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Briefs

PM condoles demise of Sadaf Naeem

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif Sunday expressed deep grief over the demise of television channel reporter Sadaf Naeem who fell from the long march container. In a message, the prime minister prayed to Allah Almighty to rest the departed soul in eternal peace and grant courage to the bereaved family to bear the loss with fortitude. He said Sadaf Naeem was an active reporter and was committed to her work.

Mariyum grieved over reporter's demise

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Minister for Information and Broadcasting Mariyum Aurangzeb on Sunday expressed condolences to the spouse of a female reporter affiliated with a private news channel, Sadaf Naeem, who lost her life during the coverage of PTI's long march. Sadaf Naeem fell from PTI container while discharging her journalistic duties, today, and in that process lost her life. According to a news release, the minister made a phone call to the deceased husband and prayed to the Almighty to rest the departed soul in eternal peace.

Siraj tells youth to remain hopeful

DNA

LAHORE: Jamaat e-Islami chief Siraj ul Haq on Sunday said that the youth must not feel hopeless, and remain hopeful for a better future. Addressing a youth convention in Lahore, he said that Minar e Pakistan reminds us that will and determination is very important for nation's progress. Jamaat e-Islami chief urged the young generation to actively participate in productive activities and play their part in nation's success.

Attempts to create crises to be foiled

PM says Imran's thinking revolves around his personal vested interests

ABID RAZA

LAHORE: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Sunday said that it was the responsibility of the elected coalition government to ensure stability in the country and would not allow anyone to create political and economic crises. Referring to Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf's long march, the prime minister reiterated that any wrong attempt to enter the Red Zone would be thwarted under the relevant laws. During his interaction with UTubers, the prime minister said that PTI's leader Imran Niazi had the sole personal agenda, and he was hell-bent to push the country into turmoil and economic destruction for the achievement of his vested interests. "Expect everything from the person. Unfortunately, Imran Niazi's thinking revolves around his personal vested interests. Even he did not spare his close friends who were sidelined," he added. The prime minister observed that PTI's leader even did not spare the institution that had been rendering unmatched sacrifices for the protection of the motherland and was out to malign it to the pleasure of enemies of Pakistan including India. India was now portraying him (IK) as their hero, he added.

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PM expects to further deepen ties with China

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif said he expected to further deepen strategic relations and enhance trade and business ties with China during his upcoming visit. "I hope the visit will result in further cementing our strategic relations and enhancing business and trade with China," he told China Global Television Network (CGTN) in an interview. The prime minister is scheduled to begin an official visit to China on November 1. It's his first visit to China since he took office in April. Shehbaz Sharif is among the first batch of foreign leaders to visit China after the conclusion of the 20th National Congress of the Communist Party of China (CPC) in Beijing. "I feel really honored and deeply touched and it's very heartwarming to know that I am one of the first leaders from the world

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'November to prove important for country'

Khawaja Asif says Imran has no say in the matter of COAS appointment



STAFF REPORT

SIALKOT: Federal Minister for Defence Khawaja Muhammad Asif has said that the country's politics has reached a turning point and the month of November will prove to be very important in the country's politics. Addressing a press conference at his residence here on Sunday, he said that it was claimed from the march container that negotiations were going on with the government, but "I would

clarify that no negotiations are taking place with Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf". The minister said that due to the language Imran Khan was using against the Pakistan institutions, the Indian media was giving full coverage to him. He said PTI chief had been exposed before the nation, adding that his narrative showed that he was not sincere with the public. That was why, he added, his march was reducing in strength with

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Imran Khan wins NA-45 by elections

DNA

PESHAWAR: PTI Chairman Imran Khan has won the by elections that took place Sunday in NA-45 Kurram. According to unofficial sources, Imran Khan had received 18775 votes while the JUI-F candidate Jamil Khan received 10547 votes in 128 of 143 polling stations' results. Polling began at 8 am and continued till 5 pm without any break. The spokesman of the ECP K-P division said a day earlier that there were 198,618 registered voters among which 111,349 were men and 87,269 were women. He said a total of 143 polling stations had been set up, out of which 119 had been declared "very sensitive", while 24 polling stations were categorised as "sensitive". A total of 16 candidates are contesting for the NA seat, including PTI chief Imran Khan, Jamil Khan of JUI-F and Sher Muhammad Khan of Jamaat Islami (JI) as well as independent candidates. The Kurram by-election was originally postponed from Oct 16 due to the law and order situation in the constituency. There were 16 candidates, including Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf chief Imran Khan, Jamil Khan of Jamaat Ulema e-Islam-Fazal (JUI-F) and Sher Muhammad Khan of Jamaat Islami (JI) who contested the elections.

Thieves and bandits have been imposed on us: Imran Khan

"These tyrants make us worship the idol of fear," Khan says

STAFF REPORT

SADHOKE: On day three of the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) "Haqueqi Azadi March" former Prime Minister and PTI supreme Imran Khan on Sunday said that Pakistan has an inhuman justice system, and thieves and bandits were imposed on us. Addressing the participants of the long march at Sadhoke, the former PM said that he said that there was only one difference between the society of animals and humans. "In the society of animals, the powerful can do whatever they want, and the weak have no one to protect them. "But in a human society, there is justice," Imran claimed, adding that this was exactly the "revolution" Pakistan was seeing right now. Imran Khan said that he and the nation would not stand with the establishment for supporting thieves. He went on to say that people on social media were receiving threats and were being oppressed. The former premier questioned, "You should be ashamed of what you did to Azam Swati. What was his crime? A tweet in which he criticised the army chief?" "What kind of a calamity was it that you had to inflict torture on him [Swati]?" he added. He told his supporters that this was the time to change their destiny and side with the truth. "These tyrants make us worship the idol of fear," Khan said. Imran Khan told his supporters that "I have one goal, we want justice in our country. It's time to change our destiny. They are threatening and oppressing."

Reporter's death: PTI ends march for the day



DNA

SADHOKE: Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf chairman Imran Khan has announced to end long march's Sadhoke phase after the tragic death of a female reporter in an accident. A female reporter from a private news channel namely Sadaf Naeem died in a horrific accident during PTI's long march. Channel 5 reporter Sadaf Naeem was crushed to death by a container after falling from another container. It was learnt that Sadaf fell down from a container while trying to jump to a nearby container and was

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Russia urged to reverse grain deal suspension

NEWS DESK

BRUSSELS: Western governments are calling on Russia to reverse its decision to pull out of a UN-brokered grain deal, a move that undermines efforts to ease a global food crisis, with Ukraine saying Moscow had planned the move well in advance. The Turkey and UN-brokered deal was signed between Russia and Ukraine in July under which Moscow allowed the grain ships to leave Ukrainian Black Sea ports. The agreement has already allowed more than 9 million tonnes of Ukrainian grain to be exported and was due to be renewed on November 19. UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres on Sunday expressed "deep concern" as Ukraine's maritime grain exports were halted. "The Secretary-General continues to engage in intense contacts aiming at the end of the Russian suspension of its participation in the Black Sea Grain Initiative," Guterres' spokesman said.

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Antony Blinken accuses Russia of weaponizing food

NEWS DESK

WASHINGTON: Russia's halting of its participation in the United Nations-brokered Black Sea Grain Initiative grain deal is weaponizing food by exacerbating humanitarian crises, US Secretary of State Antony Blinken said on Saturday. "Any act by Russia to disrupt these critical grain exports is essentially a statement that people and families around the world should pay more for food or go hungry," Blinken said in a statement. Russia on Saturday suspended participation in grain deal after what it said was a major Ukrainian drone attack on its fleet in Crimea. US President Joe Biden denounced

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HEC holds training for incubation centre Managers

“Aligned with HEC’s mission these Innovator Seed Fund Grants are key components of HEDP Project launched for very first time

DNA

Islamabad- October 30, 2022: The Higher Education Commission (HEC) under Higher Education Development in Pakistan (HEDP) project organized a week-long training for Business Incubation Centres in Islamabad.

The training was held in collaboration with Invest2Innovate (i2i), a leading organization that supports startup communities. It was attended by Directors/Managers of 17 Business Incubation Centres (BICs) from higher education institutions of Islamabad, Rawalpindi, Peshawar and AJK.

HEC in the past has organized multiple capacity building programmes for the BICs staff. However,

this training was focused on providing complete hand holding to startups from induction and incubation to formal graduation. The training plan has been designed in accordance with the BICs Needs Assessment held in one-on-one session with respective BICs recently. The training covered A to Z of programme design for executing a successful incubation programme including research and rapid product prototyping, road mapping startup’s journey, business development, revenue generation, building a financial narrative and investment readiness.

In her opening remarks, Director (R&D) HEC Ms. Noshaba Awais offered her full support to the BIC teams. During the training, the participants were briefed

about their significant roles in the Innovator Seed Fund (ISF) grant. ISF is a unique national level seed-funding programme where HEC, along with its partner BICs, is implementing this activity to provide a combination of capacity plus seed-funding support to innovative startups in a blended format. The grant winners will receive up to \$35,000 in seed funding along with technical support from BICs.

“Aligned with HEC’s mission these Innovator Seed Fund Grants are the key components of HEDP Project launched for the very first time. HEDP will be holistically supporting development of entrepreneurial and innovation ecosystem, hence will play a key role in transforming Pakistan into a knowledge economy,” said Executive Di-

rector HEC, Dr. Shaista Sohail in the context of ISF Capacity Building Programme and upcoming Awards ceremony. She stressed the dire national need to use the power of innovation to solve economic, social, environmental challenges and even global challenges. The participants appreciated the efforts of HEC team and assured their firm support to resolve any challenges faced by successful ISF grantees and future incubates in their upcoming entrepreneurship journey. Mr. Hazrat Bilal, Director General (Research & Innovation) HEC, in his closing remarks appreciated the efforts of trainers, BIC Directors and HEC organizing team. He also gathered feedback from participants on how to improve upcoming training and capacity building programmes for BICs.



LAHORE: Shazia Marri, Federal Minister for Poverty Alleviation and Social Security hold a press conference at Pakistan People’s Party Secretariat. APP

Fault disrupts electricity supply

DNA

GWADAR: The electricity supply to Pasni, Gwadar and its adjoining areas is facing disruption due to technical fault in the electricity transmission line coming from Iran.

According to spokesperson for Qesco, a 132-KV Quetta-Iran power transmission line is hit by a technical fault owing to which the power supply to the grid stations of three districts of Makran has been affected.

The power supply to grid stations in Turbat, Gwadar, Gwadar Industrial area, Deep Seaport, Pasni, Ormara, Panjgur and Hoshab has been affected, the spokesperson added. He said that after the restoration of electricity supply from Iran, the Qesco would restore the power supply to all areas in Makran. He further said that the Qesco regrets the electricity suspension and requests the consumers to cooperate with the electricity supply company. —DNA

Nicotine addiction trend becoming ‘health catastrophe’

DNA

ISLAMABAD Health experts on Sunday stressed the need for educating society about the negative effects of tobacco use as E-cigarettes and Nicotine pouches has a new rising trend among country youngsters which was becoming health catastrophe.

A Liver specialist Dr Murtaza Kazmi while talking to a state news channel, urged the media celebrities to discourage these advertisements and raise awareness on harms of nicotine, E-cigarettes, smoking, and adverse impacts of tobacco products on youngsters’ mental health. Media platforms are the main key to support civil society awareness campaigns which would discourage the sales, promotion and advertisement of the emerging

products to safe precious youth’s lives, he told.

He lamented that tobacco industry has been using innovative tactics for youngsters to sell its products everywhere, adding, concerned authorities should impose an immediate ban on the new sale trends of nicotine pouches and protect the youth from the lung cancer.

Another educationist from Quaid-e-Azam University Dr Marraym Anees said that nicotine pouches were now making their way into country, adding, E-cigarettes come in various designs ranging from cigarettes to pens and larger products like tank systems and personal vaporizers. E-cigarettes are attracting new generation in universities and cafes where youth are openly using these harmful products, she said, adding, the

use of nicotine pouches is spreading even among younger children in primary schools, who are especially at risk of overdoing or developing an addiction. She demanded that nicotine pouches, which are available in shops without any restrictions should be ban.

Dr Murtaza Kazmi added that just like other tobacco products, nicotine pouches could be very addictive and could increase blood pressure, heart rate and leading to heart disease and stroke. He added that according to Global Adult tobacco survey 11.4 percent male and 3.7 percent female were addicted to Nicotine, adding, there has been no policy or legislation to control and monitor the sales, promotion and advertisement of nicotine pouches which needs to address immediately.



MOITT launches 2 projects for Tharparkar, Gwadar

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for IT and Telecommunication Syed Amin Ul Haque has said his ministry had launched two more projects worth Rs. 1 billion for the provision of mobile and high-speed internet services in Tharparkar and Gwadar districts.

On the directive of Minister IT & Telecom, the Universal Service Fund (USF) Board approved an award of 2 contracts worth approx. Rs.1.06 billion to Telenor and Ufone for the unserved and under-served communities of Balochistan and Sindh provinces.

“We own the urban and rural areas of Sindh and continuously rolling out Broadband, OFC and other connectivity projects for these areas without any discrimination,” Haque said in a statement.

A project worth more than Rs. 870 million for Tharparkar district will be completed in 18 months and provide mobile and broadband facilities to more than 72,000 residents of various unserved villages spread over an area of 10,432 sq. km. Syed Amin Ul Haque said the broadband project had also been approved costing Rs 188.1 million for more than 15,000 people in 19 villages of Gwadar, Balochistan.

