



ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif presenting a cheque of Rs. 150 million to Arshad Nadeem for winning gold medal in Javelin Throw at Paris Olympics.

KP CM announces plots for families of martyrs

F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: The Chief Minister of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Sardar Ali Amin Khan Gandapur has issued directives to the Pakhtunkhwa Housing Authority (PKHA) to accelerate the process of allotting free housing plots to the families of on-duty martyred civil servants in the provincial government housing schemes.

The initiative includes the provision of plots to the heirs of martyred civil servants from all armed forces, including the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Police, FC, and the Pakistan Army, as well as other government personnel from Khyber Pakhtunkhwa who were martyred in the line of duty.

The chief minister stated that this initiative, aimed at honoring the sacrifices of the martyred, will be implemented in phases, beginning with the allotment of 500 available plots across various housing

schemes in the province. "The sacrifices made by our martyred heroes for our future can never be fully repaid, but this gesture serves as a token of honor and a means of financial support for their families," said the Chief Minister.

The Chief Minister emphasized that the allotment of plots would commence immediately with the available plots in the housing schemes located in Hangu, Nowshera, Swat, and Abbottabad. He further instructed the authorities to also prioritize planning for plot allotments in upcoming housing schemes.

The chief minister made these decisions during an important meeting of the Pakhtunkhwa Housing Authority at the Chief Minister's Office in Peshawar. The meeting was attended by the Special Assistant to the Chief Minister for Housing, Amjad Ali, Secretary Housing,

Director General PKHA, and other senior officials.

Gandapur urges nation to celebrate August 14 with tree plantation: On the occasion of Pakistan's Independence Day, Chief Minister, Ali Amin Khan Gandapur, extended heartfelt congratulations to the nation and emphasized the importance of tree plantation and hard work as a symbol of patriotism.

Speaking as the chief guest at an Independence Day ceremony organized at the China Window in Peshawar, the Chief Minister urged citizens to not only hoist the national flag but also to plant a tree in celebration of this auspicious day. He stressed that true love for the country is demonstrated through hard work and dedication, which are the foundations of national pride and progress. "Our love for the country demands a spirit of hard work," said Sardar Ali Amin Khan Gandapur.

Shehbaz hosts Arshad Nadeem

F.P. Report

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Tuesday hosted a lavish dinner for the country's pride and ace javelin thrower Arshad Nadeem, who won a gold medal at Paris Olympics 2024.

To honour the Pakistani star, the prime minister also announced a reward of Rs150 million as the country's citizens continue to celebrate the high feat achieved by the javelin thrower prior to the festivities of Independence Day on Wednesday. The esteemed reward was declared by the premier in regards to Arshad's incredible performance at the sports event setting a new record and securing a gold medal.

Govt slashes petrol price

F.P. Report

ISLAMABAD: The petrol price in the country has been slashed by Rs8.47 per litre for the next fortnight, the federal government announced, mainly due to a drop in fuel prices in the global market.

As per the latest fuel prices, the petrol price has been cut from Rs269.43 to Rs260.96 per litre. The federal government also reduced the price of high-speed diesel (HSD) from Rs272.77 per litre to Rs266.07 with a cut of Rs6.7. The announcement was made in a statement issued by the Ministry of Information on Tuesday. The fuel price cut comes as a major relief for the masses on the occasion of Independence Day, as the country gears up for the celebration of 77 years of independence today (August 14).

PM: Economic policies yielding positive results

F.P. Report

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif vowing to work collectively for an inclusive and prosperous Pakistan, said that the government's efforts for economic growth and stability had started yielding positive results.

"In a short span, our efforts have started yielding positive results. The economy is on its path to stability. The high inflation of 38% has come down to 11.1% (July) and shall be brought down to single digit soon Inshallah," the prime minister said in his message to the nation on the 78th Independence Day being observed on Wednesday.

Extending heartfelt felicitations to the countrymen, the prime minister paid homage to the immense sacrifices of forefathers and countless unsung heroes of the Pakistan Movement which led to the creation of Pakistan as an independent and sovereign state on August 14, 1947 through the unwavering and steadfast leadership of Quaid-e-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah and unmatched sacrifices of our ancestors.

He said that over the decades, Pakistan had achieved significant milestones as the resilience of Pakistani people had been tested through natural disasters and economic and social challenges, yet the spirit of determination and unity has always prevailed. He expressed confidence that the nation would make collaborative efforts with the spirit of independence for the benefit and welfare of the citizens.

Also acknowledging the key role of overseas Pakistanis in the progress and prosperity of Pakistan, Prime Minister Shehbaz said that the country was proud of their hard work and achievements and considered them as true Ambassadors of Pakistan to project its positive image to the world. He also expressed gratitude to the Pakistan armed forces, who safeguarded the country's borders and protected its sovereignty.

"While we celebrate our freedom, we also remember the brave people of the Indian Illegally Occupied Jammu & Kashmir (IIOJK) and Palestine who have been fighting for their right to self-determination for over seven decades and are facing the

worst form of state atrocities," he remarked and reiterated Pakistan's continuous moral, political and diplomatic support to the Kashmiri people in their struggle their universal right to self-determination.

The prime minister said that Pakistan would also continue its support for the oppressed Palestinians for their legitimate rights. "Pakistan stands at a crossroads today. While the common values, rich cultural heritage and diverse traditions continue to bind us together, our economy continues to face significant challenges in the shape of inflation, high-energy costs, unemployment and a growing debt burden."

He said that since assuming power after the February 2024 elections, the government's consistent focus was on creating the right conditions for economic growth and stability. He said that Pakistan's rich natural resources and a youthful workforce were true assets. He said the government was taking steps to attract investments to take full advantage of these resources to create job opportunities, speed the pace of industrialization, and bring economic prosperity.

Visa fee for 126 countries waived under new visa policy: Tarar

Saqib Mushtaq

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Information, Broadcasting, Culture and National Heritage Attaullah Tarar on Tuesday announced launch of a new visa policy under which visa fee for the nationals of 126 countries would be waived to boost tourism and attract foreign investment in the country.

Addressing a news conference, the minister said Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif would launch the new visa policy tonight which would allow 126 countries' residents to visit Pakistan in hassle-free manner. The new visa policy

which is aimed at simplifying the visa process would come into effect tonight, he added.

According to him, the nationals of these countries would get their visas within 10 minutes after filling an online form which had only 30 questions. The visa would be valid for 3 months and could be renewed in no time, he added. The minister said the residents of gulf countries would get visa on arrival, while pilgrims would also be facilitated in this regard to boost the religious tourism in the country.

The beauty and infrastructural development of Pakistan stunned the

foreign tourists who left the country with sweet memories, he said, urging them to visit Pakistan which has been opened its doors to the world including travelers, businessmen and investors. He said Pakistan had vast tourism potential and the government wanted the foreigners to witness the beauty of Pakistan which is endowed with stunning green valleys, famous deserts, beautiful oceans and mesmerizing landscapes. To a query, he said all provincial governments and the secretary interior were informed that dedicated desks would be established to welcome tourists at the airports.

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ATHENS: An aircraft busy to drop water after wildfire broke out at around 35 miles area of Greek.

Tanzania opposition figure Tundu Lissu arrested in crackdown

DAR ES SALAM (BBC): Tanzanian police have arrested prominent politician Tundu Lissu and four other opposition officials, the Chadema party has said. It said three politicians, including Mr Lissu, were detained in the south-western town of Mbeya, on the eve of their planned rally to mark the World Youth Day.

Chadema's chairman and the head of its youth wing were arrested, the party said. The reported arrests come a year after President Samia Hassan lifted a ban on opposition gatherings and promised to restore competitive politics. The police banned the Chadema rally saying it was intended to cause violence. They cited the party's rallying call for people to come together like the "youth in Kenya" - apparently referring to the weeks of deadly anti-government demonstrations in the neighbouring East African country.

Chadema told the BBC that it did not know where its three detained leaders were being held. Party chairman Freeman Mbowe demanded in a post on X "the immediate, unconditional release of our leaders, members, and supporters arrested across

the country". Then the party said that Mr Mbowe had himself been arrested. Police detained him after he arrived in Mbeya to bail out Mr Lissu and the two officials arrested alongside him. Mr Mbowe was arrested at Mbeya's airport along with Chadema's youth wing chairperson, John Pambalu. The police have not officially spoken about the arrests. The BBC has contacted them for comment.

Chadema spokesman John Mrema said groups of youths travelling in hired buses were arrested and forced back to their respective regions under armed escort. About 10,000 young people were set to meet in Mbeya to celebrate youth day, with the slogan, "Take charge of your future", according to the party's youth wing. But police said in a statement that no such meetings would be allowed in the city or elsewhere in the country. Chadema officials shared pictures of a large group of about 100 party members who they said had been detained in Iringa, a town close to Mbeya. They were later released and escorted back to where they had come from. Mr Lissu, who survived an assassi-

nation attempt in 2017 after being shot 16 times, returned to Tanzania last year after two years in exile in Belgium. He returned after President Samia lifted a ban on political rallies imposed by former President John Magufuli in 2016.

The ban had prohibited political parties from holding rallies and even engaging in internal political activities. Ms Samia, who came to power in 2021 following Mr Magufuli's sudden death, was praised for moving away from many of her predecessor's policies. But in the wake of the arrests, some opposition politicians have criticised her, saying she is not ready for political reconciliation. "We cannot allow this Magufuli style to continue in our country," Chadema's deputy secretary general for the Tanzania mainland, Benson Kigaila, was quoted as saying by the AFP news agency. "We want to know the whereabouts of our party leaders who were arrested by the police." The party had learned that some officials had been beaten in detention, Mr Kigaila alleged. Tanzania is due to hold presidential and parliamentary polls late next year.

US says Sudan peace talks to proceed, while UN warns of 'breaking point'

GENEVA: Talks to end Sudan's 15-month war between the Sudanese Armed Forces (SAF) and the paramilitary Rapid Support Forces (RSF) will move forward in Geneva this week, United States Special Envoy Tom Perriello has said, as the United Nations warns of a "cataclysmic breaking point" in Sudan.

The US last month invited Sudan's warring sides to hold ceasefire talks in Switzerland, more than a year after fighting broke out between the army and the RSF. While the RSF has agreed to US-mediated talks, Sudan's army leader General Abdel Fattah al-Burhan has said the military will not join talks. "We will not retreat, we will not surrender and we will not negotiate," al-Burhan told troops at the time. Al Jazeera's Hiba Morgan, reporting from Khartoum, said the talks will start on Wednesday regardless of whether the Sudanese army attends or not. "[The US special envoy] made it very clear this would be a launch

of the process ... not the start of ceasefire talks itself. He said there were several other countries and bodies that are involved in the process of trying to bring together the Sudanese army and the RSF in talks in Geneva to halt the fighting," Morgan said. "The Sudanese army has made it clear that there are certain conditions that need to be met and the Sudanese government has also made that clear. They say that they want a guarantee that the Jeddah agreement which was signed between the Sudanese army and the RSF in Jeddah last year will be implemented by the RSF.

"They say they want their representation in Geneva to be as a government and not as the Sudanese army and that seems to be a way of the government asking for legitimacy." International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) President Mirjana Spoljaric Egger said she hoped this week's scheduled talks would result in solid humanitarian steps and remove obstacles

blocking a ceasefire. She described the situation in Sudan as a "humanitarian disaster". "We are not part of these talks, but I do hope that they will find agreements that will allow us to increase humanitarian assistance, that will allow us to have more access to affected populations, especially in the north of Darfur the situation is extremely concerning," she told a press conference at the ICRC headquarters in Geneva. Speaking at an event marking the 75th anniversary of the Geneva Conventions, she called for "very concrete humanitarian steps that will help build the trust, and will help remove some of the immediate obstacles for a ceasefire agreement". Meanwhile, the UN migration agency warned that Sudan is at a catastrophic "breaking point", with tens of thousands of preventable deaths looming due to multiple crises. The International Organization for Migration (IOM) said famine and floods were adding to a catalogue of challenges facing millions

of people in the war-torn country, amid the world's largest displacement crisis.

"Make no mistake: these conditions will persist and worsen if the conflict and restrictions on humanitarian access continue," Othman Belbeisi, IOM's Middle East and North Africa director, said in a statement. "Without an immediate, massive, and coordinated global response, we risk witnessing tens of thousands of preventable deaths in the coming months. We are at breaking point - a catastrophic, cataclysmic breaking point." War has raged since April 2023 between the Sudanese army under Abdel Fattah al-Burhan and the RSF, led by his former deputy Mohamed Hamdan "Hemedti" Dagalo. The conflict has left tens of thousands dead, according to the UN. The IOM said new figures showed more than 10.7 million people are internally displaced within Sudan, with many uprooted several times over. Meanwhile 2.3 million have fled across the borders into neighbouring countries. — Aljazeera

Israel, civilian deaths and the question of proportionality

GAZA: Israel justified the killing of more than 100 Palestinians sheltering at a school in Gaza City by claiming the attack was targeted at 20 Hamas and Palestinian Islamic Jihad fighters. Last month, the killing of at least 90 Palestinians in al-Mawasi was also justified by the Israelis, who said that the attack targeted two Hamas commanders, including Mohammed Deif, the long-time leader of the Qassam Brigades.

Zooming out, since the beginning of its war, Israel has killed almost 40,000 Palestinians in Gaza, wounding tens of thousands more. While occasionally disputing the death toll, Israel has made it clear that it views its destruction of Gaza, and the civilians killed, as being warranted in return for the destruction of Hamas, following the group's attack on Israel, which killed an estimated 1,139 people. Leaving aside whether these

Palestinian fighters were present at the sites Israel attacks (and Hamas denies that it operates from civilian facilities, and that Deif is even dead), the mass killings raise the question of proportionality, and how many civilians Israel is prepared to kill in order to assassinate one Hamas figure.

There is no formula for proportionality under international humanitarian law (IHL). The International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), however, says that under the principle of proportionality, an attack that may cause incidental loss of civilian life, injury or damage to civilian objects that is "excessive in relation to the concrete and direct military advantage anticipated, is prohibited". Israel's military strategically uses disproportionate violence, analysts told Al Jazeera. "Israel's military has failed both to secure the release of the hostages and to deal a 'death blow' to Hamas," Tariq Kenney-

Shawa, a policy fellow at Al-Shabaka, a Palestinian policy network, said. "Massive attacks ... give the Israeli government and military something to point to as a 'win' if they result in the death of Hamas leaders and large numbers of civilians because it fits into Israel's wider strategy of deterrence through unparalleled destruction."

