



# Islamabad POST

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Pakistan's Credible Daily Newspaper

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**First Saudi envoy to Palestine presents credentials to Abbas**

Detailed News On Page-07

**Solangi for increasing media coop with SCO**

Detailed News On Page-08

**Babar aims to leave AC behind to win ICC WC**

Detailed News On Page-06



**PM pledges free polls**

## No support or opposition to any party

PM Kakar said that the PTI has backtracked on its 'foreign conspiracy' narrative

CENTRELINE REPORT / DNA

LONDON: Caretaker Prime Minister Anwaar-ul-Haq Kakar has said that there would be no organisational or institutional involvement in favour of any political party in the upcoming general elections, pledging to ensure free and fair polls. "We are entering into the electoral process quite soon and it is according to the law and the Constitution," said the interim prime minister while speaking during an exclusive interview with Turkish national TV channel. PM Kakar said delimitation of constituencies is a constitutional requirement, and "we should abide by this regulation if we believe in the supremacy of the constitution". Speaking about the May 9 protests, PM Kakar said people have the right to express their sentiments under prescribed law but "we can't allow vandalism in the name of protest or if people are going violent then that kind of situation is not acceptable under any democratic system". The violent protests took place almost across the country after Pakistan

Continued on Page 06

## Imran transferred to Adiala Jail

Judicial remand extended till Oct 10

BUREAU REPORT

RAWALPINDI: Islamabad Police took PTI Chairman Imran Khan from Attock Jail to Adiala Jail on Tuesday, following the orders of the Islamabad High Court. The police convoy consisted of 15 vehicles, including two armoured vehicles and one ambulance with doctors and paramedical staff. The transfer was carried out under strict security measures to ensure the safety of the PTI chairman, who is facing charges of terrorism on May 9 and corruption. Imran Khan is shifted to Adiala Jail from Attock Jail on the orders of Islamabad High Court Chief Justice Aamer Farooq passed

yesterday (Monday). During the case proceedings yesterday, Chief Justice Farooq remarked that the under-trial prisoners of Islamabad were kept in Adiala Jail. IHC Chief Justice said the PTI chairman was transferred to Attock Jail before his sentence (in the Toshakhana case) was suspended. But now Imran's sentence in the case has been suspended and he is an undertrial prisoner now, the judge observed. "According to law, the undertrial prisoners of Islamabad are kept in Adiala Jail. Transfer him to Adiala Prison," the chief justice ordered, inquiring further which class was given to the former premier.

Continued on Page 06



LONDON: Caretaker Prime Minister Anwaar-ul-Haq Kakar visited the Oxford Centre for Islamic Studies in London. - DNA

## Involvement in violence Federal Cabinet okays repatriation of illegal Afghans

Repatriation to take place in three phases; 1.1 million Afghan nationals to be sent back to Afghanistan

MEHTAB PIRZADA

ISLAMABAD: The caretaker federal cabinet has okayed sending over 1.1 million Afghan nationals back to Afghanistan who are residing illegally in Pakistan. A decision to this effect was taken by a meeting of the caretaker cabinet held in Islamabad on Tuesday. The decision comes in the wake of mounting concerns over the involvement of some of these individuals in various illicit activities, including terrorism, currency smuggling, and the illegal trade of essential commodities such as sugar and fertilizer. The illegally staying Afghan citizens have also been accused of providing funding and support to terrorist organizations, posing a grave threat to the security of Pakistani citizens. The cabinet decision follows

Continued on Page 06

## AFN becomes best performing in the world

DNA

KABUL: The Afghan currency Afghani is the best-performing currency of the third quarter of 2023. It has jumped 9% against the US dollar since July 1. This means that the Afghani is the third-strongest performing currency of 2023 so far, behind only the Colombian peso and the Sri Lankan rupee. In Afghanistan, people buy and sell foreign currency at money exchange

Continued on Page 06

## Israeli minister's first public visit to Saudi Arabia

Katz is the first Israeli minister to head an official delegation in Saudi Arabia