He said that the completion of these projects would provide an opportunity to the residents of unserved, under-served and remote areas of Balochistan and Sindh “not only to connect with the digital world but also be able to find convenience” in their daily routines, their businesses and other life needs with this connectivity. The Federal Minister for IT congratulated the USF Board of Directors, its Chairman Additional Secretary MOITT Mohsin Mushtaq Chandna and CEO Haaris Mahmood Chaudhary for launching these projects. He said that with the projects of providing broadband services in the unserved, under-served areas of the country under the USF expanding Connectivity Network, the performance of the USF was being appreciated globally. —APP

FAFEN for action over less than 10 % female turnout

ISLAMABAD: The Free and Fair Election Network (FAFEN) has exhorted the Election Commission to employ its constitutional and legal mandate to look into incidents of abysmally low turnout of women witnessed at more than 70 polling stations across five constituencies during the by-elections held on October 16, 2022. Such instances of suppressed women voting at the polling station level go unnoticed as Section 9(1) of the Elections Act, 2017 empowers the Election Commission to declare a poll null and void or conduct a re-poll at all or some polling stations only when the overall turnout of women in a constituency remains below 10 percent of the total polled votes, said a press release on Sunday.

FAFEN, however, believes that Section 9(2) empowers the Election Commission to take cognizance of such instances of suppressed women voting at the polling station level and proceed against persons who may have been involved in restraining women from voting. The section authorizes the Commission to order the filing of a complaint before a court of competent jurisdiction against the responsible persons. In addition, the Election Commission also needs to direct the District Election Commissions (DECs) to conduct special voter education campaigns for women in polling areas that recorded low female turnout in the previous general election or recent local government or by-elections as required by Section 12 (c) of the Elections Act, 2017. At the same time, the law needs to be tight-

ened further to ensure that the suppression of women voting at the polling station level has a legal consequence and guarantees that the political parties and contesting candidates guard against women being barred or discouraged from voting in any polling area within their respective constituencies. FAFEN says that its recommendation has been compelled by the analysis of Form-48 (Consolidated Statements of the Results of the Count Furnished by the Presiding Officers) of 11 National and Provincial Assembly constituencies where by-elections were held. According to these forms, there were 74 female polling stations in five constituencies where the voter turnout remained below 10 percent of the registered votes. These incidents of low women voting need to be investigated by the Commission as part of its efforts to make elections more inclusive and in an effort to deter such practices in the upcoming general elections. As many as 43 female polling stations recording a turnout below 10 percent are located in NA-31 Peshawar-V, 17 in NA-239 Korangi Karachi-I, nine in NA-24 Charsadda-II, three in NA-22 Mardan-III and two in NA-237 Malir-II. At one female polling station in NA-22 Mardan-III set up in the Government Girls High School, Aslam Killi, none of the 1,348 registered voters turned out to vote on October 16. Moreover, two polling stations recorded a turnout between two percent and four percent, nine between four percent and six percent, 22 between six percent and eight percent. —APP

Inte’l delegates visit historical sites

PESHAWAR: The delegates from South Korea, Saudi Arabia, Azerbaijan, Sri Lanka, Malaysia, Hungary, Afghanistan on Sunday visited historical places of Peshawar city, including Fort Bala Hisar, Machni Check Post, Khyber Rifle Officers Mess, Islamia College Peshawar, BRT, Sethi House Gore Ghatri, and Peshawar Museum. The delegates, who are in the City as part of the fourday International Peace and Sports Conference to be held under the auspices of Pakistan Sports Writers Federation and Sports Writers Association Khyber Pakhtunkhwa were given a tour and entertainment at the tourist spots of Peshawar and Khyber district. Hee Din Jung, President of Asian Sports Journalists Federation from Korea, Niranjan from Nepal, Awad Bin Mubarak from Saudi Arabia, Ramakrishnan Karuppan from Sri Lanka, Izahar Atan from Malaysia, Eldar Ismayilov from Azerbaijan, Emanuel Fantanean, Anna Szilagyi from Hungary, Nargiz Mahmudzade from Europe, delegates from Afghanistan. —APP

PN demonstrates fire power with UAE Navy

KARACHI: The Pakistan Navy on Sunday demonstrated fire power in the Arabian Sea amid bilateral naval exercise NASL AL BAHRI-IV conducted with United Arab Emirates (UAE) Navy at Karachi. The exercise com-

prised of advanced-level naval operations, including practical demonstration of Live Weapons Firings (LWF), said a Pakistan Navy news release. Chief of the Naval Staff Admiral Muhammad Ajjad Khan Niazi and Head

of UAE Naval Training Brigadier Staff Abdulla Sultan witnessed the LWF at the North Arabian Sea. The exercise NASL AL BAHRI is the fourth edition among the two navies aimed to enhance

interoperability, display operational readiness and consolidate existing strong bilateral relations in Naval Operations. The hallmark of the exercise was Live Weapon Firings by both navies Surface and Aviation platforms. All units successfully engaged the respective targets. On the occasion, the Chief of the Naval Staff expressed his complete satisfaction over the immaculate war preparedness of the Pakistan Navy against the entire spectrum of threats. He also lauded the successful conduct of joint LWF by Pakistan and UAE Navy which has “strategically underscored strong brotherly relations between the two countries”. Professional experience gained by both navies during the exercise has been profoundly rewarding and will foster existing bonds between the two navies. —APP



Punjab govt urged to make Rules of Business

DNA

LAHORE: As the Punjab government has made a law for free and compulsory education across the province, stakeholders, while welcoming this long due legislation towards improving literacy rate, have urged the government to take practical measures to ensure the law is implemented without any delay and targets of sustainable development goals in education sector are achieved. The provincial government last week had approved The

Punjab Free and Compulsory Education (Amendment) Bill, 2022 after a rigorous initiative of stakeholders especially educationists, civil society organizations, teachers and parents led by AwazCDS-Pakistan to make free education compulsory across the province. “The passage of this law is a great achievement on the part of both government and all stakeholders as it would contribute a lot towards popularizing free and compulsory secondary education across the province,” remarked Chief Executive Awaz CDS Pakistan Zia ur

Rehman while reacting to the government’s major step towards promoting education. Towards achieving the desired goals of this law, he, however, said the government needs to ensure quick and across the board implementation of this law by taking along all stakeholders through sustainable collaboration. It is to be mentioned here that the Punjab Education Department has instructed all private schools in the province to provide free education to ten percent poor and deserving students, which is appreciated by the stakeholders.

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National Days and Armed Forces Days

OCTOBER

Oct 01 / China	National Day
Oct 01 / Cyprus	National Day
Oct 01 / Republic of Korea	Armed Forces Day
Oct 01 / Nigeria	Armed Forces Day
Oct 02 / Guinea	National Day
Oct 03 / Germany	Unification Day
Oct 03 / Republic of Korea	National Foundation Day
Oct 05 / Indonesia	Armed Forces Day
Oct 06 / Egypt	Armed Forces Day
Oct 09 / Uganda	Independence Day
Oct 12 / Spain	National Day
Oct 23 / Hungary	National Day
Oct 24 / UN	United Nations Day
Oct 25 / Romania	Armed Forces Day
Oct 26 / Austria	National Day
Oct 27 / Turkmenistan	Independence Day
Oct 28 / Czech Republic	National Day
Oct 29 / Turkey	Republic Day

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Water Tank

Islamabad.....	0321-5744480
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Businessmen asked to explore investment potential in Gwadar

Mujeeb ur Rehman Qambrani said that a central business district over an area of 2,500 acres has been established in Gwadar that offers great opportunities to investors

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Mujeeb ur Rehman Qambrani, Director General, Gwadar Development Authority (GDA) said that Gwadar is destined to emerge as a hub of business and investment activities and the business community should focus on this port city for joint ventures and investment. He said that Gwadar has the potential to transform the lives of the people of Balochistan and the entire country. He said this while giving a detailed presentation to the business community about the development works in Gwadar during his visit to Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry. Mujeeb ur Rehman Qambrani said that a central business district over an area of 2,500 acres has been established in Gwadar that offers great opportunities to investors. He said that the New Gwadar International Airport, which is one of the largest in the region, will be operational by Sept 2023 with its 1st test flight in March 2023. He also briefed the

business community about the planned health, educational, sports, cultural, and tourist facilities that are being established in Gwadar. He said many important projects have been completed in Gwadar including boat parking padizer, jetty structure, pishukan jetty, sewerage treatment plant, marine drive, school, hospitals, restaurant, central park, padizer park, beach model park, cricket stadium and small tuck shops. He said that the ICCI delegation should visit Gwadar to explore the potential for business and investment opportunities. Speaking at the occasion, Ahsan Zafar Bakhtawari, President, Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry said that the remaining development works in Gwadar should be expedited to make it functional and that would



generate more economic activity in the province. He said that all international flights should land in Gwadar to make it a hub of business activities like Dubai and Doha. He said that Gwadar should be connected with other major cities through a railway network. He proposed that the government should declare Gwadar as winter capital of the country to promote

it as an attractive destination for economic activities. He assured that ICCI would consider sending its delegation to Gwadar to explore business and investment prospects. Azhar ul Islam Zafar Vice President ICCI, Mian Shaikat Masud, Zafar Bakhtawari, Muhammad Ejaz Abbasi, Nasir Qureshi, Muhammad Shakeel Munir, Ajmal Ba-

loch, Faseeh Ullah Khan, Akhtar Hussain, Khalid Mehmood, Chaudhary Javed Iqbal, Sheikh Muhammad Ijaz, Dr. Muhammad Usman, Muhammad Yahya, Muhammad Shabbir, Rizwan Chheena, Chaudhary Muhammad Ali, Khalid Chaudhary, Hasan Iqbal Gardezi, Ms. Parveen Khan, Ms. Naina Ali and others were also present at the occasion.

APBF confident after Pakistan's exclusion from FATF's grey list

STAFF REPORT

ISLAMABAD: The All Pakistan Business Forum (APBF) has welcomed the removal of Pakistan from FATF's grey list, expressing the hope that the move would drive positive impacts and revival of confidence in the economy. APBF President Syed Maaz Mahmood, however, raised his concern over the Pakistan's downgrading by the Fitch and Moody's rating agencies, indicating the country's worsening liquidity and policy risks, anticipating the removal of the country from the grey list is a big decision, which would help overcome several financial and fiscal challenges. He said being on the grey list was creating a very negative perception among the investment community, which negatively influenced a country's ability to attract foreign inflows. Now getting out of the grey-list would help in attracting investment. However, this cannot be quantified as global en-

vironment does not offer much support at the moment. Thus, no monetary benefits are expected in the near term, but the improvement in perception would be helpful for Pakistan in the long run, he said. APBF Chairman Ibrahim Qureshi said Pakistan needs to work on structural reforms to attract investment. While removal from FATF will help, Pakistan's other major problems in attracting FDI are inconsistent policies, high corporate taxes, unstable rupee, perpetual political instability and above all, utter disregard for commercial contracts. Ibrahim Qureshi referred that Pakistan's FDI inflows plunged by 47% during the first quarter of this fiscal year. The State Bank of Pakistan (SBP) has reported that Pakistan fetched FDI amounting to \$253.4 million during July-Sep of FY23 as against \$479.2 million in the same period of last fiscal year (FY22). APBF President Maaz Mahmood said that the development will increase confidence, especially for the

country's banking sector, which would also boost the level of business confidence, especially among international investors, bringing Pakistan back into the limelight, he added. He opined that Pakistan never really attracted much Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) even prior to its entry into the FATF grey-list, as this has more to do with government policies and the overall economic situation of a country. He said that in the short-term, removal from the grey-list would change the sentiment, but would not attract much monetary benefit. The FATF white list does not guarantee instant foreign inflows, but it does offer long-term flows added with some market reforms, he said. He asked the government to take bold steps and austerity measures as the Fitch downgrading reflects further deterioration in Pakistan's external liquidity and funding conditions, and the decline of foreign exchange reserves. However, we should also acknowledge that after four years,

the global anti-money laundering watchdog decided to pull Pakistan out of the 'increased monitoring list' after the country completed a 34-point agenda, which seemed to be impossible. Being on the grey list has had direct ramification on the economic front with different challenges arising for Pakistan, he said and added that FATF has recognized this progress, as its team has verified that reforms are in place, and there is high-level commitment and capacity to sustain these reforms. He said that over the last few years, international agencies such as International Monetary Fund and World Bank have emphasized on curbing anti-terror financing. He observed that removal from the grey-list would have a huge positive impact for the country, as it carried out a very strict agenda with respect to anti-money laundering and terror financing reforms. The development is good for medium to long term with respect to the perception of Pakistan, which is considered a risky investment.