In Israel's 2006 war with Hezbollah in Lebanon, the Israeli military deployed a strategy of disproportionate retaliation by targeting neighbourhoods and destroying civilian infrastructure as a means of putting pressure on their enemies. This strategy came to be called the "Dahiye doctrine". But can it work? "All natives will resist colonists as long as they have the slightest hope of ridding themselves of the colonisers," Hani Awad, a researcher at the Arab Center for Research and Policy Studies, told Al Jazeera. That steadfastness means the

Israeli military believes it is "necessary to respond to any act of resistance with formidable, deadly, and devastating power until the natives lose hope and accept the settler colonial claims and will."

Since the war on Gaza began, the Israeli military has flattened homes, schools, universities, hospitals and cultural landmarks in what has been termed "genocide" and "domicide". More than 55 percent of buildings were destroyed by Israel between October 7 and May 31, according to a United Nations report. Israel's military claims the destruction since has been necessary to target Hamas figures in Gaza. "Regardless of Israel's claims about Hamas leaders being present in targeted areas, it is unacceptable to kill civilians, target ambulances, and target civil defence personnel," Ihab Maharmeh, a researcher at the Arab Center for Research and Policy Studies in Doha, told Al Jazeera. — Aljazeera

Colombian villagers release 60 soldiers

BOGOTÁ (AP): Colombia's defense ministry said 66 soldiers who had been "kidnapped" by villagers in the south of the country were released unharmed and will continue to carry out operations against rebel groups in the province of Guaviare.

Colombia's army has long struggled to defeat rebel groups in the Guaviare area, which has been heavily affected by deforestation and cocaine trafficking. The rebels sometimes exert control over remote settlements in the area. In a message posted on the social platform X, the defense ministry said the soldiers had been held since Friday by large numbers of villagers who were following orders from a local rebel group, known as the Jorge Suarez Briceño front.

Colombia's defense minister had threatened to break off a ceasefire with the Briceño front if the soldiers were not released. The province's governor, Yeison Roja, told Colombia's Caracol TV network that while some of the villagers who detained the soldiers could have been influenced by the rebel group, others were attempting to protest the army's presence because they don't want more fighting in the area.

Colombia is currently holding peace negotiations with several armed groups that refused to join a 2016 peace deal between the government and the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia, in which more than 14,000 fighters laid down their arms. The Briceño Front, is part of the FARC-EMC, a group of around 4,400 fighters that split recently, with around 40% of its fighters continuing negotiations with the government, while the rest walked away from peace talks and are now fighting the army in rural parts of Colombia.

In a statement published, Colombia's army said the soldiers who had been detained were headed to two villages where business owners had complained they were being extorted by the Briceño front.

Kenya cult leader Paul on trial for manslaughter

NAIROBI: The leader of a Kenyan starvation sect has gone on trial for manslaughter over the deaths of more than 400 of his followers in one of the world's worst cult-related tragedies. Paul Mackenzie, head of the Good News International Church, is currently facing charges of murder, child torture and "terrorism" after last April's discovery of hundreds of bodies of his followers who had starved to death on his instructions.

In January, Mackenzie pleaded not guilty to multiple counts of manslaughter. But prosecutors have said the cases will be charged under a Kenyan law dealing with suicide pacts. The self-proclaimed pastor appeared in a magistrate's court in the port city of Mombasa along with more than 90 other suspects, prosecutors and court officials said. Reporting from Mombasa, Al Jazeera's Stefanie Dekker said Mackenzie looked frail and thinner than usual in court, but was still a man "portraying that he was in charge to his followers". "He [Mackenzie] is at the helm of all of these charges in a case that has also raised questions on accountability on self-appointing pastors and healing men in a country that is deeply religious," Dekker said. Prosecutor Alexander Jami Yamina told the AFP news agency that "there has never been a manslaughter case like this in Kenya" and that he believed it would prove to be "very unique". With the hearing scheduled to run for four days until Thursday, at least 420 witnesses have been prepared by the prosecutors. Some of the witnesses will also present testimonies in camera. The suspects, 55 men and 40 women, went on trial last month on charges of "terrorism" over the massacre in Shakahola, and also face separate cases of murder, child torture and cruelty relating to the deaths, which prosecutors say occurred in 2020-2023. — Aljazeera

Is US preparing for Israel-Iran war?

NEW YORK: The United States has deployed a naval strike group to the Eastern Mediterranean amidst increased tensions following Israel's killing of Hezbollah commander Fuad Shukur in Beirut and the assassination of Hamas political leader Ismail Haniyeh in Tehran.

The killings took place within hours of each other on July 30 and 31, with Haniyeh's death also blamed on Israel, although it has not officially claimed responsibility. The deployment follows a call between US Secretary of Defense Lloyd Austin and Israeli Minister of Defense Yoav Gallant in anticipation of an Iranian counterstrike. In a statement released by the Pentagon afterwards, Austin "reiterated the United States' commitment to take every possible step to defend Israel and noted the strengthening of US military force posture and capabilities throughout the Middle East in light of escalating regional tensions".

Observers are concerned that any retaliation to the two assassinations, from either Iran or its ally Hezbollah, could spark a wider regional war and potentially draw in the US in support of its ally Israel.

The deployment of the strike force comes at a time when critics of the US administration are calling upon it to use its influence to impose a ceasefire, the US news channel CNBC reported. US President Joe Biden has also criticised the conduct of the war on

Gaza, characterising Israel's operations in the enclave as "over the top" in February, and repeatedly saying that "too many" civilians had been killed. However, that has not led to any forceful attempts to get Israel to stop its assault on Gaza, such as a ban on arms sales, or other sanctions. Many countries, including Saudi Arabia, Turkey, Jordan and a number of Western states, have urged their citizens to evacuate Lebanon, fearing that the country could be heavily attacked by Israel if the latter is hit by direct strikes. Simultaneously, a number of airlines have suspended flights to Israel, Jordan and Lebanon. According to Gordon Gray, a professor and former US ambassador, "the announcement of the deployment of the carrier strike group is intended to deter Iran rather than to escalate the situation".

Biden ordered a similar deployment to the eastern Mediterranean in October of last year, when one of the largest aircraft carriers in the world, the USS Gerald R Ford, steamed to the region, where it was joined by vessels and spy planes from the United Kingdom.

At the time, US officials framed the deployment as a bid to deter Hezbollah and Iran from "taking advantage" of Israel's war on Gaza, then in its early stages. Israel has now killed almost 40,000 Palestinians in the war.

Omar Rahman, a fellow at the Middle East

Council on Global Affairs, said that he believes the "US is clearly signaling to Iran that [it] will be part of any fight ahead, likely to deter Iran from a significant retaliation against Israel". The strike group, led by the aircraft carrier USS Abraham Lincoln and its squadron of F-35C fighter jets, was already heading towards the region, where it was scheduled to replace the USS Theodore Roosevelt aircraft carrier. Austin has now ordered it to increase its speed. Additionally, the USS Georgia, a nuclear-powered submarine carrying guided missiles that was already present within the Mediterranean, has been deployed to the area. HA Hellyer of the Royal United Service Institute (RUSI) believes that the show of force is intended to limit the chances of escalation, without the US having to confront the behaviour of its ally Israel and its war on Gaza. However, restricting the odds of any escalation while also taking a hands-off approach to the actions of the Israeli government is likely to be challenging, not least when dealing with a state that has proven itself "incredibly reckless", Hellyer noted.

"A lack of accountability ensures impunity, and [Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin] Netanyahu has broken pretty much every rhetorical red line that Biden has set down, and will keep doing so, until he thinks there will be real consequences," he said. — Aljazeera

Officials at UNSC push for a permanent seat for Africa

NEW YORK: The United Nations chief has called for the UN Security Council (UNSC) to reform its outdated structure and assign Africa a permanent seat at the table, stressing that the continent is underrepresented.

Addressing the council during a high-level debate, Secretary-General Antonio Guterres said the composition of the UNSC has failed to keep pace with a changing world. "We cannot accept that the world's pre-eminent peace and security body lacks a permanent voice for a continent of over a billion people ... nor can we accept that Africa's views are undervalued on questions of peace and security, both on the continent and around the world," he said.

The 15-member UNSC consists of five permanent members with veto power - China, France, Russia, the United States and the United Kingdom - while the remaining 10 nonpermanent seats are allocated regionally. The 10 seats include three seats

for African states; two each for Asia-Pacific, Latin America and the Caribbean, and Western Europe and other states; and one for Eastern Europe. In May, the UNSC called for the role of African countries to be strengthened in addressing global security and development challenges. UN General Assembly President Dennis Francis said at the debate that the UN must reflect the world as it is.

"The fact that Africa continues to be manifestly underrepresented on the Security Council is simply wrong, offending as it does both the principles of equity and inclusion," he said. "It runs counter to the principle of sovereign equality of states and calls for the urgency to reform this institution to reflect the world as it is now, rather than what it was nearly 80 years ago." Speaking at the UNSC, Sierra Leone President Julius Maada Bio said Africa demands two permanent seats in the UNSC and two additional nonpermanent seats. "The African Union

will choose the African permanent members. Africa wants the veto abolished. However, if UN member states wish to retain the veto, it must be extended to all new permanent members as a matter of justice," he said. Carlos Lopes, a professor at the University of Cape Town who previously served as a high representative for the African Union (AU), told Al Jazeera that African attempts to have better representation aren't new, but current geopolitics have made this current moment "quite favourable". "[There's] a competition for Africa's votes; Africa's bloc has become much more difficult to actually align with one position or another," Lopes said. "The Africans have been able to navigate these geopolitical tensions very well. We have seen it with the membership of the G20 being expanded to include the African Union. Now it's another attempt by the Africans to push the envelope and try to do it at the Security Council." — Aljazeera

'Not prisoners but students'

BUENOS AIRES: It's nearly lunchtime, and a buzz of activity fills the wide central corridor of Centro Universitario San Martin (CUSAM), a university in the state of Buenos Aires. People stream in and out of classrooms. Some students rush off to grab a quick meal. Others gather in the director's office to debate the state of Argentina's education system.

Were it not for the tall fences topped with razor wire or the multiple security checkpoints, CUSAM might seem like any other higher-education facility. But CUSAM is situated in the San Martin prison, a maximum-security facility located about an hour from Argentina's capital city. There, imprisoned men and women - as well as prison staff - attend in-person classes affiliated with the National University of San Martin, a public university based nearby. They can even earn degrees in sociology and social work.


"This is like any other university. It just happens to be in a prison," said Matias Bruno, a professor from the National University who works at CUSAM. But as Argentina's prison population continues to grow and investment in public education wavers, experts like Bruno fear fewer and fewer resources may be devoted to

education behind bars. That fear has mushroomed in the months since libertarian President Javier Milei took office in December. As part of his cost-cutting agenda, Milei has floated the idea of privatising the country's prison system and building new facilities to house up to 6,000 people at a time. Still, one man's success story has come to symbolise the potential of prison education programmes like CUSAM. After all, he did not just benefit from the programme. He helped to found it. Waldemar Cubilla was only 14 years old when he was first arrested. Born in La Carcova, an informal settlement built next to the largest open-air dump in the country, Cubilla grew up during one of Argentina's worst economic crises.


It was the late 1990s, and the country had plunged into a deep economic depression. Over the span of four years, its economy contracted by nearly 28 percent. Factories shuttered. Bank accounts were frozen. And some residents took to looting grocery stores to satisfy their hunger. Like many people in La Carcova, Cubilla survived by digging through the rubbish to find food or items to sell. But he eventually turned to theft, along with other teens in the neighbourhood. All the

while, though, Cubilla continued attending school, finding solace in learning. "He always loved books," said Gisela Perez, his partner and the mother of his two children. She and Cubilla met as teenagers. "He knew that studying was the way to change his life, but things were tough, and he got involved in crime. In his backpack, he used to carry a gun and a book." By the time he was 23, Cubilla had been arrested twice on armed robbery charges. The first time, when he was 14 years old, cost him a month in a juvenile facility. The second time, however, he spent five years in a maximum-security prison.

"The prison had a small room where people who wanted to study law could access the reading material and then sit the exams," Cubilla explained. As he finished his high school diploma behind bars, he convinced the prison director to allow him to study law too. "There, we no teachers, but it was something," Cubilla said. "I was finishing school in the morning, and in the afternoon, I was allowed to access the law books." He smiled at the memory. "It was a good deal because I was learning and could spend time outside of my cell. — Aljazeera



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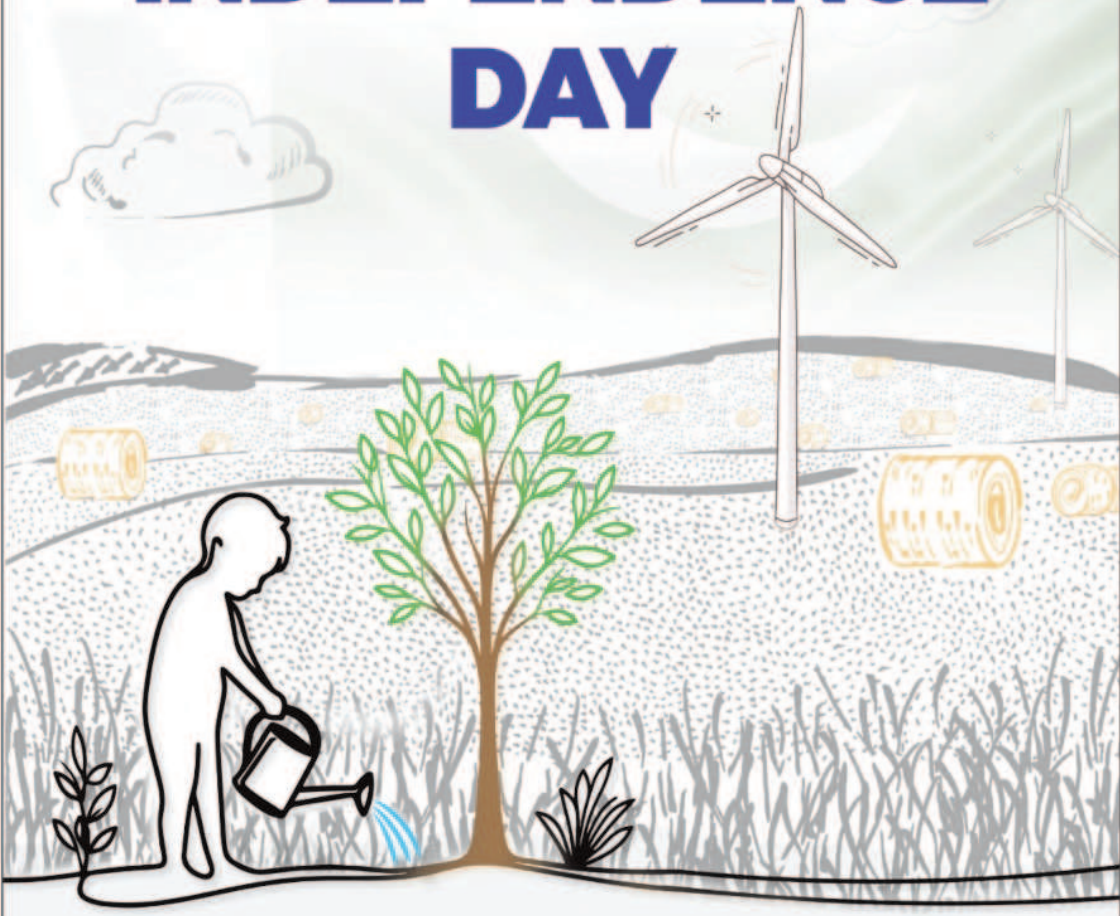
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Protesters continue to wield power in Bangladesh

THE protesters in Bangladesh, who had started out last month opposing the reservations for the descendants of Bangladesh's 1971 freedom fighters, and which ended in then Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina leaving the country, continue to assert the power of protesters.

