



The purpose of the import is to ensure food security in the country, increase productivity for country's farmers, and reduce prices significantly, thereby stabilizing the local urea fertilizer market

Federal Minister for Industries and Production  
**Rana Tanveer**

## Ringleaders among 3 terrorists killed in Khyber IBO



RAWALPINDI: Intensifying actions to eliminate the menace of terrorism in the country, security forces killed three terrorists including two ringleaders Sohail aka Azmat and Haji Gul alias Zarkavi in an intelligence-based operation (IBO)

in Khyber district, the military's media wing said on Thursday.

The operation was conducted by the security forces on April 24-25 on the reported presence of terrorists in the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa's tribal district, the Inter-Services Public Relations (ISPR) said in a statement. Security forces eliminated three terrorists after intense exchange of fire, as well as busted their hideout during the operation, it added.

The ISPR further said that weapons and ammunition were also recovered from the killed terrorists, who remained actively involved in numerous terrorist activities in the area.

"Locals of the area appreciated the operation. A sanitisation operation is being carried out to eliminate any other terrorist found in the area as security forces are determined to wipe out the menace of terrorism from the country," it concluded.

Separately, the senior army commanders visited the families of eight martyred Customs' officials who laid their lives in the line of duty in Dera Ismail Khan in two separate incidents that took place earlier this month.

In due recognition of this selfless sacrifice in fight against illegal spectrum and as an expression of solidarity, the commanders met the families of the martyred officials at their homes to express condolences, pay tribute and pledge unflinching support on behalf of Chief of Army Staff (COAS) General Syed Asim Munir.

The families expressed their gratitude to the Pakistan Army for the support and respect.

The military's media wing said: "Shuhadas and Ghazis are our pride and their respect and honour is binding on each Pakistani. We must never forget that the peace and freedom we enjoy today is due to the ultimate sacrifices rendered by these brave sons of soil." "We as nation salute Shuhada families for sacrificing their loved ones for Pakistan," it concluded. PR



ISLAMABAD: Danish Ambassador to Pakistan H.E. Jakob Linulf and CEO APM Terminals Keith Svendsen along with his team called on Federal Minister for Maritime Affairs Qaiser Ahmed Sheikh. APP

## Identification specifics required to know about lawmakers put on travel stop lists: Atta Tarar

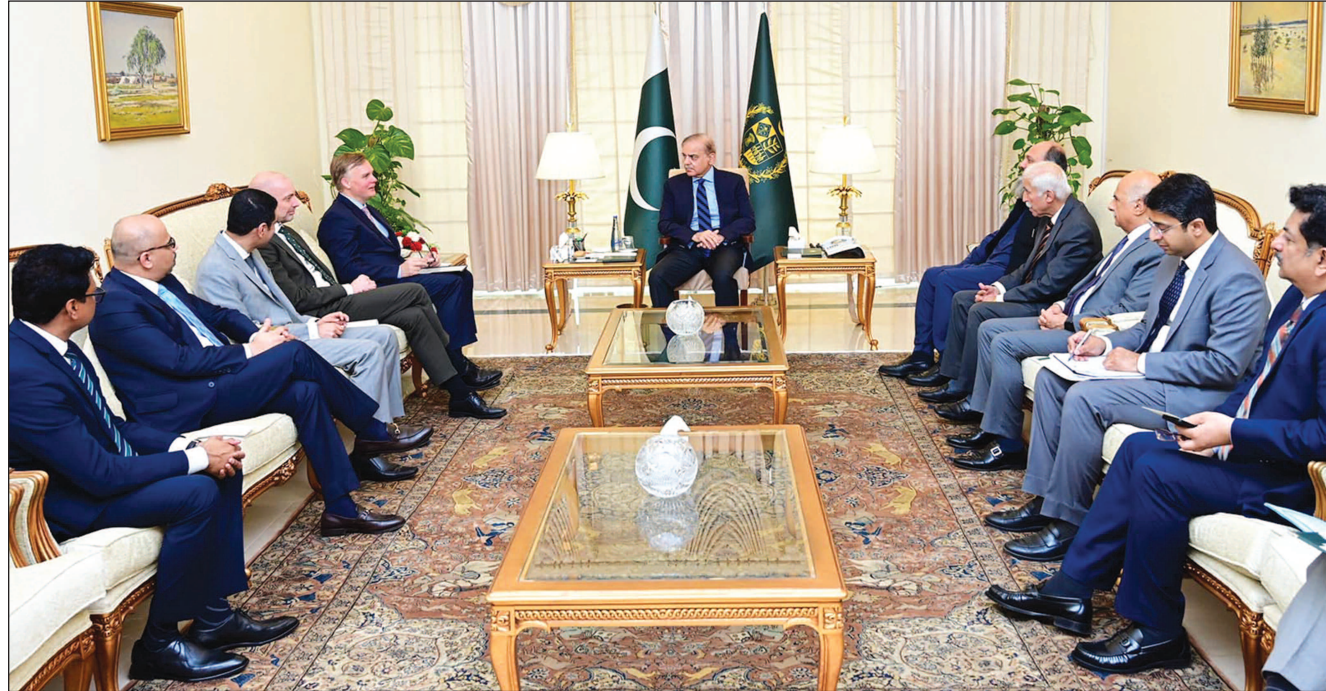


ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Information and Broadcasting Attaullah Tarar Thursday informed the National Assembly that for providing exact information about the names of legislators, if any, put on the travel stop lists, specific identification details like CNIC number or father's name were required. Due to extensive nature of the lists, identification specifics would make it feasible to provide details about the lawmakers included in them, the minister said.