'Winter precautions can reduce risk of heart attacks'

ISLAMABAD: Expert on Sunday advised the public to take timely preventive steps to reduce the danger of heart attacks in winter and emphasized media for creating awareness about cardiovascular diseases (CVD) to reduce the death rate from them. While talking to the PTV news channel, Executive Director (ED) of the Rawalpindi Institute of Cardiology (RIC), Major General (R) Azhar Mehmood Kayani said that heart disease could be prevented by changing lifestyle, consuming a healthier diet, quitting smoking and playing sports. He stressed the importance of educating patients and the general public regarding preventive means by repeating the messages through effective awareness campaigns. Dr Kayani said that "laziness was the main root cause of heart diseases among youngsters" and people should adopt a healthy lifestyle as well as take exercise to protect themselves from cardiac diseases, especially in the winter season. It was imperative that people of all ages should regularly get their complete heart check-ups to avoid possible heart diseases, he added. Replying to a question, he said heart disease is the leading cause of death globally, including in Pakistan, adding, smoking, excessive intake of sugar-sweetened beverages, diabetes, high blood pressure, a sedentary lifestyle, and obesity were all factors that contribute to heart attacks in the country. Hypertension was increasing among young adults between the ages of 30 and 40, which can lead to a heart attack, he mentioned. He advised that "everyone over the age of 40 should make a kit with these medicines and carry it with them". He regretted that a large number of people die of heart attacks due to a lack of awareness, adding, it was important for everyone to know what is high BP level and upon crossing the level how to treat it in emergencies. - APP



ISLAMABAD: Defence Attaches of Romania, Czech Republic posing for a picture on the occasion of Euro Village Festival. More Pictures on Page 4 and 8-DNA

Report shows optimistic picture of economic performance

DNA

ISLAMABAD: The Finance Division has released economic outlook report showing an optimistic picture of the economic performance in the coming months. The report states that Consumer Price Index for inflation is declining, rupee has gained stability and current account balance is on improving trend which indicates that economic activity will remain positive and persistent in coming months. According to report, the agriculture sector has been destroyed due to floods, the report said. The sugarcane production has decreased by 8 per cent. The rice pro-

duction has decreased by 40.6 per cent. The cotton production has decreased by 24.6 per cent. The ministry has set the target of wheat production at 28.37 million tonnes. The inflation rate remained 25.1 per cent from July to September. In the same period last year, inflation rate was 8.6 per cent. The price of oil has decreased in the global market in October. Inflation is likely to decrease in October compared to September. In the first quarter of the fiscal year, the budget deficit increased by 45.4 per cent. The budget deficit remained \$672 billion from July to September. In the

same period last year, the budget deficit was Rs462 billion. The remittances have decreased by 3.6 per cent from July to September. The total investment has decreased by 83.7 per cent during the same period. The exports have increased by 5.5 per cent during the same period. The imports have decreased by 7.9 per cent during the same period. The current account deficit remained \$2.20 billion. In the first quarter of the financial year, the revenue of the Federal Board of Revenue (FBR) increased by 17 per cent. As of October 26, 2022, the State Bank's reserves were around \$8.88 billion.

CTP sensitizing people to avoid safety hazards

RAWALPINDI: The CTP under its ongoing smog awareness campaign on Sunday, is visiting different areas and trying to sensitize the people to avoid any activity posing health or safety hazards during smog season. According to a spokesman, the CTP had launched a campaign on the special directives of City Traffic Officer (CTO) Naveed Irshad with an aim to raise awareness about best practices to keep oneself safe and healthy during smog season. Therefore, the citizens should bring the vehicles on the roads while keeping them in good condition, he said adding that in this regard, teams were visiting different city.-APP

PM grieved over Seoul stampede

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif on Sunday expressed his grief over the tragic death of 146 people in a stampede in Seoul, South Korea. The prime minister also expressed condolences to the people and the government of South Korea. On his Twitter handle, the prime minister posted, "I am saddened at the tragic death of 146 people in a stampede in Seoul. Our thoughts & prayers are with the government & people of South Korea." According to media reports, the tragedy occurred in Seoul's Itaewon district during Halloween festivities when a narrow crowd surged into a hilly downhill alley.-APP

680 apartments' grey structure near completion

ISLAMABAD: A senior official of the Federal Government Employees Housing Authority (FGEHA) has said the grey structure of 680 apartments in the Life Style Residency project was near completion whereas a block of 468 apartments was under construction. "As soon as civil work on the remaining apartments gets into small tangible shape, balloting for the entire lot of 1,148 apartments will be held collectively, to avoid any chances of discrimination amongst the members," he told APP. Commenting on the balloting of 'C' category apartments, he said no member ever made full payment till 2015, as the payment schedule concluded on March 31, 2021. He noted that every member had agreed to the terms and conditions of the project, wherein it was clearly mentioned in the Provisional Offer Letter (POL) that in case of any delay in handing over possession of apartment on account of unavoidable unforeseen circumstances, the allottee shall not be entitled to claim compensation from the EHPRO (construction company). To a query about the delay in project, the official said due to the increase in the prices of construction materials, the overall cost of the project rose abnormally. As a result, the original completion timeline became unviable. The COVID-19 Pandemic, he said, globally affected activities in all walks of life, but the "construction industry was adversely impacted", as basic supplies like steel, cement, concrete, etc became scarce and costlier, besides the labour pools got dispersed.-APP

Estd. 1860

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Briefs

Legendary actor Dildar Bhatti remembered

ISLAMABAD: Legendary TV, Radio comp re, columnist, author and actor Dildar Parvaiz Bhatti was remembered on his 28th death anniversary, wherein people from various walks of life through media platforms paid him glowing tributes for his unforgettable services in the entertainment industry.

He was born in Gujranwala on November 30, 1948, Dildar Parvaiz Bhatti, a beloved composer of TV and radio, who was home to hundreds of hearts in short stories, was unparalleled in his present response.

His early education was in Gujranwala city of Pakistan. Dildar received many trophies by winning debating competitions throughout school and college, electronic channels reported.

After completing masters in English Literature, Bhatti started his career as an English lecturer at Govt college Sahiwal. Within a year, he relocated back to his home city Lahore, working at government college. His second career in entertainment industry started from Radio Pakistan in early 70s, where he hosted a program called Sohni. The transition from radio to TV didn't take long. In 1974, when he was given the opportunity to program on television, his public style gained national fame. In 1987, after the success of the TV programs 'Takra, Yashish-beer, and Jawan Thought,' he programmed the festival, in 1990, the fair was renamed as 'Panjand', which is known to this day.—APP

ANF seizes over 28 kg narcotics; arrests six

RAWALPINDI: Anti-Narcotics Force (ANF) on Sunday managed to seize over 28 kg of narcotics from different areas of the country and arrested six accused.

According to an ANF spokesman, ANF in an operation conducted a raid near Tarnol Islamabad and recovered 7.2 kg charras from the possession of an accused namely Ibrahim.

In another raid on International Mail Office Rawalpindi, ANF recovered 48 grams of weed from a parcel being sent to London. The parcel was booked by Muhammad Adnan, a resident of Azad Kashmir.

ANF and Airport Security Force, in a joint operation at Bacha Khan International Airport recovered 7.1 kg Ice drug from the trolley bag of a passenger, going to Doha by Qatar Airways, flight no QR-601. Whereas, ANF Sindh in two operations recovered 14.4 kg charras from different areas of Karachi and rounded up four drug pushers. Separate cases have been registered against the accused, he said and informed that raids were being conducted to net the accomplices of the arrested accused.—APP

Imran Khan following anti-state agenda

ISLAMABAD: Special Assistant to Prime Minister for Narcotics Atta Ullah Tarrar on Sunday said that Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) chairman Imran Khan was following Indian agenda to destabilize the country but elements trying to create chaos will never succeed in their nefarious designs. "Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf leadership doing politics on non-issues will have to face embarrassment and insult", he said while talking to a private news channel.

He criticized Imran Khan for dragging the institutions into his dirty politics by hurling abuses and naming them in his public speeches. Replying to a query, Atta Tarrar replied that Imran Khan is becoming main player to implement the agenda of anti-state elements in the country, adding, the state recognizes democratic right of the Opposition to hold peaceful protest, however necessary action will be taken in case of violation of the law. Imran Khan wanted that everyone should believe in his lies and he should not be held accountable for his wrongdoings, he said, adding, Khan wants match of his choice, umpire and players of his choice where decisions are made on his will which is not acceptable.—APP



ISLAMABAD: Visitors taking interest in various items displayed at the Bulgarian stall during Euro Village festival.—DNA

Pak identity is a multi-layered phenomenon

The study revealed that a lot of confusion exists about the language of the people of Pakistan as most surveys ask this question in a very imprecise way, and then use it as a proxy for ethnicity in the country

DNA

ISLAMABAD: How do Pakistanis feel towards each other, towards people who are like them, and towards people who are unlike them? Do Pakistanis trust their various institutions? What are their values, beliefs and attitudes? Are they able to achieve their ambitions? Do they feel safe on the streets? What are their views about the governance and political system in the country? What are community life and informal sociability like in Pakistan? What is the state of volunteerism and civic involvement? And most importantly, what do Pakistanis consider as their identity? The PIDE-BASICS survey covers these twelve areas to understand the basics of Pakistanis.

According to the press release issued from Pakistan Institute of Development Economics (PIDE), in the supervision of PIDE's Pro-Vice Chancellor Dr. Durre Nayab, PIDE-BASICS nationwide survey was carried out. The research results shows, in spite of

the fact, seemingly straightforward questions elicit very complex responses. "Usually, we perceive the identity in singularity i.e. we are Pakistanis. We are Muslims. However, the study uncovers that in context of Pakistan Identity is a multi-layered phenomenon with the majority not perceiving it in singularity. Identities are linked to: i.e. religion; ii. Nationality; iii. ethnic background; iv. caste, for instance, Rajput, Kakar, Achakzai or Gujjar; v. being a human; vi. biological, that is the sex of the person; vii. relationship, with reference to someone like being a mother, father, son or daughter; and viii. One's profession." Additionally, at national level 61.5% revealed multi-layer identity. And, its prominent among the inhabitants of ICT (Islamabad Capital Territory) followed by GB (Gilgit Baltistan). On the other hand, singularity (religion) was dominant among the people of Punjab. Up to par, both at national and regional level religious identity is most prevailing. Subsequently, being a Pakistani as single

identity is not strong one at any level (national, regional and provincial). Thus, the finding compels me to celebrate, why some regions are deemed as patriotic and some are blamed for the lack of loyalty? It's a wonder, among the four provinces, the largest proportion is in Balochistan which considers being a Pakistani as part of their identity, followed by Sindh and KP. Furthermore, the population of Punjab has the smallest proportion including nationality as a layer of their identity. Anyway, being a human is an identity kept by some, but many more give importance to caste as their single identity. It is a rather thought-provoking finding that more than ethnicity it is caste, a narrower ascribed characteristic, which is contemplated as indispensable by Pakistanis. The study revealed that a lot of confusion exists about the language of the people of Pakistan as most surveys ask this question in a very imprecise way, and then use it as a proxy for ethnicity in the country. This is totally misleading. To have a better understanding of the issue, PIDE-BASICS

Survey asks three questions in this regard: the mother tongue of the father, the mother tongue of the mother and the language commonly used for informal day-to-day communication. We examine in the study that Urdu is used much more often by people in ICT, AJK and Punjab than what the mother tongues would suggest. Among the four major provincial languages, Punjabi is most frequently switched to Urdu. To sum up, in the context of Pakistan Identity is a multi-layered phenomenon with the majority not perceiving it in singularity. The finding rejects our assumptions of Pakistanis identity either Pakistani (National) or being Muslim (religious). And, rejects the perceptions we have developed regarding different regions of the state (for instance Balochistan is blamed for being non-patriotic). Moreover, the dynamics vary with regions and many other demographic characteristics. All in all, majority of the population are neither calling themselves Pakistanis, nor Muslims.

CUI awards degrees to 1239 graduates

STAFF REPORT

ISLAMABAD: The COMSATS University Islamabad (CUI) awarded degrees to 1,239 graduating students of its Wah Cantt and Attock Campus at its annual Convocation 2022. According to a press statement issued by the university, CUI conferred degrees to 808 graduating students of the Wah Campus and 431 graduating students of Attock Campus. The degrees were provided at undergraduate and graduate levels in the disciplines of Management Sciences, Electrical and Computer Engineering, Civil Engineering, Mechanical Engineering, Computer Science and Mathematics. Meanwhile, 33 graduates of Wah Campus and 28 graduates of Attock Campus were awarded gold, silver, and bronze medals on account of their excellent academic performance. Fourteen (14) graduates of Wah Campus were awarded with PhD degrees in the field of Electrical and Computer Engineering, Computer Science and Management Science. Meanwhile, Prof. Dr. Muhammad Tabassum Afzal, Rector CUI presided over the convocation ceremony while Prof. Dr. Muhammad Abid, T.I., Director CUI Wah Campus and Prof. Dr. Junaid Mughal, Director CUI Attock Campus presented a Campus report in which they highlighted the achievements of their campuses and future plans.

Speaking on the occasion, the Rector CUI congratulated all graduating students and their parents on attaining degrees and advised them to work hard, and contribute to the development of the country and nation. He also congratulated the teaching faculty of the University who stand behind the success of these graduates as equally as their parents. The Rector CUI advised graduating students to engage in entrepreneurial activities to create business and job opportunities and contribute towards the economic development of the country.



IRSA releases 99,700 cusecs water

ISLAMABAD: Indus River System Authority (IRSA) on Sunday released 99,700 cusecs of water from various rim stations with an inflow of 56,300 cusecs.

