



"Terrorists are enemies of peace and stability of the country"

*Federal Minister for Information and Broadcasting
Attaulah Tarar*

Ishaq Dar assures the UK side that all technical issues on Pak's side to be resolved at the earliest, enabling PIA to resume flights to the UK

Meets with UK Ministers Lord Tariq Ahmad & Andrew Mitchell in London



LONDON: Foreign Minister Mohammad Ishaq Dar has held separate meetings with the UK Minister of State for South Asia and Commonwealth, Lord Tariq Ahmad, and with the Minister of State for Development, Andrew Mitchell at the

Foreign Commonwealth and Development Office in London on Friday. Pakistan-UK relations, regional and global security, Pakistan's role at the UN and other multilateral forums as well as Pakistan's economic and development vision came under discussion.

Lord Ahmad felicitated Foreign Minister Ishaq Dar on assuming the position of Foreign Minister, and expressed the desire to work closely with the new government going forward.

The two sides underscored the deep bonds of friendship and amity that exist between Pakistan and the UK. Next steps for further deepening of relations including leveraging the untapped potential of the British Pakistani diaspora to further expand trade and investment opportunities, were also discussed.

In response to Foreign Minister Ishaq Dar's call for early resumption of PIA flights to the UK, the UK side assured that it was working closely with Pakistan at the technical level to support resumption of flights at the earliest possible. The Foreign Minister assured the UK side that all technical issues on Pakistan's side would be resolved at the earliest, enabling PIA to resume flights to the UK.

Discussing Afghanistan, the Minister of State for South Asia thanked the Foreign Minister for Pakistan's continued support on resettlement of Afghan nationals. The Foreign Minister apprised him about the current situation.

Foreign Minister Ishaq Dar expressed wishes for complete health and recovery for His Majesty, King Charles III as well as the Princess of Wales.

The Foreign Minister extended cordial invitations to Foreign Secretary Lord Cameron, Minister Lord Ahmad and Minister Mitchell to visit Pakistan, which were received with appreciation. SABAH



ISLAMABAD: Ambassador of the People's Republic of China, Jiang Zaidong calls on Planning Minister Prof Ahsan Iqbal in Ministry of Planning, Development and Special Initiatives to discuss accelerated growth of CPEC projects. INP

PM Shehbaz appreciates the long-standing friendship between the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia & Pakistan

Also appreciates efforts of SFD for providing financing to Pak in fields of Health, Energy, infrastructure & Education as well the recent floods

VOM Report

ISLAMABAD: A delegation of Saudi Fund for Development (SFD), led by Sultan Bin Abdul Rehman Al Marshad, Chief Executive Officer (CEO), SFD, during its visit to Pakistan (22-24 March, 2024), called on Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif in Islamabad on Friday. Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif welcomed the delegation and appreciated the long-standing friendship between the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and Pakistan and the efforts of SFD for providing financing to Pakistan in the fields of Health, Energy, infrastructure and Education as well the recent floods. The CEO, SFD thanked the Prime Minister and Government of Pakistan for the warm welcome and hospitality as well as the conferment of the National Civil Award, Hilal-e-Quaid-e-Azam.

The Prime Minister also appreciated the signing of Financial Agreements, early on Friday, between SFD and the Government of Pakistan worth US\$ 107 Million for construction of Hydropower stations in AJK, which would not only provide clean energy but would also help eradicate the menace of deforestation, besides providing job opportunities to the local population. The CEO, SFD shared updates with the



Prime Minister about the ongoing projects including Mohmand Multi-purpose Hydropower Project, Golan Gol Hydropower Project, Malakand Regional Development Project, and other projects funded through Saudi grants.

The Prime Minister, while appreciating the support of the SFD, highlighted the need to expedite the processing of the new projects, shared with SFD, in the field of green energy and infrastructure, which once implemented, would go a long way in the eco-

nomical revival of the country, besides serving the needs of the local communities. The CEO, SFD assured early processing of the shared projects and also reiterated that the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, under the leadership of the Royal Family, would extend all possible assistance and continued support to Pakistan. The Prime Minister thanked the CEO and members of the delegation and conveyed his best wishes to all the members of the Royal Family, especially the Khadime-Harain Sharifain.

Parliament-to-parliament contacts vital for regional prosperity, economic development: Ayaz Sadiq



ISLAMABAD: Speaker National Assembly of Pakistan Sardar Ayaz Sadiq on Friday said that Pakistan and the United Arab Emirates (UAE) enjoy cordial ties based upon shared religious and cultural values. He said that parliament-to-parliament contacts are vital for regional prosperity and economic development. He added, "UAE has always supported Pakistan in difficult times and Pakistan values its tie with UAE." He expressed these views during his meeting with the Ambassador of the United Arab Emirates Mr. Hamad Obaid Ibrahim Alzaabi who called on him in Parliament House, said a news release.

While talking about the significance of enhanced bilateral ties between the two countries, he emphasized the need to revive the Parliamentary Friendship group. He also extended an invitation to the Speaker Parliament of UAE to visit the Parliament of Pakistan. He said that Pakistan has vast opportunities for investment and trade. He added, "Pakistan is bestowed with a skilled labour force which can play a significant role in the development of UAE".