NEWS DESK

RIYADH: Israel's Tourism Minister Haim Katz arrived in Saudi Arabia on Tuesday for the first such high-level public visit to the kingdom amid talks to secure bilateral ties. "Katz is the first Israeli minister to head an official delegation in Saudi Arabia," his ministry said in a statement, adding he would attend a United Nations World Tourism Organisation event in Riyadh. During the two-day visit he is due to hold meetings "with his counterparts", Katz's office said without specifying which countries will be represented in such talks. The landmark visit comes as Riyadh sent its first delegation to the occupied West Bank in three decades. Nayef al-Sudairi, who was appointed non-resident ambassador to the Palestinian territories last month, held talks Tuesday with senior Palestinian officials including president Mahmud Abbas. The diplomatic travels come as the United States presses its allies Israel and Saudi Arabia to normalise ties. Israel has moved closer to the United Arab Emirates, Bahrain, Sudan and Morocco following a US-driven diplomatic initiative in 2020 which pushed for normalisation of relations. Establishing ties with Saudi Arabia - home to some of Islam's holiest sites - would be the grand prize for Israel and

Continued on Page 06

## Briefs

### 'Stop speculations on petroleum prices'

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Minister for Information and Broadcasting Murtaza Solangi on Tuesday said that speculations regarding prices of petroleum products be avoided. Using his X account, formerly Twitter, while tagging a news item of Khaleeq Kiani he said he appreciated OGRA for asking everyone to avoid speculations. Thanking Khaleeq Kiani the minister said, "I was not in the business of speculations. During a presser, I was asked if the prices of POL were about to go up north. I clearly said the prices of petroleum products are mainly determined keeping in the prices in int'l market and the dollar-rupee exchange rate."

### Non-bailable arrest warrant for Moonis

ABBAS HASHMI

LAHORE: An accountability court on Tuesday issued a non-bailable arrest warrant for Moonis Elahi in connection with alleged corruption in development projects in Lahore. Upon NAB plea, the accountability court issued a non-bailable arrest warrant for Elahi, with a deadline set for October 5. Police tried to arrest Moonis but to no avail. Accountability Court Judge Naseem Ahmed Virk heard the NAB's request hearing, where Moonis Elahi, accused of involvement in corruption amounting to billions of rupees, was the subject of discussion.

## Faizabad sit-in case IB seeks withdrawal of its review plea

The verdict ruled that the intelligence agencies must not exceed their respective mandates

COURT REPORTER

ISLAMABAD: The Intelligence Bureau (IB) on Tuesday decided to withdraw its review petition contesting the Supreme Court's judgment delivered by now Chief Justice of Pakistan (CJP) Qazi Faez Isa regarding the Faizabad sit-in case. In a plea filed today, IB's Deputy Director Amjad Iqbal has asked to withdraw the review plea and accept the miscellaneous application. "The petitioner intends to withdraw the civil review petition and does not want to pursue the matter in the above-titled case," said the plea. Last week, the apex court - in response to a series of review petitions submitted against its previous ruling - said that it would revisit the Faizabad sit-in case on September 28. A three-member bench, led by Chief Justice Qazi Faez Isa and consisting of Justices Amin-ud-Din Khan and Athar Minallah, will hear the review proceedings. Following the decision to revisit the case, Awami Muslim League (AML) chief Sheikh Rashid

Continued on Page 06

## PML-N lashes out at Bugti statement on Nawaz's arrest

STAFF REPORT

ISLAMABAD: Former interior minister and Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) leader Rana Sanaulah on Tuesday hit back at incumbent caretaker security czar Sarfraz Bugti for saying that party supremo Nawaz Sharif would be arrested on his return if he was not granted bail. Nawaz, who stepped down as prime minister in 2017 after the Supreme Court disqualified him for life for not declaring receivable salary, was granted permission to go

Continued on Page 06

## SIFC to resolve issues related to 4 key sectors

The relevant ministries presented progress on various aspects including policy level interventions