According to the data released by IRSA, the water level in River Indus at Tarbela Dam was 1531.58 feet and was 133.58 feet higher than its dead level of 1,398 feet. Water inflow in the dam was recorded as 30,100 cusecs while outflow was 50,000 cusecs. The water level in River Jhelum at Mangla Dam was 1163.05 feet, which was 113.05 feet higher than its dead level of 1,050 feet. The inflow and outflow of water were recorded 7,500 cusecs and 31,000 cusecs respectively. The release of water at Kalabagh, Taunsa, Guddu and Sukkur were recorded 61,300, 41,400, 34,400 and 14,100 cusecs respectively. Similarly, from River Kabul, a total of 8,700 cusecs of water was released at Nowshera.—APP

AIOU holds RDs conference to discuss students' facilitation

ISLAMABAD: An online meeting of regional directors was held at Allama Iqbal Open University. Director General Regional Services, Dr. Malik Tauqir Ahmad Khan presided over the meeting. He said that students are our asset, it is our primary responsibility to take care of them for the development of the institution and we should try to provide them with all possible facilities. The problems of students should be solved on an emergency basis. He added that certificates of appreciation will be given to regional directors who have performed well in terms of increasing confidence in the university and increasing enrolment. Dr. Malik Tauqir further said that the main objective of this meeting is to discuss strategies, challenges, plans for further increasing the facilities of the students and to bring more students in the educational network across the country, especially from remote areas. He said that the future of 1.2 million students relates to this institution, it is necessary for us to take care of their needs as per the vision of Vice Chancellor, AIOU, Prof. Dr. Zia Ul-Qayyum, so regional directors should give suggestions for further increase in their facilities. All the officers of the Directorate of regional services participated in this meeting. Director Admissions, Syed Zia ul Hussain Naqvi presented a detailed report of the admissions so far for the autumn semester 2022. He said that because of digitization, the students' confidence in the university is increasing. All the academic facilities from admission to degree issuance have been made available online due to which the students do not have to go around the university.—DNA

BMP for overhauling power sector: Nisar

Anjum Nisar says energy efficiency, conservation key measures to mitigate risks

STAFF REPORT

ISLAMABAD: The Federation of Pakistan Chambers of Commerce and Industry's Businessmen Panel (BMP) has stressed the need for overhauling the power sector, through some drastic measures as the total cost of inefficiencies in the power sector is estimated at a whopping Rs9.4 trillion during the last 15 years. FPCCI former president and BMP Chairman Mian Anjum Nisar stated that in present scenario the energy efficiency and conservation are key measures used by countries across the globe to mitigate associated risks. However, in the case of Pakistan, both energy efficiency and conservation were generally treated as alien concepts. Referring to a report, he said that the stock of circular debt has surpassed Rs 2.3 trillion level, while the government budgetary support has reached Rs 4.9 trillion, besides borrowing cost of budgetary support is computed at Rs 2.4 trillion during

this period. He said that Pakistan, being a net importer of energy resources, was facing serious supply-side challenges, as the global price of crude oil and imported coal had witnessed an increase of 32 percent and 103 respectively only in the last nine months, leading to a significant threat to country's energy security. Mian Anjum Nisar said that the sector needs to be deregulated in letter and spirit, as nothing can work unless the DISCOs are truly empowered and allowed to act independently. He pointed out that the power sector has been suffering from miss-governance, lack of DISCOs' competence and missing coordination between the generation and distribution systems. The sector alone can drag the economy down to an abyss unless it is resolved. And for that to happen, nothing short of deregulation and privatization will work, as successive governments have used the energy sector for their political gains by taking decisions that have resulted in unabated rise of circular debt. Quoting the figure, he said that energy consumption for FY 2020-21 stood at 60.2 million

tons of oil equivalent, registering an increase of more than 15 percent over the previous year. This situation was becoming unsustainable for the country and warranted a concerted effort, at the national level, for implementation of energy efficiency and conservation measures, across the energy value chain. So, the government will have to review the situation holistically with a mandate to consider and recommend measures to be taken for conservation of energy. He noted that there was an urgent need for up-gradation of energy efficiency and conservation standards and strict enforcement, besides replacement of inefficient appliances and consumer awareness for responsible use of energy were other key areas which should be identified for action as a national priority. He estimated that a dollar outflow of around \$ 1.150 billion could be potentially saved annually through implementation of efficiency and conservation measures. He said that enforcement of administrative measures like hybrid work model, closure of commercial markets at 8pm and alternate

switching of streetlights are must as this will result in saving to the tune of 568 million dollars annually through fuel and electricity savings. In the same way switching to LED lights from traditional incandescent bulbs will enable annual savings of \$ 103 million, as approximately 2.65 million fans out of total annual production of 7 million, are inefficient and cause a loss of around 0.68 billion units annually. He said that ban on production of inefficient fans shall enable savings of around \$ 69 million annually while existing installed water geysers consume around 105 million MMBTUS of gas annually which can be reduced by 25 percent through installation of conical baffles. Accordingly, installation of conical baffles in the existing water geysers should be progressively ensured to enable annual saving of around \$ 419 million through gas conservation annually. Pointing out electricity connections of over 300,000 primary and secondary schools, he suggested that school solarization could result in substantial savings.—APP

Rs 10,533 million toll revenue collected in four months

ISLAMABAD: The authorities concerned have collected an amount of Rs 10,533.67 million as toll revenue from the taxes of highways and motorways from April 11 to July 2022, an official has told APP. He said an amount of Rs 1,949.42 million was earned from toll taxes on highways and motorways from April 11 to 30, after the coalition government took over. "Rs 2,896.22, Rs 2,898.57 and Rs 2,789.46 million, toll revenue was earned in months of May, June and July, respectively," he said.—APP

'Tales of the Heart' continues to attract art enthusiasts

ISLAMABAD: A solo painting exhibition "Tales of the Heart" by the prominent artist Atif Khan at Tanzara Art Gallery (TAG) continues to attract the art enthusiasts through his unique portrayal of socio-political and cultural narratives. The exhibition was inaugurated by the Vice Chancellor, the National College of Arts (NCA), Professor Dr. Murtaza Jafri, and will continue till November 09. Noshi Qadir, curator of Tanzara Art Gallery (TAG) said as a contemporary image-maker, Khan pushes his artistic limits through varied artistic thoughts and visual explorations of social-political and cultural issues.

The work of the noted artist Atif Khan interweaves Islamic miniature painting with modern geometric design and popular culture which successfully creates mysterious narratives through his juxtapositions of Mughal era figures within mandala-like landscapes, she said and added that through his unique artwork, Atif Khan had built a unique visual vocabulary of interweaving storytelling that addresses itself through a soul searching process.

Noshi Qadir said that Atif Khan's work had been widely exhibited at home and abroad and was part of private and public collections worldwide. He is a recipient of numerous prestigious international awards and has participated in workshops and residencies locally and globally, she added. Atif Khan's work has been part of collections namely at the Bradford Museum, UK, Aga Khan Museum, Toronto, Canada, Sharjah Art Museum UAE, and the Islamic Museum of Australia Melbourne, Australia. He has several solo shows to his credit in Pakistan, UK, Jordan, Switzerland and India as well as participated in numerous group shows.—APP

Experts to deliberate over prospects in children's literature

ISLAMABAD: Three-day international conference titled "Children's Literature: Past, Present and Future" will start at Pakistan Academy of Letters (PAL) on October 31 (Monday). The conference will be arranged in collaboration with Daira IIm-o-Adab Pakistan with the presence of local and foreign experts.

Talking to APP, an official of PAL told that national and international writers, scholars, researchers and storytellers from within the country and abroad will participate and present their literature, thoughts and children-related literature. The seminar will highlight salient features of children's literature, including its significance and effectiveness, its development in Pakistani languages, international languages and the 21st century. The official said that the seminar would also hold discussions on children's literature and the digital era, children's interests and future possibilities, tradition and patriotism, and hurdles in children's literature with practical solutions. A total of 11 sessions on the different aspects of children's literature will be held during the three-day conference. A number of foreign literary experts will join the conference online while a few will attend the three-day seminar depending on the prevailing circumstances.—APP

Climate crisis: no end in sight

THE world is falling into an “abyss of risk”, said Prof Johan Rockström of the Potsdam Institute for Climate Impact Research in Germany. Reports published this week by three UN agencies all point to the failure of governments to make – and keep – sufficient commitments to ensure that global temperatures will not rise by more than 1.5C above pre-industrial levels, which was the target in the 2015 Paris agreement. This is the worst possible news, and arrives just a week before this year’s round of climate talks, Cop27, is due to open in Egypt. So far human activities have raised the temperature by around 1C on average. If current pledges on emissions are fulfilled, that figure is expected to rise to 2.5C. That would – and probably will – mean destruction on a scale that is hard to imagine, even after what we have already witnessed, most recently with devastating floods in Pakistan but also record-breaking heatwaves and other extreme weather elsewhere. Optimists came away from Cop26 in Glasgow believing that unsteady progress there – particularly in the crucial area of US-China cooperation – could be built on afterwards. Those hopes have now been dashed, with only 24 countries submitting new plans, known as nationally determined contributions (NDCs), over the past year – and even the adjusted pledges falling short of what is needed. Climate tipping points including the collapse of the Greenland ice shelf, scientists warn, are becoming unavoidable, with rises in methane emissions in 2021 a particular source of alarm. In the UK, the new prime minister, Rishi Sunak, has made a terrible decision not to go to Cop27. Given that the UK held the Cop presidency this year, Greenpeace’s Rebecca Newsom was right to liken this no-show to “a runner failing to turn up with the baton” in a relay race. Mr Sunak’s comment that “everyone should be really proud” of what the UK has achieved so far suggests that he is alarmingly out of touch with the rising threat. Giving up on further progress via the UN process, and by other means including new taxes on oil companies, is not an option. Global heating of 2.5C is a terrifying prospect, especially for the millions of people who live in the places most dangerously exposed to sea-level rises. But it is a less terrifying prospect than the 2.7C of warming that would have followed from the Glasgow pledges. Even people who understand fully the risks from climate change are sometimes reluctant to publicise them. Transformation of the global energy system, combined with a package of financial support for the global south from the north, is arguably more likely to be achieved if people believe that a greener future is within reach. With the head of the UN, António Guterres, predicting “a global catastrophe”, this week that future looks horribly distant. But the struggle continues.

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US losing friends with its them-or-us stance

THE 2022 session of the Future Investment Initiative, commonly known as “Davos in the Desert”, was held in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, last week, bringing together prominent policymakers, CEOs, investors, entrepreneurs and emerging business leaders to discuss the future of international investment and the global economy. No US government official attended the event. But that was because none were invited. When asked about the non-participation of anyone from the US administration ahead of the event, FII group CEO Richard Attias said they made the decision so that the event did not turn into a “political platform”. The “Davos in the Desert” has further exposed the divergences between the United States and Saudi Arabia. Tensions have been apparent between the two for quite some time, and the conflict between Russia and Ukraine has exacerbated them. While Washington has insisted on sanctioning Russia for its “special military operation” in Ukraine, Riyadh has maintained good relations with Moscow, which has irked the Joe Biden administration. It was further displeased with “OPEC+” members deciding at their ministerial-level conference at the beginning of October to cut their crude oil production by 2 million barrels daily compared with that of August, despite US President Joe Biden urging them to increase production during his visit to Saudi Arabia in July. And Saudi Arabia knows where the opportunities are. Saudi Arabia’s Crown Prince and Prime Minister Mohammed bin Salman bin Abdulaziz Al Saud expressed his country’s desire to join BRICS earlier this month, which is regarded as it adjusting its previous “oil for security” strategy that aligned it with the US. The Future Investment Initiative also exposed the divergences between the US business community and the Biden administration. Even without the participation of any official representatives, as many as 400 US executives attended the event upon invitation. Among them were JP Morgan CEO Jamie Dimon, Blackstone CEO Stephen Schwarzman, Bridgewater founder Ray Dalio and Goldman Sachs CEO David Solomon, who shared a stage on Monday. Despite the global recession, the International Monetary Fund has estimated Saudi Arabia’s economic growth will be 7.6 percent for 2022, which is an attractive cake for US investors. US politicians should be reminded that in this way they are turning many friends into adversaries. Saudi Arabia has signaled that it is no longer tied to Washington’s apron strings. Its turning to BRICS signifies recognition of a global community that is forming outside of the established Western one that is dictated by the US and under the self-serving manipulation of the financial and commercial controls that it applies to secure its advantages.

Two Years of Ibrahim Accord

Dr. Muhammad Akram Zaheer



Israeli politicians may also consider developing relations with Saudi Arabia outside the framework of the Abraham Accords. Similarly, both Oman and Qatar have continued their longstanding diplomatic engagement with Israel. Despite Doha criticizing the Abraham Accords and reiterating its support for the API, the Qatari government has kept its “working relationship” with Israel under its radar. For its part, Oman has enjoyed cordial relations with Israel for nearly 50 years, perhaps the oldest ties between Israel and a Gulf state

TWO years after the signing of the Ibrahim Accord on September 15, 2020, which normalized diplomatic relations between Israel, the United Arab Emirates, Bahrain, Morocco and possibly Sudan, progress in strengthening ties has yielded mixed results. As expected, normalization has opened up new opportunities for defense and security cooperation, particularly between Israel, Bahrain and the United Arab Emirates, which share a common approach to the security threat posed by Iran. A subsequent agreement to organize the Negev Summit, which also included Egypt in the Ibrahim Pact alliance, provided additional opportunities for cooperation on common interests, including energy, food and water security, health and other issues. But there are also many shortcomings in the level of cooperation. Most importantly, despite the initial goal of Arab administrators, cooperation between Israel and its Arab partners has not produced any tangible improvement in the Israeli-Palestinian calculation. This may change as the Negev Forum includes measures to improve the living conditions of Palestinians as part of its agenda. In addition, Israelis are now more cautious in their relations with the Palestinians to avoid conflict with their new Arab partners. But any real change for the Palestinians has so far been largely invisible, and the prospect of the November 1 election sparking

another right-wing swing in Israel could make a positive change.