He also appreciated the support and facilities provided by the UAE government to the Pakistani diaspora in UAE. He said that the Pakistani diaspora in UAE has a substantive role in bringing both Nations closer. Ambassador of the United Arab Emirates Mr. Hamad Obaid Ibrahim Alzaabi extended warm felicitations to Sardar Ayaz Sadiq on his successful election as Speaker of National Assembly of Pakistan.

He expressed hope that parliament-to-parliament contacts between UAE and Pakistan would further improve ties between both nations. He also said that the UAE is committed to facilitating Pakistani workers in UAE and values the services offered by the Pakistani diaspora in UAE.

Tarar condemns cowardly attack on security forces convoy in D I Khan

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Information and Broadcasting Attaulah Tarar on Friday strongly condemned the suicide attack on the convoy of security forces in Dera Ismail Khan.

The minister for information expressed his heartfelt condolences on the martyrdom of the personnel of the Pakistan Army Subedar Yasir Shakeel and Sepoy Tahir Nawaz. "Terrorists are enemies of peace and stability of the country," Tarar said, adding that the cowardly acts of terrorism cannot dampen the spirits of the nation. The minister said any attempt to harm national security will be dealt with iron hands. The entire nation stood with the security forces in the war against terrorism, the minister remarked. He saluted the brave sons who sacrificed their lives for the safety of the country and nation. APP

Petroleum Minister Musadik Malik highlights Pak's commitment towards fostering stronger ties with the United States

Says together both the countries can achieve the shared energy goals



ISLAMABAD: Ambassador of the United States of America Donald Blome called on the newly appointed Federal Minister for Petroleum, Senator Dr. Musadik Masood Malik. The US ambassador extended his congratulations to Dr. Musadik Malik on assuming the office and expressed high hopes for the transformation of the energy sector. Federal Minister appreciated Ambassador Blome for always extending his support and reaffirmed that

together both the countries can achieve the shared energy goals. Taking the opportunity, both sides discussed in detail the potential areas of cooperation, including technology transfer, investment opportunities, and capacity building initiatives in the energy sector and regional projects. Ways and means to promote sustainable carbon friendly footprint, renewables, green hydrogen were also discussed. During the meeting, Minister highlighted Pakistan's commitment towards fostering stronger ties with the United States.

The Minister apprised the US ambassador regarding Pakistan's vast potential in the energy sector, particularly in the minerals sector. Ambassador Blome informed the Minister that a high-level economic dialogue is scheduled to be held in April at Washington where energy related matters including minerals would take the center stage. SABAH

Two soldiers embraced martyrdom after vehicle borne suicider explodes near forces' convey



RAWALPINDI: Two soldiers of Pakistan Army embraced martyrdom on Friday after a vehicle borne suicide bomber exploded himself on a security forces' convey in Dera Ismail Khan District. According to the Inter Services Public Relations (ISPR) news release, the two brave sons of soil were identified as Naib Subedar Yasir Shakeel (Age: 38 years, resident of District Kohat) and Sepoy Tahir Naveed (Age: 34 years, resident of District Kohat) who embraced martyrdom. "Security forces of Pakistan remain determined to eliminate the menace of terrorism and such sacrifices of our brave soldiers further strengthen our resolve. Moreover, the perpetrators of this cowardly attack will be brought to Justice," the ISPR said. PR

Govt to steer country out of current challenges: Shaza Fatima

ISLAMABAD: Minister of State for Information Technology and Telecommunication, Shaza Fatima Khawaja on Friday said that government under the leadership of Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif is determined to steer the country out of the current crisis.

Addressing a press conference along with Rana Mashood Ahmed Khan and Romina Khurshid Alam, she said, the country will be put on the road to progress, prosperity, and development under the leadership of Mian Muhammad Nawaz Sharif and Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif.

She expressed confidence that the country would overcome all the challenges and crisis within the next three to four years.

Recalling about the past achievements of Mian Muhammad Nawaz Sharif, she highlighted the eradication of load shedding and terrorism, as well as the successful initiation of the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) and the remarkable economic growth witnessed during

his last tenure. She recounted that soon after assuming government in 2013, under the guidance of Mian Muhammad Nawaz Sharif, an agreement was made with the IMF. However, the government terminated the program within two years, leading the country towards economic self-reliance. Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif, she said, made all out efforts to protect the country away from default during his 16-month tenure. The Minister said that collaborative efforts of the Pakistan Muslim League (N) and allied parties had stabilized the country economically during the 16-month period.

She highlighted the stabilization of the Pakistani rupee and the robust performance of the stock exchange during Shehbaz Sharif's tenure. She assured that the government is well aware of the problems and hardships faced by the common people and said that government is working on various direction and taking initiatives to provide relief to poor people. APP

EASA clearance to national flag carrier in mid May this year would make this entity more valuable & attractive for potential bidders: Khawaja Asif



ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Defence, Defence Production and Aviation Khawaja Muhammad Asif along with Federal Minister for Privatisation Abdul Aleem Khan co-chaired a high level consultative meeting on privatisation of national flag carrier.