He was responding to a calling attention notice regarding non-removal of the names of members of the National Assembly and provincial legislators from the travel stop lists, including Exit Control List (ECL), Provisional National Identification List (PNIL) and Black List (BL).

He emphasized that a list of lawmakers containing their names, parents' names, Computerized National Identity Cards (CNICs) and other details was required so that the reasons for inclusion of their names in the travel stop lists could be furnished. Referring to the criticism by the Leader of Opposition leader, the minister reminded them of their actions when they were in power. He called for showing respect for parliamentary norms instead of engaging in such criticism.

The opposition leaders should better provide a list of their members, if any, put on such lists if they were serious in resolving the matter. He clarified that names were not added to the ECL unilaterally or arbitrarily, rather a specific process and procedure was followed for the purpose. Investigation agencies forwarded the names of people for inclusion in such lists. The minister recalled the past instances of placing several members of his party, including Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif, on the Exit Control List and others lists. APP



ISLAMABAD: A delegation of the world's leading shipping and logistics company A.P. Møller - Mærsk led by CEO of APM Terminals and board member of A.P. Møller - Mærsk, Keith Svendsen calls on Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif. APP

## Govt committed to empower youth with modern tech, IT: PM

VOM Report

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif Thursday said the government was committed to empower youth with modern technology and provide them latest vocational training. He was speaking at an event organized by Ministry of Information Technology on occasion of International Girls in Information Communication Technology (ICT) Day, to recognize contribution of female entrepreneurs in the field. He said, "It is our hope and we expect that youth will become entrepreneurs and open offices in cities like Karachi, Lahore and in other places in Pakistan and other countries like Saudi Arabia and information technology will become the biggest foreign exchange earner for Pakistan."

He said, "We will commit all investments required to achieve our goals in the field of information technology so that youth can become bread earners for their families and foreign exchange earners for Pakistan." He underlined the need for decreasing gender discrimination in society, adding in Saudi Arabia women were forty percent of the workforce working in shopping malls, business houses, universities, and other places.

The prime minister said Pakistan was blessed with huge human resource in the shape of highly talented youth population of 15 to 30 years. Youth were a great asset of Pakistan and it was an opportunity and challenge to utilize this young population for the progress of Pakistan, he remarked. He said fintech was playing an important role

## PM launches Shuhada Package for martyred federal govt officials; resolves to eliminate smuggling

ABBOTTABAD: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif on Thursday launched the Shuhada Package to support the families of the federal government officials martyred in the line of duty, comprising cash assistance, housing allowance as well as free education and medical treatment. The prime minister, who visited the family of late Customs Inspector Syed Hasnain Ali Tirmizi, who was martyred in a firing incident in Dera Ismail Khan a few days ago, handed over a cheque under the Shuhada Package to the grieved family and assured his government's all-out efforts for the security of the customs officials serving to purge the country of smuggling.

Offering Fateha for the martyred soul and sympathizing with the bereaved family, he said that the Shuhada Package, earlier announced by the Punjab government, had now been extended to the federal government and could be revised further consid-

ering the country's financial position. Under the package, the family members of a martyred sepoy would get Rs 10 million cash assistance and Rs 13.5 million housing allowance besides free education and medical treatment. The family of a martyred customs inspector would be entitled for a Rs15 million cash and Rs25 million housing allowance along with free education and medical facilities.

The package will also apply to civilian officials, police and law enforcement agencies, the prime minister said who was accompanied by Minister for Information and Broadcasting Attaullah Tarar, PML-N leaders, and senior government officers.

During interaction with the family members, the prime minister showed compassion and affection to the orphaned children and called them the "children of a hero" and his father the "father of a hero" of whom the whole nation felt proud.

in increasing gross domestic product (GDP) of countries in the region including Gulf states as with its help people were opening bank accounts in minutes and fast business transactions were taking place without any delay. He said Pakistan would gain a bright future by utilizing emerging technologies like

artificial intelligence and robotics. Earlier he gave away awards to women entrepreneurs and freelancers for their contributions in the field of information technology. He expressed hope that many more young entrepreneurs would emerge in future and win laurels for the country.

## Romina meets ADB Climate specialist Nathan Rive



ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister's coordinator on climate change and environmental coordination here on Thursday held a meeting with Asian Development Bank Mission led by senior climate change specialist Nathan A Rive. Both sides discussed strengthening of climate finance wing of the ministry by ironing out overlapping and setting up resources for the said wing, a news release said. It was agreed that the Asian Development Bank would provide technical assistance and trainings by the climate financing experts. It was also decided to ensure close collaboration and joint meeting of the Asian Development Bank, The World Bank and FCDO to cope with challenges of climate crisis from technical perspectives. VOM Report

## Divorced from ground reality: Pakistan rejects US State Deptt's country report on HR practices

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan on Thursday categorically rejected the recently released 2023 Country Report on human rights practices issued by the US State Department terming its contents "unfair, based on inaccurate information and completely divorced from the ground reality." The Foreign Office spokesperson Mumtaz Zahra Bloch, in a statement, said that the US State Department's annual exercises of preparing such unsolicited reports lacked objectivity and remained inherently flawed in their methodology.