No new members came under the scope of Ibrahim Accord despite some softening of its position on bilateral relations, including defense cooperation and opening its airspace to Israeli aviation. Saudi Arabia has maintained its commitment to the pre-existing Arab Peace Initiative (API). As Saudi Foreign Minister Adel al-Jubeir pointed out over the summer, API’s position is that “peace comes at the end of the process, not at the beginning”. Even Gulf States such as Oman and Qatar, which have long had almost illegitimate relations with Israel, have so far refused to follow the UAE and Bahrain in formalizing their ties.

From Israel’s perspective, a gradual improvement in its relations with the Arab Gulf states may be sufficient. Despite its apparent ban on the API, the Saudis are willing to take slow, small-scale routine steps before the Israeli-Palestinian issue is fully resolved. As mentioned early, security cooperation in the Red Sea littoral region is one area where the Saudis have shown a willingness to work with Israel. And Saudi agreements allowing Israeli civil aviation to fly more over its airspace, as well as accepting direct travel for Hajj pilgrims from Israel, are further indications of Saudi Arabia’s more compassionate stance on cooperation with Israel.

Israeli politicians may also consider developing relations with Saudi

Arabia outside the framework of the Abraham Accords.

Similarly, both Oman and Qatar have continued their longstanding diplomatic engagement with Israel. Despite Doha criticizing the Abraham Accords and reiterating its support for the API, the Qatari government has kept its “working relationship” with Israel under its radar. For its part, Oman has enjoyed cordial relations with Israel for nearly 50 years, perhaps the oldest relationship between Israel and a Gulf state. Today this is most prominently marked by Israel’s involvement in the Middle East Desalination Research Center in Muscat, the last of the remaining steps of the Madrid Process.

Two years later, the governments involved continue to view the Ibrahim Pact positively as advancing their national interests. And normalization has opened the door for private sector elements, particularly in the UAE, which are well-positioned to take advantage of opportunities arising from bilateral trade and commerce. But the agreements are still firmly rooted in the attitude of the Arab population. With the exception of Morocco, where recent Arab Barometer polling data shows that only 11 percent of the population views Israel as a threat, Arab publics generally view Israel negatively, with large. The extent is based on the failure to resolve the Palestinian issue. This negative approach leaves decision makers in another cycle.

Are US-Saudi relations spinning out of control?

Engin Koc

Saudi Arabia and UAE are the most significant allies of the US next to Israel in the Middle East but the Biden administration has failed to push them to increase oil output to calm the global economic crisis and gum up the Russian energy advantage. Particularly, Saudi Arabia is foot-dragging on the US concern about Russia’s extent of influence in global politics, especially in Europe. For years now, Russia and Saudi Arabia have had a special place in US international politics as “pariahs”. Moscow has been challenging Washington at the international level and Riyadh is hedging the US with China and Russia at the sub-regional level, especially since Biden came to power

OPEC’s decision to sharply cut output has put more pressure on the already strained ties between the once-close allies. Will this be the end of the strategic partnership in the Middle East? The OPEC+ countries control the valve to global oil output, and their collective decision directly impacts energy prices since they are the pricing cartel in the energy market. On October 5, the OPEC+ – 13 member countries plus 10 allies under Moscow’s de facto leadership – announced in Vienna a sharp cut of output by two million barrels per day, roughly equal to two percent of global supply, despite the Biden administration’s push to pump more. The announcement – the largest supply cut by OPEC+ since 2020 – sent global shockwaves as it came in the midst of an energy crisis triggered by the Russian incursion on Ukraine. The cut will go into implementation at the beginning of November. However, the action was taken before the European Union’s fresh embargoes on Russian energy over the conflict in Ukraine. The decision will clearly help Moscow’s revenue rise despite the western sanctions. Russia will undoubtedly exploit the rising energy costs as retaliation for the curbs against Moscow. It is entirely foreseeable that the OPEC decision will result in tensions between the United States and some of its Gulf allies – it would not only exacerbate the issues that already exist but will also have political repercussions between the US and Saudi Arabia, the de facto leader of OPEC. Saudi Arabia’s Energy Minister, Prince Abdulaziz bin Salman, said “We are here to stay as a moderating force, to bring about stability”. Though he stressed that the “decision is not an act of belligerence”, it will definitely destabilise the market and sour relations with oil-importing Western countries. Suhail al Mazroui, the Energy Minister for the United Arab Emirates, too maintained that “the decision is technical, not political”. Haitham al Ghaith, the secretary-general of OPEC, supported the group’s decision to impose a major supply reduction, asserting that OPEC+ is working to provide

“security [and] stability to the energy markets”.

In response, the US intends to release an additional 10 million barrels of oil from its Strategic Petroleum Reserve in November to counterbalance OPEC’s output drop, and officials suggested they may consider releasing more. The White House also argued that the OPEC decision will offer a lifeline to the Russian military campaign in Ukraine. Karine Jean-Pierre, a spokesperson for the White House, said, “It’s clear that OPEC+ is aligning with Russia with today’s announcement.”

The chain of events was a clear indication that President Biden’s visit to Saudi Arabia, a staunch American ally, in July and his encouragement to crown prince Mohammed bin Salman to increase oil output did not yield any result. The US government called OPEC’s deep output cut “short-sighted” and as weaponising energy. Biden told reporters, “We’re looking at what alternatives we may have.” He deliberately insight NOPEC (No Oil Producing and Exporting Cartels Act), a new oil supplier group, to control prices and output in the global energy market. Saudi Arabia and UAE are the most significant allies of the US next to Israel in the Middle East but the Biden administration has failed to push them to increase oil output to calm the global economic crisis and gum up the Russian energy advantage. Particularly, Saudi Arabia is foot-dragging on the US concern about Russia’s extent of influence in global politics, especially in Europe. For years now, Russia and Saudi Arabia have had a special place in US international politics as “pariahs”. Moscow has been challenging Washington at the international level and Riyadh is hedging the US with China and Russia at the sub-regional level, especially since Biden came to power.

Moreover, though OPEC is claiming that the output cut is aimed at maintaining a healthy balance between supply and demand, in reality it is a direct message to the US administration. Significantly decreased oil supply will most probably cause US gasoline prices to rise sharply. It is a timely and important attempt to

indirectly influence the US congressional and state elections in November. Soaring prices will potentially help drive up inflation and Biden’s position will be more brittle.

Numerous friction points have existed between the US and Saudi Arabia, including intervention in Yemen, foreign policy orientation, pricing of oil in the Chinese yuan, and energy prices. But the steep cut in oil production could be the last nail in the coffin. White House immediately released a statement to “re-evaluate relations with Saudis”, that is, to put Riyadh directly in the firing line over OPEC’s output curbs. Legislation to remove US soldiers from Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates was presented by Democratic congressman Tom Malinowski of New Jersey.

In addition, the Chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, Bob Menendez, issued a statement that “the United States must immediately freeze all aspects of our cooperation with Saudi Arabia, including any arms sales and security cooperation beyond what is absolutely necessary to defend US personnel and interests”.

These official statements indicate that the US and Saudi Arabia’s relationship is spinning out of control. Washington is clearly angry and political “retaliation” against Riyadh is very much on the table. OPEC’s decision has already affected oil prices and it will increase the cost of living not only in the US but also in other parts of the world. Hence, the US may ease sanctions on Venezuela and seek closer rapprochement with Iran to punish Riyadh. The House Democrats are mounting pressure on the Biden administration, asking it to call American troops back from Saudi military bases and pause the supply of strategic conventional weapons to Saudi Arabia. This scenario will be catastrophic for Riyadh’s regional security. The US stance may impact the Saudi position on the war in Yemen, crippling the Saudis’ ability to bomb and blockade the country, finally ending US complicity in that devastating conflict, one of President Biden’s earliest foreign policy commitments.

– Courtesy: TRT World

Briefs

Attempts to create crises to be foiled

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The prime minister said that unfortunately, once again a long march and sit-in was announced by the PTI's leadership when he would be visiting China and recollected that during President Xi's visit in 2013 similar sit-in was staged, dirty clothes were hanged on the premises of buildings in the Red Zone and roads were littered with garbage. The then-Chinese Ambassador met the PTI chief and requested him to vacate the place for a few days during the visit but he refused. For seven months, the visit was postponed which had also shaken the trust of the country's friends, he added. The prime minister said that the close party leaders of PTI were claiming that the long march could be turned bloody. The PTI's government had left the country's economy in tatters and the current government was striving to build it from the straw, he added.

The prime minister said that during their rule, not a single penny of corruption could be proved whereas in the PTI's tenure, through sugar and wheat scams, people made from the windfall. The low-priced gas during the Covid period was not imported. What kind of relief the PTI's chief had provided to the masses? The prime minister questioned and said that there could be no two opinions that Imran Niazi had the 'narcissist agenda'. In the past, he had inflicted irreparable loss to the country which was not relevant to him considering his personal agenda.

The prime minister said that the coalition government was grappling with the issues of unemployment and price hike worsened by the rising global oil prices. The prime minister to a question, replied that a person had brought a message from the PTI's chief suggesting consensus over the appointment of new army chief which was rejected by him as it was the prerogative of the Prime Minister to make such appointment under the Constitution. Expressing his displeasure over the haughty attitude of the former prime minister, he said that Imran Niazi even did not like to shake hands with his political opponents in the Parliament. Whether they had approached him when the PTI's government made amendment over the army chief, he said, adding that he told the messenger that he was ready for a dialogue to avoid crises, and to discuss the charters of economy and democracy. But the appointment of a new army chief was a constitutional matter, and he told the messenger pointblank that he would not hold consensus with Imran, he said, adding that as prime minister he would take decision in the best interests of the country.

'November to prove important for country'

FROM PAGE 01

each passing day. When he started the long march on Friday, 10 to 12 thousand people were with him. But now when he reached Muridke, only 3,500 to 4,000 people are part of his long march, he added. Kh Asif said that earlier, the Pakistan Democratic Movement (PDM), then the opposition parties, used to expose Imran Khan's real face before the nation, but now it was being done directly by top officials of the institutions. Kh Asif welcomed the armed forces' decision to distance them from politics. He said that the institution, which had been making sacrifices for the country and the nation for the past 75 years, was being dragged into politics by Imran Khan, which was regrettable. He said, "Our forces and our intelligence agencies are among the best forces and agencies in the world. The armed forces have always rendered sacrifices in the war against terrorism and the entire nation support them." Kh Asif said Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif had rejected a proposal from PTI Chairman Imran Khan about appointment of the army chief jointly. He said the appointment of army chief was a routine matter and Imran Khan was nobody to intervene in the PM's prerogative.

Pakistan down Netherlands to keep semi-final hopes alive

Shadab returned figures of 3-22 and pace bowler Mohammad Wasim took two wickets to set the tone for their team's domination against a Dutch side who are out of the semi-final running after losing a third straight Super 12 match

SPORTS DESK

PERTH: Pakistan bowlers, led by spinner Shadab Khan, helped them hammer the Netherlands by six wickets in Perth on Sunday for a first win at the Twenty20 World Cup to keep their faint hopes of reaching the semi-finals alive. Pakistan restricted the Dutch to 91-9, and then cruised to 95-4 with 37 balls to spare as Mohammad Rizwan made 49. But it was the bowlers set up victory for a side that lost their opener to India and then were shocked by Zimbabwe in Group 2. Shadab returned figures of 3-22 and pace bowler Mohammad Wasim took two wickets to set the tone for their team's domination against a Dutch side who are out of the semi-final running after losing a third straight Super 12 match.

Pakistan lost skipper Babar Azam, for four, in the second over of their chase when he was run out by a direct throw from Roelof van der Merwe. Rizwan attacked from the start, hitting five fours and putting on 37 with the returning Fakhar Zaman. Fast bowler Brandon Glover had Zaman caught behind



for 20 as a crowd of over 10,000, dominated by Pakistan supporters, feared for the worst at a venue where Pakistan fell short by one run in their chase of a modest 130 against Zimbabwe on Thursday. But Rizwan and Shan Masood calmed the nerves with stand of 30 and despite both falling near

the end Pakistan sailed past their target as bowling hero Shadab hit the winning four. Netherlands captain Scott Edwards won the toss and chose to bat first but Pakistan's new-ball bowlers kept a disciplined line and only three runs came from the first two overs. Returning opener Stephan My-

burgh broke the shackles with a boundary off Shaheen Shah Afridi only to fall next ball, caught at fine leg attempting another big hit to be out for six. There was no respite from the Pakistan quick bowlers.

Wasim took two wickets in two balls only for Paul van Meekeren

to survive the hat-trick delivery, and Haris Rauf made good use of the bounce on offer.

A nasty bouncer from Rauf got through Bas de Leede's helmet grill, forcing the batsman off the ground with a bruised cheek bone. He sat out the rest of the match in the dugout sporting a nasty-looking black eye.

Shadab's leg spin had Tom Cooper caught for one after the power play and then trapped Max O'Dowd lbw for eight in his next over.

After crawling to 34-3 after 10 overs, and with De Leede retired hurt, Netherlands captain Edwards and Colin Ackermann (27) attempted to rebuild with a 35-run stand but once they were separated the wickets kept tumbling. Shadab trapped Ackermann lbw with a quicker and flatter delivery and Edwards fell soon after, for 15, to Naseem Shah.

Van Meekeren was last to fall, run out off the final ball for seven. Pakistan need to win their remaining matches against South Africa on Thursday and Bangladesh in a week's time, and need other results to go their way, to have any chance of a semi-final place.

