attracted adoption by around 30,000 businesses on its platform.

This year's MSME Day marks the seventh anniversary of the United Nations' designation to recognize the vital role played by MSMEs in achieving the UN Sustainable Development Goals and the contributions of MSMEs to the global economy. On this meaningful occasion, Kuo Zhang, President of Alibaba. com, participated in a panel discussion on the topic of global trade during the World Trade Organization's (WTO) bi-annual Global Review of Aid for Trade. Together with four MSMEs from Ethiopia, Vietnam, Italy and India, Zhang also joined a session held by the United Nations International Trade Centre (ITC) to celebrate MSME Day.

Emphasizing the importance of ensuring that no MSMEs in underdeveloped countries are left behind in the era of AI, Zhang mentioned that among the top 20 countries making the most frequent use of Alibaba.com's AI tools, approximately 10 are developing coun-

Govt urged to review agreement with IPPs

All Pakistan Chambers Presidents Conference issues declaration for country's economic growth

Staff Reporter

ISLAMABAD: The All Pakistan Chambers Presidents' Conference has issued a landmark declaration outlining a comprehensive roadmap for the country's economic growth and development. The declaration, endorsed by business leaders from across Pakistan, calls on the government to Review agreements with Independent Power Producers (IPPs). Prioritize industrial development and regional trade promotion

It is further stated in the declaration that Govt should provide a better business environment and simplify tax collection procedures. Establish industrial parks and provide electricity to industries at a reasonable tariff. Promote digital transformation and provide duty-free status for IT equipment.

Offer easy loans for industries and incen-



tivize exporters. The conference emphasized the need for strategic planning and collective efforts to achieve a tax revenue target of Rs 10,950 billion and a GDP growth rate

President of the Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry, Ahsan Bakhtawari, hailed the conference declaration as a landmark document that embodies the collective thinking of the nationwide business community and charts a new course for the country's economic trajectory.

He vowed to tirelessly advocate for the conference's recommendations, ensuring they reach every pivotal decision-making platform, including the government. He urged the government to acknowledge and integrate the business community's proposals into policymaking, fostering a collaborative approach to drive economic growth and prosperity.

IT, tech education should be modernised: Mian Zahid

Staff Reporter

ISLAMABAD: Chairman of the FPCCI Policy Advisory Board and National Business Group Pakistan, President of the Pakistan Businessmen and Intellectuals Forum and All Karachi Industrial Alliance, and former Provincial Minister Mian Zahid Hussain said on Friday that Prime Minister Shahbaz Sharif has realized the importance of the education sector and taken steps for its rapid development.

The Prime Minister's decision to promote is highly commendable as it will pave the way for social and economic development, he said.

Mian Zahid Hussain said that improving the education sector is one of the important responsibilities of the government, without which social and economic development is not possible.

Speaking to the business community, the veteran business leader said that the condition of this sector is very poor because its funding is low and monitoring is non-existent.

The business leader claimed that the government schools' curricula do not system in place for monitoring and holding tion on the ground is the opposite. Approxi-



teachers accountable, which results in the loss of both male and female students'

Many countries, including Western ones, do not recognize Pakistani degrees, and those who go there face challenges in terms of education or employment.

Mian Zahid Hussain said ghost schools and teachers across the country are responsible for destroying this sector.

The country's constitution guarantees compulsory and free education to every meet modern standards, and there is no child up to the age of sixteen, but the situa-

mately two hundred and three million children, deprived of education, will grow up to become a burden on the country.

The rest of the children pay huge fees at private schools without getting anything in return. Mian Zahid Hussain said that the technical education system in the country is also very weak, which means that the industrial sector does not get the workers it needs.

The IT sector, which is the guarantor of Pakistan's better future, is also lacking manpower. Mian Zahid Hussain said that the education of girls is more important, but their number is always less than that of boys, which is a big threat to our future.

Realizing these problems, the Prime Minister has established an Education Task Force, which will try to change this situation. The Prime Minister will give full attention to literacy in Sindh and Balochistan, and increase investment in this sector. After reviewing the problems of the education sector, the task force will make recommendations for its develop-

Mian Zahid Hussain added that without the task force's recommendations and reforms in this sector, the country's development is impossible.

CCP takes notice of misleading packaging

Staff Reporter

ISLAMABAD: Competition Commission of Pakistan (CCP) has initiated action against fifteen beverage manufacturers for disseminating, prima facie, false and misleading information through their product packaging.

initial scrutiny The revealed that these manufacturers prominently display images of multiple fruits, vegetables and medicinal plants on their packaging, creating the impression that the products are purely extracted from the pictured ingredients or contain their pulps, pastes or natural flavours

The Commission noticed with great concern the differences between the packaging of same product sold in Pakistan and exported for sale in the international markets. Similarly, variations are observed in the pictured ingredients and

on the same label. Notably, two well-known manufacturers have omitted similar fruit graphics on products intended for international markets, indicating a deliberate attempt to mislead Pakistani consumers.