"These reports use a domestic social lens to judge human rights in other countries in a politically biased manner. This year's report is once again conspicuous by its lack of objectivity and politicization of the international human rights agenda," she said. She said the report clearly demonstrated the double standards thus undermining the international human rights discourse.

The spokesperson said that it was deeply concerning that a report purported to highlight human rights situations around the world ignored or downplayed the most urgent hotspots of gross human rights violations such as in Gaza and Indian Occupied Jammu & Kashmir. "Only a politically motivated report can ignore the alarming situation in Gaza, the weaponization of humanitarian assistance and the massacre of over 33,000 civilians. Silence of the United States on the continuing genocide in Gaza runs counter to the stated objectives behind the so-called country reports on human rights," she remarked.

The spokesperson reiterated that Pakistan remained steadfast in its commitment to strengthen its own human rights framework, constructively engage to promote international human rights agenda and uphold fairness and objectivity in the international human rights discourse. APP

## Pakistan's reform actions would lead to improved business confidence & attract investments to Pakistan: Finance Minister

Muhammad Aurangzeb says govt committed to facilitate an environment conducive to business

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Finance and Revenue Senator Muhammad Aurangzeb held a meeting with Keith Svendsen, CEO of APM Terminals accompanied by Ambassador Jakob Linulf, along with representative from APM Terminals, at Finance Division on Thursday.

The meeting was attended by Secretary Maritime Affairs, representatives from APM, and senior officers from FBR and Finance Division. The Finance Minister commenced the discussion by expressing gratitude to the Danish Government

for its commitment, notably in the form of the grant for flood-affected communities in 2022 and the \$3.8 million grant pledged during the Geneva pledges. He emphasized the need to capitalize on this momentum to further enhance economic ties between the two nations.

The Finance Minister further apprised the representatives about the government's reform agenda and expressed optimism that Pakistan's reform actions would lead to improved business confidence and attract investments to Pakistan. He also expressed



that the government is committed to facilitate an environment conducive to business and is keen to explore opportunities for future projects and investments with APM, particularly in the maritime sector.

Keith Svendsen expressed that APM Terminals is pleased to engage with the Government of Pakistan to discuss the ongoing and future projects in Pakistan. He stated that the company sees great potential in the Pakistani market and is committed to enhance its investment and operations to support the

country's trade, affirming confidence in the country's growth prospects and commitment to its development agenda. Additionally, the matter regarding the need of improvisation in customs rules and regulations for efficient execution of the maritime affairs in a seamless manner was also discussed. The Finance Minister assured his support in this regard. Both sides acknowledged the importance of continuous dialogue and collaboration between public and private sectors to further boost the economic ties. SABAH

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## The NFC debate

SADIA JAVED

Once again there is debate surrounding the National Finance Commission (NFC) Award, driven by short-term fiscal concerns and external pressures. It is important to acknowledge the pivotal role the NFC Award plays in ensuring fiscal equity, decentralization, and stability within Pakistan's economic landscape. The NFC Award, enshrined as a constitutional provision, embodies the principles of fiscal federalism by facilitating the distribution of financial resources between the federal government and the provinces. Through its allocation process, which considers factors such as population, revenue generation, and developmental needs, the NFC Award promotes equitable growth and development across diverse regions of the country. Critics often contend that provincial allocations are unrealistic and that provinces fail to effectively utilize their allocated resources. However, this overlooks the substantial progress made by provinces in enhancing governance, service delivery, and infrastructure development with their NFC allocations. Provinces have strategically invested in critical sectors such as education, healthcare, and infrastructure, thereby driving socio-economic progress at the grassroots level. Moreover, the NFC Award serves as a bulwark against centralization, empowering provinces to exercise greater autonomy in resource management and decision-making. This decentralization fosters innovation, responsiveness, and accountability, as provinces tailor policies and programmes to address local priorities and challenges effectively. Attempting to tamper with the NFC Award would undermine the principles of intergovernmental fiscal relations and disrupt the delicate balance of power between the federal government and the provinces. Any such endeavour to roll back provincial allocations would not only be shortsighted but also undermine the constitutional framework that underpins Pakistan's federal structure. Instead of solely focusing on short-term fiscal challenges, policymakers should prioritize strengthening the implementation mechanisms and accountability frameworks associated with the NFC Award. This involves enhancing revenue mobilization efforts, improving fiscal discipline, and promoting transparency in resource allocation and utilization. Furthermore, exploring innovative financing mechanisms, such as public-private partnerships and development bonds, can help augment fiscal resources without compromising the integrity of the NFC Award. Essentially, the NFC Award stands as a cornerstone of Pakistan's fiscal architecture, embodying principles of equity, decentralization, and fiscal autonomy. Preserving and reinforcing the NFC framework is essential for fostering inclusive growth, empowering provinces, and safeguarding the integrity of Pakistan's federal structure. Rather than viewing the NFC Award as a liability, it should be embraced as a catalyst for sustainable development and shared prosperity across the nation. The NFC Award is deeply rooted in Pakistan's constitutional framework, representing a commitment to equitable resource distribution and decentralized governance. Established under Article 160 of the constitution, the award has undergone several iterations since its inception, reflecting the evolving needs and priorities of the nation. Through its allocation formula, the NFC Award aims to address regional disparities, promote socio-economic development, and uphold the principles of fiscal federalism. One of the fundamental objectives of the NFC Award is to ensure fiscal equity among the federating units. By distributing financial resources based on factors such as population, revenue generation, and developmental needs, the NFC Award seeks to mitigate disparities in resource endowment and promote balanced growth across regions. This approach acknowledges the diverse socio-economic realities and developmental challenges faced by different provinces, thereby fostering inclusivity and social cohesion. Moreover, the NFC Award plays a crucial role in promoting decentralization and empowering provincial governments to address local priorities and challenges effectively. By devolving financial resources and decision-making authority to the provincial level, the NFC enhances governance, accountability, and service delivery at the grassroots level. Provinces are better positioned to tailor policies and programmes to meet the unique needs of their populations, thereby promoting responsiveness and efficiency in governance. Critics of the NFC often highlight issues related to the utilization of allocated resources by provincial governments. They argue that provinces may not always utilize their share of resources effectively, leading to inefficiencies and suboptimal outcomes in service delivery and infrastructure development. While there may be instances of mismanagement or underperformance at the provincial level, it is essential to recognize the strides made by provinces in utilizing NFC allocations to address key socio-economic challenges. Many provinces have made significant investments in critical sectors such as education, healthcare, and infrastructure, resulting in tangible improvements in human development indicators and quality of life for their citizens. Furthermore, the NFC Award serves as a mechanism to safeguard against centralization. By delineating the respective financial responsibilities of the federal government and provinces, the award ensures a fair and equitable distribution of powers and resources in line with the principles of federalism. This decentralization of fiscal authority enables provinces to make informed decisions and allocate resources according to local priorities, thereby enhancing governance effectiveness and accountability. Attempting to roll back or tamper with the NFC Award would not only undermine the principles of fiscal federalism but also jeopardize the stability and integrity of Pakistan's federal structure. Any such action would disrupt the delicate balance of power between the federal government and provinces, potentially leading to increased centralization and erosion of provincial autonomy. Instead of resorting to short-term fixes or ad-hoc measures, policymakers should focus on strengthening the implementation mechanisms and accountability frameworks associated with the NFC Award. This entails enhancing revenue mobilization efforts, improving fiscal discipline, and promoting transparency in resource allocation and utilization.