An interim government has been formed under Nobel laureate and micro-finance miracle worker Muhammad Yunus, the protesters have forced the chief justice of Bangladesh to resign, and so did the vice-chancellor of Dhaka University where the protests originated. Even the central bank governor has resigned but he was asked by the finance minister in the interim government to continue as a headless central bank would have sent out a negative message to the markets.

The protesters had issued threats to the chief justice saying he must step down or face trouble. Head of the interim government Muhammad Yunus had asked the protesters to maintain peace, but it looks like the protesters are not willing to trust the interim government to remove all the people in top positions appointed by Sheikh Hasina Wajed and her Awami League government. The thinking and demand of the protesters is that those in top positions are Awami League loyalists and they cannot be expected to be impartial and fair.

Protesters forcing decisions through threats can only spell anarchy. The system could break down under the popular pressure. This is no doubt an extreme reaction by the protesters against the extreme partisan politics that the Awami League government had played for 15 years. Had there been a change of government, the other side would have brought in its own people to be in top positions and some balance of power would have been maintained.

But the long and uninterrupted stay in power by the Awami League had only made things worse, it seems. Whatever be the justification of the protesters in forcing the Awami League appointees out of office, it can be a mode of governance. The opposition parties in Bangladesh are using the people's anger to get back at the ruling Awami League, but a way has to be found when the interim government should be implementing the changes in the system, and the interim government would have to show that it is fair and impartial.

Given the present mood of the people, they would want early elections, and the interim government has to prepare for it. And most likely, the verdict will go against the Awami League and Sheikh Hasina Wajed, and in favour of the Bangladesh National Party (BNP) and its leader, former Prime Minister Khaleda Zia.

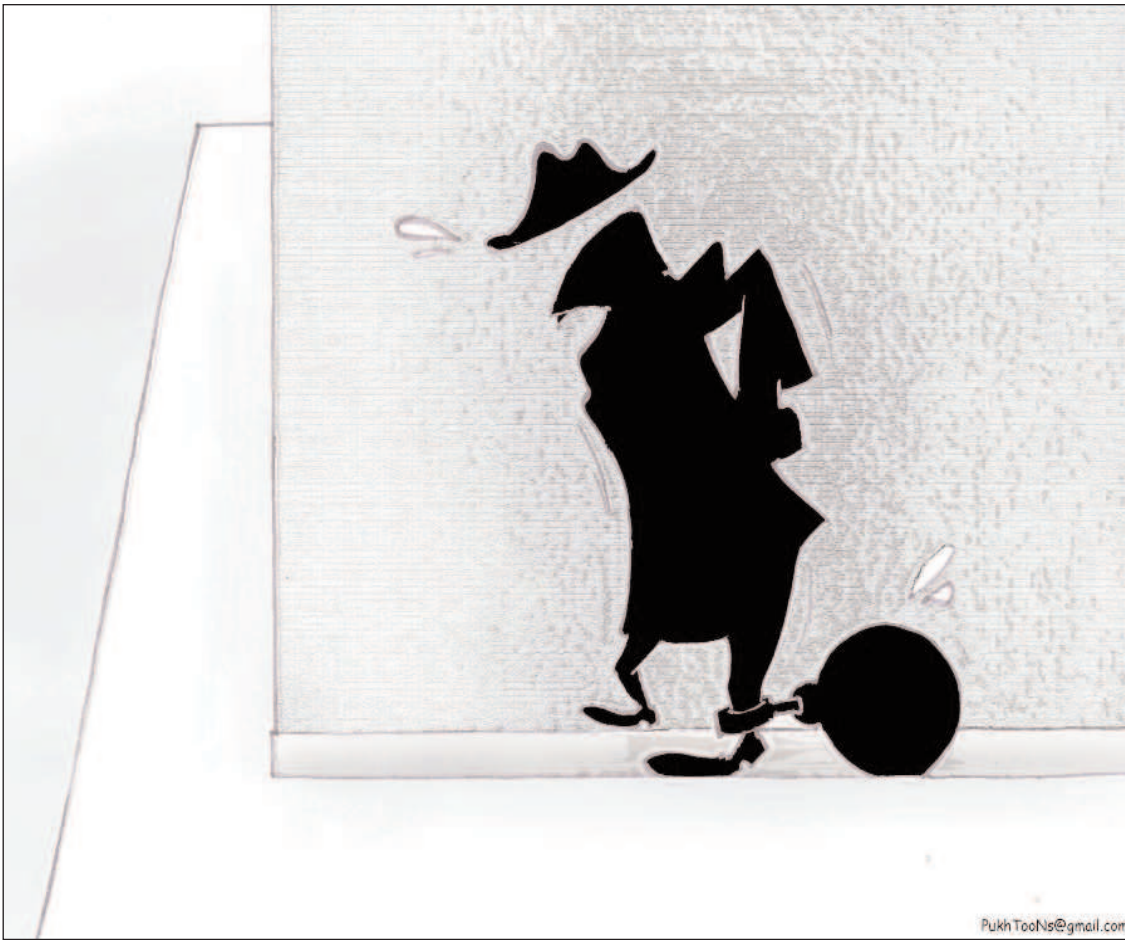
But the BNP and Khaleda should not follow in the footsteps of Sheikh Hasina Wajed. They should not demonise and marginalise the Awami League. The elections have to be fair, and the opposition parties have to find a place in the political system. What is needed on the part of Khaleda Zia is a sense of moderation, and even generosity towards Awami League and its leader.

It is indeed the case that Sheikh Hasina had thoughtlessly imprisoned Khaleda Zia and undermined the credibility of the election process. Sheikh Hasina wielded total power, and it has proved the undoing not only of her own government but also the Bangladesh political process. The people were left helpless, and they were forced to come out on to the streets.

Khaleda Zia has the responsibility of restoring the credibility of Bangladesh democracy. Terming Sheikh Hasina Wajed as the enemy and treating her as criminal will pacify the angry protesters and satisfy the BNP and Khaleda Zia. But it will keep Bangladesh as a single party-dominant democracy. It will keep Bangladesh's democracy fragile and unstable.

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Islamic Perspectives on the Two-Nation Theory and Pakistan's Independence

Muhammad Mohsin Iqbal

THE Two-Nation Theory, a pivotal concept in the creation of Pakistan, asserts that Muslims and Hindus in the Indian Sub-Continent were two distinct nations, each with its own customs, religion, and tradition. This theory was the ideological foundation for the demand for a separate Muslim state, leading to the independence of Pakistan in August 14, 1947. To understand the roots of the Two-Nation Theory, one must explore its grounding in Islamic teachings, the Quran, Hadith, and the broader Islamic perspective. This theory was not just a political stance; it was deeply intertwined with the religious identity and consciousness of Muslims in the Sub-Continent.

The Quran, as the divine scripture of Islam, emphasizes the concept of the Ummah—a global community of Muslims bound by their faith. The Quranic vision of the Ummah transcends geographical, ethnic, and linguistic boundaries, uniting believers in a collective identity centered around their submission to Allah. The Quran declares in Surah Al-Hujurat, "The believers are but a single brotherhood, so make peace between your brothers, and be mindful of Allah, so you may be shown mercy" (49:10). This verse highlights the importance of unity among Muslims, which was a significant factor in the demand for a separate Muslim homeland. The idea was that the Muslim Ummah needed to be safeguarded from external influences that could compromise their religious practices and way of life, which was increasingly becoming difficult under the British Raj and the Hindu majority.

Moreover, the Quran recognizes the diversity of nations and tribes, as stated in Surah Al-Hujurat, "O mankind! We created you from a single pair of a male and a female and made you into nations and tribes, that you may know one another. Verily the most honored of

you in the sight of Allah is the most righteous of you" (49:13). This verse indicates that while diversity in human societies is acknowledged, the measure of true superiority is piety and righteousness, not ethnic or national identity. However, in the context of the Indian Sub-Continent, where Muslims found themselves as a minority, the Two-Nation Theory was a means to preserve their religious and cultural identity, as their way of life was inextricably linked to their faith.

The Hadith, the sayings and actions of Prophet Muhammad (Peace Be Upon Him), further reinforce the importance of Muslim unity and the distinctiveness of the Muslim community. The Prophet (PBUH) emphasized the bond of faith over all other affiliations. In one Hadith, he said, "The believers, in their mutual love, mercy, and compassion, are like a single body: if one part of it feels pain, the rest of the body responds with sleeplessness and fever" (Sahih Bukhari).

This metaphor of the Muslim community as a single body underscores the need for solidarity among Muslims. The growing influence of Hindu nationalism and the threat of cultural assimilation into a Hindu-dominated society was seen as a danger to the Muslim Ummah in the Sub-Continent. The leaders of the Muslim League, particularly Quaid e Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah, invoked this sense of unity and distinctiveness to justify the demand for a separate Muslim state.

From an Islamic perspective, the Two-Nation Theory was also rooted in the historical experiences of Muslims in the Sub-Continent. The advent of Islam in the region, starting with the Arab traders and later the conquests by Muslim rulers, established a rich Islamic heritage that flourished over centuries. The Mughal Empire, for example, was

not just a political entity but also a beacon of Islamic culture, learning, and architecture. The decline of Muslim power following the British colonization led to a period of introspection and reevaluation among the Muslim intelligentsia. The rise of Hindu revivalist movements, such as the Arya Samaj, which sought to reassert Hindu identity, further alienated Muslims, who began to feel marginalized in the socio-political landscape of India.

The struggle for Pakistan was thus seen as a continuation of the historical quest for Islamic sovereignty in the region. Islamic scholars and leaders argued that the establishment of Pakistan was necessary to ensure that Muslims could live according to the principles of Islam, free from the fear of being overwhelmed by a Hindu majority. The All-India Muslim League, under the leadership of Quaid e Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah, articulated the demand for Pakistan by asserting that Muslims were not merely a minority but a nation with their own distinct identity. Quaid e Azam's famous speech at Lahore in 1940, where he declared that "Muslims are a nation by any definition and they have every right to demand a separate homeland," encapsulates this sentiment.

The demand for Pakistan was not just a political strategy; it was also a response to the Islamic duty of establishing a society based on justice, equality, and the rule of law, as prescribed by the Quran and Sunnah. Islamic political thought, as articulated by scholars like Allama Iqbal, who is considered the spiritual father of Pakistan, emphasized the need for a polity where Muslims could freely practice their religion and develop according to their own values and traditions. Iqbal's vision of a separate Muslim state was deeply influenced by his understanding of Islamic philosophy and his desire to see

Muslims regain their lost glory in the modern world.

The creation of Pakistan, therefore, was seen as the fulfillment of an Islamic ideal—the establishment of a state where Muslims could implement the Shariah and live in accordance with the teachings of the Quran and Hadith. The early years of Pakistan were marked by efforts to align the country's legal and educational systems with Islamic principles. The Objectives Resolution of 1949, which laid the foundation for Pakistan's constitution, declared that sovereignty belongs to Allah alone and that the state would strive to enable Muslims to live according to the teachings of Islam.

However, the journey towards realizing the Islamic vision of Pakistan has been complex and fraught with challenges. The interplay between religious ideals and practical governance has led to debates about the role of Islam in the state's affairs. Despite these challenges, the Two-Nation Theory remains a central tenet of Pakistan's national identity. It continues to be invoked in political and religious discourse, especially in times of crisis or when the identity of the state is perceived to be under threat.

In conclusion, the Two-Nation Theory, as it was articulated in the movement for Pakistan's independence, was deeply rooted in Islamic teachings, the Quran, and Hadith.

It was not merely a political argument but a religious imperative for many Muslims who believed that their faith, culture, and way of life were inextricably linked to the creation of a separate homeland. The establishment of Pakistan was seen as a means to safeguard the Muslim Ummah in the Sub-Continent and to create a society based on Islamic principles. While the journey of Pakistan has been complex, the foundational role of the Two-Nation Theory in the country's creation remains a significant aspect of its national consciousness.

Why is Washington refusing to let the UN do its job?

Daoud Kuttab

The lack of progress in indirect negotiations between Israel and Hamas over Gaza has led three key parties, the US, Qatar, and Egypt, to issue a strongly worded joint statement, saying: "It is time to bring immediate relief both to the long-suffering people of Gaza as well as the long-suffering hostages and their families. The time has come to conclude the ceasefire and hostages and detainees release deal."

The statement on Aug. 8 notwithstanding, Israel carried out yet another mass killing of Palestinians in Gaza two days later, this time during morning prayers at a school where families were sheltering. More than 100 Palestinians died. Israeli military claimed it killed 19 fighters from Hamas and Islamic Jihad in the attack, but the two groups strongly denied this.

A CNN reporter, Allegra Goodwin, tweeted on X that Benjamin Netanyahu, he may be refusing to let the UN do its job.

US President Joe Biden issued a framework for a ceasefire agreement two months ago, yet nothing has happened. A superpower cannot supply weapons to a country accused of war crimes and genocide, while doing little to stop the carnage. If the US is serious, there is a clear and effective route. The Biden administration must simply put to the Security Council a resolution on behalf of its partners in the negotiations, Egypt and Qatar. Naturally, it would make no sense that the US would veto its own submitted resolution. If the Israelis or the Hamas militants refuse to adhere to the resolution, it should be given added political "bite" and put to another vote. The UN charter calls for sanctions and other forms of punishment for those who refuse to adhere to binding resolutions of the world body. While the above seems obvious, and the US has already done that on behalf of several countries, including Ukraine, most observers doubt that it will happen.

obtained evidence that a "US-made GBU-39 small diameter bomb" was used in the attack on Al-Tabin school in northern Gaza.