The meeting was also attended by the secretaries of aviation division, privatisation commission, privatisation division and finance division. Earnest & young (EY) team which is a steering group leading this process recapitu-

lated the restructuring and segregation plan being carried out by the approval of cabinet on country's biggest privatisation. The Scheme of arrangements was presented to the forum and financial advisors highlighted different pre bidding and post bidding areas of concerns about core assets and liabilities and non core assets and liabilities and it's phase wise solutions were recounted to the forum. The challenges and risks including debt re-profiling with commercial banks, six month cash flow plan and transfer of liabilities to hold co. were also thoroughly discussed.

Khawaja Muhammad Asif hoped that EASA clearance to national flag carrier in mid May this year would make this entity more valuable and attractive for potential bidders. He also expressed his hope, based on conversations with the quarters concerned, for resumption of flights for UK soon. SABAH

British HC Jane Marriott commends Pak's commitment to economic reforms & expresses the UK's continued support for Pak's development goals

Calls on Finance Minister Muhammad Aurangzeb to discuss matters of bilateral significance & strengthening the longstanding relations b/w Pak & the UK

VOM Report

ISLAMABAD: British High Commissioner to Pakistan, Ms. Jane Marriott, called on Minister for Finance and Revenue Muhammad Aurangzeb on Friday, to discuss matters of bilateral significance and strengthening the longstanding relations between Pakistan and the United Kingdom. Muhammad Aurangzeb, acknowledged the enduring relations between Pakistan and the UK. The minister also apprised the High Commissioner about the conclusion of



the second IMF review under the Standby Arrangement (SBA) and reiterated the Government's commitment to implement prudent fiscal

policies and structural reforms in various sectors such as FBR, privatisation, and private sector facilitation. The British High Commissioner, Ms.

Jane Marriott, commended Pakistan's commitment to economic reforms and expressed the UK's continued support for Pakistan's development goals. She emphasized the importance of further enhancing bilateral cooperation, particularly in areas of mutual interest, and reiterated the UK's commitment to strengthen the partnership between the two nations. Concluding the meeting, the both sides expressed their mutual commitment to further strengthening bilateral relations and enhancing cooperation between Pakistan and the United Kingdom for the benefit of both nations.

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Water woes

ZEESHAN SALAHUDDIN

David Brower shared a poignant reflection on our relationship with the earth: "We don't inherit the earth from our ancestors, we borrow it from our children." In an era where climate change wreaks havoc across the Global South, with Pakistan the eighth most severely impacted nation, confronting water insecurity should be a clarion call, particularly in the face of the quantum of conflicts the country faces in this domain. Water security is a critical challenge that intertwines with the very essence of its national security and societal well-being. Deeply rooted in the survival and prosperity of the nation, it demands transformative solutions and acute attention due to its direct impact on agriculture, urbanization, and geopolitical stability. The journey towards effective water stewardship in Pakistan is not merely about conservation; it's about navigating through a complex web of conflicts towards a sustainable future. The agricultural sector, which forms the backbone of Pakistan's economy, is predominantly dependent on the waters of the Indus Basin. This reliance underscores the critical nature of water availability, not just for irrigation and food production, but as a linchpin of economic vitality and rural livelihoods. The scarcity of this vital resource, therefore, does not merely pose a challenge to agricultural productivity; it directly threatens the economic foundation of a country already facing food insecurity (Pakistan imports roughly \$8 billion in food annually). The implications of water scarcity extend beyond agriculture, catalysing a chain reaction of socio-economic challenges. As water resources dwindle, rural communities, heavily reliant on agriculture for their sustenance, face unprecedented hardships. This adversity drives internal migrations, with populations moving in large numbers from parched rural areas to urban centres in search of better living conditions and opportunities. Such migrations strain urban infrastructures, leading to overcrowding, inadequate housing, and increased demand on already limited urban water supplies. The resultant urban congestion can exacerbate social tensions and unrest, as competition for resources intensifies in densely populated areas. The ever-dwindling water table in Lahore (population: 12 million) and water scarcity and tanker mafia in Karachi (population: 24 million) are prime examples. Pakistan's struggle with water security manifests across three distinct levels: local, inter-provincial, and transnational. At the local level, communities often find themselves embroiled in disputes over access to and distribution of water resources. Inter-provincial tensions, particularly between Punjab and Sindh, revolve around allegations of unequal water distribution from the Indus River. The transnational dimension introduces complex challenges, recently exemplified by Pakistan's inability to negotiate a water-sharing agreement with Afghanistan. The non-recognition of the Taliban government in Kabul complicates these efforts, spotlighting the intricate dynamics of regional water diplomacy; to say nothing of the rising tensions with India over the Indus Waters Treaty. Despite the prevailing focus on conflict, there is a critical gap in exploring avenues for cooperation and understanding potential future flashpoints. Cooperation is essential at all levels for sustainable water management. Grassroots initiatives can significantly contribute to water conservation and conflict resolution, leveraging local knowledge for sustainable practices. Interprovincial bodies like the Council of Common Interests play a crucial role in mediating disputes and promoting equitable water distribution. The judiciary's involvement in setting legal precedents for water rights further aids in conflict resolution and establishes a framework for long-term governance. However, as is the case in the Kalabagh Dam, the court proceedings have stalled for well over a decade. At the federal level, prioritizing water security within a national policy is imperative. This includes investing in infrastructure to improve water storage and distribution and engaging diplomatically to resolve transnational water issues. Such efforts underscore the importance of mutual benefits and regional stability. Pakistan must navigate the dual challenge of managing existing conflicts and anticipating future ones. Climate change, population growth, and urbanization are likely to intensify water scarcity, potentially leading to new conflicts, ones we have yet to imagine and predict. A proactive approach focusing on conflict resolution and prevention is essential. Investing in research to understand the impact of climate change on water availability, developing sustainable water use strategies, and enhancing diplomatic capacity for water negotiations are critical steps forward. Promoting water conservation across societal levels can foster a culture of sustainability, crucial for securing Pakistan's water future. None of this is new information, but as is almost always the case with Pakistan, it comes down to the pecking order of competing priorities and a lack of enforcement and execution. Pakistan's journey towards effective water security is fraught with challenges but also offers an opportunity to set a global example in water management. Through a steadfast commitment to collaboration and the adoption of sustainable practices, Pakistan has the potential to reverse the currents of water insecurity, thereby securing a thriving future for its populace.