The writer is an MPA from Sindh and information secretary of the PPP's Sindh Women's Wing.



Muhammad Waqar Rana

# Pakistan can make a fresh start

The meltdown of Pakistan's economy needs immediate attention. Political unrest and instability are causing tremendous loss to the economy and straining the federation. An unremitting wave of terrorism has resurfaced that now seriously undermines peace and stability. Soldiers and officers of the armed forces are laying down their lives to protect the sovereignty and integrity of Pakistan. This marathon war on terror that started with the American invasion of Afghanistan in the aftermath of 9/11 spilled over to Pakistan's soil and continued with brief intervals of peace in the troubled areas alongside north-western borders. Initially, a coalition support fund partially covered the cost of this war, but it was discontinued. The economic impact of this war broke the back of the country's economy and pushed it into a debt trap. This debt now poses an existential threat. To pay off foreign and local debt, Pakistan needs more debt and also needs to further tax and increase the cost of utilities which a recessive economy can hardly afford. The state is focused on the war on terror and does not have the resources to cater to social and economic uplift and the well-being of the people, particularly the burgeoning youth that needs education, jobs and a decent living. The cumulative and consequential effect of all these multiple problems is political instability and an undefined discontent that finds its way into political agitations and social polarization that pose a challenge for policymakers. Pakistan's economy and politics are intertwined. Since 1947, hardly any political government has completed its tenure. There was either dissolution of governments or midterm orchestrated changes. Economic growth is dependent on political stability and rule of law which pave the way for economic planning. Prosperity comes from economic growth which helps in mitigating discontent. The most critical aspect of Pakistan's political economy is ownership, legitimacy and accountability for policy decisions. There has