What is mind-boggling is that after 10 months of brutal killings and claims of a possible genocide against Palestinians, the US is refusing to allow the world's top security and peace forum to do its job. Washington has effectively disabled the UN Security Council by repeatedly using its power of veto — an inexplicable move for a superpower that insists it wants an immediate end to the conflict.

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While the above seems obvious, and the US has already done that on behalf of several countries, including Ukraine, most observers doubt that it will happen. Biden need not worry about any negative electoral effects of such a decision because he is no longer running for a second term. He may want his vice president and presumptive Democratic nominee to win in November, but that is unlikely to affect his own policy decisions.

A more worrying reason for the Biden administration continuing to disable the Security Council might be found closer to home. Despite Biden's public disagreement with Israeli Prime Minister Netanyahu, he may be refusing to let the UN do its job.

ing to pressure the Israeli leader because of his own beliefs. Biden has said publicly as late as July this year that he considers himself a Zionist, adding that he has done "more for the Palestinian community than anybody." On the latter claim, few would agree, but the admission of being a Zionist shows that the US leader is not an honest broker. Claims of disagreement with his Israeli counterpart must be seen in the bigger picture of a brotherly disagreement, not a major policy dispute. Along with US Secretary of State Antony Blinken, Biden has scuttled US law and allowed offensive weapons to be used against Palestinian civilians without a sincere effort to stop arming Israel.

If the White House is unwilling to use the world's peace and security forum, other nations have an obligation under international law to do so. Preventing further killing and war crimes requires an immediate meeting of the UN Security Council. Washington should be put on the spot to show whether it backs its own proposal for a ceasefire and prisoner exchange, or whether it values its alliance with a rogue state more than world peace.

Olympic spirit can help foster Sino-US ties

Wang Huiyao

THE just-concluded Paris Olympic Games was a milestone for China, as the country not only won 40 gold medals, tying with the United States for top gold medal winner, but also celebrated its best ever performance at an Olympics overseas, showcasing its emergence as a global sports powerhouse.

This achievement marks a historical journey for China, from the moment in 1908 when it first expressed the wish to host its own Olympics to successfully hosting the Beijing 2008 Summer Olympics and then the Beijing 2022 Winter Olympics, becoming the world's first "dual Olympic city". The breakthroughs China has achieved in different sports disciplines, including in tennis and cycling, mirrors the country's rise in economic, technological and social domains, which the West has often viewed as a challenge to the existing world order, particularly affecting China-US relations. However, emphasizing that its rise is peaceful in nature, China has remained committed to developing a fairer and just world order.

Sino-US relations are the important critical bilateral relationship in the world today, influ-

encing global politics, economics and security. In the 45 years since the establishment of diplomatic relations between China and the United States, the two countries' relationship has weathered many storms only to move forward.

On Jan 1 this year, Chinese and US presidents exchanged congratulatory messages on the 45th anniversary of the establishment of China-US diplomatic ties. In the first seven months of this year, the total Sino-US trade volume reached 2.72 trillion yuan, marking a 4.1 percent increase. Among this, exports to the United States amounted to 2.04 trillion yuan, up by 5.1 percent.

As two of the five permanent members of the UN Security Council and nuclear powers, China and the US play key roles in maintaining global stability and promoting development. Yet bilateral relations face a series of challenges, including trade tensions, technological rivalry and geopolitical disputes. The trade war initiated by the US in 2018 and characterized by punitive tariffs on Chinese goods not only harmed the two economies but also sent ripples across the global trade system. And the high-tech competition between the two sides further intensified with the

US imposing sanctions on Chinese technology firms in a bid to curb China's advancement in high-tech. Besides, geopolitical issues including the South China Sea disputes — and the Taiwan question, which is China's internal matter — made the already fragile Sino-US ties more complex.

Amid all this, the Olympic Games offered valuable lessons for both China and the US. Sino-US ties should mirror the ethos of the Olympics, which embodies the spirit of friendly competition. The competition between the countries, no matter in which field, should be like any competition in the Olympics — to seek mutual accomplishment under the motto "Higher, Faster, Stronger — Together". This spirit of striving for excellence while supporting each other in the process is crucial for advancing human progress. The addition of "Together" to the Olympic motto in 2021 emphasizes the importance of solidarity, cooperation and friendship among countries, a vision that resonates with China's proposal to build a community with a shared future for mankind.

China has long championed the principle of "Friendship First,

Competition Second", a guiding tenet that has roots in the "ping-pong diplomacy" of 1971 which helped thaw Sino-US relations, as the two sides' table tennis teams engaged in friendly matches that eventually led to a historic breakthrough in bilateral ties. After the breakthrough, the two countries began breaking down the barriers that had kept them apart for more than two decades. The ping-pong diplomacy shows that even the most entrenched divisions can be narrowed through sportsmanship and mutual respect.

The concept of cooperation is deeply embedded in the Olympic spirit. The Olympic rings, representing the five continents, symbolize unity and the collective effort of all countries to work together to achieve common goals. The Olympics also underscore the importance of fair competition, a principle that Chinese delegation has highlighted by advocating for "gold medals of morality, style and integrity", which reflects China's commitment to fair play and commitment to maintain global peace and uphold global values, drawing international praise.

Olympic competitions are not zero-sum games; they are mutually beneficial and fulfilling events.

During the ancient Olympic Games, people from different city-states in ancient Greece achieved mutual benefit and shared prosperity through friendly competition, cultural exchanges and trade. From its inception, the Olympic Games have promoted the values of mutual benefit and shared prosperity, extending beyond the realm of sports into the broader context of international relations. Graham Allison, who made the concept of "Thucydides trap" popular, recently suggested that positive competition, as represented by the Olympic spirit, should dominate international relations. Indeed, the Olympic spirit, with its emphasis on friendly competition, cooperation and fairness, offers a powerful metaphor for the future of China-US relations.

As the two sides navigate the complexities of their relationship, they would do better to draw inspiration from the Olympic ideals. By embracing this spirit, they can move beyond the challenges that have strained their relations in recent years and work together to build a future where competition is constructive and cooperation valued, and the two sides contribute to the progress of humanity.



SCCI and district admin decide to set up a Business Facilitation Desk

F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: Sarhad Chamber of Commerce and Industry and district administration Peshawar have decided to set up a Business Facilitation Desk and joint liaison committee to resolve traders' issues and ease doing business.

The decision came at a meeting during a visit of Deputy Commissioner Peshawar Capt (retired) Sarmand Saleem Ikram at the chamber house.

The meeting was chaired by SCCI president Fuad Ishaq.

FPCCI former president Ghazanfar Bilour, SCCI SVP Sanaullah Khan, VP Ejaz Khan Afridi, the chamber former presidents Haji Muhammad Afzal, Zulfiqar Ali Khan, former VPs Haji Abdul Jalil Jan, Haris Mufti, Javed Akhtar, Fresh Fruit Markets President Haji Alaf Jan, Peshawar Mirch Mandi President Pir Dilawar Khan, IAP President Ayub Zakori, Farhad Asfandiyar Khan, the chamber executive committee members Qaratul Ain, Muhammad Ismail Safi and Ihsanullah, Nadeem Rauf, President of Fast Moving Consumers Goods Association Atif Shahzad, Khalid Farooq, presidents of different bazaars and business organizations of Peshawar, leaders and industrialists were

present in large numbers in the meeting.

Fuad Ishaq in his opening remarks apprised meeting in detail about the problems of business community and industrialists and gave suggestions for their solution.

The SCCI chief said that the business community is being faced with difficulties in the prevailing circumstances. He said doing business was not only made difficult but impossible owing to government unfriendly policies and actions.

Fuad Ishaq asked for practical steps to facilitate the business community. He also demanded to stop harassing and imposing fines on small traders and businessmen.

The chamber president said that the business community should be consulted before implementation of policies and laws so that all measures do not lead to conflict between the business community and institutions.

Ishaq emphasized on taking corrective measures to improve cleanliness and the traffic system across the city. He expressed concern over the imposition of unnecessary taxes and fines on the installation of signboards and billboards on the shops by the district administration and demanded their immediate

elimination.

The president informed the meeting about the concerns of the business community on the deteriorating law and order situation in the province, especially the provincial capital Peshawar.

He said on this occasion that the SCCI is running an organized campaign against the contracts of IPPs while due to the gas crisis, businesses and industries have been severely affected and people and community had been forced to switch to alternative resources.

Former presidents Haji Muhammad Afzal, Zulfiqar Ali Khan, President of Industrialist Association Ayub Khan Zakori, President of FPCCI Ghazanfar Bilour, Atif Shahzad and others also spoke on this occasion and highlighted the problems faced by the business community and industrialists and also presented several suggestions for their solution.

Later, Deputy Commissioner Peshawar Sarmad Saleem Akram answered the various questions of the participants of the meeting and assured to solve the problems immediately.

The DC gave a proposal of setting up of a Business Facilitation Desk between the SCCI and the district administration, which was fully endorsed by the participants.

Sarmand Akram said

that peace is very important for the promotion of business, trade and economic activities.

He said that the use of modern technology is indispensable for solving the problems of the business community.

The DC said that ease of doing business is one of the topmost priority of the government.

He assured that joint measures will be taken to provide facilities to the business community and solve the problems immediately.

Sarmand Saleem said that a facilitation desk will be established soon to solve the problems of licenses, transfer, registry of properties and other problems including cleanliness and traffic across the city.

He furthermore said that the business community has a key role in the development of the national and provincial economy. He assured that such measures will not be taken which will affect business, trade and economic activities.

On this occasion, he also informed about the campaign of distribution of saplings by the district administration to make Peshawar lush and green and asked the SCCI to take advantage of this scheme to plant more saplings and in this regard 2 senior members of the chamber were also nominated.



PESHAWAR: President SCCI Fuad Ishaq presiding over a meeting at Chamber's House. DC Peshawar Capt (retired) Sarmand Saleem Ikram and vice president Ejaz Khan Afridi also present on occasion.

SBP supporting banking sector

F.P. Report

KARACHI: In line with the Government's efforts to give impetus to the SME sector, the State Bank of Pakistan (SBP) has recently conveyed its strong resolve to support the banking sector by issuing a risk coverage scheme, which will help the banking sector to double its SME exposure to Rs. 1.1 trillion during the next five years.

These strategic measures being implemented with the support of Pakistan Banks' Association (PBA) dedicated taskforces, in collaboration with the Ministry of Finance, are expected to provide significant support to driving robust economic recovery and sustainable development in the country.

Shipping activity at Port Qasim

KARACHI (APP): MSC Nicole carrying containers, berthed at Qasim International Container Terminal on Monday.

Meanwhile another ship 'LT Beryl' scheduled to load Bitumen also arrived at Outer Anchorage of Port Qasim during the same day.

A total of 10 ships were engaged at PQA berths during the last 24 hours, out of them five ships MSC Nicole, Maersk Durban, Rhine, Golden Denise and Bateleur left the port on Tuesday morning, while two more ships, Lusail and Chang Han Run Hai are expected to sail on today afternoon.

Cargo throughput during last 24 hours stood at 152,980 comprising 88,435 tonnes imports cargo and 64,545 tonnes export cargo including containerized cargo carried in 3,999 Containers (679 TEUs imports and 3,320 TEUs export) was handled at the Port during last 24 hours.

There are four ships at outer anchorage of the port, out of them two ships, Lt Beryl and Kashi & another ship Marathopolis scheduled to load/offload Bitumen, Palm oil and Containers are expected to take berths at MW-1, LCT and QICT on Tuesday, while four more ships, Conti Courage, Aerotropolis, MSC Positano and APL Southampton carrying containers are due to arrive at Port Qasim today (Wednesday).

Stock markets diverge, as oil prices cool

LONDON (AFP/APP): Europe's main stock markets fell Tuesday after gains in Asia, as attention turned to economic data and its impact on the outlook for interest rates.

The week's main focus is expected to be US inflation figures Wednesday, while attention is also on the oil market on concerns about a broader war in the Middle East.

Crude futures dropped Tuesday but remained well up over the week owing also to an escalation of tensions in major oil producer Russia.

The White House warned that a "significant set of attacks" by Iran and its proxies against Israel was possible as soon as this week after top leaders of Hezbollah and Hamas were assassinated in late July.

PSX witnesses bearish trend, loses 102.87 points

ISLAMABAD (APP): The 100-index of the Pakistan Stock Exchange (PSX) witnessed bearish trend on Tuesday, losing 102.87 points, a negative change of 0.13 percent, closing at 77,877.42 points against 77,890.29 points on the last working day.

A total of 604,144,238 shares were traded during the day as compared to 415,170,050 shares the previous day, whereas the price of shares stood at Rs 19.981 billion against Rs 22.242 billion on the last trading day.

As many as 443 companies transacted their shares in the stock market, 183 of them recorded gains and 211 sustained losses, whereas the share price of 49 companies remained unchanged.

The three top trading companies were Kohinoor Spinning with 131,917,010 shares at Rs 8.32 per share, Yousuf Weaving with 89,200,219 shares at Rs5.63 1.17 per share and Hascol Petrol with 47,802,550 shares at Rs 6.79 per share.

Mari Petroleum Company Limited witnessed a maximum increase of Rs

129.00 per share price, closing at Rs 3,395.80, whereas the runner-up was Hoechst Pakistan Limited with a Rs 91.27 rise in its per share price to Rs 1,599.99.

Unilever Pakistan Limited witnessed a maximum decrease of Rs 322.99 per share closing at Rs 17,620.00 followed by Khyber Textile Mills Limited with a Rs 54.4500 decline to close at Rs 569.19.

Rupee sheds 06 paise against dollar

Pakistani rupee on Tuesday depreciated by 06 paise against the US dollar in the interbank trading and closed at Rs 278.70 against the previous day's closing of Rs 278.64.

However, according to the Forex Association of Pakistan (FAP), the buying and selling rates of the dollar in the open market stood at Rs 279.40 and Rs 280.50 respectively.

The price of Euro increased by 21 paise to close at Rs 304.52 against the last day's closing of Rs 304.31, according to the State Bank of Pakistan (SBP).

The Japanese yen went down by 01 paise and

closed at Rs1.88, whereas an increase of Rs 1.05 was witnessed in the exchange rate of the British Pound, which traded at Rs356.83 as compared to the last day's closing of Rs 355.78.

The exchange rate of the Emirates Dirham increased by 01 paise to close at Rs 75.87 and the Saudi Riyal remained unchanged and stood at Rs74.23.

Gold rates increases Rs1,200 to Rs257,700 per tola

The per tola price of 24 karat gold on Tuesday recorded an increase of Rs1,200 and was traded at Rs 257,700 in the local market.

The price of 10 grams of 24 karat also increased by Rs1,029 and sold at Rs.220,936, whereas the price of 22 karat gold was registered at Rs202,525, All Sindh Sarafa Jewellers Association reported.