Such misrepresentations mislead consumers about the true nature and nutritional value of the products, especially when these claims are not substantiated. The use of unfounded ingredients pictures on the product packaging falls under the domain of deceptive marketing practices in the light of Section 10 of the Competition Act, 2010.

Competition Commission of Pakistan accordingly requires the manufacturers to have uniformity in the packaging of their products for local as well as international markets with minor variations to meet the specific labelling requirements of the foreign jurisdictions in order to maintain consistency and description of ingredients avoid double standards.

L'Oréal Professionnel Institute of Pakistan celebrates its graduates

Solution Our Correspondent

KARACHI: The future of hairstyling in Pakistan is shining bright! The graduation of the first and second batches from the L'Oréal Professionnel Institute of Pakistan was celebrated at a ceremony held at the Marriott Hotel in Karachi.

A celebration of women's empowerment and financial independence, the ceremony was graced by the presence of the esteemed Consul General of France for Karachi, Monsieur Alexis Chahtahtinsky, as the Guest of Honor.

Building on the success of its inaugural batch, the LPIP is on a mission to transform lives. In collaboration with CIRCLE, a women-led non-profit, they're identifying talented yet underprivileged women with a passion for hairstyling and giving them the tools they need to thrive and achieve financial independence.

The ceremony highlighted the critical role of such initiatives in Pakistan's socio-economic landscape. The graduating class of 24 talented hairstylists, with 50% students receiving full scholarships from L'Oréal Pakistan and CIRCLE, is a testament to the program's effectiveness.

The ceremony featured a captivating panel discussion moderated by Corporate Affairs & Engagement Director, Adeela Liaquat. The panelists - including CIRCLE's founder Sadaffe Abid and esteemed Salon



Gill discussed L'Oréal Pakistan's unwavering commitment to empowering women and providing them with a platform to become leaders in the industry.

Renowned stylist and long-term partner, Nabila Magsood, and L'Oréal Pakistan's Country Managing Director, Qawi Naseer, delivered inspiring keynotes. Mr. Naseer emphasized, "At L'Oréal Pakistan, our commitment to fostering financial independence among women is unwavering. Through the L'Oréal Professionnel Institute of Pakistan, we aim to create a sustainable future that values diversity and promotes Partners Hifsa Khan, Nina Lotia and Sidra equality, providing women with the tools

they need to succeed."

A special keynote address was delivered by the Guest of Honor, Consul General of France for Karachi, Monsieur Alexis Chahtahtinsky, who praised the initiative for its substantial impact on women's economic empowerment. He stated, "I would like to really commend L'Oreal and its partners for their dedication and significant support in order to make this project a success. By doing this, you are not only helping brave and capable Pakistani women acquiring the necessary skills to earn a living and support their families. You are also helping make your country, Pakistan, stronger."

Sarhad Business Alliance delegation holds meeting with **Peshawar Commissioner**

Mark Correspondent

PESHAWAR: A delegation from the Sarhad Business Alliance held an important meeting with Peshawar Commissioner Riaz Mehsud regarding security during Muharram at the Commissioner's office. Peshawar Mayor Haji Zubair Ali, SSP Operations Kashif Zulfiqar, and DC Peshawar Afaq Wazir were also present at the meet-

The delegation was led by Sarhad Business Alliance Chairman Syed Zahir Ali Shah, and other members included Muhammad Ishaq, former minister Malik Mehr Elahi, former minister Adnan Adeel, President of Central Organization of Traders Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Sharafat Ali Mubarak, President of Peshawar Traders Chamber Ghulam Bilal Javed, former President of Sarhad Chamber Yusuf Sarwar

Mohmand, Abid Uddin, Bakht Mir Jan Durrani, Lugman Shah, Shehzad Siddiqui, Malik Shan Elahi, Rizwan Sarraf, Haji Waheed, Arshad Siddiqui, Altaf Baig, Nisarullah Khan, Jahangir Khan, and others.

The purpose of this important meeting was to discuss and improve the security situation in Peshawar during Muharram and to address the concerns and challenges of the trading community. Commissioner Peshawar thanked the delegation, noting that joint efforts lead to solutions for all issues. He assured the delegation that the best security arrangements would be made during Muharram to ensure the complete safety of the trading community and the public. Commissioner

Mehsud further stated that the police and administration are fully active and prepared to handle any untoward inci-

Celebrating Future in Tech

CIRCLE Women Honours Graduates of IT Advanced Skills Training Program in Collaboration with Plus W

KARACHI: The leading non-profit tech start-up CIRCLE Women Association, in collaboration with Plus W, proudly awards graduation certificates to the graduates of IT Advanced Skills Training Program. The training program focused on advanced technical skills, preparworld of tech.

Organised by CIRCLE Women, the event reflected the organisation's mission of empowering the youth in the realm of tech and enabling them to drive change in the digital age.

