



Special measures are being taken to bring down electricity prices and socio-economic uplift of marginalized section of society

Minister for Petroleum  
Senator  
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## Pak holds in high regard the significant role ASEAN plays in promoting peace, stability & prosperity within the Asia-Pacific region: Ishaq Dar

Says Pakistan remains steadfast in its support for ASEAN's vision & looks forward to contributing to its ongoing success



ISLAMABAD: Pakistan has reaffirmed its desire to enhancing its partnership with Association of Southeast Asian Nations in its quest for a peaceful, stable, and prosperous region.

In his message on the occasion of ASEAN Day, observed on Thursday, Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Senator Mohammad Ishaq Dar extended warmest congratulations and best wishes to the governments and peoples of the ASEAN member states.

He said this day symbolizes the enduring spirit of unity and cooperation among the Southeast Asian nations. It is a privilege to celebrate this milestone alongside our ASEAN friends.

Ishaq Dar said that the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) stands as a model of regional integration and collective progress, demonstrating remarkable achievements in economic development, social cohesion, and diplomatic engagement. Pakistan holds in high regard the significant role ASEAN plays in promoting peace, stability, and prosperity within the Asia-Pacific region. The celebration of ASEAN Day not only reminds us of the vital importance of regional cooperation but also highlights the rich cultural diversity and historical heritage of the region.

Ishaq Dar said that Pakistan's relations with ASEAN are underpinned by a shared commitment to principles of mutual respect, non-interference, and constructive engagement. We have been an active partner in ASEAN's dialogue mechanisms and have sought to deepen our cooperation in areas such as trade, investment, education, culture, and people-to-people exchanges. Our engagement with ASEAN has been further strengthened through our active participation in the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF), where we contribute to discussions on regional security and cooperation, he said.

Ishaq Dar said that as we celebrate ASEAN Day, Pakistan reaffirms its desire to enhancing its partnership with ASEAN in its quest for a peaceful, stable, and prosperous region. Let us take this opportunity to reflect on our shared achievement and renew our commitment to the principles that guide ASEAN's mission, he said. Ishaq said that Pakistan remains steadfast in its support for ASEAN's vision and looks forward to contributing to its ongoing success. SABAH



ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif and Chief of Army Staff General Syed Asim Munir NI(M) attending the National Ulema & Mashaikh Conference.

## PM Shehbaz urges the Ulema & Mashaikh to play an active role in countering propoganda, fake news

COAS General Syed Asim Munir says we stand united & resolute in our commitment to eradicate terrorism from our soil

VOM Report

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif Thursday urged the Ulema and Mashaikh to play an active role in countering propoganda, fake news, and disinformation, while aligning with core Islamic values and principles.

He stressed the significance of the role of Ulema and Mashaikh in guiding youth towards understanding the Quran, Sunnah, and character building, alongside academic knowledge and technical skills.

He was speaking to a large gathering of esteemed Islamic scholars (Ulema o Mashaikh) from diverse schools of thought convened at the Pakistan-China Friendship Center here for the National Ulema Convention. The prime minister graced the occasion as the Chief Guest, while the Chief of the Army Staff, General Syed Asim Munir NI(M), was the Guest of Honor.

In his address, the prime minister emphasized, "Islam is a religion of peace, and peace is the foundation of Islam. It teaches us coexistence, not confrontation. We must uphold these Islamic values firmly." He further remarked, "Pakistan is a nation built on



the principles of love, compassion, and acceptance. Our diversity, encompassing various cultures, religions, and ethnicities, is our strength. Let us embrace our differences and celebrate our unique identities." He also paid tribute to the brave security forces and law enforcement agencies, saying, "We salute those who risk their lives daily to protect the nation, offering the highest sacrifice for the motherland. We honor the sacrifices of our martyrs, who have given their lives to defend the nation."

In his address, the Chief of the Army Staff stated, "We stand united and resolute in our commitment to eradicate terrorism from our soil. We will not tolerate extremism, violence, or fear-mongering." He condemned "twisted ideologies that seek to divide us,

senseless killings that aim to intimidate us, and inhumane tactics employed by Fitna Al Khawarij (FAK) that attempt to break our spirit."

He emphasized, "Let us strive for a Pakistan where everyone can thrive in peace and prosperity. We are one nation, one people, and together we can achieve greatness." He acknowledged the vital role of Ulema in promoting peace, tolerance, and inclusivity, countering extremist narratives, and educating society to reject hate and violence.

The forum unanimously expressed deep anguish over the ongoing brutalities against Kashmiris in Indian Illegally Occupied Jammu and Kashmir (IOJK) and the inhumane conflict in Gaza, terming these as crimes against humanity.

## Establishment of peace & order in KP is the top priority of the Government: Mohsin Naqvi

Interior Minister, Governor KP express grave concern over the incident in Kurram



ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Interior Mohsin Naqvi met with Governor Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Faisal Karim Kundi at the Ministry of Interior.

Mohsin Naqvi welcomed the Governor Khyber Pakhtunkhwa upon his arrival at the Ministry. During the meeting, the overall situation in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, law and order, and the unfortunate incident in Kurram were discussed.

Federal Minister for Interior Mohsin Naqvi and Governor of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa expressed grave concern over the incident in Kurram and agreed to formulate a multi-faceted joint strategy to prevent such incidents in the future. The Interior Minister assured full cooperation for the establishment of peace in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, stating that the establishment of peace and order in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa is the top priority of the Government. He expressed deep grief over the loss of precious human lives due to land disputes in Kurram. He noted that some elements gave a wrong perception to the clash between the two groups, which increased the tension.