Jake Paul beats Silva to remain undefeated

WEB DESK

GLENDALE: As Jake Paul entered Desert Diamond Arena to deafening boos from the 14,000 fans standing and mostly rooting for his demise, it was clear that this fight would be different from any others in his professional career. The man he was facing, Anderson Silva, had received clamorous roars just moments before, and if Paul were not fighting Silva, he probably would have been somewhere cheering, too. Silva is one of the best mixed martial artists of all time, retired with one of the most decorated U.F.C. careers ever, and counted a childhood Paul as a fan. Paul still cherishes a photograph from over a decade ago when he and his brother, Logan, posed together with Silva. And on Saturday night, Paul, 25, was matching up with Silva, 47, in an arena where it seemed like no one wanted Paul to win, but Paul prevailed in a unanimous decision to a mix of boos and cheers from the pro-Silva crowd. The fight moved Paul to 6-0 with three knockouts as a professional boxer, and pushed him more than any other bout in his career. "It's surreal," Paul said. "I don't think it'll hit me until, like, a couple of weeks from now. I feel like I'm living in a movie. You know, he was the one that told me I could accomplish anything if I set my mind to it. You couldn't have written this in a story." This fight was another attempt at legitimacy for Paul, who gained fame through social media pranks and



stunts, drawing controversy before turning to boxing. The boxing world has often viewed Paul as nothing more than an upstart influencer who can sell out arenas but not a legitimate contender. As Paul traded punches on Saturday, his white feathered trunks and white left glove stained red with Silva's blood, Paul's evolution as a boxer was evident. The biggest moment of the fight came in the final round, when Paul connected on a right hand that stunned Silva, his legs crumbling as he fell backward onto the canvas. But even after the win, Paul acknowledged that many in the boxing world still view him as somewhat of a dilettante in the sport: "If I were to walk on water, people would say I can't swim," Paul said. And it only took moments after the fight in a news conference for Uriah Hall, who defeated Le'Veon Bell, the former N.F.L. run-

ning back on the undercard — yes, the fight undercard was a circus that featured even an internet-famous family practice doctor — to somewhat support that theory. "He survived," Hall said, brushing off Paul's win. Hall joked that the most impressive thing he saw from Paul was his tattoos and added: "I think he's gotten better, but I can see so many holes." While the decision was unanimous, Paul hardly dominated the fight. Through the early part of the bout, Silva did not seem to take Paul seriously, dropping his hands and evading punches with ease as Paul furiously tried to make contact. Silva often gestured toward Paul or the crowd to show that he was not giving the fight his full attention. But eventually, Paul's punches began to land, and Silva began to bleed and look less relaxed. In the final round, Silva blitzed Paul, seemingly realizing his only chance for a win would come with a knockout, but his last-

ditch effort proved ineffective. This was Silva's third professional boxing match since he retired from the U.F.C. in 2021, and with a 22-year age difference between him and Paul, on paper, this seemed like a fight that Paul should have won with ease. And while Silva was technically Paul's first fight against an opponent with professional boxing experience, it was not against someone who is making a primary career of the sport. Still, Paul thinks he deserves more respect with this win. "I'm only two and a half years in. So this is just the start." He later added: "I'm trying to become a world champion." To his credit, the only reason Paul was fighting Silva on Saturday night was because two fights scheduled in August at Madison Square Garden fell apart. There was Tommy Fury, the brother of heavyweight champion Tyson Fury, who is early in his boxing career but couldn't fly into the United States. Then there was Hasim Rahman Jr., who was considered an even tougher foe because of size and experience, yet he could not make weight. In his post-fight interview, Paul seemed most focused on fighting former U.F.C. fighter Nate Diaz, one of the most popular mixed martial artists ever, and Saul Alvarez, the sport's biggest star who is known by his nickname, Canelo. Diaz seemingly would not help Paul's quest for boxing legitimacy, as he has not fought a professional boxing match (though he has certainly trained with boxers).

Lewandowski snatches Barca win at Valencia

MADRID: Barcelona, bruised after Champions League elimination in midweek, snatched a late 1-0 victory at Valencia on Saturday in La Liga, with Robert Lewandowski stretching to convert a 93rd minute winner. The Polish forward managed to divert Raphinha's cross home at the death to pull Barcelona level on 31 points with Real Madrid at the top of the table, before the champions host Girona on Sunday. It was a hard-fought win — the Catalans lost centre-backs Jules Kounde and Eric Garcia to injury, and they will be worried for their

national teams, France and Spain respectively, ahead of the Qatar World Cup which starts in under three weeks. Valencia saw Uruguayan Edinson Cavani go off injured with an ankle problem too, with the game billed as a shoot-out between him and fellow veteran marksman Lewandowski, who came out on top with his late goal. "It was not brilliant football, today we were not inspired," said Xavi. "The anxiety of this week weighed on us, Valencia defended very well. These are three vital points. I am happy for the win,

it was deserved, and each victory is celebrated, and when you don't win, the alarms sound, it's normal, this is a big club." Gennaro Gattuso said he and Barcelona counterpart Xavi Hernandez played almost different sports in their playing days, but their teams were evenly matched at a feisty Mestalla. The visitors had the upper hand from the start, although Valencia's tricky forward line caused them concern at the back, with Samuel Lino and Justin Kluivert particularly hard to handle.



set up by a perfectly timed Pedri pass, but onrushing Valencia goalkeeper Giorgi Mamardashvili saved the forward's attempted dink with his face. Frenkie de Jong hammered an effort wide from distance, while Fati, on a rare start, could not direct a header from Ousmane Dembele's cross low enough to cause problems. Valencia thought they had broken the deadlock early in the second half when Lino slid home but Marcos Andre hand handled a cross into his path and the goal was disallowed. — APP

national teams, France and Spain respectively, ahead of the Qatar World Cup which starts in under three weeks. Valencia saw Uruguayan Edinson Cavani go off injured with an ankle problem too, with the game billed as a shoot-out between him and fellow veteran marksman Lewandowski, who came out on top with his late goal. "It was not brilliant football, today we were not inspired," said Xavi. "The anxiety of this week weighed on us, Valencia defended very well. These are three vital points. I am happy for the win,

PM expects to further...

FROM PAGE 01

visiting my brotherly and friendly country China. That shows and reflects the depth of our friendship and strength of our understanding and our bond," he added. The prime minister said that he looks forward to his talks with Chinese President Xi Jinping and Premier Li Keqiang and Chinese leadership to enhance cooperation in various fields.

Regarding assistance extended by China for the flood-hit people in Pakistan, he expressed gratitude for the Chinese leadership, people and companies who have generously contributed. "China has supplied food items, medicines, mosquito nets and lots of other items for the flood-affected people," he added.

He said that the Chinese leadership had contributed in a very big way and they want to know from the Pakistani government what else China could do to support the flood-stricken people. Appreciating the rapid development of China in economic, social and cultural fields, he opined that China believes in globalization and he wanted to emulate the Chinese model of economic development. About China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) which has entered a high-quality second phase, he said that the flagship project of the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) has transformed the energy sector and infrastructure in Pakistan. The road network constructed under CPEC in all parts of the country has shortened the travelling time and now people could easily reach from one place to another, he added. The prime minister said he would also discuss expanding the role of CPEC under the Belt and Road Initiative.

Russia urged to...

FROM PAGE 01

"The same engagement also aims at the renewal and full implementation of the initiative to facilitate exports of food and fertilizer from Ukraine, as well as removing the remaining obstacles to the exports of Russian food and fertilizer."

A ship with 40,000 tonnes of grain bound for Ethiopia under the United Nations aid programme could not leave Ukraine on Sunday as a result of Russia's suspension of the deal, said Olexandr Kubrakov, Ukraine's minister of infrastructure. Currently, some 176 ships loaded with grain are being prevented from sailing from Ukraine's ports, Ukraine's President Volodymyr Zelenskyy said, adding it was destined for seven million people in need.

Moscow suspended its participation in the deal on Saturday, effectively blocking shipments from Ukraine, one of the world's top grain exporters, in response to what it called a major Ukrainian drone attack earlier in the day on its Black Sea Fleet headquarters near the port of Sevastopol in Russian-annexed Crimea. "Russia's decision to suspend participation in the Black Sea deal puts at risk the main export route of much needed grain and fertilisers to address the global food crisis caused by its war against Ukraine," European Union foreign policy chief Josep Borrell said on Twitter on Sunday.

Antony Blinken...

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the move as "purely outrageous" and said it would increase starvation. "There's no merit to what they're doing. The UN negotiated that deal and that should be the end of it," Biden told reporters in his home state of Delaware. The deal allows shipments of grain from Ukraine, one of the world's largest exporters, that the Russian invasion had halted.

Reporter's death: PTI...

FROM PAGE 01

crushed by another container-carrying truck. Following the accident, Imran Khan immediately left his container vehicle and rushed to the accident site. The PTI chief announced to end the long march's Sadhoke phase following the reporter's death in the tragic accident. He expressed condolences to the deceased reporter's family. Khan said that PTI marchers will resume its journey from Kamoke city on Monday.

All set for Combaxx Asian Open Int'l Taekwondo C'ship

AFZAL JAVED

ISLAMABAD: More than 400 athletes from 18 countries will be in action to fight for 26 gold medals in the Combaxx 4th Asian Open International Taekwondo Championship (G2) will be starting from November 1st here at Liaquat Gymnasium, Pakistan Sports Complex Islamabad. This was stated by President Pakistan Taekwondo Federation (PTF) Lt Col (Retd) Waseem Ahmed Janjua along with CEO Combaxx Sports Omar Saeed, Deputy Director General Pakistan Sports Board (PSB) Mansoor Ahmed, Technical Delegate and Referee Chairman during press conference.

"All arrangements are completed for Asian championship as this event will open the door for Pakistan to host more big international taekwondo event in future too. President PTF said adding that we are hoping that Pakistani athletes will perform good as we provide them good platform to improve their international ranking for the qualification of the Paris Olympics. He said that athletes from Egypt, Bahrain, Afghanistan, Iran, Kazakhstan, Nepal,



Oman, Sri Lanka, Pakistan and other countries will be seen in action and fight for 26 gold medals in different categories of boys and girls during four day competitions in the championship. Answering a question about Indian team participation, Wasim said India was also invited to participate in the

Asian Championship but Indian Taekwondo Federation was hesitant to participate in the championship. Wasim Ahmed said that Pakistan have good chances of making their mark in a couple of events. "With the help of Pakistan Sports Board (PSB), we have almost completed arrangements to host

the biggest number of Asian athletes from 18 countries as Pakistan has never hosted a sporting event on such a big scale. "As many as 79 foreign officials are registered for this mega event while 133 foreign athletes along with 350 Pakistani athletes will also be in action in four day championship", he said.

Wasim said that we are thankful to Federal Minister for Inter Provincial Coordination (IPC) Ehsan Ur Rehman Mazari, President South Asian Taekwondo Association (SATA) and CEO Combaxx Sports Omar Saeed, CEO Serena Hotels Aziz Boolani and other sponsors for their wonderful

support for the successful conclusion of the Asian Championship. Speaking on the occasion CEO Combaxx Sports Omar Saeed said that he will continue their support and all assistance for talented athletes and promotion of sports in the country.

Briefs

Lebanon's Aoun vacates presidential palace

Baabda: Michel Aoun was vacating Lebanon's presidential palace on Sunday, amid acclaim from his supporters, a day before his mandate expires without a designated successor, threatening a new power vacuum in the crisis-torn country.

A few thousand well-wishers gathered to pay tribute to the Maronite Christian former army chief and head of the Free Patriotic Movement which is allied with the powerful pro-Iranian Shiite movement Hezbollah. FPM supporters, some brandishing portraits of the outgoing head of state widely referred to as "General", flocked to the presidential palace in the hills above the capital Beirut, where some had spent the night in tents, to accompany him to his private home.

"We have come to escort the president at the end of his mandate, to tell him that we are with him and that we will continue the struggle by his side," said teacher Joumana Nahed.

Lebanese lawmakers have tried but failed four times in a month to agree on electing a successor after Aoun's six-year term ends Monday, stoking fears of a deepening political crisis.

Lebanese lawmakers have tried and failed three times in a month to agree on a successor after Aoun's six-year term ends Monday, stoking fears of a deepening political crisis.

The term of Aoun, who is in his late 80s, was marred by mass popular protests, a severe economic crisis and currency collapse, and the August 2020 portside blast of ammonium nitrate that killed hundreds and laid waste to swathes of the capital.

Neither the Hezbollah camp, the powerful armed movement which dominates political life in Lebanon, nor its opponents have the clear majority to impose a candidate to succeed him. Lebanon is being run by a caretaker government as political divisions have prevented the formation of a new cabinet ever since legislative elections in the spring. —APP

Thousands protest 'foreign interference' in Sudan's affairs

KHARTOUM: Thousands of supporters of Sudan's former ruling party demonstrated in the capital Khartoum on Saturday against foreign interference in the country's internal affairs. Supporters of the National Congress Party (NCP) of ousted President Omar al-Bashir waved banners demanding the expulsion of Volker Perthes, head of the United Nations' Integrated Transition Mission in Sudan (UNITAMS), according to an Anadolu Agency reporter. "We are protesting against conspiracies that target Islamists in Sudan," Ismail Mahmoud, 56, told Anadolu Agency. "Sudan will never be ruled by secular laws as long as we are alive," he said.