Plus W teams and a panel discussion to highlight the mission, accomplishments, and key challenges of the training program. CEO CIRCLE Women, Sadaffe Abid took to stage to share a few words of encouragement for the graduates. Takashi Horiuchi, Vice-President Plus W. up-skilling IT professionals with and Ando-San, Senior Director Plus W joined in virtually to celebrate the ing them for the rapidly evolving achievement of the graduates. The graduates expressed their gratitude and shared their experience of this incredible journey.

As part of the IT Advanced Skills Training Program, 28 IT professionals were trained in the field

speeches by CIRCLE Women and front-end development. Along with this, they were able to achieve basic fluency in the Japanese language, preparing them to enter the Japanese job market. Throughout the training program, the participants engaged in a series of hands-on training sessions, and real-world projects to further their understanding and proficiency in various IT domains. 3 of the graduates were successful in securing placements in a project with a leading Japanese client. Addressing to the audience,

Sadaffe Abid shared "Congratulations to our graduating class! Today marks a significant milestone in your journey, and we at CIRCLE Women The graduation ceremony featured of IT, specifically on backend and are incredibly proud of your dedi-

Advanced Skills Training Program. The ever-evolving tech industry demands a skilled and adaptable workforce. This program has equipped you with the advanced technical skills and intercultural knowledge to not only compete but thrive in this dynamic landscape. Remember, your learning journey doesn't end here. Embrace challenges, stay curious, and keep pushing boundaries. CIRCLE remains committed to supporting your future endeavors, and we are excited to see the innovative paths you forge in the tech world."

Kazunori Yamaguchi, Country Director Japan External Trade

cation and achievements in the IT Organization (JETRO) attended the event as Guest of Honor. While speaking about the advancement of technology among youth, he said, "Congratulations to our graduates for their hard work and dedication in completing this intensive course. At Plus W, we are proud of your achievements and excited to see you grow in your IT and Japanese skills. Today marks the beginning of many new opportunities, and we look forward to continuing our collaboration with Circle to support and showcase the talents of Pakistani IT students on the global stage. Thank you to everyone who has supported this journey."-Takashi Horiuchi, Executive Vice President & COO of Plus W.

Staff Reporter

№ T20 World Cup

India vs South Africa final at risk due to Barbados weather

A reserve day has been set for Sunday, but rain is also expected then

Spokesman Report

BARBADOS: The T20 World Cup final between India and South Africa, scheduled for Saturday, faces potential disruption due to rain.

Various weather applications have forecast rain in Barbados from early morning and continuing till the evening on both days of the weekend.

A reserve day has been set for Sunday, but rain is also expected then.

According to the World Cup playing conditions, an additional 190 minutes have been allocated for both days to accommodate any delays.

The official match duration is from 10:30 AM to 1:40 PM local time, with the possibility of extending play until 4:50 PM if needed.

If the final cannot be completed, India and South Africa will be declared joint T20 champions.

Earlier, India overpowered England by 68 runs in the second semi-final of the T20 World Cup 2024 at the Providence Stadium in Guyana on Thursday.

After edging out England, India will now face South Africa in the final of the T20 World Cup on Saturday, June 29 in Barbados.

India's bowlers took English batters under pressure from the very outset of



their innings. However, England got off to a good start as they scored 26 runs without losing a single wicket. Jos Buttler looked in good touch but was dismissed by Axar Patel on the first ball of the fourth

England never recovered after losing their skipper as Jasprit Bumrah increased their troubles by removing Phil Salt's stumps.

India's spin department continued to dominate the defending champions as Jonny Bairstow (0 off 3), Moeen Ali (8 off 10), Sam Curran (2 off 4) and Liam Livingstone (11 of 16), all failed to score big for the team.

Harry Brook provided some resistance by contributing 25 runs on 19 balls but he was removed by Kuldeep Yadav. For India, Patel and Kuldeep bagged

three wickets each while Bumrah got two as the entire English team was out for 103 runs in 16.4 overs.

In the first innings, India didn't have a great start as Virat Kohli, once again, failed to perform in the ongoing tournament as he was bowled by Reece Topley after just scoring nine runs.

Following Kohli's dismissal, Rishabh Pant too walked back to the pavilion after scoring just four runs, leaving India 40-2 in 5.2 overs.

However, after losing two wickets, India bounced back as Survakumar Yadav and Rohit Sharma formed a 73-run partnership. The Hitman completed his half-century but fell to Adil Rashid's googly after contributing

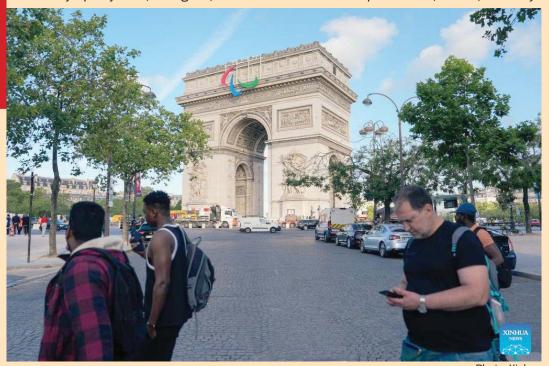
Yadav continued India's attack after Sharma's dismissal but he missed his half-century by just three runs by losing his wicket to Jofra Archer.