always been confusion in this area because of an overlap and conflict of interest between civil governments and the establishment. For the large part, Pakistan has had authoritarian regimes and even after the transfer of power to civilian setups shadows of authoritarianism continued to linger over the policy domain. Owing to its geopolitical location and a willing role in the cold war due to economic vulnerability, water disputes with India, and the wars over Kashmir, Pakistan became a security state for which it heavily depended on foreign military aid and loans. Its limited economy could not sustain a huge military apparatus. There was no industrial base to meet the defence requirements. Consequently, Pakistan witnessed a permanent presence of the establishment in politics and its influence on economic and foreign policy and also in the allocation of resources. Moreover, the lack of sincere political leadership with the competence to share responsibility and handle these complex issues of economy and security had a cumulative effect on stability. There is a perennial trust deficit amongst the institutions and politicians. Pakistan is now wholly dependent on foreign loans – at a time when economic standing and democratic credentials are the new measures of respect among the comity of nations. But every challenge also brings an opportunity for reflection and consequent change. Civil-military relations are a complex area. In the interest of Pakistan, however, there is a need to converge conflicting interests. The whole policy domain needs to be reviewed and reformed. In the first place, it requires separation of the decision-making process from the implementation domain. All past experiments to manage and control this tricky area, judged from their results, have utterly failed because of an unwillingness to correct the beaten course. It is thus imperative to recalibrate the roles of different stakeholders through dialogue and most certainly to involve the people of Pakistan with their political judgment. The world has changed. It is time to reassess all fundamental presumptions that hitherto have been applied while making decisions. Pakistan's future lies in a true and real democracy, rule of law and supremacy of the constitution and civilian institutions. When the time for change has come, sticking to beaten paths never leads to the destination. A paradigm shift is needed in the approach. Trust in people and their abilities is required to bring Pakistan out of the ongoing economic and political crises because that will strengthen civilian institutions. In an interdependent world, state institutions should endeavour to create an investment-friendly atmosphere. Concrete steps should be taken to secure peace, security of persons and investment for which rule of law, independent judicial system and freedoms of the press and speech are to be ensured to encourage new ideas. History is not wanting with examples of when nations faced with similar situations entered a grand dialogue and all stakeholders agreed on and charted a future course that led them to horizons of success. South Korea, Indonesia, South Africa and many European countries did that. It is, therefore, necessary that the primacy of the constitution is accepted and recognized, and the roles of all stakeholders are clearly brought within it. Once a national economic agenda and policy are defined and agreed upon, Pakistan is bound to prosper. The following steps are suggested for a fresh start: one, the dichotomy of de jure and de facto power needs to end. The habit of outright denial of facts and truth causes error of judgment. The legitimacy of actions and requisite trust for attracting foreign and local investment demands that the primacy of the constitution is not only accepted but implemented with sincerity. No deviance is justified under any kind of necessity. Two, foreign and economic policies are thoroughly reviewed and redirected. Parliamentary oversight is ensured to create checks and balances. A culture of deliberation and debate is to be encouraged to stop autocratic rule. Relationships with all neighbours are normalized and a policy of non-interference is strictly followed. This is an age of soft power. Mutual economic interests are the new weapons to secure territorial integrity. Three, the constitution of Pakistan used to be a consensus political document but due to several amendments made therein during the past military regimes it has become unworkable in many areas, causing a strain and hindering its obedience which does not come only from reverence but also when it actually guarantees protection to all. It needs review to create a balance in favour of civilian power. Four, the federal and provincial governments must cut down their sizes by changing their roles from managers to regulators. The sole purpose of forming a civil government is to secure the life, liberty and happiness of the people. When people live in abject poverty and under constant fear and are burdened with heavy taxes to finance inefficient governments then freedom has no meaning. Freedom can only be secured through truth which remains elusive in our society. Five, we need law for taxation. There is no law for appropriation. Money can be expended with the simple authentication of the prime minister or the chief minister. Hundreds of billions of rupees are expended on false and fake development schemes. The attitude towards public money is of plunder and not of trust. This area needs to be fully revamped. And finally, education, health and industries are provincial subjects. Provinces receive hundreds of billions of rupees out of federal revenue under the National Finance Commission Award and almost 57.50 per cent of revenue goes to the provinces. There are no provincial finance commissions. Chief ministers can spend all money in one place. There is an inequitable use of public money. It is time to provide for separate taxation powers for the federal and provincial governments with checks and balances on the spending power.

The writer is an advocate of the Supreme Court and former additional attorney general for Pakistan. He can be reached at: mwaqarrana@yahoo.com

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 1997 election resulted in conservatives receiving a large majority of the vote and winning enough seats in parliament to change the constitution to eliminate the checks and balances that restrained the prime minister's

power. Institutional challenges to authority of the new prime minister, Nawaz Sharif, were led by the civilian President Farooq Leghari, Chairman Joint Chiefs of Staff Committee General Jehangir Karamat, Chief of Naval

Staff Admiral Fasih Bokharie, and Chief Justice Sajad Ali Shah. These were countered and all four were forced to resign, Chief Justice Shah doing so after the Supreme Court was stormed by Sharif partisans.[154]

Problems with India further escalated in 1998, when television reported Indian nuclear explosions, code-named Operation Shakti.

To be continued....

## Showbiz

# Julia Garner nabs starring role in 'Weapons' with Josh Brolin

Julia Garner scored three Emmy's for her performance in Netflix' crime drama 'Ozark'



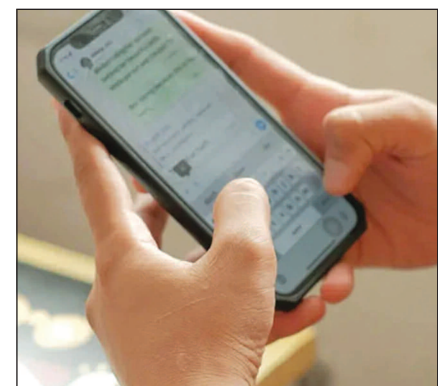
Julia Garner is booked to helm the starring role in Zach Cregger's upcoming horror movie Weapons. According to The Hollywood Reporter, Garner, emerging quickly as one of the most in-demand actresses in Hollywood, will star opposite Josh Brolin in the upcoming movie. The horror thriller penned by the filmmaker himself will kick off its production in mid-May in Atlanta. Moreover, the new project marked the reunion of the Barbarian producing team. Cregger will be joined by Roy Lee of Vertigo and J.D. Lifshitz and Raphael Margules of BoulderLight Pictures. In addition to the upcoming horror flick, Garner, 30, has bagged three

Emmy awards for her widely acclaimed Netflix drama Ozark. Since her crime drama ended, she has been scoring big-studio gigs. She recently wrapped up production of an upcoming psychological thriller, Apartment 7A, which will premiere on Paramount. Meanwhile, she is currently showing off her acting chops opposite Christopher Abbott under Leigh Whannell's directorial talent on Blumhouse/Universal's Wolf Man. Additionally, she has secured a role in Fantastic Four as Silver Surfer. Pedro Pascal, Vanessa Kirby, Ebon Moss-Bachrach, and Joseph Quinn will also star in the upcoming Marvel instalment.