The price of per tola and ten gram silver remained unchanged at Rs.2,850 and Rs.2,443.41 respectively.

Prices of gold in the international market increased by \$19 to \$2,458 as compared to the previous day rates of \$2,439, the Association reported.

Circular debt termed a silent killer of economy

KARACHI (PPI): The circular debt, a persistent and growing challenge for Pakistan's economy, has reached alarming levels over the past decade, according to Syed Mazhar Ali Nasir, former Senior Vice President of the Federation of Pakistan Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FPCCI) and Central Leader of the UBG.

In a statement, he said that this self-perpetuating debt trap had far-reaching consequences, stifling economic growth and undermining the country's financial stability.

The circular debt had ballooned from approximately Rs. 400 billion in 2012 to a staggering Rs. 2.5 trillion in 2024, representing a six-fold increase, he added.

The exponential growth

of circular debt is primarily attributed to massive payments made to Independent Power Producers (IPPs) on account of power captive charges," said Mazhar. "This has resulted in severe consequences, including strained liquidity in the power sector, inhibited investment in generation and transmission infrastructure, increased burden on consumers through higher tariffs, enormous strain on the national exchequer, negative impact on the country's credit rating, and investor confidence," he added.

The primary driver of circular debt was the payment of capacity charges to IPPs, totaling over Rs. 1.3 trillion. These payments, made regardless of power generation, created an

unsustainable financial burden on the power sector, Mazhar further added.

To break the cycle of circular debt and revive Pakistan's economy, Mazhar urged the government to Implement structural reforms in the power sector, renegotiate Independent Power Producer (IPP) agreements to reduce capacity charges, increase power generation efficiency, enhance consumer tariff rationalization.

The circular debt has become a major obstacle to Pakistan's economic progress," hesaid. It is imperative that the government takes immediate and decisive action to address this issue, ensuring a sustainable and prosperous future for the nation to save the nation of this injustice, Mazher added.

Tokyo's key Nikkei index closes 3.45% higher

TOKYO (AFP/APP): Tokyo's key Nikkei index jumped 3.45 percent on Tuesday with sentiment boosted by a rally in US tech shares as traders returned from a long weekend break.

The Nikkei 225 added 1,207.51 points to end the session at 36,232.51, while the broader Topix index climbed 2.83 percent, or 70.25 points, to 2,553.55.

The tech-rich Nasdaq Composite Index gained 0.21 on Wall Street on Monday, with chip giant Nvidia among the main winners.

The Nikkei plunged more than 12 percent last Monday on worries about the US economy and a stronger yen, before soaring more than 10 percent the following day.

The index ended a volatile week down 2.5 percent, and 17 percent off its peak in early July.

"Rallies of US high-tech stocks during the holidays cheered investors," IwaiCosmo Securities said.

"The market was also supported by good earnings results from major Japanese companies."

But Mizuho Securities earlier cautioned that "a wait-and-see attitude is likely to prevail as US inflation and other indicators are expected to be released later in the week."

Japan's wholesale prices continue to rise in July

Japan's corporate goods price index, which measures costs of goods traded between businesses, went up 3 percent year on year in July, the Bank of Japan (BOJ) said Tuesday.

According to preliminary figures from the BOJ, the producer price index stood at 123.1 against the 2020 base of 100, up 0.3 percent from that of June.

The pace of growth on year marked the sixth straight month of expansion, the central bank data showed.

Local analysts noted that the monthly increase was mostly due to the Japanese government's halted subsidi-

dies for electricity and city gas, while the weakening yen exerted upward pressure on import prices.

In breakdown, electricity, city gas, and water prices rose by 6.7 percent year on year and 4.4 percent month on month.

The biggest contributor to the increases in corporate prices for the month was the price of nonferrous metals, which rose 18.5 percent from a year earlier, while that for plastic products, other industrial products, and products from the agriculture, forestry, and fisheries sector also saw increases.

The only category where prices fell year on year was wood and wood products.

Meanwhile, the yen-based import and export price indices both increased by 10.8 percent year on year for the month.

The corporate goods price index, one of the country's important inflation gauges, measures prices that companies charge each other for goods and services.

Ceremony to mark Independence Day celebrations held at SCCI

SIALKOT (APP): A ceremony to mark the Independence Day celebrations was held at Sialkot Chamber of Commerce and Industry (SCCI) Auditorium on Tuesday.

The ceremony was attended by Group Leader Sialkot Business Community Riaz-ud-Din Sheikh (Sitara-e-Imtiaz), Senior Vice President (SVP) SCCI Wahub Jahangir, Vice

President (VP) SCCI Amer Majeed Sheikh, Chairman SCCI Departmental Committee on Post Office and Telecommunications Saleem Akhtar Bhutta, Senior Vice President (SVP) Women Chamber of Commerce and Industry Sialkot (WCCIS) Gulzaib Waqas Awan, Chairperson Legal Aid Committee and Legal Advisor WCCIS Lubna Tabassum, SCCI

Executive Committee Members and Sialkot Business Community.

Addressing the ceremony, SCCI President Abdul Ghafoor Malik highlighted the Pakistan Movement and paid tribute to the national heroes for their struggle for a separate homeland envisioned by the Poet of the East Allama Muhammad Iqbal.

He said that August 14 was the day when the

nation remembers those who sacrificed their lives for getting independence from Indian yoke.

He said that independent Pakistan was a blessing from Allah and now it was a responsibility of people of the country to make it stronger and prosperous.

Earlier, SCCI President Abdul Ghafoor Malik cut a cake and hoisted the national flag at SCCI Auditorium.

Hamdard marked Pakistan's 77th Independence Day

F.P. Report

KARACHI: Pakistan's leading herbal healthcare and food and beverages manufacturer Hamdard Pakistan marked Pakistan's 77th Independence Day with a lot of patriotic fervour and enthusiasm yesterday in a 14th August Independence Day celebratory cake-cutting event held at Hamdard's Corporate Head Office.

Ms. Sadia Rashid, Chief Mutawallia attended the event as chief guest. She was accompanied by Managing Director & CEO Fatema Munir Ahmed, Chief Operating Officer - Faisal Nadeem, along with directors and staff members.

The event commenced with the National Anthem, after which Ms. Sadia Rashid cut the cake.

Speaking on the occasion, Ms. Sadia Rashid said that August 14th is a historic milestone. Pakistan is



a blessing of Allah, and it is our collective duty to protect it. As a nation, we should observe Independence Day as a day of com-

mitment and gratitude, remembering the countless sacrifices made by our elders to ensure the blessings of independence. We must

renew our commitment to building and developing our country and nation, and we will strive with all our efforts to achieve this goal.

China market carries Vast Potential for Pakistani meat exports

ISLAMABAD (INP): China market carries Vast Potential for Pakistani meat exports particularly beef, says a report carried by Gwadar Pro on Tuesday.

Pakistan's meat and meat products exports have reached new heights, surpassing \$512 million in the fiscal year 2024—a remarkable 20 percent increase from the previous year.

This growth, driven by a 24 percent rise in export volume to 123,515 tonnes, was fueled by strong international demand and competitive pricing, aided by the depreciation of the Pakistani rupee.

While the UAE and Saudi Arabia remain the top destinations for Pakistani meat exports, Kuwait and Qatar are emerging as promising markets.

China, with its 1.41 bil-

lion consumers and growing demand for imported food products, is also poised to become a key market for Pakistani meat exports.

China's meat consumption is forecasted to reach 102.53 million tons by 2033, with annual growth of 0.3 percent, according to projections from the 2024 China Agriculture Outlook Conference in Beijing.

Within this, beef and lamb consumption is expected to reach 11.1 million and 6.46 million tonnes, respectively, with average annual growth rates of 1.2 percent and 1.4 percent.

Bilal Tata, CEO of Tata Best Foods—a pioneering Pakistani company licensed by the Chinese Customs Administration to export cooked beef to China since

last year—emphasized the significance of the Chinese market for Pakistan's meat exports.

"China's role in driving Pakistan's meat export growth cannot be underestimated," said Mr. Tata.

"Pakistan is well-positioned to offer high-quality chilled meat from young cattle at competitive prices, helping us maintain a significant share in chilled meat markets, including China."

However, Tata acknowledged the challenges Pakistan faces in expanding its market share in China due to current restrictions limiting exports to cooked meat products.

To address this, Tata Best Foods and other Pakistani meat exporters are actively seeking to attract Chinese brands to

set up production facilities in Pakistan.

"Instead of merely exporting generic boiled beef, we are exploring collaborations with Chinese brands to bring their expertise to Pakistan, enabling us to meet the diverse needs of the Chinese market," he added.

Tata also emphasized the need for approval to export raw meat products from disease-free zones in Pakistan to China.

"We are working tirelessly to meet the necessary health and safety standards to ensure that Pakistani raw meat products can be exported to China," he said.

Recognizing the potential of the meat export sector, the Punjab government is playing a pivotal role in certifying livestock farms as disease-free units.



In brief

Kaleem Shaheed Club wins Futsal Championship

FAISALABAD (APP): Kaleem Shaheed Club has won the Jashan-e-Azadi Sports Mela Futsal Championship with 5-3 goals. District Sports Department in collaboration with District Futsal Association organized Inter Club Futsal Championship in Shehbaz Sharif Indoor Sports Complex. Kaleem Shaheed Colony in connection with Jashan-e-Azadi Sports Mela and four clubs participated in it. However, Kaleem Shaheed Club defeated Lasal Club with 5-3 goals in the final match. District Sports Officer Sajida Latif witnessed the final event as chief guest and distributed cash prizes and trophies among the position holder teams. The winner team was awarded Rs.5000 along with trophy while the runner up was given Rs.3000. President District Futsal Association Hafiz Azhar Mehmood, Vice President Atif Naumi Malik, General Secretary Qamar Ikram, Dr Kashif Ali, Farooq Anwar Bajwa, Aneel Jamshaid, Dr Shehzad Mustafa and others were also present on the occasion.

Sri Lanka appoint Ian Bell

C O L O M B O (Agencies): Sri Lanka have appointed former England batter Ian Bell as their batting coach for the ongoing England tour. Bell represented England from 2004-2015, playing 118 Tests and scoring 7727 runs in the format at an average of 42.69. He scored 22 hundreds and 46 fifties in his Test career. Ashley De Silva, CEO of Sri Lanka Cricket, believed Bell could bring key insights into the local conditions. "We appointed Ian to bring in a person with local knowledge to help the players with key insights on the conditions there. Ian has a lot of experience playing in England, and we believe his inputs will help our team in this crucial tour." Bell will start working with the team on 16 August until the three-Test series concludes. The series will be a part of the ICC World Test Championship where Sri Lanka are currently placed 4th in the standings while England are 6th. Sri Lanka Squad: Dhananjaya de Silva (c), Dimuth Karunaratne, Nishan Madushka, Pathum Nissanka, Kusal Mendis (vc), Angelo Mathews, Dinesh Chandimal, Kamindu Mendis, Sadeera Samarawickrama, Asitha Fernando, Vishwa Fernando, Kasun Rajitha, Lahiru Kumara, Nisala Tharaka, Prabath Jayasuriya, Ramesh Mendis, Jeffrey Vandersay, Milan Rathnayake.

Messi won't play for Miami

MIAMI (AFP/APP): Argentine star Lionel Messi was ruled out on Monday by Inter Miami coach Gerardo Martino for the defending champions' Leagues Cup knockout match on Tuesday at reigning MLS champion Columbus. Messi remains sidelined after suffering a right ankle injury a month ago in Argentina's 1-0 victory over Colombia in the Copa America final. Messi has not yet trained with his Miami teammates since escaping a walking boot. The Leagues Cup is a tournament with MLS and Liga MX Mexican clubs, with Messi helping lift Miami to last year's inaugural title. The showdown match between the Columbus Crew, last year's MLS kings, and Miami, this year's top overall team in the league table, is among eight matches that will decide quarter-final pairings on Friday and Saturday.

Masood, Gillespie want to make Pakistan a great team

ISLAMABAD (APP): Pakistan Test cricket team captain Shan Masood and red ball head coach Jason Gillespie want to make the Pakistan a strong team, as to achieve great accomplishments.

Masood said, "We are both on the same page and it's great that Pakistan has two very world class coaches in red ball and white ball and we are very excited to have both of them bring their vast experience to us."

He said it is a pleasure for us that we will play nine Test matches in four to five months of this season. This has not happened before. We have played maximum five to six Test matches in a year.

Seven Tests are at home grounds. Of course, some of our players, including fast bowlers, are players in all three formats whose workload we have to handle, like we did in Australia where Shaheen Afridi played two Tests and in the third he was given rest, he said talking to PCB podcast. Masood said the good thing is that we have six

fast bowlers in our current squad and they are capable of being included in the six-on-six playing XI.

He said in the presence of Misbah-ul-Haq and Younis Khan, we were also world number one in Test cricket. Major teams have been playing ten to fifteen Tests a year. We are playing the home series again from 2019 but have played different teams at different times of the year. Test cricket is a challenging format which requires adapting to many things, he said.

He said the goal is to make Pakistan a Test team that can compete with big teams like Australia England and play the final of the World Test Championship. Masood gave the example of England and said, "I like England's approach of identifying a style of play and then finding domestic cricketers, he said. I would like to have the same approach in Pakistan so that at the top level we can support those players who suit the requirements of the

team and then give them maximum opportunities to play, he said.

Masood said the dressing room culture is very important as everything starts from there. It is the primary responsibility of the captain to maintain a positive and cheerful atmosphere in the dressing room. Major sporting teams have a strong dressing room culture.

Meanwhile Jason Gillespie highlighted the importance of Pakistan Shaheens and said that the Pakistan Cricket Board has tried to reduce the gap between domestic and international cricket with the four-day matches of Pakistan Shaheens. Pakistan Shaheens have an important role in Pakistan cricket as by playing against different teams in different conditions, there is an opportunity for these players to come to international cricket, he said.

Gillespie said that there are challenges of having too much cricket. We have to strike a balance between representing Pakistan and other competi-

tions. Players also gain experience by going out and playing and this is also their source of income.

Cricket is busy not only in Pakistan but all over the world. We can take care of players in all three formats as much as possible but our priority is to represent Pakistan and we cannot compromise on that, he said. There may be some decisions that are not popular but it is very important to understand that such decisions will be in the best interest of Pakistan Cricket and players, he said.

Gillespie said he has been in regular contact with Masood. Both of us have been discussing in detail the strategy and philosophy of the Pakistan team. Shan has also spoken to the boys about the areas we need to focus and improve, he said.