India lost wickets in quick succession with Hardik Pandya (23 off 13), and Shivam Dube (0 off 1), but Ravindra Jadeja (17 off 9) and Axar Patel (10 off 6) propelled India to 171 in the allocated

For England, Chris Jordan picked three, while Adil Rashid, Sam Curran, Jofra Archer and Reece Topley bagged one wicket each.

Arc de Triomphe

The Paralympic symbol, the Agitos, is seen on the Arc de Triomphe in Paris, France, on Friday.



Rohit Sharma surpasses Babar Azam's another record

Spokesman Report

KARACHI: Indian cricket team captain Rohit Sharma surpassed Pakistan's Babar Azam another record to become the highest run-scorer in T20 Internationals, amassing 4,222 runs in 150 innings compared to Babar's 4,145 runs in 116 innings.

The record came following India's triumph over England by 68 runs in the T20 World Cup 2024 semi-final, securing a spot in the final game against South Africa in Barbados on Saturday.

Previously, Sharma surpassed Babar's 48 wins, extending India's second-longest winning streak in T20Is to 11 matches.

Under Sharma's leadership, India achieved their 49th win in T20Is, making Sharma the most successful captain in this format and setting a new world record. The semi-final saw India deliver a commanding performance. The batting lineup, spear headed by Sharma, set a formidable target for England. The bowlers then executed a well-strategized plan, with standout performances that dismantled the English batting order, securing India's spot in the final.

Unbeaten Spain fails to convince Spaniards as Euro 2024 enters knockout stage

BARCELONA: Spain may have won all their matches so far at Euro 2024, but many Spaniards remain unconvinced about their national team's chances of

going all the way. This edition of the quadrennial European football tournament began on June 14 and is entering its knockout stage, when the 16 teams left in the competition will look to progress to the quarterfinals.

With Spain's hopes of winning their fourth Euros still very much alive, Xinhua took to the streets on Friday to ask locals who they thought might win the final in Berlin's Olympic Stadium on

"I think Germany could do very well, England also has a good chance, but I think just about the best right now is Spain because they are undefeated," Pol Montero told Xinhua.

While Ariadna Matamoros shared



less confident about their chances of lifting the trophy: "I hope Spain wins because it's my country and I think they have very good players, but I don't think they will win, I think that Italy will win." Alba Martinez was more optimistic

Pol's positive opinion of Spain, she was

they had some tough competition. "I want Spain to win because they're my team and I think that this year we have and Austria also have possibilities," she told Xinhua. Meanwhile, Alvaro Aviles told Xinhua

that he had "lost a lot of enthusiasm for

"It's not the team it used to be. Also, I don't like the coach. If they win that's fine, but I want Germany to win," he said. Germany is also unbeaten so far in the tournament, while teams like France,

impress and have managed only one win each.

"I've seen all the teams play but none

about Spain's chances but admitted I'm Spanish. But we'll have to see how things go from now on," said Jose Maria Baldoma.

Martinez agreed that some of the top a good chance, but Italy and Germany national teams had so far failed to live up to expectations. "I must say that I expected more from France, England and Portugal. But Portugal lost against Georgia, for example, I didn't expect that," she said.

Also, with Portugal and the Netherlands losing their final group matches to Georgia and Austria respectively, Euro 2024 is throwing up plenty of surprises.

"There are always surprises. In the Belgium and England have failed to 2010 World Cup, Spain lost the first match against Switzerland. In the last World Cup in Qatar, Argentina lost the first match against Saudi Arabia. Then of them have quite convinced me like they were both champions. Football is in other years. Spain seems [only] to like that, if football were predictable it be doing a little better, even though wouldn't be fun," added Aviles. Xinhua

Austria gears up for 2024 F1 Austrian Grand Prix at Spielberg



LONDON: F1 fever is set to hit Austria this weekend, with the country hosting the 11th round of the 2024 Formula One World Championship.

The Austrian Grand Prix will be run over 71 laps of the 4.318-kilometer (2.67-mile) Red Bull Ring in Spielberg in the country's

Before the race, the sprint on Saturday will define the grid for the Austrian GP at 1000GMT.

Sunday's Grand Prix will begin at 1300GMT.

Mercedes' Lewis Hamilton won seven Grands Prix, while Ferrari's Carlos Sainz and Charles Leclerc and McLaren's Lando Norris have each taken one trip to the podium. Anadolu Agency

Alcaraz to start Wimbledon title defence against qualifier Lajaz



LONDON: Spain's Carlos Alcaraz will start his title defence at Wimbledon with a first-round tie against qualifier Mark Lajal of Estonia, the draw for the grass-court Grand Slam revealed on

Alcaraz, 21, defeated Serbia's Novak Djokovic in a five-set battle in the final last year. This year, he arrived at the All England Club with another major trophy on hand, after having triumphed at French Open for the first time.