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Dr Imran Batada

The treasure of skills

The national skill strategy is aimed at providing a way in which the public and private sectors will implement training for skill development in various ways. This will lead to the shift from supply-led training to demand-driven skills. People will be trained on skills that are relevant and leave out skills that are outdated or cannot be used in the current world. It will also lead to the change from time-bound curriculum-based training to flexible competency-based training. At the end of the day, people will get skills that will help them grow in their careers and economically. The implementation process is not complicated if these reforms are put in place. For starters, the introduction of competency-based training will help those currently in school to get the skills that are relevant in the market to thrive. Therefore, they will get training that is crucial and based on current trends rather than what has been taught for years. The establishment of industry-specific centres of excellence will be geared towards training people in specific career paths and also those professionals who would want to get more skills and upgrade from what they already have. Also, there will be a need to encourage entrepreneurship courses to be compulsory in vocational centres and universities. People need to know that they can still venture into a business instead of just considering getting employed. To enhance skill development, training should be available to everyone, not just those in urban areas but

also those in rural areas. In addition, while providing skills in all geographical areas, the marginalized, disabled, youth, and women need to be considered. All the disadvantaged groups need to be included to ensure everyone has an equal share in the training. At times, it can be hard to know whether you are passionate about a specific career choice, therefore, there should be the provision of career guidance for those to join a university or any tertiary institution. Additionally, the placement service should ensure students are placed in the right career based on their passion and performance. Thereafter, the right candidates will go to specific jobs they will enjoy doing. For effective skill development in schools, colleges, and universities, it is essential to focus on quality education. Also, the management of training institutions needs to be reformed to ensure they are more updated about the current changes and be ready to implement them. Proper research should also continue to be undertaken to ensure the right strategies are put in place. The impact of implementing the national skills strategy is that it will boost employability. It is so worrying that students complete university education and do not get access to employment. However, with the right skill development, students will be equipped with skills that will help them get jobs. They will also get access to remote jobs that they can use to earn a decent living. With the development of AI and such great systems like ChatGPT, OpenAI sora, Gemini, and other great inventions, the future of technology is bright, and if people are provided with great skills, they will surely thrive in freelancing even in the specific professional courses they undertook, since it is also possible to get tutor jobs online. The entrepreneurship course is also

crucial to ensure people do not just think about getting employed, but also owning their businesses and even employing others. Also, entrepreneurship can help people to be more creative about what they can do and not just think about what they have learned in school. Therefore, all stakeholders need to provide input on what needs to be done to ensure that everyone gets the skills required seamlessly. For example, in Germany, the main aim of the national skills strategy is to advance digitalization in education to ensure that students are well-equipped. Also, they have set out a great investment to ensure that education reforms are well established. Australia is geared towards lifelong learning regardless of the age of the intended person who wants to gain more knowledge. Ireland is also visionary to ensure everyone gains the skills required without any kind of discrimination. The skills being given are relevant to the target population to ensure they can help themselves once they gain the knowledge. There is also a need for regular assessment of what is being taught to ensure it is relevant and will help the participants. India's government is also vibrant towards providing lifelong education for all without any discrimination. Sixty-five per cent of the people in India are young, and the rate of unemployment is worrying. However, with the right skills, the number of employed, self-employed and entrepreneurs will increase. Singapore's national skills strategy is also at the forefront with high investment put into skill development. Also, they are geared towards instilling a culture of continual learning to ensure no one is left out. Saudi Arabia is also geared to covering over 2,000 skills and developing different career paths. This will help enlighten the population and make them more informed. In addition,