Mohsin Naqvi said that he met with the dignitaries of the area led by MNA Hamid Hussain of Majlis-e-Wahdat-e-Muslimeen and took immediate steps to normalize the situation. He highlighted that the security forces also took effective measures in view of the situation.

He assured that every possible effort is being made to improve the law and order situation in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa including Kurram. He stated that the role of external elements in sabotaging peace efforts cannot be ruled out. Governor of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Faisal Karim Kundi thanked Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi for his cooperation in establishing peace in the province. SABAH

## University Students spend day with Pakistan Navy



LAHORE: The Pakistan Navy organized an event "A day with Pakistan Navy" for the students from various universities and colleges to enlighten them on the functioning, organisation and defence capabilities of Pakistan Navy. A total of 250 students alongwith the faculty members from Lahore Garrison University and various cadet colleges under supervision of TABA Foundation attended the event, a Pakistan Navy news release on Thursday said. During his interaction with students and faculty, Commander Central Punjab Rear Admiral Azhar Mehmood apprised them about Pakistan Navy's commitment to protect maritime frontiers of the country. He also highlighted the

importance of maritime sector for developing countries and how a strong Navy can facilitate economic development of their nation. Later, demonstration of combat readiness by troops, display of arms and equipment followed by anti-terrorist demo by Pakistan Marines and Special Service Group (SSG) of Pakistan Navy were presented. The students took keen interest while attending the briefing about PN roles & responsibilities, latest platforms available in PN Fleet and other dimensions of Pakistan Navy. The visiting students and faculty members praised the state of commitment and professional competence of Maritime Defenders of the country. PR

## Armed Forces of Pakistan, CJCS & Services Chiefs pay tribute to Major Tufail Muhammad Shaheed on martyrdom anniversary

RAWALPINDI: The Armed Forces of Pakistan, the Chairman Joint Chiefs of Staff Committee (CJCS), and the Services Chiefs pay a solemn and heartfelt tribute to Major Tufail Muhammad Shaheed, recipient of the prestigious Nishan-e-Haider, on the occasion of his 66th martyrdom anniversary on Thursday. According to the statement issued by ISPR, Major Tufail Muhammad, the second recipient of the esteemed Nishan-e-Haider, valiantly laid down his life in 1958 while fearlessly engaging the enemy in the Lakshampur sector of East Pakistan. Despite fatal injuries, he resolutely completed his mission, exemplifying unparalleled bravery, unwavering resolve, and unrelenting dedication to duty. The martyrdom anniversary of Major Tufail Muhammad Shaheed serves as a poignant reminder of the extraordinary sacrifices and selfless devotion of the Pakistan Armed Forces in defending the motherland. We honor the memory of these gallant sons of the soil who have made the ultimate sacrifice to safeguard our nation's sovereignty and territorial integrity. PR

## US Ambassador calls on Muqam to discuss Afghan refugees' issues

ISLAMABAD: United States Ambassador to Pakistan Donald Armin Blome on Thursday called on Minister for Kashmir Affairs and Gilgit-Baltistan and SAFRON Engr. Amir Muqam and discussed the matters related to the welfare of Afghan refugees, rehabilitation, and bilateral cooperation.

During the meeting here, the minister expressed his gratitude for the long-standing cooperation of US with Pakistan. He said that Pakistan was combating successful war against terrorism and also rendered countless sacrifices in terms of human lives and economic losses. He said that more than 70,000 lives had been lost due to terrorism in Pakistan since 2001 and more than \$150 billion in economic losses. Amir Muqam urged the international community to recognize Pakistan's efforts in the war against terrorism.

He emphasized the need for the assistance of the United States and other international partners in the return of Afghan refugees. He emphasized on increasing US aid to host communities and efforts to create favorable condi-



tions in Afghanistan for the return of refugees. On the occasion, US Ambassador Donald Blome reiterated US commitment to support Pakistan's economic development, especially in improving exports in textiles sector.

He acknowledged the Pakistan's efforts in eliminating the menace of terrorism and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and Balochistan were affected badly Donald Bloom appreciated Pakistan's role in supporting the hosting of Afghan citizens. The meeting ended with both sides pledging continued cooperation.

The minister reiterated Pakistan's commitment to work with the US and the international community to find a lasting solution for the Afghan refugees. He emphasized the need for increased cooperation and joint efforts. APP

## Pakistan, Turkiye vow to strengthen relations, expand trade

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan and Turkiye here on Thursday reiterated their dedication to strengthening bilateral relations and expanding trade volume between the two countries.

The reiteration was made during a call on meeting of Trade Minister of Turkiye Prof. Dr. Omer Bolat along with Turkish delegation with the Federal Minister for Finance and Revenue, Senator Muhammad Aurangzeb here, according to press release issued by finance ministry.

The Finance Minister warmly welcomed Minister Bolat and his delegation and emphasized the robust and longstanding brotherly relationship between the two

nations, which has potential for further bilateral economic and trade development.

He acknowledged the significance of historical and cultural ties between Pakistan and Turkiye and provided an update on Pakistan's improving economic fundamentals, including a stable currency, foreign exchange reserves exceeding \$9 billion, and declining inflation rates.

He informed Minister Bolat of a recent Staff Level Agreement with the International Monetary Fund (IMF), aimed at ensuring long-term stability and outlined ongoing reforms in taxation, energy sector and state-owned enterprises.