"I and the selectors want consistency and continuity and when we create an environment where there is consistency and consistency on and off the field, the players will have the best chance of being supported and looked



after. They will also be able to show their best performance, he said. About social media, he said, it we live in a digital world. Players will definitely see a lot of things that are upsetting but we have to face them as a mature person. We have to create an environment in the dressing room that is a safe place for the players and they know they are being supported in that, he said. Masood and Gillespie also invited Paris Olympics 2024 gold medalist Arshad Nadeem to visit the Pakistan team's dressing room. They said that they would be happy if Arshad comes and share his success story with them as to motivate the players.



ISLAMABAD: Mominul Haque flicks the ball away, Pakistan A vs Bangladesh A, 1st four-day game, 1st Test.

Athletics Federation to send Arshad, his family on Umrah

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Athletics Federation of Pakistan (AFP) has announced to send Paris Olympics 2024 gold medalist Arshad Nadeem and his family on Umrah.

In a significant development following Arshad's record-breaking performance in Paris Olympics, the Athletics Federation of Pakistan has made a grand announcement for athlete Arshad Nadeem, said a press release. Maj Gen (R) Muhammad Akram Sahi, Hilal-e-Imtiaz (Military), Sitara-e-Imtiaz (Military) Chairman SAAF, Vice President Asian Athletics has announced that Arshad, along with his wife, children, and parents, will be sent for Umrah after the conclusion of his engagements and celebration events.

Shaheens register commanding performance on day one

ISLAMABAD (APP): Pakistan Shaheens excelled with the ball on the opening day against Bangladesh 'A' in the first four-day match as the visitors were all out for 122 in 44.3 overs on a rain-hampered day one, here at the Islamabad Club.

In reply, Pakistan Shaheens' opening batters, Saim Ayub and Mohammad Huraira, scored two runs in two overs before the stumps were drawn six minutes earlier than the scheduled close of play due to bad light.

Earlier, the two teams had to wait for four hours

to get into action due to wet outfield. Mir Hamza drew first blood for Shaheens as he castled Zakir Hasan for a seven-ball duck.

Apart from Mahmudul Hasan Joy, who top-scored with a gritty 65 off 116 balls hitting nine fours, only Mominul Haque (11, 15b, 2x4s), Mushfiqur Rahim (14, 27b, 1x4, 1x6) and Rejaur Rehman Raja (10, 17b, 1x4) got into double figures.

Mahmudul and Mushfiqur were also involved in the most productive partnership for Bangladesh A which was a 38-run stand, which

was broken by Mohammad Ali.

The Shaheens pacers shared eight wickets among them with Naseem Shah, making his return to red-ball cricket after more than a year, taking 3-24 in 8.3 overs. Hamza bagged as many wickets giving away 33 runs in 11 overs.

Ali was the most economical bowler as he conceded only 14 runs in 11 overs, picking up the valuable wicket of Mushfiqur, including six maidens.

Umar Amin provided an important breakthrough for Shaheens as he dismissed the well-set Mahmudul. Leg-spinner Mohammad Rameez Jnr eked out two wickets for 41 runs in 11 overs.

Scores in brief: Pakistan Shaheens trail by 120 runs. Bangladesh 'A' 122 all out, 44.3 overs (Mahmudul Hasan Joy 65; Naseem Shah 3-24, Mir Hamza 3-33, Mohammad Rameez Jnr 2-41). Pakistan Shaheens 2-0, 2 overs (Saim Ayub 2 not out).

PU athletes win 9 medals in Asian rowing c'ship

LAHORE (APP): Punjab University (PU) players created history by winning 9 medals for the first time by showing excellent performance in the Asian Indoor Rowing Championship held in Penang, Malaysia.

PU students won 5 gold, 3 silver and 1 bronze medals. Nineteen countries including India, Saudi Arab, Iran, Iraq participated in the event.

The PU rowing team participated in the championship under the supervision of Director Sports Zubair Ahmad Butt and

coach Abdul Rehman. Abdul Rahman of PU Department of Economics clinched 2 gold medals and one silver medal. Zarak Khan from Hailey College won 2 gold medals. Gohar Ayub of Sports Sciences won 1 gold and 1 silver medal while Iqra from Sports Sciences won 1 silver and 1 bronze medal.

Moreover, Abdul Rehman and Zarak Khan were declared the best time performers in the championship. Two gold medals were won by the PU students in team event.

PU Vice Chancellor Prof Dr Khalid Mahmood congratulated the players for this wonderful and historical achievement. He said that the players of PU have made the country, the institution and the nation proud. He said that the day and night hard work of the Department of Sports, coaches and players paid off. He said that despite limited resources, PU provided Rs1.5 million to the players to participate in the event. Director Sports Mr Zubair Butt thanked the PU VC for encouraging sports.

Jashan Azadi Basketball C'ship finals on Wednesday

ISLAMABAD (APP): The finals of Jashan Azadi inter-provincial basketball championship will be played here at the Liaquat Gymnasium of the Pakistan Sports Complex on Wednesday.

The women's final will be played between Punjab and Islamabad-A while men's final will be contested between Punjab and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.

In the first Women semifinal, Punjab defeated Sindh 64-32. The half-time score was 40-13 in the favour of Punjab. For the winning side, Khadija Mushtaq scored 17 points and Aiman Mahmood scored 16 points, while Maryam scored 10 points and Aqsi scored 9 points

for Sindh.

In the second semifinal, Islamabad A defeated Islamabad-B by 36-24 after an interesting match. Maria scored 12 points and Amani scored 7 points from Islamabad-A, while Shanzyr scored 9 points and Shahbano scored five points from Islamabad-B.

In the men's first semifinal, Punjab beat Islamabad-A by 81-56. The score at half-time was 41-28 in favor of the winning team. Muhammad Taimur scored 22 points and Muhammad Saifullah scored 21 points for the winning team, while Ali Hamza Kazmi scored 23 points and Muhammad Usman scored 7 points for Islamabad-A.

The second semifinal was played between KPK and Islamabad-B which was won by KPK. The final score was 70-51. Top Scorer were Abdul Wahab 23, Bilal Khan 10 from KPK. While Haroon Rashid 15, Behram Raees 10 from losing side Islamabad-A.

Matches were supervised by Muhammad Prain Shahzad, Moazzam Naveed Rao, Muhammad Mudassar, Yasir Ghafoor, Umar Mehmood, Adeel S Raza, Gul Jamal, Naveed Ahmed Beeda and Saadat Jahangir. Brig Muhammad Iftikhar Mansoor, President Pakistan Basketball Federation and sizeable spectators also witnessed the matches.

Sports Icons vow to propel Pakistan to greater success



ISLAMABAD (APP): As the nation dons the green and white to celebrate its 77th Independence Day, Pakistan's sporting heroes have come forward with more than just messages of congratulation.

The legends, whose feats have raised the country's stature on the global stage, have expressed a shared pledge to take Pakistan to new heights in the world of sports. Across cricket pitches, hockey fields, squash courts, boxing rings and Olympic arenas, these icons have not only brought home medals and trophies but also inspired the generations to come.

Talking to APP, they have expressed a renewed commitment to steer the nation toward a brighter, more prosperous future in sports. They also pledged to uphold the legacy of Quaid-e-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah, the founder of Pakistan.

Former hockey great, Khawaja Junaid while congratulating the nation on the Independence Day underlined the need to focus on grassroots to revive the national game of hockey.

"Our future in hockey lies in our youth," said Junaid, who has recently been appointed as focal

person on Sports for Prime Minister's Youth Programme.

"We need to invest in our young players, giving them the training and resources they need to shine on the global stage. On this Independence Day, I pledge to work towards nurturing the next generation of hockey stars," added Khawaja, who also runs a hockey academy.

Pakistan's pro pugilist Muhammad Waseem said, "Wherever we go in the world, we recognize that there is no place like home (Pakistan). We should make our country a strong and powerful nation." He expressed his gratitude to the country, saying, "This country has given me everything; this is my identity."

President of Pakistan Taekwondo Federation Lt. Col. (R) Waseem Ahmed Janjua emphasized the importance of self-belief, hard work and dedication, saying, "We have to take our nation forward and feel the freedom that we enjoy in our country."

Former World Squash Champion Qamar Zaman said, "Pakistan has given us a lot. This is the time to work together to take our

beloved country forward."

He urged the need to celebrate Independence Day with a renewed resolve to make sacrifices for the country's safety, survival and security.

Recalling his accomplishment as a player he said, "Whatever I have achieved today is because of my country. This country has given me a lot. I got the opportunity to represent Pakistan at the international level with pride."

Former squash player Amir Atlas said, "Pakistan is our beloved country, and our forefathers sacrificed a lot to have a separate homeland. We should value our freedom."

He wished all Pakistanis a 'Happy Independence Day', saying, "Pakistan Zindabad! (Long Live Pakistan)."

Tennis ace Aqeel Khan expressed his love for the country, saying, "We have got our country after a lot of struggle and sacrifices."

"I wish all Pakistanis a very Happy Independence Day! Pakistan Blind Cricket Council (PBCC) Chairman Syed Sultan Shah said sports unite countries. There is no scarcity of talent in our country. We will have to identify this talent and polish it to earn laurels at the international level.

The words and commitments of these legends offer a powerful reminder of the nation's potential. Their voices, filled with pride and determination, inspire hope that the future of sports in Pakistan can indeed be brighter than its illustrious past.

Haaland and James nominated for PFA player of year awards

LONDON (Agencies): Manchester City's Erling Haaland is in contention to win the PFA player of the year award for a second successive year, while Chelsea's Lauren James could win a historic double.

Haaland has been named on the six-player shortlist for the men's category after scoring 27 goals last season to finish as the Premier League's top scorer.

James' selection in the women's category means she could become the first woman to win both the PFA young player of the year and PFA player of the year awards in the same year.

The 22-year-old was on Monday named on the young player of the year shortlist. Haaland is joined on the men's shortlist by team-mates Phil Foden and Rodri, while Chelsea striker Cole Palmer, Arsenal captain Martin Odegaard and Aston Villa forward Ollie Watkins are also included.

On the women's shortlist, James' Chelsea team-mates Niamh Charles and Erin Cuthbert feature, along with Manchester City trio Yui Hasegawa, Lauren



Hemp and Khadija Shaw. The award winners will be announced on Tuesday, 20 August.

Title holders have three players on the list, while Palmer's season recognised

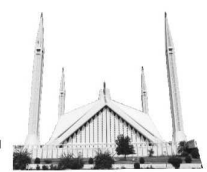
Haaland is one of three players from Premier League winners Manchester City on the six-person shortlist for the men's award. Foden, a two-time PFA young player of the year, enjoyed a superb season under Pep Guardiola, scoring 27 goals, and became the youngest player to win six Premier League titles.

Rodri, a European Championship winner with his country this summer, is included after consistently impressive displays in the heart of Manchester City's

midfield. Former Manchester City youngster Palmer is included after a superb debut season at Chelsea. The striker, who on Monday was also short-listed for the young player of the year award, had more goal involvements than any other player in the league with 22 goals and 11 assists.

Arsenal's Odegaard, who was also on last year's player of the year shortlist, is recognised after providing eight assists from midfield last season, as well as scoring eight goals. Watkins' excellent performances last season was recognised by his fellow players after he helped Aston Villa finish fourth in the Premier League. He scored 19 goals and provided 13 assists.

Chelsea and Man City

**In brief****Rubina vows to serve marginalized segments**

ISLAMABAD (PPI): A delegation of the National Lobbying Delegation for Minority Rights, led by Haroon Sarab Diyal, met with Senator Rubina Khalid, Chairperson of the Benazir Income Support Programme (BISP), at BISP Headquarters today. During the meeting, Senator Rubina Khalid reaffirmed BISP's commitment to serving marginalized segments of society, regardless of religious affiliation. She emphasized that there is no registration fee for BISP and that registration is an ongoing process, facilitated through BISP Dynamic Registry Centers. Senator Khalid informed the delegation that once a family is registered, the eligibility of the woman in need is assessed. Eligible beneficiaries will receive a confirmation message from 8171, the only official number of BISP. She cautioned against trusting any messages from other numbers, as they are fraudulent. The delegation requested that BISP coordinate with the minority communities in remote areas to ensure their enrollment in the program. Senator Rubina Khalid assured her full cooperation and directed BISP staff to take the necessary steps in this regard.

IRSA releases 405,100 cusecs water

ISLAMABAD (APP): Indus River System Authority (IRSA) on Tuesday released 405,100 cusecs water from various rim stations with inflow of 446,400 cusecs. According to the data released by IRSA, water level in River Indus at Tarbela Dam was 1546.00 feet and was 148.00 feet higher than its dead level of 1,398 feet. Water inflow and outflow in the dam was recorded as 283,600 cusecs and 254,600 cusecs respectively. The water level in River Jhelum at Mangla Dam was 1210.55 feet, which was 162.55 feet higher than its dead level of 1,050 feet. The inflow and outflow of water was recorded 22,300 cusecs and 10,000 cusecs respectively. The release of water at Kalabagh, Taunsa, Guddu and Sukkur was recorded as 305,400, 227,500, 398,300 and 350,500 cusecs respectively. Similarly, from River Kabul, a total of 64,200 cusecs of water released at Nowshera and 59,000 cusecs released from River Chenab at Marala.

Raisani emphasis to remember Quaid's vision

ISLAMABAD (APP): Pakistan People's Party (PPP) leader Nawabzada Jamal Khan Raisani Tuesday extended his greetings to the nation on the occasion of Independence Day and emphasized the need to remember the vision of Quaid-e-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah, which led to the creation of a free nation. "Today, we must honor the great sacrifices made by our elders for this homeland, and particularly embrace the message that Quaid-e-Azam gave about the youth," he said while talking to APP. He said that Quaid-e-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah regarded the youth as the architects of this nation, urging them to serve the country with dedication, hard work, and discipline. Nawabzada Jamal Khan Raisani, who lost his father and 300 comrades in a terrorist attack, stated, "I believe in the ideology of Shaheed Mohtarma Benazir Bhutto, that 'democracy is the best revenge.' We must strengthen democracy, justice and equality by following the principles of Quaid-e-Azam to fulfill the dreams of our martyrs."

Interior Minister calls on British Counterpart

ISLAMABAD (APP): Minister for Interior Mohsin Naqvi called on British Home Secretary Yvette Cooper during his visit to the United Kingdom. The Minister congratulated Yvette Cooper on assuming the office of British Home Secretary and expressed good wishes for her.

During the meeting, matters of mutual interest, including legal assistance in criminal cases, effective border management, and measures to curb illegal immigration were discussed. The training of Pakistani police officers in the UK was also discussed.

The Minister welcomed the British cooperation in this regard and expressed his pleasure that Pakistani police officers would receive regular training in the UK. He emphasized the need to enhance mutual cooperation to tackle illegal immigration, adding that developed and developing countries should take joint actions in this regard.