KHAYAM ABBASI

ISLAMABAD: The 5th meeting of Executive Committee of Special Investment Facilitation Council (SIFC) began on Tuesday and will continue for two days. The meeting was aimed to review the measures being undertaken for improving investment ecosystem, overcoming macroeconomic challenges and stimulating economic growth. The meeting was chaired by Minister for

EDITORIAL ON PAGE 5

Planning, Development and Special Initiatives and attended by National Coordinator for SIFC Dr Jehanzeb Khan SAPM (Governance Effectiveness), concerned Federal and Provincial Ministers and high level government officials. The relevant ministries presented progress on various aspects including policy level interventions to be undertaken in short, medium and long term to yield the desired dividends. After a healthy

Continued on Page 06

## Dollar continues downward trend

NAZIR SIYAL

KARACHI: The US dollar continued its downward spiral against the Pakistani rupee for the 16th consecutive session on Tuesday, sliding below the Rs290 mark for the first time in around six weeks. The greenback lost Rs1.06 against the rupee in the interbank market today. The local unit closed at Rs289.80 after appreciating 0.37% from yesterday's close of Rs290.86, according to the State Bank of Pakistan (SBP). Following a massive crackdown against the illegal currency trade the US dollar shed its value by around Rs17.46 from its highest level against the rupee. Talking to Geo.tv, capital market expert Saad Ali said Monday that the recent appreciation of

Continued on Page 06

**TURKISH AIRLINES**

**BEST PART OF THE JOURNEY**

**Stopover IN ISTANBUL**

**EASY VISA**

FOR UNITED KINGDOM, IRELAND, USA, SCHENGEN PASSENGERS

A STAR ALLIANCE MEMBER

**Economy**

ECONOMY CLASS PASSENGERS CAN STAY 1 NIGHT FOR FREE IN A 4 STAR HOTEL

**FREE ACCOMMODATION**

FOR UNITED KINGDOM, IRELAND, USA, SCHENGEN PASSENGERS

**Business**

BUSINESS CLASS PASSENGERS CAN STAY 2 NIGHTS FOR FREE IN A 5 STAR HOTEL

## RCCL urges FBR to extend submission date of tax

DNA

RAWALPINDI: The Rawalpindi Chamber of Commerce and Industry (RCCL) has requested the Federal Board of Revenue (FBR) to extend the date for submission of income tax returns. President RCCL Saqib Rafiq said in a statement that the business community is facing difficulty in filing tax returns due to glitches in the FBR IRIS system. He added that due to the new change introduced by the FBR in the IT system of IRIS, filers are unable to retrieve the previous wealth statement data. Due to the heavy load of filings in the last week, FBR IRIS goes down and responds slowly. He demanded that the date for filing tax returns be extended to October 31 from September 30.

## Eid Milad-un-Nabi PBUH arrangements reviewed

BAHAWALPUR: A meeting was held to review arrangements for Eid Milad-un-Nabi Peace Be Upon Him under the chair of Deputy Commissioner Bahawalpur Zabeer Anwar Jappa. He said that the Eid Milad-un-Nabi PBUH will be celebrated in a befitting manner, and all events will be organized on a grand scale. He said that all the government and private offices, roads, and markets would be decorated with lights, Qirat, Naat, and speech competitions among school and college students will be organized. He said that the routes of Eid Milad processions should be cleaned and the traffic plan must be chalked out. The meeting was attended by Additional Deputy Commissioner Headquarters Sumera Rabbani, Chief Municipal Officer Azhar Javid, and other concerned officers.

### Court Notice

I, Lubaina Bint Sohrah have lost my original BS International Relations degree (International Islamic University Islamabad) Registration no. (379-FSS/BSIR/F16) along with original CNIC No (82401-4032516-4) and other important documents in Islamabad. If found please contact (0301-5115579)



ISLAMABAD: families are enjoying at Dino Valley park as the citizen of twin cities and native area, usually visits Margalla and such tourists places, on weekend in Federal Capital.— Online

# NORI Hospital designated as IAEA “Anchor Centre”

ADIL SHAHEEN

ISLAMABAD: PAEC Hospital NORI, Islamabad is designated as IAEA “Anchor Centre” to Enhance Member States’ Capabilities in Cancer Research which is a significant achievement. At a signing ceremony held in Vienna, organized on the sidelines of the 67th Session of the General Conference of the IAEA, Pakistan’s Nuclear Medicine, Oncology and Radiotherapy Institute (NORI) has been designated as an Anchor Centre under the IAEA’s “Rays of Hope initiative”.