Greece is also transforming its labour market by optimizing workforce skills. This is also to strengthen the capacity of the population and promote energy-saving activities. Portugal is promoting adult learning. Education and skills are at the forefront. Luckily, in most countries, they have started free training for the youth. The overall impact of the national skills strategy should be to ensure the relevance of the education and skills being given, to meet the skills needs, strengthen the relationship and knowledge exchange between employers and employees, ensure the workforce has the required knowledge, business flexibility, and ensure economic social success. Technology should also be used to provide talent and skills to people. Luckily, some advancements have been made in Pakistan to ensure that the right skills are given to people. If more reforms are put in place, skill development in Pakistan will surely escalate. The national skills strategy should ensure the provision of the skills to the right people, ensuring professionals also advance based on the current trends. It is obvious that a few years from now, with automation and everything, some jobs might be lost while some new ones will be created. Therefore, there is a need to change with the current trends to ensure everyone benefits from the skills being given, both the advantaged and the disadvantaged. Also, people need to embrace learning and should never cease learning, since the future will disadvantage those who did not take their time to get the right skills needed.

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Disclaimer: Views expressed by writers in this section are their own and do not necessarily reflect The Asian Telegraph's point-of-view

Today in History

History of Pakistan



The All-India Muslim League election campaign was based on the Pakistan demand. The Muslim community responded to this call in an unprecedented way. Numerous Muslim parties were formed making united parliamentary board at the behest of the Congress to oppose the Muslim League. But the All-India Muslim League swept all the thirty seats in the Central Legislature and in the provincial elections also, its victory was outstanding. After the elections, on April 8-9, 1946, the All-India Muslim League called a convention of the newly-elected League members in the Central and Provincial Legislatures at Delhi. This convention, which constituted virtually a representative assembly of the Muslims of South Asia, on a motion by the Chief Minister of Ben-

gal, Hussain Shaheed Suhrawardy, reiterated the Pakistan demand in clearer terms, CABINET PLAN In early 1946, the British Government sent a Cabinet Mission to the subcontinent to resolve the constitutional deadlock. The Mission conducted negotiations with various political parties, but failed to evolve an agreed formula. Finally, the Cabinet Mission announced its own Plan, which among other provisions, envisaged three federal groupings, two of them comprising the Muslim majority provinces, linked at the Centre in a loose federation with three subjects. The Muslim League accepted the plan, as a strategic move, expecting to achieve its

objective in not-too-distant a future. The All-India Congress also agreed to the Plan, but, soon realising its implications, the Congress leaders began to interpret it in a way not visualized by the authors of the Plan. This provided the All-India Muslim League an excuse to withdraw its acceptance of the Plan and the party observed August 16, as a 'Direct Action Day' to show Muslim solidarity in support of the Pakistan demand. PARTITION SCHEME In October 1946, an Interim Government was formed. The Muslim League sent its representative under the leadership of its General Secretary, Mr. Liaquat Ali Khan, with the aim to fight for the party objective from within the

Interim Government. After a short time, the situation inside the Interim Government and outside convinced the Congress leadership to accept Pakistan as the only solution of the communal problem. The British Government, after its last attempt to save the Cabinet Mission Plan in December 1946, also moved towards a scheme for the partition of India. The last British Viceroy, Lord Louis Mountbatten, came with a clear mandate to draft a plan for the transfer of power. After holding talks with political leaders and parties, he prepared a Partition Plan for the transfer of power, which, after approval of the British Government, was announced on June 3, 1947. To be continued....

Showbiz

Gisele Bündchen reveals secret to overcoming 'one of worst times in life'

Gisele Bündchen claimed she became a 'different person' by making this one change in life

Gisele Bündchen recalled overcoming her depression and anxiety by altering her diet during early 20s. During an appearance on Thursday episode of The View on the heels of her new cookbook, Nourish, the 43-year-old model reflected on the correlation between good food and mental health. She admitted to experiencing debilitating panic attacks halfway through her modeling career after she emancipated from her parents at age 14. Gisele claimed she constantly got through her days in fear of another panic attack, which is a "manifestation of sudden, intense feelings of fear into physical symptoms like a racing



heart, fast breathing and sweating" and "may feel like you're having a heart attack," according to the Cleveland Clinic. The model ended up coming across an "amazing naturopath," a wellness doctor, who instructed her to "change your diet." "Diet, what does that have to do with panic attacks?" she claimed to have asked at the time. "And he's like, 'No, it has everything to do with it,'" the mom of two continued. "I told him about my day. I drink, I smoke, I have coffee — and he said 'Listen ... stop right there.' He says, 'You're not sleeping. You're in different time zones all the time. You're eating, like, terrible all day.'"

Tech

Worm Moon Eclipse to take over skies before Total Solar Eclipse

People across much of the world are going to witness the Worm Moon eclipse on Monday, March 25. According to the Farmer's, sometimes nicknamed the "Worm Moon" for the worms and beetles commonly seen emerging at the beginning of spring, it is the third full Moon of 2024, according to Live Science. Resulting in a slight penumbral lunar eclipse that will make the full Moon appear dimmer as an odd-looking shadow moves across its surface, Almanac will move through Earth's outer shadow. Earth and the Sun will put the Moon on a celestial trajectory that will cause a total solar eclipse on April 8 contributing to the almost perfect alignment of the Moon. There will be two important times to observe the Moon in North America. At dusk on Sunday, March 24, when the full Worm Moon will rise in the east, it can be witnessed first. Whereas, the second observation window is a



few hours later when the full Moon will move through Earth's outer shadow, its penumbra between 12:53am and 5:32am EDT, during the early hours of Monday, March 25. Enough sunlight will be blocked from reaching the Moon to cause 95% of the lunar surface to be in shadow at the event's peak.