Lajal, also 21, has no Grand Slam main draw experience so far, having edged Australia's James Duckworth in the third qualification round to gain access to the tournament proper.

24-time Grand Slam champion Djokovic will face the Czech Republic's Vit Kopriva in the opening round, while Italy's world $No.\,1\,Jannik\,Sinner\,will\,play\,German\,veteran\,Yannick\,Hanfmann.$

China's Zhang Zhizhen, seeded 32nd, will lock horns with French qualifier Maxime Janvier in the first round, while his teenage compatriot Shang Juncheng is slated to face former world top 20 player Cristian Garin of Chile.

In the women's singles, five-time Grand Slam champion and world No.1 Iga Swiatek of Poland could face a strong challenge from former Australian Open champion Sofia Kenin in her first match.

Defending champion Marketa Vondrousova's first opponent is Spain's Jessica Maneiro, while two-time runner-up Ons Jabeur of nisia is to play Japan's Moyuka Uchijima.

China's eighth seed Zheng Qinwen will face qualifier Lulu Sun of New Zealand. Zheng's best result at Wimbledon was a thirdround finish in 2022. The Chinese has enjoyed a fast-track rise since turning pro in 2022, reaching the quarterfinals in last year's US Open before advancing to the final of this year's Australian

AB de Villiers predicts T20 World Cup 2024 winner

Legendary batter AB de Villiers on Friday, predicted the winner of the highly-anticipated ICC Men's T20 World Cup 2024 final between South Africa and India.

The former captain acknowledged the challenge Rohit Sharma's side possesses but insisted that the Proteas have all bases covered and are favourites to clinch their first-ever title.

"The moment of truth has arrived. South Africans have been waiting for 33 years to see the Proteas play in an ICC World Cup final. After so many heartbreaks, we know all about them. South Africa will play India in the T20 World Cup final in Barbados on Saturday and I am backing the Proteas to win. It will be close as we all know India are a team of superstars but I believe South Africa's time has come," De Villiers said.

This Proteas team brings power. Power at the top order with De Kock, Hendricks, and Markram, power in the middle with Miller, Klaasen, and Stubbs, and power in the pace attack of Jansen, Rabada, and Nortje. Now add the skills of Shamsi and Maharaj, and you've all the bases covered. Some will say that they have not produced their best cricket in the tournament so far but they have won eight from eight and that's not bad," he added. "India have their own match-winners of course and they also bring the power of more than a billion people urging them to go out there and win another World Cup. Maybe my heart is ruling my head but I just think it's South Africa's time," AB de Villiers concluded.

Pakistan's first Olympic markswoman guns for historic medal

21-year-old Talat, who comes from a military family, is first Pakistani woman to qualify for Olympic shooting

JHELUM: Slowing her breath stay at home, do girly things, and 37th in the 10m event and is and focusing on a bullseye in her pistol's sights, Kishmala Talat is aiming to become the first woman from Pakistan to win an Olympic medal.

on July 26, Talat will compete in the 10m air pistol and 25m pistol events, going for glory abroad and defying stereotypes back home.

Pakistan's medal prospects are undercut by modesty codes which dissuade women from participating in sport.

The 21-year-old Talat, who comes from a military family, is the first Pakistani woman to

qualify for Olympic shooting. "In Pakistan there's a prevalent taboo that dictates girls should

play with dolls, while boys are to play with guns," she said.

"I see no one as competition. I compete with myself," she told AFP at a target range in the At the Paris Games starting eastern city of Jhelum.

Talat has won dozens of medals at national level and four internationally, including Pakistan's first shooting medal ever, a bronze, at the Asian Games last year.

Pakistan have only ever won 10 Olympic medals — all by men and none since the 1992 Games.

Talat, who has just completed her university degree in communications, realistically faces an uphill task to get on the podium

She has a global ranking of

International Shooting Sport Federation.

"I longed for recognition. I wanted to do more," she said.

"I wanted that whenever shooting is discussed, or 'Kishmala' is mentioned, it would be associated with someone who did something great for Pakistan."

Hoping to defy the odds, she spends 10 hours a day training one hour of physical exercise and then four hours each on the 10m and 25m ranges.

The last hour in the evening is spent meditating, concentrating on the flickering flame of a candle in an attempt to hone the zen needed to find her target.

"I am dedicated to giving my 41st in the 25m, according to the best performance to let Pakistan's name shine," said Talat.

She takes her shots with her spare hand stuffed in her pocket and one eye covered by custom-fit glasses, her face frozen in expressionless concentration.

The sport of target shooting is not a common pursuit in Paki-

Cricket is by far the most popular pastime, but all sports suffer from chronic underfunding.