## Tech

# How to use Meta AI to create images on WhatsApp?

Meta has entered the artificial intelligence race (AI) by introducing its chatbot, Meta AI. You can now use the chatbot across all of Meta's social media platforms such as Facebook, Instagram and WhatsApp, Techloy reported. The Meta AI chatbot also lets you create images with a simple prompt "imagine". You can use the feature to create images out of personal references or to make business advertisements by providing a description of what you want. How to create images with Meta AI? Open Meta AI chat on WhatsApp. If you can't find it, just write "Meta AI" on the search bar. In the chatbot, write "imagine" followed by what you want it to create. You can also use this feature in your personal or group chats. To use, just open any chat you want to send, Type @ and tag Meta AI. Followed by imagine and your text prompt.



Tap on Send and your generated image will be displayed in the chat. As Meta AI is a new feature, it is still evolving and may not be the most accurate at times. By trial and error, you can create unique and engaging images to share on WhatsApp.

## Health

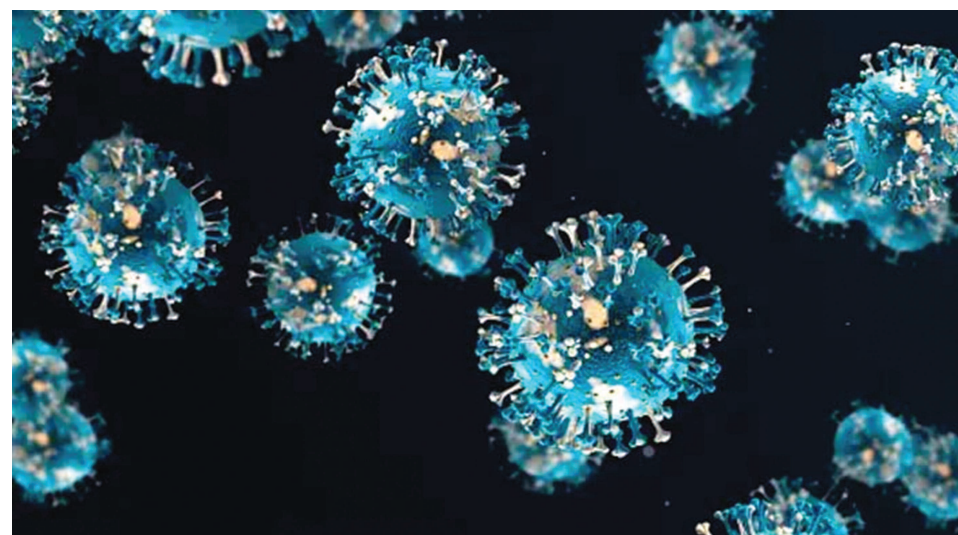
# Vaccine fighting all viruses finally created

UC Riverside scientists make one-for-all virus vaccine

UC Riverside researchers have created a novel vaccine employing RNA, that is safe for use by immunocompromised individuals and effective against all strains of the virus. Each year, scientists attempt to forecast which four influenza strains will be most common in the forthcoming flu season. And each year, in the hopes that the experts have created the injection accurately, individuals wait in line to receive their updated vaccination, according to SciTech Daily. Similarly, Covid vaccines have been redesigned to focus on sub-variants of the most common strains that are now in circulation in the US. This novel approach targets a portion of the viral

genome shared by all virus strains, thus it would not be necessary to produce all these distinct doses. A report released today in the Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences describes the vaccine, how it works, and a demonstration of its efficacy in mice. "What I want to emphasise about this vaccine strategy is that it is broad," said UCR virologist and paper author Rong Hai. "It is broadly applicable to any number of viruses, broadly effective against any variant of a virus, and safe for a broad spectrum of people. This could be the universal vaccine that we have been looking for."

Additionally, the researchers say there is little chance of a virus mutating to avoid this vaccination strategy. "Viruses may mutate in regions not targeted by traditional vaccines. However, we are targeting their whole genome with thousands of small RNAs. They cannot escape this," Hai said. Moreover, the researchers believe they can "cut and paste" this strategy to make a one-and-done vaccine for any number of viruses. "There are several well-known human pathogens; dengue, SARS, Covid. They all have similar viral functions," Ding said, adding that "this should be applicable to these viruses in an easy transfer of knowledge."





## Islamabad Tennis Club demolished by CDA amid anti-encroachment action at public park: Tarar



ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Law and Justice, Senator Azam Nazeer Tarar on Thursday said the Capital Development Authority (CDA) has demolished the Islamabad Tennis Club during its anti-encroachment action since the establishment was built at a national park.

Responding to Senator Taj Haider of Pakistan People's Party Parliamentarians (PPP)'s query pertaining to Islamabad Tennis Complex which was demolished by CDA late at night.