The minister also highlighted the role of the Special Investment Facilitation Council (SIFC) in streamlining investment processes and attracting foreign direct investment. He assured Minister Bolat of the Pakistani government's commitment to supporting investors by streamlining regulations which support ease of doing business.

On the occasion, Minister Bolat highlighted the shared commitment of Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif and President Erdogan to strengthen bilateral ties, with a particular focus on increasing trade and investment. He identified key sectors for potential

investment, including services, health, education, medicine, and fashion, the statement added.

He also proposed measures to facilitate investment for Turkish companies to enhance investor confidence and recommended increasing flight connectivity between Pakistan and Turkiye to support greater economic exchange.

Minister Bolat expressed gratitude for the support and constructive dialogue, the press release said adding the meeting marked a significant step toward deepening economic ties and fostering closer cooperation between Pakistan and Turkiye. APP

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## A convenient scapegoat

ADIL KHATTAK

The ongoing debate in the media is trying to pin all the current challenges on one sector: the IPPs. Arguments typically revolve around capacity charges paid to IPPs coupled with various extracts from the 2020 report by Mr Muhammad Ali on the power sector. This is distracting from the real issues in the power sector without understanding the basics and context. It is always easy to criticize decisions retrospectively. The decisions made at the time, when the country was losing two per cent of its GDP due to power shortages, were probably the best possible based on country risk, investor appetite, available fuel/technology and power requirements.

The concept of IPPs was introduced by the government, in consultation with the World Bank and IFC in the early 1990s. This included a two-part tariff – capacity and energy charges, a global concept for developing countries. The goal was to cover the shortfall in electricity, trigger economic growth and remove government inefficiencies through the support of the private sector. This led to multiple private power policies and the establishment of several IPPs in Pakistan. Capacity charges are now being blamed as the root cause of today's high electricity prices without much understanding on composition or necessity. Capacity charges consist of fixed O&M (operations & maintenance), insurance, working capital, debt service, and return on equity (ROE). As can be seen, capacity charges cover the ongoing fixed charges for a plant that supplies electricity dedicated to the government. Capacity charges ensure IPPs remain available all the time. If an IPP is not able to provide electricity when demanded, capacity charges are not paid to IPPs and liquidated damages can apply.

Capacity charges apply to both government plants and IPPs. The current tirade against IPPs is misdirected as more than 80 per cent of current capacity charges are associated with government owned, CPEC and must-run plants. The reality is that Pakistan has surplus power available added over the last decade, doubling the installed capacity to 46,000MW. New power plants have debt components frontloaded in capacity charges for the first 10-15 years of operations, adding to the high capacity charges challenge. The matter has further escalated due to rapid rupee devaluation and underutilization of plants. The issue of surplus power has also been compounded by the fact that the country has not seen required growth to absorb installed capacity. This has resulted in considerable underutilisation of power plants. Capacity charges per unit to the consumer increases with underutilisation and vice versa, whereas the utilization of IPPs is controlled solely by government entities.

In FY24, the government estimated 40 per cent utilization of power plants, resulting in capacity charges of around Rs14/kWh. If utilization was 80 per cent, the capacity charges would have reduced to Rs8/kWh, translating to lower electricity costs to the consumer.

In addition to misunderstandings around capacity charges, snippets are being quoted from the aforementioned report on the power sector at various fora. There is a lack of acknowledgment that matters raised in the report were already addressed through contract renegotiations in 2021. Mr Muhammad Ali himself was part of such renegotiations which led to IPPs providing significant concessions in national interest. These concessions were estimated to bring around Rs800 billion savings to the national exchequer. The matter related to alleged excess profit was agreed to be resolved through arbitration, which is currently under process. CPEC plants, however, were not part of the negotiations and should be considered to help further reduce the tariff to the consumer. It is also confounding that termination of IPP contracts is being repeatedly suggested as a solution to reducing capacity charges. Premature termination will not result in material relief to the consumer; rather there are contractual and legal costs associated with this which would have to be funded by the government. Why not fully utilize infrastructure already installed and readily available? Terminating or revisiting signed contracts, backed by government sovereign guarantees, severely damages the investment climate in the country. This was demonstrated recently when a solar project was tendered twice by the government, but no bids were received.

I had the privilege to lead the process of establishing Attock Gen Limited (AGL) as the first IPP under the 2002 Power Policy, following a fair and transparent process. After scrutiny by PPIB and Nepra for almost 1.5 years, AGL's groundbreaking was done by former president General Pervez Musharraf in May 2007 and it was inaugurated by former PM Yousuf Raza Gilani in April 2009. This was done with great fanfare as the country was in dire need to resolve the issue of non-availability of electricity – with no alternate solution to IPPs in sight. I cannot vouch for other IPPs, but the allegations levelled against AGL, within the earlier mentioned report, were misleading. AGL's capital cost was less than \$1 million per MW which was internationally competitive. AGLs declared 45 per cent efficiency was also much better than earlier IPPs' efficiency with similar technology (up to 42 per cent), and significantly higher than government owned GENCOs (up to 30 per cent). AGL is fuelled by indigenously sourced crude oil and low sulphur furnace oil without any transportation costs. Therefore, AGL not only helped plug the electricity demand gap, but did it at a competitive cost with local fuel and transparent pricing. Having first-hand experience in the process followed for AGL, I was open to any kind of audit or investigation during renegotiations. Nevertheless, we agreed to renegotiate in the larger national interest and voluntarily reduced ROE from 15 per cent to 12 per cent on foreign equity, gave up dollar indexation on local equity, and also agreed to share fuel and O&M savings. Though the efficiency test is typically conducted for new plants, we also agreed to a one-time heat rate test. Since 2021, only the points related to IPPs seem to have been addressed through renegotiations while ignoring the other 'bleeding' segments which were also highlighted by Muhammad Ali in his report.