Health

Smoking makes you fat and not many people want you to know about this

Smoking associated with increase in abdominal fat, as per new study

Smoking is not only bad for your lungs but it may cause an increase in a type of body fat linked to serious disease, as per a new study. An increase in abdominal fat was associated with both starting smoking and spending a lifetime smoking cigarettes, as per a study in the journal Addiction, according to CNN. Lead study author Dr Germán Carrasquilla, an epidemiologist and assistant professor at Karolinska Institute in Sweden said that fur-

ther analysis showed that the increase may be in visceral fat. Visceral fat surrounds your organs within your abdomen but it is not visible. According to the Cleveland Clinic, it's normal and healthy for visceral fat to make up about 10% of your body's total fat. However, too much visceral fat can create inflammation, contributing to chronic disease. "Its location and the way it interacts with our

body's functions make it particularly dangerous," Carrasquilla said in an email. "This type of fat is strongly linked to heart disease, type 2 diabetes, and other metabolic conditions." "The results show the need for large-scale efforts to prevent and reduce smoking," he said. "Reducing one major health risk in the population will, indirectly, reduce another major health risk," Carrasquilla said in a statement.



ECP notifies newly elected Senators

ISLAMABAD: The Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) on Friday issued a notification of successful candidates of Senate by-elections held on March 14. According to the notification, Pakistan People's Party's (PPP) Syed Yousuf Raza Gilani has been notified as Senator on a general seat from Islamabad. On two vacant Senate seats from Sindh, PPP's Jam Saifullah Dharejo and Muhammad Aslam Abro have been notified as elected.

Abdul Qudoos Bizenjo of PPP, Jamiat Ulama-e-Islam-Fazl's (JUI-F) Abdul Shakoor Khan Ghaibai and Mir Dostain Khan of Pakistan Muslim League (PML-N) have been notified as Senators from Balochistan.

Need to strengthen Primary Health Care system on district level, says Minister

PESHAWAR: Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Minister Health, Syed Qasim Ali Shah has stressed the need of strengthening Primary Health Care system on district level to manage the burden of patients in major hospitals in Peshawar. Speaking during one-day training workshop for Lady Health Workers coordinators organized under the Primary Health Care Reform Project here on Friday, he emphasized improvement in the system to ensure basic healthcare facilities are provided to people in health centers and DHQ hospitals in the province. Syed Qasim Ali Shah emphasized that although there are challenges in the health system, working as a team would help in overcoming these challenges. Minister health further stated that it is his responsibility to provide the best healthcare facilities, especially in underserved areas.

He assured Lady Health Workers coordinators that all their challenges and issues would be addressed promptly, emphasizing the importance of not neglecting the health of the people. The health minister stressed the importance of treating patients as clients rather than just medical cases to ensure better facilities in hospitals. He reiterated that all doctors are part of his team and without them, he cannot achieve anything, emphasizing the need to work as a team to serve the people.

Director General Health Services Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Dr. Shaukat Ali, highlighted the importance of enhancing the skills of Lady Health Workers to strengthen the Primary Health Care system and assured continuous support for providing better health facilities to the public. Dr. Ikramullah Khan, Director of the Primary Health Care Reform Project, explained that the purpose of the workshop was to enhance the capabilities of district Lady Health Workers coordinators so they understand the project's objectives, scope, and expected outcomes. Following this workshop, better coordination between the Primary Management Unit and District Health Committee is expected, leading to timely data updates and improved reporting. Regional Director-General Hazara Division, Dr. Shah Faisal Khanzada, Director Public Health Dr. Arshad Ali, Director IMU Dr. Ijaz, and senior officers from the Health Department were also present at the occasion. INP



KARACHI: Pakistan Navy, officials handing over seized liquor worth PKR 145.6 million to Pakistan Customs. INP

Together, united, we shall overcome obstacles & chart a course towards a better & brighter future for our beloved Pakistan: President Zardari

Says people of IIOJK are enduring the worst form of repression & state-sponsored terrorism at the hands of Indian occupation forces

VOM Report

ISLAMABAD: President Asif Ali Zardari has said that together, united, we shall overcome obstacles and chart a course towards a better and brighter future for our beloved Pakistan. This was stated by President Asif Ali Zardari in his message on the occasion of Pakistan Day being celebrated today (Saturday). "On this auspicious occasion of Pakistan Day, I extend heartfelt greetings and best wishes to each one of you. Today, as we commemorate the historic passage of the Pakistan Resolution on 23rd March 1940, a day that laid the foundation for the creation of our beloved nation and an independent homeland, let us reflect on our journey, celebrate our achievements, and reaffirm our commitment to a prosperous and united Pakistan. As we revisit the pages of history, we are reminded of the vision and determination of our forefathers," President Asif Ali Zardari said.