On behalf of Pakistan, the Anchor Centre Agreement was signed by Dr. Raja Ali Raza Anwar, Chairman, Pakistan Atomic Energy Commission (PAEC) alongside the Director General of the IAEA, Rafael Mariano Grossi, said a news release. Anchor Centres are designated cancer treatment facilities

which work with the IAEA to support and provide relevant expertise in the respective region. These centres are part of the IAEA’s Rays of Hope (RoH) initiative, which aims to assist Member States in establishing or expanding their capacities in radiotherapy and multimodality medical imaging. Moreover, the designated Anchor Centres will train fellows, organise training courses for healthcare providers, participate in IAEA Coordinated

Research Projects, promote networking, and provide experts and mentorship to other radiotherapy and medical imaging centres in their region. Along with Pakistan, Anchor Centre Agreements with cancer institutes from Algeria, Egypt, Jordan, Morocco and Türkiye were also signed during the ceremony. Within the health sector in Pakistan, the PAEC has used nuclear and other advanced techniques for the diagnosis and treatment

of cancerous and allied diseases. It is actively involved in the national cancer awareness, prevention, and diagnosis and treatment program. NORI, one of the 19 cancer hospitals run by PAEC, established in 1983 in Islamabad, is a state-of-the-art facility and the only fully fledged tertiary care cancer hospital of Pakistan specifically designed for diagnosing and treating cancer patients, equipped with state of the art equipment including Cyberknife.

## Governor spotlights KP investment opportunities in UK

PESHAWAR: Governor Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Haji Ghulam Ali has said that world has changed into a global village that has created endless opportunities of investment and exploring resources through use of modern technology. He was talking to a ten-member delegation of UK Business Forum, here at Governor House.

The delegation was included Chairman Overseas Business Forum UK, Muhammad Farooq, General Secretary, Salman Dosa, Ahmad Ali, Naeemullah and Noman Ali. The delegation appreciated the keen interest of governor to promote business activities in the province and urged him to establish overseas commission in KP like Punjab and Sind to facilitate business

community. Delegation said thousands of overseas Pakistanis are facing difficulties in UK Europe and Central Asian states due to absence of overseas commission added that expatriates want to invest in vast natural resources of the province and play a role in its development. Governor said that transformation of world into a global village has created new vistas of business

and utilization of resources through use of modern technologies. He said that Pakistan has abundant resources of various kinds that can be utilized by foreign investors. He also suggested formation of a joint venture of business community of both Pakistan and UK to create opportunities of investment and explore vistas of education, health and mineral resource exploration.—APP

## Artist delegation applauds Rs 500 million fund

MEHTAB PIRZADA

LAHORE: A delegation of artists called on Punjab Caretaker Chief Minister Mohsin Naqvi at the Chief Minister’s Office, here on Tuesday. The CM attentively listened to the concerns raised by the artists and assured them of prompt resolutions. Addressing the delegation, the chief minister empa-

thetically acknowledged the absence of a pension system for artists, highlighting their unwavering dedication even in their advanced years. In a significant stride towards recognizing the invaluable contributions of artists, singers, writers, and other creative individuals, the Punjab Cabinet has granted approval for the establishment of a Rs 500 million endowment fund. This fund is poised to extend

its benefits to all members of the artistic community. He affirmed that the disbursement of funds for this endowment is imminent, underscoring his commitment to the welfare of artists. Furthermore, Chief Minister Naqvi pledged to review actionable recommendations put forth by the artists, acknowledging their pivotal role in garnering international acclaim for the nation.