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OSAMA AL-SHARIF

## Five minutes to midnight as all-out war looms in the Middle East

This is an October 1973 moment for the Middle East, when the region was on the cusp of an all-out regional war, with Israel at its center. Inconclusive in its outcome, the conflict began a long and arduous endeavor to end all wars. It almost did. October 1973 was a classical war in the sense that the clashes were between Israel and regular Arab armies, with one side being backed by the US and the other by the now-defunct Soviet Union. But this time the situation is different. It was Israel that lit the fuse by launching two lethal strikes only a few hours apart, first targeting Fouad Shukur, a senior Hezbollah military commander, in the heart of Beirut's southern suburbs, and then Hamas political chief Ismail Haniyeh in Tehran — the heart of what Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu calls Iran's axis of evil.

One has to view those two dramatic incidents against the backdrop of Israel's 10-month war in Gaza. This is a war that Israel has no choice but to wage for different reasons. Before Oct. 7, the Israeli public was profoundly polarized, and on the verge of civil strife in protest against the far-right coalition's attempt to curtail the powers of the judiciary, giving the executive branch unlimited authority with virtually no oversight.

Netanyahu was in deep water, facing a widespread backlash, while staving off legal prosecution over alleged corruption and abuse of power. Then Hamas launched its attack, sending shockwaves across Israel. Netanyahu saw a way out. He declared war on Hamas and the hapless people of Gaza. He delivered a typical Zionist lachrymose lament of Jews being the victims of yet another massacre, bemoaning the historical victimization of the Jews.

Israeli tanks breached the fences, fighter jets dropped 1,000-pound bombs, and a killing spree ensued — as it continues until today, with the Palestinian death toll approaching 40,000.

There was no day-after scenario. Israel wanted to decapitate Hamas, even if that meant killing as many Palestinians as possible. Initial sympathy for Israel soon dissipated. The killing fields of Gaza horrified the world.

Hezbollah stepped in as soon as Israel launched its war, launching missiles and drones, and displacing thousands of Israelis in the north of the country. Its purpose was to support Gaza and the Palestinian resistance. Hezbollah called it the "unity of the battlefields." Israel retaliated, but avoided all-out confrontation. Then, the Houthis of Yemen stepped in. This was soon becoming an international crisis. Israel found itself targeted by Iranian proxies in Iraq, Yemen, and Lebanon. All were non-state actors. No regular Arab armies were involved. This was to become the new geopolitical reality of the region.

The common denominator in the anti-Israel coalition was Iran. Arab governments took a backseat. This was a new twist in the age-old Israel-Palestine conflict. But after 10 months in Gaza, Israel was running out of military objectives. It was facing a dangerous war of attrition, one that was crippling its economy and running down its troops. It found itself bogged down

in Gaza, while unable to neutralize Hezbollah. Netanyahu's war was all but lost. But he was adamant. When Israel struck the Iranian consulate in Damascus last April, it did not expect the Iranian response: hundreds of missiles and drones fired directly from Iran against the heart of Israel. The US stepped in to defend Israel, reinforcing the view that without US support, Israel was vulnerable.

So, what prompted Netanyahu to sanction the two high-stakes assassinations at this point in time? Such a painful and humiliating blow to Iran and its proxies would never pass without a bold response. Netanyahu knew precisely what he was doing when he ordered the strikes. He knew that Hezbollah and Iran would retaliate, joined by other pro-Iran groups, such as the Houthis in Yemen and the Popular Mobilization Units in Iraq. For months, he was seeking to expand the war, and lure in the US and other Western allies to strike Iran and its proxies. Having failed to deliver the promised decisive victory in Gaza or neutralize Hezbollah's threat in the north, Netanyahu's survival instincts took over. He decided to break the rules of engagement, and put the US-Israeli alliance to its most severe test.

As is the case with Gaza, the Israeli leader has no plan for the day after when Iran and its proxies deliver their promised response. Israel has vowed to retaliate if attacked. The US sent a carrier strike group, a fighter squadron, and additional warships to the region. Its regional allies are apprehensive. No one wants a protracted and unpredictable war in the Middle East — except for Netanyahu and his radi-

cal coalition partners. The double assassinations have derailed US President Joe Biden's ceasefire and hostage exchange deal. Netanyahu never really committed to ending the war in that manner. In his speech to Congress, he sought to incite lawmakers against Iran, just as he did in 2015 and before. He did the same against Saddam Hussein in Iraq and Muammar Qaddafi in Libya, and before them, the Soviet Union.

What Netanyahu wants is an endless war against anyone in the region who poses a threat to Israel, while denying Palestinians any right to end the occupation and establish a state.

He is willing to endanger Israel's security and existence by forcing the US to go to war in defense of Israel, even when Israel is the belligerent party. He has manipulated the US for decades and believes that he can do so again.