Mohsin Naqvi said that Pakistan is desirous of enhancing the mutual cooperation in the fields of border management, legal assistance in criminal cases, and curbing illegal immigration. He con-

demned those who incite people towards violence and said that there would be no leniency for those who incite violence through social media.

British Home Secretary Yvette Cooper said that the UK attaches great importance to its relations with Pakistan and would continue cooperation in various fields.

Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi invited his British counterpart to visit Pakistan. Pakistani High Commissioner to the UK, Dr. Muhammad Faisal, and senior officials of the British Home Office were also present on the occasion.

Azam Nazeer Tarar felicitates nation on 'I-Day'

ISLAMABAD (APP): Federal Minister for Law and Justice Azam Nazeer Tarar has extended warm congratulations to the nation and overseas Pakistanis on the occasion of Pakistan's 77th Independence Day and said that the Day reminds us of our relentless determination of our forefathers, led by Quaid-e-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah, who established a separate homeland where every citizen regardless of faith, ethnicity, or background

could live with dignity and freedom.

In a message on Tuesday, the federal minister said our national flag, with green representing the Muslim majority and white symbolizing the protection of religious minorities, embodies our unwavering commitment to unity in diversity. As we commemorate this momentous day, we also reaffirm our steadfast support for the people of Indian Illegally Occupied Jammu and Kashmir in

their rightful struggle for self-determination.

We also strongly condemn Israel's aggression in Gaza and term it a barbaric act and grave violation of human rights. Pakistan stands in unyielding solidarity with the people of Palestine, he said.

On this significant day, the minister said let us renew our collective resolve to build a society where rule of law and justice, equality and human dignity are paramount.

QAU Alumni to plant ten thousand trees on 77 I-Day

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Quaid-i-Azam University (QAU) Alumni Association Founders Group successfully organized a Quaidians Meet-up and Mango Party, bringing together old students of QAU from across Pakistan.

The event, which celebrated the enduring bond among alumni, was a vibrant gathering marked by camaraderie and shared memories.

During the meet-up, it was announced that like the previous years, in celebration of the 77th Independence Day of Pakistan, the QAU alumni, in collaboration with its partners, will plant approximately ten thousand trees

across the country.

This initiative is part of the alumni's commitment to environmental sustainability and the well-being of future generations. Additionally, the association plans to establish three fruit orchards within the premises of QAU, further contributing to the university's green environment.

The gathering also focused on the collective responsibility of supporting young Quaidians in their professional journeys. It was vowed that the QAU alumni will intensify its efforts in providing continuous mentorship, internships, and job opportunities to young

graduates, ensuring they have the resources and guidance needed to succeed in their careers.

The participants expressed their deep appreciation for the QAU Alumni Association's sustained contributions over the past two decades.

The association's commitment to various welfare projects has had a lasting impact on the QAU community, reflecting its dedication to the university's legacy and its alumni.

The event concluded on a note of unity and determination, with alumni reaffirming their commitment to the betterment of QAU and the success of its students.

Police finalizes security plan for Independence Day

RAWALPINDI (APP): In connection with Independence Day celebrations, the Rawalpindi Police have finalized comprehensive security plan to ensure public safety and smooth traffic flow across the city and the surrounding areas.

Over 5,300 police officers have been deployed on duty, with more than 750 traffic officers and traffic wardens have also been deployed to maintain flow of traffic. According to the police spokesman, in Malka-e-Kohsar

Murree, additional 950 officers and traffic wardens will perform duty.

To enhance safety in the popular tourist destination, 14 special pickets have been established. To tackle issues like one-wheeling, 57 special pickets and squads have been formed citywide. Moreover, mobile patrolling, elite commandos, and special Dolphin Force units for extra vigilance have also been deployed additionally.

Senior police officers will remain active in the

field to supervise while special police personnel's have been assigned at parks and public spaces to maintain law & order.

The Rawalpindi Police have issued a strict warning against one-wheeling, aerial firing, fireworks, and public disturbances, emphasizing that immediate legal action will be taken against any violations. As the city gears up for Independence Day festivities, the Rawalpindi Police urge everyone to celebrate responsibly and adhere to the law.



ISLAMABAD: Secretary Information Ms. Ambreen Jan visits the displayed artworks during the Painting Competition and Exhibition organized by Directorate of Electronic Media and Publications to commemorate 78th Independence Day of Pakistan. —APP Photo

Shaza, Korean Ambassador discuss IT Park project

ISLAMABAD (APP): Minister of State for IT and Telecommunication Shaza Fatima Kawaka and Ambassador of Korea to Pakistan on Tuesday discussed matters of mutual interest, digitalization and Islamabad IT Park project.

During a meeting with the Ambassador, the minister said Pakistan greatly values its ties with Republic of Korea.

She said both Pakistan and Korea can benefit from each other's experiences in the field of IT and Telecommunication.

She said on the directives of the Prime Minister of Pakistan, steps are being taken for digitalization in the country. Governance, economy and services are being digitized, she added.

Shaza Fatima also emphasised upon exchanging tech experts between the two countries and starting joint training program in the field of IT & Telecom. The minister offered thanks to the government of Korea for cooperation in construction of IT Park in Islamabad. "Islamabad IT Park is very important project and government wants its completion as soon as possible", she added.

The Ambassador said that Korea wanted to enhance cooperation with Pakistan in the field of IT and Telecommunication. Secretary IT Aisha Humera Chaudhary was also present in the meeting.

ANF seizes 40 kg drugs

RAWALPINDI (APP): Anti-Narcotics Force (ANF) while conducting two operations managed to recover 40 kg drugs and arrested three accused, said an ANF Headquarters spokesman here on Tuesday.

He informed that 1.4 kg ice was recovered from a passenger going to Doha from Peshawar Airport.

In second operation, 39 kg hashish was recovered from a vehicle intercepted near Shikarpur Road Sukkur and two suspects were arrested. Cases under the Anti-Narcotics Act have been registered against the arrested accused and further investigations are under process.

Gilani extends Independence Day greetings to nation

ISLAMABAD (APP): Chairman Senate Syed Yousaf Raza Gilani extended heartfelt greetings to all Pakistanis, both within the country and abroad, on the occasion of Independence Day.

In his message, Chairman Gilani said, "This day serves as a reminder of the sacrifices made by our forefathers and as an occasion to renew our commitment to the ideals of unity, faith, and discipline. As we stand at a crossroads in our history, facing numerous challenges, it is our collective resolve that will lead us forward."

He emphasized the importance of poverty alleviation, inclusive growth, and socio-economic equality, stressing the need to ensure that the benefits of economic growth are distributed equitably so that every Pakistani has the opportunity to live a life of dignity and respect.

The Chairman called for the formulation of sound policies that promote inclusivity, foster sustainable development, and ensure that no segment of society is left behind. Paying tribute to the armed forces and law enforcement agencies, he acknowledged their tremendous sacrifices in ensuring the safety of the nation. "By infusing unity, cohesion, and undeterred resolve within

our ranks, we can not only persevere but also overcome the challenges we face."

He also highlighted climate change as an existential threat that looms large over the nation. Referring to recent floods and extreme weather events, he noted these are stark reminders of Pakistan's vulnerability to the impacts of climate change.

"It is crucial that we adopt sustainable practices, build climate-resilient infrastructure, and contribute to global efforts to combat this menace," He emphasized that national integration is the cornerstone of Pakistan's strength. "We must work towards fostering a sense of belonging and unity among all Pakistanis. This is the only way we can build a cohesive society that is resilient to internal and external threats."

As the nation celebrates Independence Day, Chairman Gilani urged citizens to remember that the challenges ahead are not insurmountable. "With determination and a shared vision for a better future, we can overcome these obstacles and build a Pakistan that is strong, prosperous, and just." "Let us pledge to work together for the betterment of our nation, ensuring that future generations can live in peace and harmony," he concluded.

Waheed urges unity against threats to Pakistan

ISLAMABAD (APP): Sheikh Abdul Waheed, President of Central Traders Association Liaqat road and Inter City Hotels Association, on Tuesday said that Independence Day is a day to remember the sacrifices of those who sacrificed their lives and wealth for our freedom. On the occasion of Independence Day, let us promise our motherland that we will do everything possible to strengthen and preserve our Islamic traditions, culture and our national values.

On stated here Sheikh Abdul Waheed, president of Central Anjuman Tajran LiaQat road and Inter-City Hotels Association Rawalpindi, on the occasion of Independence Day, every member of the nation will have to take oath of allegiance for the completion of Pakistan. Sheikh Abdul Waheed said that Pakistan has a unique position among Muslim countries, which is unique in terms of its geography and is also a nuclear power.

He said no one has the courage to make any conspiracy against Pakistan successful, because Pakistan is the name of a free and strong state. Sheikh Abdul Waheed emphasized that no one possesses the courage to succeed in any conspiracy against Pakistan, as the nation is defined by its freedom and strength. He highlighted Pakistan's resilience and robust status as a sovereign state, underscoring that its enduring power and unity render any attempts to undermine it futile.

He expressed his determination that every citizen of Pakistan is its protector. "Our beloved country has been blessed by the ALLAH PAK with unlimited

ed blessings, we have to appreciate it" he added.

He further said that our students should be made aware of the importance of Pakistan. Every citizen of this country should show loyalty to Pakistan beyond their own self, he said.

Waheed said that Every conspiracy to play with the integrity and economy of Pakistan must be exposed, which is not possible by mutual concern.

Political views may differ but when it comes to the integrity of Pakistan, everything has to be put aside because Pakistan comes first, Waheed said.

Sheikh Abdul Waheed said that on the occasion of Independence Day, we have to pledge that we all have to rise above our personal interests to make Pakistan strong socially, economically, defensively and in every aspect.

ICT admin gears up for Independence Day events

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Islamabad Capital Territory (ICT) administration has planned a series of events to celebrate Independence Day in a significant way, with both large and small events throughout the city to ensure widespread participation and enjoyment.

According to the spokesperson of the ICT administration, officials are working to ensure a memorable and well-coordinated celebration, emphasizing the spirit of freedom and unity. A special focus is being given to F9 Park, where a major event is being organized for the citizens.

The Chief Commissioner, Deputy Commissioner (DC) Islamabad, and Senior Superintendent of Police (SSP) Traffic recently visiting the park to review the preparations. District officials are closely monitoring the arrangements to ensure everything goes smoothly.

During their visit, they received a detailed briefing from the concerned staff about the planned events and decorations.

Meanwhile, preparations for August 14 were also discussed in a meeting chaired by the DC Islamabad. Key officials, including the SSP Traffic, SP Dolphin, and all Deputy and Assistant Commissioners, attended the meeting to review the progress and finalize plans for the celebrations.

They decided to decorate and light up various buildings across the city. National flags will be hoisted along key roads, and arrangements for August 13, the night before Independence Day, were thoroughly reviewed.

The DC Islamabad has called on building owners to decorate high-rise buildings across the city, emphasizing the importance of a unified and festive appearance. He also warned that those engaging in unruly behavior, such as playing drums and whistles in an

uncontrolled manner, will face action.

Similarly, a joint strategy with the traffic police is being finalized to maintain order during the celebrations, as confirmed by DC Islamabad Irfan Nawaz Memon. As preparations continue, public and private buildings across the city are being adorned with colorful lights. These decorations are intended to enhance the city's beauty, especially at night when the green and white lights will illuminate the skyline.

The DC urged all building owners to contribute to this effort by ensuring their properties are well-lit and decorated.

Memon expressed the administration's commitment to making this year's Independence Day celebration one to remember. The district administration's efforts are focused on bringing the community together to celebrate the nation's freedom in a meaningful and unified manner.



ISLAMABAD: A family busily chooses Independence Day attire for their kids at Shakar Parian. —APP Photo



ISLAMABAD: Ambassador-designate of Ireland, Ms. Mary O'Neil, presenting her credentials to President Asif Ali Zardari, at Aiwan-e-Sadr.

Navy reviews maritime situation

F.P. Report

ISLAMABAD: Command and Staff Conference of Pakistan Navy concluded at Naval Headquarters, Islamabad. The Conference was chaired by Chief of the Naval Staff, Admiral Naveed Ashraf. The forum reviewed maritime situation in North Arabian Sea and Gulf of Aden and deliberated on measures for safety and security of national sea trade passing through the region.

During the conference, matters related to geo strategic milieu, national security, operational preparedness, training and welfare of troops were reviewed. Comprehensive briefing on important ongoing and future developmental projects of Pakistan Navy was also given to Chief of the Naval Staff.

Naval Chief expressed confidence over combat readiness and significant contribution of the Navy in maritime domain. Chief of the Naval Staff emphasized on strengthening maritime security and maintaining combat readiness so as to effectively respond to any aggression against Pakistan. He urged on acquisition of niche and novel capabilities while exploiting indigenous sources in order to cope with modern day challenges in maritime domain.

Command & Staff Conference is the apex decision making body of Pakistan Navy in which Chief of the Naval Staff along with all Principal Staff Officers and Field Commanders undertake review of Pakistan Navy's Policies and Plans.

Sanam Javed granted bail

F.P. Report

ISLAMABAD: The Islamabad High Court has granted protective bail to PTI leader Sanam Javed, preventing her arrest by the police.

Justice Mian Gul Hasan Aurangzeb presided over the hearing of Sanam Javed's protective bail application.

Aseefa honored with Soft Diplomacy Award

F.P. Report

KARACHI: First Lady of Pakistan, Aseefa Bhutto was honored with the Soft Diplomacy Award at a ceremony hosted by the UAE Consulate in Karachi today in commemoration of Pakistan's Independence Day. The Humanitarian Award was presented in recognition of her tireless efforts in eradicating polio and her successful lobbying of the UAE government to support polio vaccination drives in Balochistan.

Accompanied by President Peoples Party Women's Wing, Faryal Talpur, who was awarded for her efforts in building relations with the United Arab Emirates. Under the initiatives of the UAE Consulate's Soft Diplomacy program, this award celebrates individuals who have significantly contributed to strengthening diplomatic and humanitarian ties between Pakistan and the UAE. Ms. Bhutto Zardari's advocacy has been pivotal in securing the UAE's assistance in one of Pakistan's most critical public health challenges—the fight against polio.

In her acceptance speech, Ms. Bhutto Zardari expressed her deep gratitude for the



recognition and reiterated her unwavering commitment to the cause of polio eradication. She emphasized the importance of international cooperation in health initiatives and praised the UAE government for its steadfast support in the fight against polio in Pakistan, particularly in the vulnerable regions of Balochistan.

Addressing the ongoing battle against polio, she emphasized, "The fight against polio is one that every Pakistani should fight to secure a better, brighter future for our children. It pains me that we are one of the two countries in the world still unable to eradicate this menace. I remain committed

to this fight, to a polio-free Pakistan. I must acknowledge that the UAE has stood steadfast in its support for a polio-free Pakistan."