"We are also demonstrating to maintain Sudan's national sovereignty against foreign interference and the new colonialism represented by UNITAMS envoy Volker Perthes" Mahmoud added.

Sudan's ruling military and the opposition Forces for Freedom and Change (FFC) coalition have been undergoing talks under the auspices of UNITAMS to reach an agreement to resolve the country's months-long political crisis. The QUAD mechanism, which includes the US, UK, Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates, is also pressuring Sudan's rivals to reach a political deal to bring the country back to transition. Sudan has been in turmoil since last year when the military dismissed Prime Minister Abdalla Hamdok's transitional government, a move decried by political forces as a "military coup."

At least 100 people have since been killed in protests against the military since October, according to Sudanese medics. —APP

Pakistan needs technology transfer: Dr. Zhou Jinfeng

Pakistan said on October 19 that the World Bank estimates this summer's record-breaking floods have caused \$40 billion in damage to this impoverished South Asian nation

DNA

BEIJING "It's important to financially support Pakistan in tackling the floods, while technology transfer and other supports are equally important to help them out in the long haul," said Dr. Zhou Jinfeng, Secretary-General of China Biodiversity Conservation and Green Development Foundation (CBCGDF). Talking to China Economic Net (CEN), he said Pakistan was already facing a severe energy crisis ahead of the monsoon rain. The heavy rains have triggered unprecedented floods that have left a third of the country inundated and displaced hundreds of thousands of people.

Although Pakistan accounts for less than 1% of global carbon emissions, it is among the 10 countries most affected by climate change. "We need to get involved. We need to be accountable," Zhou said, adding that everyone on this planet is responsible for Pakistan's climate crisis, especially the developed countries.

The floods in Pakistan have brought home the urgency of tackling climate change. Earlier this month, the UN launched the revised flash appeal for aid for Pakistan from the initial \$160 million to \$816 million, to respond to the growing lifesaving needs of the people affected. As the damage caused by floods pointed to the urgent need for long-term



help lasting into next year. Experts also said people in flood-hit areas will face a harsh winter this year.

"To help developing countries cope with climate change, in addition to short-

term financial and material assistance, promoting the application of green technologies is of long-term significance," Dr. Zhou Jinfeng told CEN.

To tackle this, CBCGDF has

joined hands with the UN Refugee Agency (UNHCR) to launch programs to boost the development of green technologies in Pakistan's energy sector and in agricultural production system in arid and semi-arid regions of the country.

"Technologies are critical to our response to the climate issues in Pakistan," Dr. Zhou Jinfeng pinpointed, adding that together with Aerospace Information Research Institute, Chinese Academy of Sciences and other institutes, they worked out Report of Monitoring and Assessment of Desert Locust in Africa and Asia to focus on the dynamics of desert locust monitoring and loss assessment in Yemen, Ethiopia, and Pakistan. On top of that,

CBCGDF teamed work with Institute of Soil and Water Conservation, Chinese Academy of Sciences and Ministry of Water Resources to help the people of Pakistan cope with climate change and rebuild their homes after disasters.

"What I believed is that 'we are born equal of carbon: carbon rights and carbon responsibilities'. Everyone has to change, or such crises will follow," he further said.

Pakistan said on October 19 that the World Bank estimates this summer's record-breaking floods have caused \$40 billion in damage to this impoverished South Asian nation. The figure is \$10 billion more than an earlier estimate by the Pakistani government.

China -Pakistan Health Corridor to bring changes in health sector

DNA

BEIJING: China -Pakistan Health Corridor (CPHC) will provide a platform that can bring changes in the health sector of Pakistan. Working together, both countries can boost this industry around the globe, said Dr. Muhammad Shahbaz, President of China Pakistan Medical Association (CPMA). According to China Economic Net (CEN), he said that Pakistan has Harappa and Mohjo Dharo civilizations dated back to 7,000 years ago. Traditional medicinal practices in Pakistan have a long history and are enjoying closer connection with traditional Chinese medicine, which has been widely used in the treatment and management of complications and pandemic. Jinhua Qinggan Granules (JHGG) have been proved effective and safe in treating COVID-19 patients in Pakistan.

"Shandong Academy of



Chinese Medicine and the Shandong University of Traditional Medicine have signed cooperation agreements with BZU, Punjab University, Gujrat University, and Haripur University. The government can provide more attractive policies for the Chinese Traditional Medicine and Pharma industry to work together with the local enterprises and institutes", he added. Shahbaz told CEN that

traditional medicine has played a key role in human history in managing a number of pandemics and plagues such as black fever, SARS, & Covid-19.

"Both countries can play a key role in traditional medicine exchanges and could sign an Initiative for Regional Healthcare Centers where herbal and western medicine can be combined together. Research & development, management

and production, extraction, categorization, usage, education and training, and entrepreneurship can also be done" Shahbaz stated.

He further said that Chinese pharma companies could conduct clinical studies in Pakistan with medicine which is already registered or being used in Chinese hospitals for the treatment of respiratory tract infections. "China's management experience of high-quality herbal medicine resources can be shared with Pakistan. Pakistan is very active in international and exchange platforms, and Pakistan and China can jointly increase the popularity and influence of traditional medicine in the world", he mentioned. Information in this article comes from third party providers. This website does not provide explicit or implied warranty for such information and is not liable for any losses directly or indirectly caused by using such information.

"Café Tourism" kicks off in Gwadar

GWADAR: Café Tourism has finally kicked off in Gwadar corresponding to the guidelines of Gwadar's first tourism strategy under its Smart Port City Master Plan, Gwadar Pro reported on Saturday. Evoking awe and thrill among Gwadar's people and tourists, Café Tourism has made headway after two residents of Gwadar, Fahad Ishaq and Qadeer, transformed their family boat into café, the first of its kind in the vicinity of Gwadar city. The Boat was abandoned and laying unused for many years after its engine broke down. Now it has been refurbished and replaced into an exotic "Café Boat" officially named "Padizar Café" that is witnessing a rush of tourists from different parts of Pakistan. "It is another feather in the cap of Gwadar youth who proved their mettle in giving impetus to Café Tourism in the private sector," Rahim Baloch, a social activist told Gwadar Pro. Café Boat that catalyzed Café Tourism in Gwadar is located in the Padizar area along the marine drive in the surrounding traditional shippard where still boats are being repaired conventionally. In an exclusive interview with Gwadar Pro, Padizar Café manager Shay Mukhtar said that the Café has the capacity to host 150 tourists initially with tea, snacks, fish, and local cuisine. Most people prefer "Padizar Café" for holding galas, special events, birthday parties, and hi-tea parties, he added. Transformation of the boat with renovation cost around Rs. 1.5 million, he said. With its three roofs on three stories Café, he said, it welcomes routine customers as well as foreign tourists. A local customer, Zafar Elahi said that Padizar Café is fast becoming the best hangout spot in Gwadar. It is like a breath of fresh air in a situation when we have meager opportunity to enjoy recreational activities, especially eateries, he added. Gwadar enjoys the bounty of seasons, different local languages, diverse ethnic groups, clear waters, exotic beaches, huge muddy plateaus, precious minerals, the most beautiful Arabian Sea, and loving locals. Gwadar is situated on a natural hammerhead-shaped headland in the promising land of Balochistan. City is situated on a tapered and sandy 12 kilometers long strip that links Pakistan to a rocky outcropping in the Arabian Sea known as Koh-e-Batil or Gwadar Peninsula. Under the newly proposed Gwadar Tourism Strategy, Gwadar is going to be festooned with Hangout Tourism, Resort Tourism, Cultural Tourism, Festival Tourism, Ecotourism, and many more. —DNA

Russia remains ready for talks on Ukraine

MOSCOW: Russia remains willing to enter into negotiations with its Western partners on Ukraine, the country's top diplomat said on Sunday.

"The Russian leadership, including President Vladimir Putin, remains ready to negotiate on Ukraine," Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov said in an interview with a local broadcaster, the state-run news agency TASS reported.

Moscow will "always be ready to listen to what proposals Western partners have to reduce tensions," Lavrov added.

"The readiness of Russia, including its president, for negotiations (on Ukraine), remains unchanged," Lavrov expressed.

He indicated that talks would be possible if Moscow is approached with "realistic proposals, based on the principles of equality and respect for each other's interests, and aimed at finding compromises and balancing the interests of all countries." —APP

150 human rights defenders killed in Colombia

BOGOTA: More than 150 rights defenders have been killed in Colombia through the first nine months of 2022, the Ombudsman's Office said Friday in a report. The figure is higher than what was recorded during the same period in 2021.

Between January and September, 157 activists were murdered. A total of 109 cases were recorded during that time in 2021, according to ombud Carlos Camargo. Among those killed in 2022 were 51 community leaders, 32 representatives of indigenous groups and 14 farmers.

"I appeal once again to the illegal armed groups to respect the life and integrity of leaders and human rights defenders. They play a fundamental role in guaranteeing the rights of communities and strengthening democracy in the regions," Camargo said while presenting the report. Violence in some parts of Colombia has increased despite a 2016 peace deal between the government and the FARC rebel group. At least 10 armed groups in Colombia, including members of the FARC rebels who rejected the peace deal and the leftist National Liberation Army (ELN), are still involved in criminal acts, making Colombia one of the most dangerous countries for activists and human rights defenders. In a Global Witness 2021 report, Colombia stood out as the second most dangerous country for environmentalists. —APP

Russia, Ukraine confirm exchange of prisoners

MOSCOW: Both Russia and Ukraine on Saturday confirmed that they exchanged more prisoners of war.

"On October 29, as a result of the negotiation process, 50 Russian servicemen, who were in mortal danger in captivity, were returned from the territory controlled by the Kyiv regime," a Russian Defense Ministry statement said. It added that the released servicemen will be transported to Moscow by military transport planes, where they will undergo treatment and rehabilitation in medical institutions of the Russian Defense Ministry. In a separate statement, Andriy Yermak, the head of Ukraine's presidential administration, said 52 officers, medics, sergeants, and soldiers have returned home thanks to the prisoner exchange with Russia.

"We do not stop and continue to fulfill the President's task of 'bringing all Ukrainians home.' I thank the coordination headquarters for the treatment of prisoners of war," Yermak wrote on Telegram. According to Yermak, 12 servicemen of Ukraine's national guard, 18 sailors, eight border guards, nine territorial defense fighters, three soldiers of Ukraine's armed forces, and two civilians returned to Ukraine after the exchange. —Agencies

EU urges Russia to reverse suspension of co-op in grain deal

WASHINGTON: The EU on Sunday urged Russia to reverse a decision to suspend its participation in the landmark Black Sea grain deal, which has helped Ukraine export foodstuffs to the rest of the world. "Russia's decision to suspend participation in the Black Sea deal puts at risk the main export route of much-needed grain and fertilizers to address the global food crisis caused by its war against Ukraine," foreign policy chief Josep Borrell said in a statement on Twitter. This came a day after Russia's Defense Ministry announced the move following alleged attacks on its Black Sea fleet. It said it took the decision "in the light of the recent events connected to the terrorist attacks against ships of the Black Sea Fleet," said a ministry statement. Türkiye, the UN, Russia, and Ukraine signed an agreement on July 22 in Istanbul to resume grain exports from three Ukrainian Black Sea ports, which were paused after the Russia-Ukraine war began in February. A Joint Coordination Center with officials from the three countries and the UN has been set up in Istanbul to oversee the shipments.

The US met Russia's decision with regret, saying: "We urge all parties to keep this essential, life-saving initiative functioning." Secretary of State Antony Blinken added in the statement that the deal had been critical for low- and middle-income countries. Blinken accused Moscow of once again weaponizing food in the war it started with Ukraine, further noting that "any act by Russia to disrupt these critical grain exports is essentially a statement that people and families around the world should pay more for food or go hungry." —APP

Millions at risk of climate displacement in Middle East

CAIRO: Little rainfall, aggressive heatwaves and worsening drought make the Middle East the most water-stressed region in the world, with climate change threatening to displace millions of people. Hussein Abu Saddam, head of the farmers' syndicate in Egypt which is hosting the COP27 global climate summit in November, told AFP he is already witness to a climate-induced exodus from the countryside. Agriculture in Egypt — "one of the most arid countries in the world" — has grown even less profitable because of new climate-linked hazards such as "the appearance of new parasites", he said. "Young people from rural areas are migrating abroad or to big cities to work in industry." According to the UN refugee agency (UNHCR), "roughly 90 percent of refugees come from countries that are the most vulnerable and least ready to adapt to the impacts of climate change".