He said that the Pakistan Resolution of 1940 marked a crucial turning point, setting the course for the establishment of Pakistan on 14th August 1947. "Today, we honour the commitment and sacrifices made by the Quaid-i-Azam Mohammad Ali Jinnah and his companions, who worked tirelessly towards transforming Allama Dr. Muhammad Iqbal's dream into reality. The journey since our independence has been marked by significant



achievements across various domains. Our armed forces, civil administration, police, and law enforcement agencies have, with unwavering commitment, ensured the safety, security, and sovereignty of our nation. Their triumphant role in the two-decade-long war against terrorism, rapid response to the call of duty in times of natural disasters, and contribution to peacekeeping missions worldwide stand out as our unflinching commitment to global peace and peaceful coexistence. Let us also recognize the unparalleled sacrifices of our Kashmiri brethren, both during the Pakistan Movement and in the ongoing struggle for the freedom of Indian Illegally Occupied Jammu & Kashmir (IIOJK)" he said.

President Asif Ali Zardari said that the people of IIOJK are enduring the worst form of repression and state-sponsored terrorism at

the hands of Indian occupation forces, aggravated by the Hindutva agenda, exemplified by the unilateral revocation of Article 370 and 35A. The key to durable peace in South Asia is the resolution of the dispute in accordance with the United Nations Security Council Resolutions, he said. Pakistan, on its part, stands committed to extending all kinds of moral and diplomatic support until the oppressed people get their right to self-determination, he said.

President Asif Ali Zardari said that similarly, Pakistan is deeply concerned over the indiscriminate killing of innocent Palestinians and persistent attacks on educational institutions and hospitals by the Israeli Defence Forces. Pakistan remains steadfast in its principled support for the establishment of an independent, viable, and contiguous state of Palestine, based on the pre-1967 borders, with Al-Quds Al-Sharif as its capital. In the spirit of Pakistan Day, let us reaffirm our commitment to democracy, justice, and equality, he said. "I urge each one of you to participate in the nation-building process actively; embracing the values of hard work, integrity, and compassion. Together, united, we shall overcome obstacles and chart a course towards a better and brighter future for our beloved Pakistan. Pakistan Zindabad! May Allah bless the Islamic Republic of Pakistan!" President Asif Ali Zardari concluded his statement.

Pakistan strongly CONDEMNS the terrorist attack in Kandahar

Mumtaz Zahra Baloch says Pakistan reiterates its strong condemnation of terrorism in all its forms & manifestations

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan has strongly condemned the terrorist attack that took place in Kandahar on 21 March 2024 and resulted in the loss of valuable lives and injuries to many others.

According to a statement issued by Foreign Office Spokesperson Mumtaz Zahra Baloch on Friday, the Government and the people of Pakistan extend their sincere condolences to the bereaved families and pray for the early recovery of the injured. She said that Pakistan reiterates its strong condemnation of terrorism in all its forms and manifestations. Terrorism is a shared concern that both countries need to address through collective efforts, she said. SABAH

Govt, which came into power as a result of selection rather than election, lacks the vision needed to address country's challenges: Sirajul Haq

LAHORE: Jamaat-e-Islami Pakistan Emir Sirajul Haq has remarked that the government, which came into power as a result of selection rather than election, lacks the vision needed to address the country's challenges. Speaking to journalists following an iftar ceremony honoring JI workers at Mansoorah on Friday, Sirajul Haq expressed skepticism that a government formed on a disputed mandate would be able to complete its tenure. Those feudal lords, families and corrupt people who remained in power for decades have been imposed again after the rigged election, he said. According to him, the ruling establishment sees IMF loans as the panacea for economic woes, while he advocates for addressing corruption, resource mismanagement, and implementing an interest-free economy to truly rectify the nation's economic issues. Sirajul Haq urged the incumbent political parties to fulfill the pledges they made to the electorate during their election campaigns. Specifically, he called for the provision of free electricity for up to 300 units—a promise made to voters. He attributed the country's heavy debt burden and lack of basic amenities to poor governance and incompetence among the ruling elite, advocating for an audit of past loans instead of seeking additional IMF assistance. Sirajul Haq vowed that JI, alongside the Pakistani populace, would vehemently oppose any new taxes or inflation resulting from IMF conditions.

He also criticized the silence of Islamic world leaders regarding the suffering of Gaza's residents at the hands of Israel, emphasizing the need for practical assistance from Islamabad to meet the expectations of the Pakistani people. SABAH



ISLAMABAD: Minister of State for IT and Telecommunication Shaza Fatima Khawaja addressing joint Press Conference.

Planning minister calls for 'proactive approach' in disaster management



ISLAMABAD: Minister for Planning, Development and Special Initiatives Professor Ahsan Iqbal on Friday urged the National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA) to adopt a 'proactive approach' to cope with any natural calamity-like situation in the future, saying "Pakistan is one of the most vulnerable countries affected by climate change."