Only a decisive US response can rein in an unhinged Netanyahu. Biden, still president, can prevent a regional war that could quickly spiral into a global conflict. The only reason that Iran and its proxies are using the Palestinian cause to threaten Israel is Netanyahu's rejection of Palestinian rights and his execution of a plan to erase the Palestinian people. The US and the rest of the world must contain Netanyahu and force a deal that delivers a Palestinian state. We are five minutes to midnight, and unless a bold US intervention takes place, the region will quickly slip into the unknown.

Osama Al-Sharif is a journalist and political commentator based in Amman. X: @plato010

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

## History of Pakistan

### Today in History



The Pakistan People's Party (PPP) was formed in 1968 by Zulfikar Ali Bhutto, working with a number of liberal leftists who wanted Pakistan to disregard the idiom of religion in politics in favour of a program of rapid modernization of the country and the introduction of a socialist economy. The PPP emerged as the majority party in West Pakistan in the elections of 1970 (though the Awami League in East Pakistan won the largest number of legislative seats). Following the disruption of the ensuing war, which produced the independent country of Bangladesh from East Pakistan, Bhutto was called to form a government in 1972. The PPP

was suppressed under the military government of 1977-88 but returned to power in 1988-90 and 1993-96 under the leadership of Bhutto's daughter Benazir. In 2008, after the nine-year period of military rule, the party joined in a civilian coalition government. The Muslim League, formed in 1906 in what is now Bangladesh, had spearheaded the Pakistan independence movement under Mohammed Ali Jinnah. However, by the time of the military coup in 1958 it had endured many setbacks and much fragmentation, and in 1962 it splintered into two parts, the Conventionist Pakistan Muslim League and the

Council Muslim League. In the elections of 1970 it almost disappeared as a political party, but it was resurrected in 1985 and became the most important component of the Islamic Democratic Alliance, which took over Punjab's administration in 1988. Since then, Muslim League factions have been associated with powerful personalities (e.g., Nawaz Sharif and Pervez Musharraf). The Islamic Assembly (Jam at-e-Islami), founded in 1941 by Ab al-Ali Mawdudi (Maududi), commands a great deal of support among the urban lower-middle classes (as well as having great influence abroad). Two other religious parties, the Assembly of Islamic Clergy (Jam at-Ulam-e-Islami) and the Assembly of Pakistani Clergy (Jam at-Ulam-e-Pakistan), have strong centres of support, the former in Karachi and the latter in the rural areas of the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. In 1996 the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) was formed by cricket player Imran Khan to oppose government corruption and promote social welfare. It remained uncompetitive and marginal until the 2010s, when it took a decidedly populist approach to politics, organizing large rallies and courting several veteran politicians.

To be continued....

## Eva Mendes' 'grateful' to Olympics for respecting star's kid's privacy

Eva Mendes shows gratitude to Olympics for keeping her, Ryan Gosling's children private



Eva Mendes seems to be really happy and "grateful" to the Olympics for respecting her family's privacy. The Hitch star was spotted with her longtime partner Ryan Gosling cheering on the athletes at the women's gymnastics uneven bars final in Paris Aug. 4. The star is "grateful" that as she enjoyed the game with daughters Esmeralda, 9, and Amada, 8, they were not made part of the spotlight. "I love @nbcolympics didn't cut away to the kids!", Eva wrote in a reply to an Instagram comment on

her post, Aug. 6. "And most sites blurred their faces so mama bear is happy about that. Anyway it felt so good to be there and feel unified with people." She added one more for reply for another commenter, adding, "they were great about not posing the kids so I'm a grateful mama bear." "Morning in Paris. Sleep marks and all," she captioned her post. "The minute I see photographers when I'm out, my guard and my wall goes up. So I wanted to share this." "So grateful to @hotellutetia for the best experience," she further added.

## Pakistani students win 4 medals in Nuclear Science Olympiad



ISLAMABAD: A team of Pakistani students achieved outstanding success by winning two silver and as many bronze medals in a remarkable debut at the first International Nuclear Science Olympiad (INSO-2024) held in the Philippines. Suleman Nouman from Siddeeq Public School, Islamabad and Subhan Kashif from Lahore Grammar School won silver medals while Ehbhan Awan from Karachi Grammar School and Qasim Salam from Siddeeq Public School Rawalpindi won bronze medals. Pakistan Institute of Engineering and Applied Sciences (PIEAS), the top-ranked engineering university of the Pakistan Atomic Energy Commission (PAEC), selected students from

all over the country after rigorous tests and scrutiny. Afterwards, they were trained at PIEAS under their mentors Dr Sajjad Tahir from PIEAS and Dr Muhammad Maqsood from the Education Directorate of PAEC and groomed to participate in the said Olympiad. INSO-2024 held in Clark, Philippines from August 01-06, 2024, was sponsored by the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) and other international institutions. The winning students, their parents, teachers from their respective institutes and mentors from PIEAS and PAEC deserve commendation for representing the country with such distinction on the global stage. It is pertinent to mention here that besides winning these medals, students from Pakistan have recently won medals in International Physics, Chemistry, Biology and Mathematics Olympiads, separately, bringing laurels to the country while the latest success in the field of Nuclear Science is a feather in the country's cap.