"If people can't farm, if people can't work, if people can't find food, they have few alternatives to displacement," Amy Pope, deputy director of the International Organization for Migration (IOM), told AFP. In 2021, natural disasters forced "nearly three million people" to leave their homes in Africa and the Middle East, she said. "And the situation is only going to get worse." By 2060, Egypt's already stretched agricultural sector could shrink by as much as 47 percent, researchers predict. In addition to "the decline in agricultural production", rural-urban migration is also fed by "the attractiveness of urban life, the city and services that are available there", according to Florian Bonnefoi, a research fellow at the Centre for Economic, Legal and Social Study and Documentation (CEDEJ) in Cairo. Globally, the World Bank estimates that by 2050, if nothing is done to prevent it, there will be 216 million people internally displaced by climate change, including 19.3 million in North Africa. Some seven percent of people in North Africa — where densely populated coastlines are among the world's most threatened by rising waters — live less than five metres (16 feet) above sea level, according to the European Institute of the Mediterranean (IEMed). As coastlines are affected, populations will naturally converge on big cities: Cairo, Algiers, Tunis, Tripoli, the Casablanca-Rabat area and Tangier. But these "hotbeds of climate migration", the World Bank warns, are themselves vulnerable to rising waters. —APP

Death toll rises to 153 in S. Korean stampede

SEOUL: At least 153 people have been killed and 133 others injured in a deadly stampede in Seoul's Itaewon district as huge crowds of partygoers, many in their 20s, converged in the entertainment district for late-night Halloween celebrations. The deadliest stampede in South Korea's history happened Saturday night in a narrow 3.2-meter-wide downhill alley near Hamilton Hotel in the famous nightlife district after tens of thousands of people visited the area for Halloween. The death toll could rise further, as 37 people sustained serious injuries, officials said. Police data, which is believed to have not been incorporated into the official tally, put the death toll at 154. The stampede marked the worst tragedy in South Korea since the 2014 sinking of the ferry Sewol that killed 304 people, mostly high school students. It was the first Halloween event in Seoul in three years after the country lifted many COVID-19 restrictions. Most of the people on the streets were wearing Halloween costumes. Of those killed, a majority of 97 were female due apparently to their relatively smaller frame, combined with usually heavier Halloween costumes. A total of 95 fatal victims were in their 20s, followed by 32 in their 30s, nine in their 40s and four in their teens, officials said. The number of foreigners killed came to 20, according to the official tally from fire authorities. They are four each from China and Iran; three from Russia; and one each from the United States, France, Vietnam, Uzbekistan, Norway, Kazakhstan, Sri Lanka, Thailand and Austria, officials said.

An Australian national and another foreigner with unconfirmed nationality have additionally been confirmed dead, yet were not added to the official government tally, an official at the Central Disaster and Safety Countermeasures Headquarters said on the customary condition of anonymity. Police also said 141 out of the 153 victims have been identified and their families have been notified. Police have also launched an investigation to determine the exact cause of the accident. Fire authorities initially received dozens of reports from people in the Itaewon area — home to expat communities with its hip nightlife and chic restaurants — about patients with breathing difficulties. The first report was made around 10:15 p.m. Witnesses and survivors say a massive group of people surged into the back alley, and the stampede began "instantly" after some people fell over and caused others to fall down like "dominoes" and pile up on one another, unable to move or breathe.

The back alley in question is a downhill 4-meter-by-40-meter path that links a busy restaurant district with a main street, where about six adults can barely pass at the same time. "People kept pushing down into a downhill club alley, resulting in other people screaming and falling down like dominos," an unidentified witness wrote on Twitter. "I thought I would be crushed to death too as people kept pushing without realizing there were people falling down at the start of the stampede." Video footage showed rescue workers and ordinary people desperately conducting CPR on victims on the streets. A sudden influx of about

300 patients needing CPR and other first-aid measures also left rescuers shorthanded, while heavy return-home traffic in the area added to the difficulties, according to witnesses. President Yoon Suk-yeol designated Seoul's central ward of Yongsan, where Itaewon is located, as a special disaster zone entitled to financial and other support from the central government. Yoon addressed the nation live from the presidential office, saying Saturday's "tragedy and disaster should never have happened." He also announced a period of national mourning and ordered the lowering of flags. Prime Minister Han Duck-soo later told reporters the mourning period would last from Sunday until Saturday at Yoon's instructions and that a mourning altar would be set up in downtown Seoul to allow people to pay tribute to the victims. World leaders from U.S. President Joe Biden and British Prime Minister Rishi Sunak to Mexican President Andres Manuel have sent messages of condolences and support to South Korea. Biden expressed his "deepest condolences." "Jill and I send our deepest condolences to the families who lost loved ones in Seoul. We grieve with the people of the Republic of Korea and send our best wishes for a quick recovery to all those who were injured," Biden said in a statement, referring to first lady Jill Biden. "The Alliance between our two countries has never been more vibrant or more vital — and the ties between our people are stronger than ever. The United States stands with the Republic of Korea during this tragic time," he said. —Agencies

Briefs

Death toll from Somalia bombings climbs to 100

MOGADISHU: The number of people killed in an attack on Saturday at a busy intersection in the Somali capital Mogadishu has risen to 100, President Hassan Sheikh Mohamud said on Sunday. "So far, people who died have reached 100 and 300 are wounded, and the number for both the death and wounded continues to increase," he said after visiting the bombing location. Two cars packed with explosives were detonated minutes apart near the busy Zobe junction, followed by gunfire in an attack targeting Somalia's education ministry. The afternoon explosions shattered windows of nearby buildings, sending shrapnel flying and plumes of smoke and dust into the air. The attack took place at the same busy junction where a truck packed with explosives blew up on October 14, 2017, killing 512 people and injuring more than 290. Mohamud described the incident as "history", saying "it is the same place, and the same innocent people involved." "This is not right. God willing, they will not be having an ability to do another Zobe incident," he said, referring to the Islamist group Al-Shabaab. The jihadists have been seeking to overthrow the fragile foreign-backed government in Mogadishu for about 15 years. Its fighters were driven out of the capital in 2011 by an African Union force but the group still controls swathes of countryside and continues to wage deadly strikes on civilian and military targets. - APP

Brazil votes in Bolsonaro-Lula showdown

RIO DE JANEIRO: Brazil was on a knife-edge Sunday as voters chose between far-right incumbent Jair Bolsonaro and his leftist arch-rival, Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva, in a presidential election seen as too close to call. Both candidates cast their ballots in the morning, expressing confidence in victory in the runoff election, after a dirty and divisive campaign that has deeply polarized the nation of 215 million people. Some Brazilians voted with gusto, while others merely picked the candidate they least disliked. "I think this has been the best government Brazil has ever had," said Afro-Brazilian lawyer Eliane de Oliveira, 61, who voted for Bolsonaro in Rio de Janeiro's Copacabana neighborhood, saying he was happy to have a government "that is not corrupt", in a dig at the graft-tainted Lula. Standing nearby, physical education teacher Gustavo Souza voted for Lula, who he hoped would "improve the lives of many people." Like many he is nervous about the outcome, reflecting fears that Bolsonaro would not accept the result after months of attacking the electoral system. - APP

Russia says attack drones used grain corridor 'safe zone'

MOSCOW: Russia said Sunday it recovered debris from drones that attacked its fleet in Sevastopol, exploiting the "safe zone" of a grain corridor, and could have been launched from a civilian ship. "The marine drones were moving in the safe zone of the 'grain corridor'," Russia's defence ministry said, adding it had "lifted" some of the drones' debris from the sea. One of the drones may have been launched "from aboard one of the civilian ships chartered by Kyiv or its Western masters for the export of agricultural products from the seaports of Ukraine", Moscow on Sunday pulled out of a UN-brokered grain deal after its Black Sea Fleet in Russian-annexed Crimea was targeted by a drone attack. Russia also said some of the drones used in what it called a "terrorist attack" had Canadian-made parts. - APP

EU holds Euro Village festival to showcase culture

This edition of the Euro Village is special because this year European Union and Pakistan celebrate 60 years of diplomatic relations: EU Ambassador



MAHNOOR ANSAR / DNA

ISLAMABAD: European Union and its member states organized a festival "Unity in Diversity" for the residents of Islamabad and Rawalpindi to experience European culture and heritage, music and food. Large numbers of people, especially families flocked to "EuroVillage" at the Pakistan National Council of Arts (PNCA) to enjoy the festival. Through games and quizzes, interactive information displays, and various activities, visitors learned what the EU's motto "Unity in Diversity" means in practice and how it applies also to Pakistan. Euro Village, which already attracted over 8,000 visitors in the past editions, took place for the first time after a gap of three years due to the Covid-19 pandemic. The Ambassador of the European Union to Pakistan, Dr Riina Kionka in her welcome remarks

said, "We cherish the diverse cultures, languages, religions, histories and identities that coexist in Europe. They are part of our wealth, they shape our shared values, connect us and give us a joint sense of purpose. It is this common understanding of shared values and diversity that lies at the heart of our relations with the world - including with Pakistan." She further added, "This edition of the Euro Village is special because this year the European Union and Pakistan celebrate 60 years of diplomatic relations. This partnership in development, trade and political engagement, manifests that we are stronger together. Our partnership has evolved over the decades, as have Pakistan, the European Union and the world." As a symbol of this partnership, an EU-Pakistan friendship truck was displayed for the first time at the event. The truck will be travelling all around the country to reach Pakistani youth in various univer-

sities across the country and offer a window into the strong connection between the EU and Pakistan. EuroVillage was organized by the diplomatic missions of the European Union and Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, the Czech Republic, Denmark, France, Germany, Hungary, the Netherlands, Poland, Romania and Sweden. It included information and activity booths for both adults and children with interactive games, selfie corners, food and an opportunity to meet the diplomatic team and learn about areas of partnership. The event also featured live performances by European performers and Pakistani artists including Asim Azhar and Shae Gill. The EU and Pakistan are bound together by a shared history. The partnership has progressed since 1962 in tandem with the European integration process. In 2019, the EU and Pakistan adopted a Strategic Engagement Plan with the common goal of building a strong partnership for peace and

development rooted in shared values, principles and commitments. This plan facilitates cooperation on a wide range of issues, including dialogues on counter-terrorism, education, democracy and human rights, migration, climate change, energy, trade and economics, and culture. Pakistan is a major development partner of the EU, with one of the largest EU programmes in Asia. Together as "Team Europe", the European Union and its member states have assisted Pakistan during the Covid-19 pandemic. In response to the catastrophic floods in Pakistan, Team Europe, including Norway, committed a total of €123 million, in addition to in-kind assistance, for the immediate relief and early recovery of the flood-affected population. The EU is also a major provider of development cooperation assistance to Pakistan with a focus on green inclusive growth, human capital and governance, including the rule of law and human rights.

Thirty five killed in suspension bridge collapse in India

AHMEDABAD: At least 35 people were killed and dozens critically injured when a suspension bridge in India's western Gujarat state collapsed on Sunday, two government officials said. "We can confirm that 30 people have lost their lives, many have been rescued from the river and some are still missing," said Amit Jhala, a senior administrator at the state-run hospital to where victims had been taken. More than 400 people were on the bridge over the Machhu River in the town of Morbi at the time of the collapse, local TV channel Zee News said. Footage broadcast by the TV channel showed dozens of people clinging onto the cables of the collapsed bridge as emergency teams struggled to rescue them. The 230-metre historic bridge was built during British rule in the 19th century. It had been closed for reno-

vation for six months and was reopened for the public last week. Prime Minister Narendra Modi, who is in his home state Gujarat for a three-day visit, said he has directed the state chief minister to mobilise teams urgently for the rescue operation. The administration, with the help of locals, is rescuing people who fell in the river after the bridge collapse. The state government has announced an ex gratia of Rs 4 lakh to the family of each deceased and Rs 50,000 to those injured in the mishap. Gujarat Home Minister Harsh Sanghavi and Health Minister Rishikesh Patel will leave shortly for Morbi. Two teams of the National Disaster Management Force (NDRF) have also left from Morbi. Soon after the incident came to light, Prime Minister Narendra Modi, who is on a three-day visit to Gujarat ahead of Assembly elections, spoke to Chief Minister Bhupendra Patel and other officials regarding the mishap. The prime minister has asked that the situation be closely and continuously monitored, and extend all possible help to those affected. Union Home Minister Amit Shah too spoke to Gujarat Home Minister Harsh Sanghavi & other state officials and said that the local administration is engaged in relief work. Shah also said that the National Disaster Relief Force (NDRF) is also reaching the spot soon. - Agencies

Unicef chief calls for scaling up assistance for flood victims

ISLAMABAD: The regional director of the United Nations International Fund for Children in Emergency (UNICEF), George Laryea-Adjei, on Sunday said that the flood devastation in Pakistan was massive by any scale as the agency alone was seeking \$173.5 million for providing humanitarian assistance to the flood victims in post-disaster relief efforts. Unicef's regional director for South Asia, in an exclusive chat with the state-run Associated Press of Pakistan, said that the fallout of the recent disaster was extensive and contained waterborne diseases that were affecting farmland, schools and everyone at large. George said some 84 districts were to face immense challenges due to disasters, whereas out of the total \$173.5 million - \$34.6 million was required for nutrition; \$35 million for health; \$58 million for washing; \$11 million for child protection; \$23 million for education and \$11 million for emergency preparedness. He said that he had visited many districts of Balochistan and Sindh and felt the distress of the affected families.



"The Government of Pakistan is leading the response. However, 9.6 million children need humanitarian assistance and due to floods some 23,000 schools are either destroyed or damaged," he regretted. Commenting on the challenges encountered in post-disaster relief and rehabilitation efforts, the Unicef director said he was noticing two massive challenges that the government should address. "The first is the community in are-

as ready to return to their destroyed homes after the flood water recedes. They are going to their homes where there is no food, cattle are lost, schools are impacted heavily and farms could be inundated and water polluted. "We will have to assist these communities. We will have to come up with alternatives. For example, a tent school could be established as an alternative, whereas temporary facilities must be in place," he weighed in. Appreciating the flood cash relief under the Benazir Income Support Programme (BISP), George said the government was providing funding which should not halt at any stage. The second challenge, he emphasised, was assistance for the communities that were still underwater. "They are staying with friends and families and others in camps. Some are in informal and others are in formal camps. We must find resources to provide nutrition, and health facilities to the affected," he asserted. He warned that Malaria was spreading and its treatment should be scaled up in the impacted areas to avoid epidemics. - APP

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