Ms. Bhutto Zardari also highlighted the strong ties between Pakistan and the UAE, acknowledging the UAE's consistent support in various crises: "Pakistan has been fortunate to count the UAE as one of its friends, and we have always relied on your support in times of trouble. Be it our fight against polio, devastating earthquakes, or catastrophic floods, you have stood beside us, at the forefront, reminding us that we are not alone."

Cabinet directs control of fertilizer prices

F.P. Report

ISLAMABAD: The federal cabinet with Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif in the chair, on Tuesday, approved increase in the strength of members of Privatization Commission Board from the existing 8 to 11 on the recommendations of Privatization Division.

On the International Women's Day, the prime minister had directed for representation of women in the country's significant boards and under his vision, women members would be appointed on these new seats, PM Office Media Wing said in a press release. The cabinet also directed for taking of all measures to keep prices of urea fertilizer under control

and directed for provision of uninterrupted gas supply to urea manufacturing factories even after September 2024 instead urea import in the light of a decision taken by Economic Coordination Committee on August 2.

"Agriculture has been the backbone of the country's economy and the cabinet directed for ensuring reduction in the prices of agriculture inputs to mitigate farmers' per acre expenses," a press release in Urdu language said. It also ratified decisions taken by the Cabinet Committee on Privatization during its meeting on August 2, however, the prime minister further directed for submission of a comprehensive plan over those State Owned Enter-

prises (SOEs) whose privatization had already been approved.

On the recommendation of Ministry of Federal Education and Professional Training, the cabinet approved implementation of court's order regarding regularization of daily-wage teachers of Federal Directorate of Education (FED). It also approved signing of MoU between ministries of foreign affairs of Pakistan and Democratic Guatemala, on the recommendation of ministry of foreign affairs, for initiation of political consultations, besides, according approval to the signing of MoU between Pakistan and Ecuador for holding of bilateral political consultations.

FO concerned over illicit sale of nuke materials in India

F.P. Report

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan is gravely concerned at the reports of recurring incidents of theft and illicit sale of nuclear and other radioactive materials in India.

This was stated by Spokesperson of Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Mumtaz Zahra Baloch while responding to a question about Pakistan's reaction to the arrest of a gang in India with radioactive material. The Spokesperson said, in the latest incident, a gang of individuals were found in illegal possession of a highly radioactive and toxic substance Californium, worth 100 million dollars in quantity.

She said three incidents of theft of Californium were also reported in 2021. Last month, five individuals with a radioactive device reportedly stolen from Bhabha Atomic Research Center were also found from Dehradun. Mumtaz Zahra Baloch said these recurring incidents call into question the measures taken by New Delhi for the safety and security of nuclear and other radioactive material.

She said these incidents also suggest the existence of a black market for sensitive, dual use materials inside India. The Spokesperson said the international community seeks an earnest disclosure from the Indian authorities as to how a sealed Radioactive Source material, like Californium, was in the possession of the apprehended individuals. It is dangerous for such sensitive material in India to be routinely found in the wrong hands.

The Spokesperson said Pakistan reiterates its call for a thorough investigation of these incidents and for adequate measures to prevent their recurrence.

Torkham border remain closed

F.P. Report

LANDI KOTAL: Following an arm battle erupted between the Pak-Afghan border forces last evening, Torkham border remained suspended for all kinds of movement on the second day, official sources informed on Tuesday.

It is to be stated here that on Monday evening the Torkham border closed after arm fighting took place between Pak and Afghan forces when the later started constructing a post in the disputed site of the crossing that caused injuring of three Pakistani troops.

An official in Torkham said the border was shut for pedestrians as well as for traffic movement and hundreds of export and import loaded vehicles stuck at both sides of the border.

The sources said that after the skirmish officials of the both countries approved in a late hours meeting to settle the dispute through a peaceful process and also agreed to normalize the situation at the border.

Bilawal reaffirms PPP dedication to uphold principles of democracy

F.P. Report

ISLAMABAD: On the occasion of Pakistan's 77th Independence Day, Chairman Pakistan People's Party (PPP) Bilawal Bhutto Zardari has reaffirmed his party's dedication to upholding the core principles of democracy, constitutionalism, and equality on which Pakistan was founded. He emphasized that the 1973 Constitution embodies the spirit of the Freedom Movement and provides a unified vision for the nation's future. Chairman Bilawal Bhutto Zardari reiterated the PPP's commitment to advancing the nation's progress and unity by strengthening democracy in line with the vision of Pakistan's founding fathers.

In a message issued by the Media Cell Bilawal House, Chairman PPP stated, "As we celebrate Independence Day, we honor the sacrifices made by our forefathers who fought for our freedom and sovereignty.

Today is a day to reflect on the vision of Quaid-e-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah and his democratic ideals. It is also a day to confront our challenges and learn from our past. Despite being founded by a leader who championed constitutionalism and democracy, our nation has faced periods of autocratic rule that undermined basic freedoms and rights."

Chairman Bilawal Bhutto Zardari emphasized that the PPP remains committed to the principles and vision of the founding

fathers. He remarked, "The ideology of Quaid-e-Azam Shaheed Zulfiqar Ali Bhutto and the philosophy of Shaheed Mohtarma Benazir Bhutto serve as guiding lights for us. Under President Asif Ali Zardari's vision of reconciliation and national unity, we find hope and strength to navigate our challenges."

He further assured, "The PPP is dedicated to lifting our nation from the grips of inflation, unemployment, and poverty, while continuing the fight against terrorism. Let us unite as one nation, driven by our shared values, to overcome any obstacle and build a brighter future for all Pakistanis." As the nation commemorates its 77th Independence Day, Chairman Bilawal Bhutto Zardari extended his heartfelt wishes to all Pakistanis and called for a renewed commitment to the ideals of freedom, democracy, and unity that define the nation's identity.

Meanwhile, I felicitate the entire Pakistani nation on the 78th Independence Day of Pakistan. This day marks the culmination of the historic political struggle of the Muslims of India for their right to self-determination. The creation of Pakistan through a peaceful and democratic struggle marks an unprecedented and unparalleled chapter in history. On this day, we pay homage to leaders and workers of the Pakistan movement as well as our forefathers who rendered innumerable sacrifices for Pakistan.

Today, we need to set aside our differences and work committedly for the unity, integrity, and economic stability of the country in the face of current challenges. Our country has been blessed with abundant human and natural resources and it is our responsibility to utilize these for the welfare of our people. We need to uphold the rule of law, strengthen democratic institutions, and work wholeheartedly in the public interest. Our nation has great hopes from us, and we must strive to meet their expectations.

We need to draw inspiration from the words of our Quaid when he said "If we want to make this great State of Pakistan happy and prosperous, we should wholly and solely concentrate on the well-being of the people, especially of the masses and the poor". It is time to invest in our youth and women, improve service delivery, and create a business-friendly environment to make Pakistan a great nation.

As we celebrate our freedom, let us also remember our Kashmiri and Palestinian brethren, who have been struggling for over seven decades for their freedom and right to self-determination. Pakistan reaffirms its support to the people of the Indian Illegally Occupied Jammu and Kashmir and Palestine for their legitimate rights. Let's pledge to work for the uplift of our people and make Pakistan a prosperous country. May Allah be with us all. Amen!

Hasina demands probe into 'killings, vandalism' in BD

DHAKA (AFP): Former Bangladesh prime minister Sheikh Hasina called on Tuesday for action against those involved in "killings and vandalism" in the country last month, her first comments since violent protests forced her to flee to India.

Around 300 people died in the demonstrations that began as protests against employment quotas but spiralled into a movement seeking Hasina's over-

throw. Hasina's statement, issued on X through her son, came hours after a court ordered a probe into her role in the death of a grocery shop owner during the protests.

Many people died "in the name of revolution" in July, Hasina said. "I demand that those involved in these killings and vandalism be properly investigated and the culprits be identified and punished accordingly," she said. Other members of

her government also face criminal action, with former law minister Anisul Huq and Hasina's adviser Salman F Rahman arrested for allegedly "instigating" the murder of two people, police said on Tuesday.

The case against Hasina — the first following the protests — was filed by Amir Hamza and accepted by Dhaka's chief metropolitan magistrate's court after a hearing. Hamza's lawyer Anwarul Islam said.

Four soldiers embraces shahadat

F.P. Report



Rawalpindi: On night 12/13 August 2024, fire exchange took place between the Security Forces and Khwarij in South Waziristan District. Resultantly, six Khwarij were sent to hell due to effective engagement by own troops. However, during intense fire exchange, four brave sons of soil; Havildar Nisar Hussain (age: 34 years, resident of District Kurram), Naik Rashid Gul (age: 34 years, resident of District Kurram), Naik Irfan Ullah Khan (age: 30

years, resident of District Lakki Marwat) and Sep Usman Rafaqat (age: 21 years, resident of District Haripur), having fought gallantly embraced Shahadat. Sanitization operation is being conducted to

eliminate any other Kharji found in the area as Security Forces of Pakistan are determined to wipe-out the menace of terrorism and such sacrifices of our brave soldiers further strengthen our resolve.

Electricity bills big problem in country: Sharjeel

F.P. Report

KARACHI: Sindh's Senior Minister and Provincial Minister for Information, Transport, Excise, Taxation, and Narcotics Control, Sharjeel Inam Memon, has stated that for national development, everyone must set aside their differences and unite. Independence Day is celebrated every year, but this time the nation is particularly excited about the occasion. The Sindh Government is celebrating the 77th Independence Day with great enthusiasm, in line with the directives of Quaid-e-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah.

Addressing a press conference at the Directorate of Electronic and Social Media, Sindh's Senior Minister, Sharjeel Inam Memon, stated that unfortunately, the spread of drugs is increasing in our society. The federal government will support us in the fight against drug abuse. The Sindh government is increasing the number of rehabilitation centers for drug addicts. Currently, we have the capacity to accommodate 400 people in these centers, while there are 7,000 pending applications from individuals seeking help to overcome their drug addiction. All institutions must play a role in drug prevention.

He mentioned that the Excise and Taxation Department has taken significant measures to prevent the spread of drugs. President Asif Ali Zardari issued directives for the eradication of narcotics during his visit to Sindh shortly after assuming office.

We must protect our younger generation from the menace of drugs.

Senior Minister Sharjeel Inam Memon stated that the Narcotics Control Wing of the Excise Department has registered 178 cases against drug peddlers since March, and 200 drug peddlers have been detained, from whom a large quantity of narcotics has been recovered. The Chief Minister of Sindh and the Provincial Minister for Health are also providing full support in the fight against drugs. We must stop the spread of drugs at all costs.

He mentioned that the Sindh Police is also taking action against drug dealers. The police conducted 5,629 raids, registered 6,396 cases, and detained 7,571 suspects, recovering 5,096 kilograms of drugs from them. The Sindh Police sent 316 drug dealers to jail and dismantled five gangs in their crackdown on drug trafficking. Additionally, 189 suspects involved in looting were detained in Karachi, and 57 were killed in encounters with the police.

Senior Minister Sharjeel Inam Memon stated that the performance of the Sindh Police in eliminating drugs is commendable. The Sindh Police has also taken significant steps to reduce street crime, and their improved performance should be highlighted. In the operation against dacoits in Kacha, 43 robbers have been killed, while 11 policemen have also been martyred. In our country, negative news is often emphasized more, but the positive work being



done by the police should also be acknowledged. The Home Minister and the IG Sindh are working very hard.

He mentioned that the electricity bill is a significant problem in Pakistan, and Chairman Bilawal Bhutto Zardari has contacted the federal government multiple times to seek relief. Inshallah, the people will hear news of this relief very soon.

Senior Minister Sharjeel Inam Memon stated that after the overthrow of Ms. Benazir Bhutto's government, her projects were halted. These projects were revived by President Asif Ali Zardari in 2008. Thar coal is the only source of affordable electricity in Pakistan, a dream of Shaheed Benazir Bhutto that

President Asif Ali Zardari brought to fruition. All credit for the success of this project goes to the Pakistan People's Party.

He mentioned that the infrastructure developed to implement the Thar project is remarkable. Currently, 2,640 MW of electricity is being generated from Thar coal. The Thar Coal project is poised to bear the burden of electricity supply for the entire country, producing electricity at 11 rupees per unit. The Nooriabad Wind Power Generation Plant is generating electricity at 9 rupees per unit. The Government of Sindh has initiated the most cost-effective electricity projects, with 1,845 megawatts of electricity being generated from wind power.

Sharjeel Inam Memon announced that a plan to educate women about their rights while traveling on the pink bus service will be launched soon, providing awareness of the rules. This will be the first awareness project of its kind in the world.

He stated that Umar Ayub should review the performance of his previous government before criticizing the Sindh government and the People's Party. People from all over Pakistan are coming to Sindh in search of employment and medical treatment because the Government of Sindh supports them. The PTI government in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KPK) supported the Taliban and funded them. During the PTI period, the Taliban breached Bannu Jail to free their accomplices, and the APS tragedy occurred. Umar Ayub should point out any development plan from the PTI government's tenure. The BRT project in KPK set records for corruption. PTI has only engaged in digital terrorism and conspiracies against the country and its people. PTI governments have been the worst, PTI patronized harmful conspiracies.

Sharjeel Inam Memon stated that the PTI leadership did everything possible to harm the country. The May 9 incident was one of the worst of its kind. However, the military leadership refrained from using force against the saboteurs due to their arrogance. PTI wrote letters to the IMF and did everything in their power to push the country towards bankruptcy. PTI's conspiracies

against Pakistan will not succeed.

In response to a question, the senior minister stated that the People's Party government aims to benefit the people of Pakistan through its projects. Residents of Islamabad are being provided with free electricity. In response to another question, he stated that the department has the legal right to take action against its officers. The People's Party has not nominated Bashir Memon for the position of Governor of Sindh.

In response to a question, he stated that the PPP government is working diligently to provide relief to people regarding electricity bills as soon as possible. The concerned Assistant Commissioners and Deputy Commissioners have the authority to take action against chemically adulterated milk.

He stated that Imran Khan's statement about throwing a petrol bomb is equivalent to an act attempt to murder. People have been sentenced to 15 years in the Capitol Hill incident, while we have individuals making such rhetoric here. No other party has ever thrown petrol bombs at the police excluding PTI. In 2018, the entire mandate of Pakistan was altered to bring in "Ladla." In response to another question, he stated that the killers of Jan Muhammad Mahar and Nasrullah Gadani will not escape the grip of the law. At the press conference, Sindh government spokesperson Sadia Javed and Ganhwar Khan Esran were also present.