## Comfort foods to get you through the cold & flu season

Feeling under the weather? The common cold or flu can be a real drag, especially when it zaps your appetite. Amidst the tissues and the endless naps, it's crucial to maintain your strength to help your body combat those pesky viruses. While indulging in junk food might seem tempting, it's not the best choice for supporting your recovery. Viruses are the culprits behind colds and the flu, so opting for foods with antiviral benefits could potentially speed up your recovery process. Instead of reaching for that greasy pizza or sugary ice cream, consider foods rich in essential nutrients like protein, B vitamins, copper, iron, vitamin C, and zinc. These nutrients are vital for your immune system and can help prevent complications. Certain items like caffeine and greasy foods should be avoided. Alcohol and caffeine can

dehydrate you, which impairs your immune system, while fatty and high-fiber foods might aggravate any gastrointestinal issues you have. Staying hydrated is crucial, as it helps eliminate toxins and supports your body's healing process. Looking for the best foods to eat when you're feeling sick? Check out these expert recommendations to stock up on your next grocery run: Chicken Soup: Your mom's go-to remedy for a stuffy nose holds up. Chicken soup is more than just comfort food—it's packed with nutrients that support your immune system. With a mix of chicken, vegetables, and noodles, it provides essential sodium, potassium, and vitamins while soothing your throat and reducing inflammation. Citrus Fruits: Vitamin C is crucial for boosting your immune system. Citrus fruits like oranges and grapefruits, along with other vitamin-rich

options such as bell peppers, broccoli, and sweet potatoes, are excellent sources of this immune-boosting nutrient. Garlic, Onions, and Leeks: These pungent vegetables not only enhance the flavor of your meals but also offer antiviral properties. Garlic, in particular, is renowned for its allicin content, which has antibacterial, antifungal, and antiviral benefits. Ginger Tea: Ginger is a powerhouse against colds, thanks to its active compounds that target common cold viruses and reduce inflammation. A cup of ginger tea or adding fresh ginger to your beverages can provide significant relief. Honey: Honey isn't just a sweet treat; it's also a natural remedy for sore throats. Its coating action soothes irritation and its antioxidant and antimicrobial properties help fight off infections.



### Health



## Pakistan welcomes international chefs at FoodAg 2024 to explore, expand culinary horizons

KARACHI: Federal Minister for Commerce Jam Kamal Khan on Thursday said that Pakistan offers a variety of continental food, the expertise brought by the international chefs participating in FoodAg 2024 is something new.

Addressing the soft launch of second FoodAg 2024, at a local hotel, he said the Pakistan is quickly embracing new continental recipes.

He invited the visiting chefs to explore Pakistan's street food, highlighting its unique taste.

He mentioned that the trend of eateries and cafes is growing globally, and Pakistan is no exception, with a strong love for food and an expanding food culture. He emphasized that food serves as a bridge for people to learn about each other and their cultures.

Jam Kamal expressed hope that food could help strengthen and further expand bilateral relations.

He assured that the Trade Development Authority of Pakistan (TDAP) team and others would do their utmost to provide excellent hospitality to the visiting chefs. Speaking at the event, South African chef Shaun highlighted that FoodAg 2024 will enable chefs to learn about ingredients from different cultures and countries. He emphasized that food has always influenced the world and continues to do so.

Shaun noted that the food Pakistanis eat today is vastly different from what was consumed in the 1500s. He also pointed out some variations in ingredients used across different countries and regions.

The soft launch event of the Second International Food & Agriculture Exhibition 2024, was attended by the TDAP Chief Executive Zubair Motiwala, chefs from different countries including Malaysia, South Africa, Turkey, Azerbaijan, Egypt and others.

The FoodAg 2024 is being organized by TDAP at EXPO Center Karachi from August 9th to 11th. With its theme of "Growing a sustainable future". The FoodAg 2024 will bring International and local communities together to generate a hope for building a common future. APP

## ECP issues schedule for LG polls in Islamabad

ISLAMABAD: The Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) on Thursday announced the schedule for the upcoming local government elections in Islamabad. The polling in the capital city will take place on September 29, according to the announced schedule. The ECP gave a four-day window for candidates to submit their nomination papers.

The initial list of candidates will be published on August 21, while the ECP will scrutinise the nomination papers from August 22 to 26.

As per the schedule, appeals against decisions to accept or reject the nomination papers can be filed from August 26 to 29.

The Appellate Tribunals will decide the appeals by September 3 and the final list will be published on September 4.

As per the ECP's schedule, electoral symbols will be allotted on September 6. INP



ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Petroleum Dr Musadik Malik at the celebration of 57th ASEAN Day themed connected and resilient community.

## President for unity among Muslim countries to address challenges

VOM Report

ISLAMABAD: President Asif Ali Zardari has underlined the need for greater unity and cooperation among Muslim countries to overcome the challenges being faced by the Muslim Ummah. He expressed these views while talking to the Imam of Masjid Al-Nabvi, Dr Salah bin Mohammad M Abdeer, who called on him, at Aiwan-e-Sadr, on Thursday.

Welcoming Dr Salah bin Mohammad M Abdeer, the President said that Pakistan and the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia (KSA) enjoyed excellent relations, based on common faith, history, and brotherhood. He expressed satisfaction that relations between two brotherly countries were growing stronger, and reaffirmed Pakistan's commitment to further boosting bilateral ties.

He urged the need for promoting cultural and people-to-people relations to bring the two brotherly countries further closer. Reiterating Pakistan's support to KSA, the President said that KSA was a close friend and Pakistan would always stand with Saudi Arabia.