Senator Azam Nazeer Tarar said that the matter was taken up to the Minister for Interior, whereas the report would be issued on the matter that would further reveal the facts.

"If you write to the Interior Minister, the matter will be resolved. There is no double standard against any province. It is not permissible to think like that. We are here for further support," he responded to Senator Taj Haider in response to his allegations of discrimination to Sindh province.

Senator Taj Haider whole taking the floor informed that the tennis tournament was organized every year in the memory of Shaheed Benazir Bhutto, and players from many countries used to participate in it. "CDA had no court order or any other reason and it bulldozed the Club building. A funding of Rs4.5 million was given by the Sindh government for the event," he said.

He accused that the CDA officials asked him to hold the tournament in Sindh province. "I said Benazir is the chain of four provinces. However, the attitude towards Sindh is not the same as for other federating units," he said.

He urged the House to send the matter to the Parliamentary committee as the initial report was given which was a lie.

## Awais Leghari meets Chief Minister Sindh

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Power Division Awais Ahmad Khan Leghari met with Chief Minister Sindh Syed Murad Ali Shah here Thursday at the Sindh House.

During the meeting they agreed to cooperate in the prevention of electricity theft, said a statement. The Sindh Chief Minister assured full cooperation in the ongoing campaign against electricity pilferage. The minister thanked the chief minister for his support in the national cause. APP



ISLAMABAD: Ms. Kanni Wignaraja, United Nations Assistant Secretary General (ASG), Asia, and the Pacific calls on Federal Minister for Economic Affairs Ahad Khan Cheema.

## Ahsan Iqbal chairs CPEC JWGs, 13th JCC review-meeting

VOM Report

ISLAMABAD: Minister for Planning, Development and Special Initiatives Ahsan Iqbal on Thursday chaired a review-meeting of China-Pakistan Economic Corridor Joint Working Groups (CPEC-JWGs) and the 13th Joint Cooperation Committee (JCC).

The meeting, attended among others by Secretary Ministry of Planning Awais Manzoor Sumra, Additional Secretary Kamran Rehman Khan and senior officials, reviewed the progress on the recommendations made during the 12th JCC and JWGs held last year.

The minister was briefed on the preparations for the 13th JCC and the progress on projects such as ML-1, Karakoram Highway Phase-2 Dera Ismail Khan-Zhob and Karachi Circular Railway. Ahsan Iqbal informed the meeting that Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif would soon visit China to further strengthen economic ties between the two countries. He directed the officials con-



cerned to finalize a strategy to ensure fast-track implementation on Memorandums of Understanding (MoUs) and other agreements on priority basis.

The minister warned that no hurdles in the implementation of CPEC agreements would

be tolerated, directing the officials concerned to ensure regular meetings of the JWGs. He also asked the relevant ministries to ensure participation in the decision-making process and to prepare a solid agenda for the 13th JCC.

## 7 ordinances laid in Senate

ISLAMABAD: As many as seven ordinances including Pakistan Broadcasting Corporation (Amendment) Ordinance 2023, Pakistan National Shipping Corporation (Amendment) Ordinance 2023, Pakistan Postal Services Management Board (Amendment) Ordinance 2023, National Highway Authority (Amendment) Ordinance 2023, the Criminal Laws (Amendment) Ordinance 2023, the Privatization Commission (Amendment) Ordinance

2023 and the Establishment of Telecommunication Appellate Tribunal Ordinance 2023 were laid in the Senate.

These ordinances were laid in the Senate under Article 89 of the constitution for information only as they have already been laid in the National Assembly and referred to the committees concerned.

All the ordinance except the Pakistan Postal Services Management (Amendment) Ordinance

were laid in the House by Minister for Law and Justice Azam Nazir Tarar on behalf of the respective ministers. Minister for Maritime Qaiser Ahmed Sheikh laid the Pakistan Postal Services Management (Amendment) Ordinance 2023 in the House. Azam Nazir Tarar told the House that these ordinances were only laid for information of the house under the Article 89 of the constitution. INP

## Meta delegation calls on Shaza Fatima



ISLAMABAD: A two-member delegation of Meta called on Minister of State for IT and Telecommunication Shaza Fatima Khawaja in her office on Thursday.

The delegation comprised Dania Mukhtar, Head of Public Policy for Pakistan at Meta and Taabeer Ather, Manager Public Policy for Pakistan.

working and different campaigns in Pakistan including Digital Safety Campaign, Election Education Campaign, Anti-Scams Campaign and Digital Literacy Program. Minister of State for IT and Telecom Shaza Fatima Khawaja appreciated the working of Meta and ensured her full support to the company. APP

The meeting discussed in details responsible use of social media platforms, said a news release. The delegation briefed Minister of State for IT about Meta

## President Raisi thanked Pakistani people for warm reception: Pirzada

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Housing and Works Riaz Hussain Pirzada Thursday informed the National Assembly that Iranian President Ebrahim Raisi had thanked President Asif Ali Zardari, Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif, the parliament and people of Pakistan for their warm welcome to him during his visit to the country. Speaking in the House, the minister said that the Iranian President had expressed his pleasure and feelings about the visit during a meeting with him.

He said that President Raisi expressed his regret that he should not have visited Lahore and Karachi as the people there faced traffic issues and congestion on the roads due to the protocol and security deployment.