The minister made these remarks during his visit to the National Emergencies Operation Center (NEOC), where he received a detailed briefing by the Chairman of NDMA Lieutenant General Inam Haider Malik, according to a Planning Ministry news release.

at the occasion, Ahsan Iqbal highlighted that in 2022, Pakistan faced unprecedented devastation due to torrential rains and flooding in most parts of the country, affecting 33 million people and causing economic losses worth \$30 billion. In response, the government devised a Resilient, Recovery, Rehabilitation, and Recon-

struction (4RF) framework, aimed at effective coordination and participation among federal and provincial governments, development partners, donors, international and national NGOs, and academic and private sectors, the minister said explaining the key features of the 4RF framework developed in the aftermath of the 2022 flood.

"We should adopt a proactive approach when it comes to disaster rehabilitation, disaster management, and preparedness while utilizing data," he emphasized.

Although Pakistan's carbon emission is less than one percent, it remains among the countries most vulnerable to climatic disasters. Pakistan presented this case before COP27 and COP28, respectively.

During the briefing, the minister underscored the importance of provinces ensuring no encroachment alongside rivers, nullahs and streams. APP

Bilawal felicitates nation on Pakistan Day

ISLAMABAD: Chairman Pakistan People's Party (PPP) Bilawal Bhutto Zardari extended warm felicitations to the nation on the occasion of Pakistan Day.

He emphasizes that on March 23rd, the nation honors the visionary foresight, sacrifices, and unwavering determination of its forebears. They labored tirelessly to establish a homeland where freedom, justice, and equality reign supreme.

According to the press release issued by the Media Cell Bilawal House, he termed Pakistan Day as a tribute to the resilience of our founding fathers and our collective journey towards progress.

He reiterated his party's unwavering commitment to upholding their ideals, particularly the vision of Quaid-i-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah.

"On this historic occasion, let us honor the unwavering determination of our martyred leaders, Shaheed Zulfiqar Ali Bhutto and Shaheed Mohtarma Benazir Bhutto, who fearlessly championed the rights of the people and sacrificed their lives for the noble cause," he said, adding that their legacy serves as a guiding light towards the journey of fulfilling the dreams of founding fathers. APP

Gwadar attack martyrs laid to rest with full military honours

RAWALPINDI: The Pakistan Army soldiers, who embraced martyrdom while thwarting the terrorist attack in Gwadar Port Authority Colony on March 20, were laid to rest in their native areas with full military honours. According to the Inter Services Public Relations (ISPR) news release on Friday, Sepoy Bahar Khan (age: 35 years, resident of Dera Ghazi Khan district) and Sepoy Imran Ali (age: 28 years, resident of Khairpur district) were laid in their native towns whereas the relatives of the martyrs, soldiers of Pakistan Army and elders of the area participated in the funeral prayers.

The armed forces of Pakistan stand by the nation and are determined to thwart all attempts by terrorists to sabotage peace and stability.

"These sacrifices of our brave sons strengthen our resolve to fight against the scourge of terrorism. The war against terrorism will continue till the end of the scourge of terrorism from the motherland," the ISPR said. PR



Grand Mufti of Bosnia & Herzegovina say prayers at Faisal Masjid, prays for Palestine

ISLAMABAD: The esteemed Grand Mufti of the Islamic Community of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Dr. Husein ef Kavazovic offered Friday prayer at the Faisal Masjid.

At the Faisal Masjid, the Grand Mufti was received by Incharge Protocol & Public Relations of International Islamic University, Islamabad (IIUI) Mr. Nasir Farid who extended a warm welcome to him.

He also conveyed heartfelt congratulations by the President IIUI, Dr. Hathal Homoud Alotaibi for his forthcoming receipt of the Sitare e Quaid e Azam Award on March 23rd, conferred by the President of Pakistan.

Dr. Husein ef Kavazovic thanked IIUI President for the warm wishes and felicitations.

The Friday prayer at Faisal Masjid was also attended by the Ambassador of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Emin Cohodarevic, officials of International Islamic

University, Diplomats of various Muslim countries, prominent religious and political figures, and thousands of faithful from twin cities.

The esteemed Grand Mufti prayed for the stability of the

Islamic world, the progress of Pakistan and Muslims of Gaza that May Allah end their hardships. He also expressed appreciation for the deep bonds of friendship between the peoples of Bosnia and Pakistan. INP



Awais Leghari seeks USAID support for Pakistan's conservation initiatives

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Power, Sardar Awais Ahmad Khan Leghari on Friday sought United States Agency for International Development (USAID) support for the implementation of conservation initiatives in Pakistan.

During a meeting with US Ambassador to Pakistan, Donald Blome, the minister reiterated Pakistan's commitment to clean energy. He also requested US assistance in unlocking the Green Climate Fund to prepare for impending environmental challenges.

The minister highlighted the key parameters of Pakistan's upcoming "Fan Replacement Program," which is set to be initiated shortly for energy conservation.

The US Ambassador expressed interest from US-based companies and the DFC in investing in renewable energy projects, aligning with Pakistan's goal to double the share of renewables in its energy mix over the next 8-10 years under Sustainable Development Goal 7.

The Ambassador stressed the importance of the upcoming Economic Dialogue in the USA and requested a strong presence from the Pakistani side. APP