The Imam of Masjid Al-Nabvi said that the leadership and people of KSA highly valued their relations with Pakistan. He stated that Pakistan and KSA enjoyed strong partnership and both countries should work together to



address the challenges faced by the Islamic World. He lauded the contributions of the Pakistani community towards the development of Saudi Arabia. He also highlighted that the reforms initiated by the Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman Al-Saud would bring further development and prosperity to KSA. The President appreciated the courage and

vision of Prince Mohammed bin Salman, who was spearheading the process of reforms for the betterment and welfare of the people of KSA. He expressed the hope that the visit of the Imam of Masjid Al-Nabvi would further boost bilateral relations. The Imam of Masjid Al-Nabvi also prayed for the peace and prosperity of Pakistan.

## Five committees have been constituted to chalk-out a plan to provide respite to electricity consumers: Musadik Malik

Says the govt making concrete efforts for the provision of relief to the people

ISLAMABAD: Minister for Petroleum Senator Dr. Musadik Masood Malik says government is making concrete efforts for the provision of relief to the people. Addressing a news conference in Islamabad on Thursday, Musadik Masood Malik said special measures are being taken to bring down electricity prices and socio-economic uplift of marginalized section of society. The Minister said five committees have been constituted to chalk-out a plan to provide respite to electricity consumers. Similarly, six hundred billion rupees have been earmarked to help the needy and deserving people under the Benazir Income Support Program (BISP).

The Minister categorically stated that country's circumstances are entirely different as compare to Bangladesh and anarchist elements will not be successful in their sordid designs.

Highlighting the socio economic progress in country, Musadik Malik said growth rate witnessed 6.5 percent increase in rural areas and overall inflation reduced to 11 percent from 38 percent. He said tax collection has also been increased to thirty percent. Criticizing the opposition, he recalled that Prime Minister invited them to form a government after the last General Election, but they rejected the offer because their agenda was not to serve the masses but creating anarchy in the country.

The Minister urged the opposition to talk about the employment generation opportunities for youth, up gradation of education and health infrastructure instead of adopting the course of agitation. SABAH

## PML-N advocates dialogue for national betterment: Minister

ISLAMABAD: Minister for Maritime Affairs Qaiser Ahmed Sheikh said on Thursday the Pakistan Muslim League Nawaz (PML-N) has repeatedly initiated dialogues for the country's betterment and strengthening democracy. Speaking to a private news channel, he said that PML-N had proposed a charter of the economy as a solution to pull the nation out of the economic crisis that worsened during the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) regime.

He said that the government was also engaging with the protesters of Jamaat-e-Islami (JI) because their demonstrations follow lawful procedures. The purpose of these negotiations, he said, is to resolve issues through democratic means. Sheikh also condemned the events of May 9, labeling them as terrorist acts that cannot be tolerated and should be regarded as an attempt to rebel against the state. He further pointed out that recent statements by the PTI founder acknowledged these anti-state activities. DNA

## Task Forces set up to bring reforms in power sector: Awais



ISLAMABAD: Minister for Power Division Sardar Ahmad Khan Leghari on Thursday said that on the directives of Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif,

Task Force on Implementation of Structural Reforms in Power Sector had been constituted to review all the aspects for improvement in power sector.

Talking to media persons along Co-Chairman of the Task Force Muhammad Ali, after first meeting of the Task Force, the minister said that power sector was the backbone of any economy and the government was committed to bringing reforms to enhance its efficiency. He said that since its inception, the incumbent government under the leadership of Shehbaz Sharif had started work to bring structural

reforms in the power sector and around 20 to 22 key points were identified in this regard. He said the PM has assigned the responsibility of the chairman of the Task Force to me.

The Task Force would review in detail all issues pertaining to power sector reforms. All the government institutions would coordinate to implement the reforms in letter and spirit, he said.

He said we have little time and it is imperative to provide dividend to the nation and the consumers.

Speaking on the occasion, Co-Chairman of the Task Force, Muhammad Ali said that today was first meeting of the Task Force and in coming days, it would regularly meet on daily basis. The Term of Reference (TORs) of the Task Force have already been devised, he said and added that the Task Force would also look into the issues of IPPs besides taking steps to bring generation cost of the electricity. DNA

## Phase one of Parliament Lodges expansion

ISLAMABAD: Speaker of the National Assembly, Sardar Ayaz Sadiq's special efforts have borne fruit as the expansion project of the Parliament Lodges is now nearing completion. Upon assuming office, Speaker Sardar Ayaz Sadiq immediately ordered the swift completion of the project. Both the Speaker and Deputy Speaker held multiple meetings with the relevant institutions to ensure progress. Taking strict notice of the increased costs of the project, the Speaker ordered that the project may be completed as soon as possible with minimal expenses. He warned that further delays in construction and costs will not be tolerated.

Due to the Speaker's efforts, the required funds for the project's construction have been provided. He has also directed legal action against all relevant institutions in the event of further delays. The delays have caused significant difficulties for the Members of Parliament, with many expressing their concerns on multiple occasions. Capital Development Authority (CDA) has assured the Speaker that Phase One of the Parliament Lodges expansion will be completed during the current fiscal year. Ayaz Sadiq has instructed that Phase Two of the expansion be completed by the next fiscal year. DNA

## Defense Minister sees opportunity for renewed ties with Bangladesh amid political shift

ISLAMABAD: Defense Minister Khawaja Muhammad Asif on Thursday described the recent political change in Bangladesh as a welcome development and an opportunity to start a new era of goodwill between the two nations. Speaking to a private news channel, he emphasized the importance of working towards mending past tensions and fostering a positive relationship with Bangladesh.