However, guns are omnipresent in Pakistan. Swiss weapons research group the Small Arms Survey estimated

in 2017 that there were nearly 44

million legal or illicit guns held by

civilians in Pakistan. The figure is the fourth highest globally and means there are 22 weapons per every hundred citizens in the nation of more than

Talat's talent has been nurtured



by Pakistan's military. Talat is trained by officers and a foreign coach at a military facility in Jhelum, known as "City of

> Martyrs" for its strong ties to the armed forces. She hails from the garrison city

living room. Yaqoob once dreamed of competing herself.

of Rawalpindi, where the armed

Her 53-year-old mother.

Samina Yaqoob, serves as a major

in the military's nursing service

and proudly displays her daugh-

ter's many medals in the family

forces are headquartered.

"I got married and got busy with that life, but it makes me happy when I see my daughter move forward with my dream," she said.

"Girls should step forward, observe, work diligently and their parents should support them," the mother said. "She believes she can do anything. That's just who she

The Spokesman

Operation Azm-e-Istehkam

Envoy to US stresses need for sophisticated small arms

Ambassador Masood Khan proposes that US should make Pakistan partner for diplomatic comeback in Kabul

WASHINGTON: Pakistan's Ambassador to the United States Masood Khan has said that the South Asian country needs small arms and other modern equipment to ensure that Operation Azm-e-Istehkam is a success.

The federal government this week approved the fresh operation, a reinvigorated and re-energised national counter-terrorism drive, to eliminate terrorism from the country.

While there were concerns about the move affecting the local population in the areas which will be focused on in the drive, Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif has clarified that it was not a large-scale military operation and that there would be no population displacement.

"Pakistan has launched Azm-e-Istehkam [...] to oppose and dismantle terrorist networks. For that, we need sophisticated small arms and communication equipment," Khan told an event organised by Wilson Center's South Asia Institute in partnership with should continue to invest in the rising tide of terrorism that also said the ambassador.



Pakistan's Ambassador to the United States Masood Khan addressing at the Wilson Center's South Asia Institute in Washington.

Letters USA in Washington,

Addressing the conference titled Looking Back, Looking Forward: Assessing ment of Pakistan's US-origin the US-Pakistan Relationship', the ambassador stressed that

the International Academy of "reset" of their relationship, threatens the interests of the US maintain strong security links, enhance intelligence cooperation, resume sales of advanced military platforms and sustain-

defence equipment. "This is crucial for regional Pakistan and the United States security and opposing the entire relationship hostage,"

and its allies," he said.

Khan said the bilateral ties should be anchored in ground realties, even as they aim for stronger security and economic partnerships. "Secondly, one or two issues should not hold the

Highlighting Pakistan's demographic dividend, technological advancements and huge market opportunities, he invited US investors and businesses to tap the country's potential.

Projecting security, economic and strategic component as the new domains of cooperation between the two countries, the ambassador observed that security cooperation had its importance. "It equals trust building," he observed.

The ambassador highlighted high level defence talks, frequent meetings, military exercises including Inspired Union-2024, Falcon Talon and Red Flag that promoted defence cooperation between the two countries.

He also proposed that the US $\,$ should make Pakistan a partner for a diplomatic comeback in Kabul, if that is what is being planned, and work with Pakistan, in an inclusive setting, on counterterrorism and the rights of women and girls in Afghan-

Ist-phase of CPEC added 8,000MW electricity in national grid: Ahsan

ISLAMABAD: Minister for Planning, Development, and Special Initiatives Professor Ahsan Iqbal said on Friday that mega infrastructure development projects were completed in the first phase of the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) projects and added 8,000 MW of electricity to the national grid.

Addressing a high-level policy dialogue organized by the Belt and Road Investment Forum, the minister said the world is undergoing significant change, noting that Asia's share of global GDP was 13 per cent in 2000 and reached 35 per cent last

He projected that by 2035, Asia would contribute 50 per cent to global GDP, emphasizing the need to establish the region as a hub of peace, stability, and prosperity. The minister highlighted CPEC as a flagship project of the Belt and Road Initiative, offering substantial benefits to the country.

He underscored the importance of developing links between South Asia, China, Central Asia, and the Middle East, suggesting Pakistan could create North, South, and East connectivity



and investment opportunities. Speaking at the event, Finance Minister Mohammad Aurangzeb described the first phase of CPEC as focused on infrastructure development such as roads, electricity, and ports. He noted that the second phase aims to attract investment built upon this foundational infrastructure.

The high-level policy dialogue of the Belt and Road Investment Forum was attended by diplomats from neighbouring countries, government officials, experts, and private sector leaders. Among others, ambassadors from China, Saudi Arabia, Turkey, Kazakhstan, Turkmenistan, and Uzbekistan in Pakistan were present.

The Belt and Road Investment Forum, the first regional economic forum led by the private sector, was jointly hosted by the Embassy of China in Pakistan in consultation corridors to explore regional trade with the Ministry of Planning. APP

Pakistan committed to peacekeeping partnership: Naqvi

Spokesman Report

NEW YORK: Pakistan will work with the United Nations and all interested states to further develop the concept of peace enforcement.

This was stated by Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi, while addressing the UNCOPS Summit 2024 at the United Nations General Assembly in New York on Friday.