Lauding the Iranian nation's strong resolve against colonial powers, he said the Iranian youth had rendered great sacrifices for the defence of their motherland, setting a motivational precedent for others like Pakistanis to follow suit with the same determination to stand firm against adversaries and challenges.

The minister urged the treasury and opposition benches to run the affairs of Parliament with dignity so that it could play a leadership role in overcoming the challenges being faced by the people. APP

## Industries Minister recommends urea fertilizer import to stabilize prices and supply



ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Industries and Production, Rana Tanveer Hussain on Thursday recommended the import of 0.200 million metric tons of urea fertilizer to stabilize prices and supply in the country during the Kharif season-2024.

The decision was taken in the meeting of the Fertilizer Review Committee after analyzing consumption patterns, available stock, and future needs during the kharif season-2024, said a news release.

Rana Tanveer emphasized that the purpose of the import is to ensure food security in the country, increase productivity for country's farmers, and reduce prices significantly, thereby stabilizing the local urea fertilizer market. The final decision to import urea fertilizer

will be taken by the Economic Coordination Committee (ECC) in the next meeting.

The minister shared that the demand for urea fertilizer has increased by 3.6 percent compared to the previous year, with an anticipated demand of approximately 3442 metric tons for the Kharif season.

The available stock in the country is approximately 3192 metric tons, resulting in a shortfall. To address this, 0.200 million metric tons of urea fertilizer will be imported, while the rest will be met by increasing production in local fertilizer plants.

All local urea fertilizer plants will remain operational at full capacity to meet local demands, and the government is ensuring a smooth gas supply to the fertilizer industry.

## Hafiz Naeemur Rehman urges for timely completion of Iran-Pakistan Gas Pipeline project

Says JI would never recognize the govt formed by PML-N, PPP & MQM on fraudulent mandate

LAHORE: Jamaat-e-Islami Pakistan Emir Engineer Hafiz Naeemur Rehman Khan has urged for the timely completion of the Iran-Pakistan Gas Pipeline project while cautioning the United States against meddling in Pakistan's internal affairs.

Addressing attendees at the "Meet the Press" event at Mansoorah on Thursday, Hafiz Naeemur Rehman underscored the significance of Iranian President Ebrahim Raisi's recent visit to Pakistan. Emphasizing the need for swift action, he called for the implementation of agreements signed between the two neighbouring nations during the visit of the President.

Hafiz Naeemur Rehman declared that the JI will pursue the issue of extensive election rigging before the Supreme Court, urging the Chief Justice to recognize it as an unprecedented violation of the would not engage in electoral alliances with any party but rather

align with the people of Pakistan. He also called for a resolution to the issue of missing persons, emphasizing the necessity of subjecting any lawbreakers to due legal process. Hafiz Naeemur Rehman highlighted need for the reforms in the electoral process, particularly the adoption of electronic voting machines. He advocated for proportional representation to strengthen democracy and dismantle the dominance of traditional power brokers like electables, feudal lords, and other ruling elites. The JI chief emphasized the urgent need to reassess agreements with Independent Power Producers (IPPs), labelling these contracts as flawed and detrimental to the interests of the people, especially in terms of expensive electricity. He announced the expansion of the "Bano Qabil" initiative nationwide, with plans to include one million youth in the

near future. Addressing the issue of education, he pledged the JI's commitment to advocating for a uniform education system at all levels. Highlighting the grievances of the youth and the plight of women under the current governance, particularly in the workforce, Hafiz Naeemur Rehman expressed the JI's readiness to be a voice for both groups, inviting them to join the JI platform. Hafiz Naeemur Rehman rejected trade ties with India until a resolution to the Kashmir issue aligning with the desires of Kashmiri people is achieved. He affirmed the JI's solidarity with the people of Gaza, honoring their resistance against Israeli occupation. Commending the activism of students in Western universities in support of Palestine, he called upon Pakistani students to similarly raise awareness about the Palestinian cause in their universities. SABAH

## CJP Qazi Faez Isa says he had received no complaints of meddling in judicial affairs during his tenure so far as the country's top judge

Says interference is not acceptable, but at the same time, nothing has been reported to me during my watch

KARACHI: Chief Justice of Pakistan (CJP) Justice Qazi Faez Isa on Thursday said he did not receive any note of grievance from any high court judge claiming the meddling of other institutions in the judicial process. CJP Qazi Faez Isa said he had received no complaints of meddling during his tenure so far as the country's top judge.

"Since I've been chief justice, I have not received a single complaint from any high court judge that there has been interference in their work. If there has been interference in their work, it has not been reported to me," he said. "Since I have been chief justice [of Supreme Court of Pakistan], I have not received a single complaint from any high court judge that there has been any interference in their work," Jus-

ice Qazi Faez Isa said while speaking during the ceremony organized by Sindh High Court Bar Association (SHCBA).

"Now, if there has been any interference in their work it has not been reported to me and all the incidents that were mentioned were before my watch... before I took the oath as the CJP" he said. "So, this is a thing to bear in mind that interference is not acceptable but at the same time nothing has been reported to me during ... my watch." He said mention was made of the support that the SHCBA extended to the six judges of the Islamabad High Court (IHC), who had written to me as well. "I thank them on their behalf," the CJP added. "Interference is not acceptable, but at the same time, nothing has been reported to me during my watch." SABAH