He noted that India's influence was significant during the tenure of former Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina, stating that it marked the end of an "Indian-backed government" in Bangladesh. Answering a question, the minister affirmed that there is complete harmony between state institutions in addressing the challenges facing the country.

He assured that economic difficulties would be overcome soon, with the nation progressing in an upward direction.

Addressing the events of May 9, the minister described them as a deliberate coup attempt against Pakistan. He said that national assets were destroyed and the memory of martyrs was dishonored on this dark day. "Imran Khan was the leader and scriptwriter behind the rebellious actions of that day," he added. APP

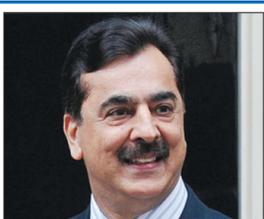


## Muslim world needs to adopt a collective strategy to counter the Islamophobia: Yousaf Raza Gilani

Says govt & people of Pakistan deeply appreciate the support provided by the Saudi Arabia during hard times

ISLAMABAD: Chairman Senate Syed Yousaf Raza Gilani has said that Pakistan and Saudi Arabia share a long history of bilateral and multilateral cooperation in divers sectors and there is still huge potential for exploring new avenues and boost cooperation in defence, trade and economic sectors.

Chairman Senate Syed Yousaf Raza Gilani expressed these views while talking to a delegation led by Imam of Masjid Nabawi Sheikh Dr. Salah Muhammad Al-Bdeer at the Parliament House on Thursday. Chairman Senate said that relationship between the two countries is based on common religion, culture and values and such a cordial relationship between the two has attached great importance to both enhance collaboration. He said that Masjid Al-Nabawi holds a profound place in the hearts of Pakistani Muslim and it is not merely a mosque but symbol of unity, peace and devotion. The Chairman Senate termed the visit of the Imam Masjid Al-Nabawi as a significant and said that the visit act in unison to counter those challenges the enduring brotherly



relations between Pakistan and Saudi Arabia. The Chairman Senate observed that under the leadership of King Salman bin Abdul Aziz Al Saud and Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman, the bond of friendship between the two nations has flourished.

The Chairman Senate also highlighted the issue of Islamophobia and said that the Muslim world needs to adopt a collective strategy to counter the Islamophobia and convince the global community that Islam is religion of peace. He called upon the Muslims show unity in its ranks and significant and said that the visit act in unison to counter those challenges the enduring brotherly

lighted the importance of high level contacts and said that people to people linkages can be further strengthened when leadership interacts more frequently and there is more corporation between nations. The Chairman Senate observed the government and people of Pakistan deeply appreciate the support provided by the Saudi Arabia during hard times.

The Chairman Senate also appreciated the linkages and cooperation between Pakistan and Saudi Arabia at all international forums including OIC. He also highlighted the Kashmir and Palestine issues. He called upon the Muslim Ummah to play its role in peaceful resolution of Kashmir issue. Pakistan, he said, wants a corporate resolution of Jammu and Kashmir dispute as per wishes and aspirations of Kashmiri people and the United Nations Security Council resolutions. Regarding Palestine issue, the Chairman Senate observed that we stand by the people of Palestine. He condemned the indiscriminate Israeli hostilities.

The Chairman Senate also acknowledged the role of 2.5 million Pakistani

diaspora working in the Saudi Arabia. He said that the diaspora is playing a significant role in the progress and development of our two countries. He also thanked the leadership, government and the people of Saudi Arabia for looking after the wellbeing of their Pakistani brothers and sisters.

The Chairman Senate said that parliamentary friendship groups play an important role in strengthening and expanding people to people contacts and in this regards friendship groups are being formed in the Senate of Pakistan for enhancing mutual cooperation in diverse sectors.

Senator Sherry Rahman, Irfan ul Haq Siddiqi, Maulana Atta Ur Rehman, Abdul Shakoor Khan, Abdul Wasay, Khalida Ateeb and Aimal Wali Khan were over also present during the meeting.

Leader of Saudi delegation expressed his delight to visit Pakistan. He said that the leadership, government and people of Saudi Arabia love their Pakistani brothers and sisters and they have a special place in their hearts. He also thanked chairman senate for his remarks. SABAH



Pak Turkiya Business Conference: Federal Minister for Board of Investment, Privatization and Communications Abdul Aleem Khan & Turkish Minister Dr. Omer Bolat photographed with business community.

## Senator Irfan Siddiqui resigns from the Senate Standing Committee on Education

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) senior leader Senator Irfan Siddiqui on Tuesday resigned from the Senate Standing Committee on Education.

Senator Irfan Siddiqui will now be a member of the National Health Committee, while Senator Raahat Jamali from Pakistan Muslim League (N) has been added to the Standing Committee on Education.

The resignation came a day after the PML-N parliamentary leader in the Senate was snubbed during a meeting of the Education Committee by its Chairperson Senator Bushra Anjum Butt.

The chairperson interrupted Senator Irfan Sid-

diqui while he was in the middle of a discussion allowing the committee's secretary to speak instead.

This led to strong protests from PTI Senator Fauzia Arshad and MQM Senator Khalida Ateeb, who demanded an apology from the Chairperson. Senator Bushra Anjum Butt apologized, which was accepted by Senator Irfan Siddiqui.

On Thursday, Senator Siddiqui met with Senate Chairman Syed Yousuf Raza Gilani and resigned from the Standing Committee on Education. His resignation was accepted and the formal notification has also been issued. SABAH