The Interior Minister said Pakistan is proud of longstanding contributions to dangerous time, the world



He said in today's arms race.

military tensions and nuclear

Mohsin Naqvi said preventhe UN peacekeeping. He faced threats of forced foreign tive diplomacy should focus said Pakistan is committed interventions, suppression of on addressing the root cause to peacekeeping partnership - freedom-struggles, poverty, - of conflicts. He said the UN especially with the African inequality, global tensions, peacekeeping missions face adequate human and material to peace, security and justice.

terrorist groups, tribal rivalries and threats to safety.

He said Pakistan agrees with the cause of series and broad-based future reflection of the UN peacekeeping.

The Minister suggested that peacekeeping missions must be part of an overall political strategy, which seeks to address and resolve the cause of conflict and violence.

He said the mandate of the UN peacekeeping must be responsive to the special circumstances or situations.

He added that each mission

increasing challenges from resources and advanced capabilities like radars and early warning intelligence.

Mohsin Nagyi improvement can be made in command and control structure especially to ensure timely response to attacks against civilians and peacekeepers.

He said the collective mission of the UN peacekeepers is clear to foster international cooperation in safeguarding communities and ensuring the security of

The Minister said the strength of our partnership hould be provided with lies in our mutual dedication

Khursheed Shah floats proposal of 4-year govt constitutional term

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan Peoples the four-year term should apply from reiterated his proposal of a four-year constitutional term for a government.

"If we want the system to function properly, the term of the government and assemblies should be four years." Khursheed Shah said in statement.

"Although the term is said to be five vears, in reality, the government has never lasted more than three and a half to four years," he added.

about a decade ago, the then Pakistan to sit together and take a consensus Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N)

Party's (PPP) senior leader Syed the next government, and "I had Khursheed Ahmed Shah on Friday proposed that we should make the constitutional amendment for the purpose now".

He said the government's fouryear term would bring stability in the system and institutions. "The first three years will pass peacefully, and in the fourth year, everyone will start preparing for elections anyway," he maintained.

Khursheed Shah urged both the Khursheed Shah recalled that government and opposition benches decision regarding the government's government had also suggested that four-year term. APP

CPEC success story for continued Pak-China collaboration: Gillani

ISLAMABAD: Chairman detailed session with Liu Jian Senate, Syed Yousaf Raza Gilani on Friday termed China-Pakistan Economic Corridor tional Department of Commu-(CPEC) a success story and said that the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between Pakistan and China for 2nd phase underscored the will for continued collaboration in diverse sectors.

He expressed these views while addressing the launch of the Annual Sustainability Report 2023 in Islamabad. The event was jointly organized by the Sustainable Development Policy Institute (SDPI) and China Chamber of Commerce now entering the 2nd phase of Pakistan at Pakistan Institute CPEC with consistency in our Bhutto Zardari. for Parliamentary Services (PIPS), a news release said.

agenda in Pakistan as all polit-

Chao, Minister of Central Committee of the Internanist Party of China (IDCPC)" Chairman Senate remarked.

Syed Yousaf Raza Gilani

also observed that the Pakistan People's Party (PPP) was the first which under the leadership of President Asif Ali Zardari paved the way for the initiation of CPEC and economic cooperation between Pakistan and China and successive governments continued their resolve to have CPEC completed. "We are relations and commitments by all political forces in Pakistan" "CPEC is a non-partisan Chairman Senate said.

The PPP's founder ical parties stood with the Chairman Shaheed Zulfikar government while having a Ali Bhutto and Chinese leader



Chairman Mao were the architects of strong brotherly relations between the two peoples. Shaheem Mohtarma Benazir Bhutto and President Zardari. continued following the footsteps of Shaheed Zulfikar Ali Bhutto and Chairman Bilawal

Chairman Senate observed that Pakistan faced a multitude of challenges on economic, political and socio-economic fronts last year. However, amidst trials and tribulations,

there emerged a story of resilience. He observed that Pakistan is fully committed to ensuring foolproof security for Chinese citizens and workers undertaking tasks on CPEC projects.

He highlighted that the Special Investment Facilitation Council (SIFC) is working to address these challenges and bottlenecks. He that the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor since its inception, has unfolded at an accelerated

pace and extended its roots to various sectors, encompassing energy, infrastructure, agriculture, transportation, and industrial development.

Syed Yousaf Raza Gilani said that special emphasis is laid on the development of Special Economic Zones and both countries have expressed their shared commitment to sustaining economic growth while prioritizing environmental sustainability.

Chairman Senate Sved Yousaf Raza Gilani said that businesses should get benefit out of using Chinese currency instead of US dollars in Pakistan's financial transactions. Encouraging businesses to leverage RMB instructions can diversify financial pressures on the current account situation, and hence will be helpful for

UNHCR calls for solidarity and solutions for Afghan refugees

Refugee Agency lauded the people and government of Pakistan for hosting Afghan refugees for over four decades and called for protecting those seeking safety in Pakistan.

UNHCR acknowledged that as Pakistan has been facing its own challenges, the country's generosity must be matched with international responsibility-sharing.

World Refugee Day is an international day designated by the United Nations to honour refugees around the globe. It's marked annually, and celebrates the strength and courage of people who have been forced to flee their home country to escape conflict or persecution. According to UNHCR's flagship global trends report, global forced displacement rose to 120 million by May 2024, of which some 43 million are refugees.

Tragically, about 40 per cent of all displaced individuals are children tion are an example to us all," she said.

ISLAMABAD: UNHCR, the UN aged 17 or under, highlighting the profound impact on young lives.

Reflecting the global 2024 theme, "solidarity with and solutions for refugees" an event was held in Islamabad to pay tribute to refugees and express appreciation for the enduring generosity of the communities hosting them.

The event was attended by Federal Minister for SAFRON, Amir Muqam, UNHCR's National Goodwill Ambassador Mahira Khan as well as other members of the government and civil

UNHCR's Representative in Pakistan, Philippa Candler, expressed concern at the increase in the number of people forcefully displaced from their homes across the world, and paid tribute to their resilience. "I am inspired by the many Afghan refugees I have met in Pakistan, whose strength, ambition and determina-

SC accepts Vawda, Kamal's...

Supreme Judicial Council (SJC) members, pointing out the intelligence agency's meddling in judicial affairs. The politicos also pointed out the dual citizenship of an IHC judge.

Shortly after their tirade, the SC sprung into action against the leaders and took suo motu notice.

"We, however, expect that they stand by their statements submitted in courts because if there is further transgression, a simple apology may then not be acceptable to this court," stated the order. The court, in its order, mentioned

Continued from Page 1 issuing notices to 24 channels which had broadcast the press conference of Vawda and 28 channels which had live broadcast Kamal's press conference.

It added about calling upon the channels to submit their explanation within two weeks as to why they should not be proceeded for contempt of court.

"Faisal Siddiqui states that he represents 26 channels and they have filed a 'preliminary reply'. These documents are not signed by any representatives of the said television channels but have been submitted under the signature of Faisal Siddiqui and Usman Mirza," read the order. Agencies

National Assembly passes ...

Continued from Page 1

Fifteen percent raise has been given in the pension of retired government employees. The minimum wages have been enhanced from 32,000

Speaking on the occasion Finance Minister Muhammad Aurangzeb said cardiology stents, surgery items and books as well as ex-FATA and

He said that this tax exemption for education and health was given in very difficult economic conditions. The Finance Minister further said

that exemptions to the agricultural inputs like fertilizers and pesticides as well as exemption to Researchers and teachers will continue. He said that we all need pure milk

and we want to promote it, but tax exemption cannot be given on packed PATA have been given tax exemption. milk which is not of standard.

Journalists' issues...

Continued from Page 1

is fully focused on timely payment of salaries and dues to journalists and media workers.

Attaullah Tarar said the issue of salaries and dues of journalists is being discussed with Pakistan Broadcasters Association and All Pakistan Newspapers Society. He said Prime Minister Shehbaz

Sharif has always accorded importance to solve problem of delay in payments to journalists and media workers. The Minister said he stands in the frontline with journalists and there should be no mis-coordination on any issue of journalists. He said still much work needs to be done on defamation law and discussions are going on with journalist organizations on the law.

Cybercriminals exploit pubic facing applications to attack users

Spokesman Report

ISLAMABAD: Today, public-facing applications play a pivotal role in enabling businesses to interact with customers, partners, and stakeholders. These applications, ranging from websites to APIs and web services. serve as the digital storefronts of organizations, providing essential services and information to users worldwide. But in its latest Incident Response report, Kaspersky found that public-facing applications remain the most common attack vector used by cyber-

criminals to infiltrate a victim's initial vector was found in applications serve various system. In light of these findings, the cybersecurity experts are issuing guidelines to help businesses using these applications to remain cyber-resil-

According to the latest Kaspersky Incident Response report 2023, compromising public-facing applications remained the most common method of cyberattacks, and one third of these applications were attacked via known vulnerabilities. It's also noteworthy that over half of these vulnerabilities were discov42.37% of cases. Following these alarming statistics, Kaspersky is unveiling its findings regarding the cybersecurity risks of public-facing applications that organizations must be aware of.

Public-facing applications are software applications or services accessible to external users over the internet. Unlike internal-facing applications, which are typically used by employees within an organization's network, public-facing applications are designed to be accessed by anyone with ered in 2021 and 2022. This an internet connection. These financial losses.

purposes, including e-commerce platforms, customer portals, social media networks, and online banking systems, among others. Some of the cybersecurity dangers associated with

public-facing applications

include but not limited to data

breaches, malware infections, phishing attacks, SQL injections and cross-sire scripting and DDos atatks. A successful to 37,000 rupees. cyberattack on these applications can lead to data breaches, resulting in the exposure of confidential information and

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