ISLAMABAD: Chinese Ambassador to Pakistan, H.E. Jiang Zaidong calling on Chairman Senate of Pakistan, Muhammad Sadiq Sanjrani at Parliament House.—DNA

## Alkhidmat foundation launches volunteer management system

KHYAM ABBASI

ISLAMABAD: Alkhidmat Foundation has introduced Volunteer Management System. The purpose of this system is to enhance the capacity of the volunteers while formulating the networking of the volunteers on the modern lines. For this purpose a simple but an elegant ceremony was held at the Alkhidmat Complex. Secretary General Alkhidmat Foundation Pakistan Syed Waqas Jafri, Vice President Alkhidmat Foundation Pakistan Dr. Muhammad Mushtaq Ahmed Mangat, Executive Director Alkhidmat Foundation Pakistan Khubab Bilal, senior manager volunteer department Nisar Ahmed, Sanan Akbar, other office-bearers and a large number of boys and girls’ students from different universities attended the ceremony.

While addressing the ceremony Syed Waqas Jafri said that the volunteers of Alkhidmat Foundation are vanguard of the Alkhidmat Foundation, who have written stories of the public service during the most difficult times. He said whether there is corona pandemic, rou-

te accidents, earthquakes or floods, the 60 thousand volunteers spread in whole country remain every time ready to serve their countrymen. He said that during the recent flood came in whole country in rescue, relief and now rehabilitation phase the Alkhidmat volunteers are

enthusiastically rendering services. Dr. Muhammad Mushtaq Ahmed Mangat said that the purpose of the Volunteer Management System along with formulating the networking of the volunteers on the modern lines is to enhance their capacity. He said

that Alkhidmat Foundation want to enhance the number of the volunteers to 1 million through this digital system. Dr. Muhammad Mushtaq Ahmed Mangat while informing about the details of this system said that one website and one mobile application has been introduced in Volunteer Management System, which is present at Google play store and Apple play store. He said that through this the volunteers could secure the information of all activities and also could become the part of these activities. Through this platform the volunteers could review their performance. He said that till date hundreds of people performed services as Alkhidmat volunteers but so far so there was no such system with us through which we could maintain its record, adding that now through Volunteer Management System we could maintain whole record.



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3rd Floor, Yasin Plaza, 74-West, Blue Area, Islamabad.

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**Karachi**

Room No. 14 & 15, 3rd Floor, Markazi Mall, Main Tariq Road, 17-1 Block-2, P.E.C.S. Karachi. Tel: (+92 21) 34531747. Fax: (+92 21) 34531747. E-mail: karachi@freelinemovers.com

**Lahore**

F-4, Gulberg Centre, Main Boulevard, Lahore. Tel: (+92 42) 3578888, 3579785. Fax: (+92 42) 3571423. E-mail: lahore@freelinemovers.com

**Peshawar**

Office No. C-6, 3rd Floor, Zameer Plaza, Laff Road, Ring Road, Peshawar. Tel: (+92 91) 2502778. Fax: (+92 91) 2502658. E-mail: peshawar@freelinemovers.com

**Kabul**

House # 4, Street # 4, Charah Anzar Road, Shahr-e-Naw, Kabul, Afghanistan. Tel: +93 79921 773, 83 79789 888, 83 779488 288. E-mail: kabul@freelinemovers.com

## National Days and Armed Forces Days

### September

- Sept01/Libya Revolution Day
- Sept01/Tanzania
- Defence day
- Sept01/Uzbekistan
- Independence Day
- Sept07/Brazil
- Independence Day
- Sept09/DPR Korea National Day
- Sept09/Tajikistan Independence Day
- Sept16/Malaysia Armed Forces Day
- Sept16/Mexico National Day
- Sept16/Papua New Guinea
- Independence Day
- Sept18/Chile National Day
- Sept21/Malta
- Independence Day
- Sept23/Saudi Arabia National Day

### Hotels & Restaurants



Serena Hotel.....111 133 133  
Marriott.....051- 2826121  
Monal.....0334-5421812



Turkish Airlines.....8494949



### Emergency

Rescue (Police).....15  
Bomb Disposal.....15  
Fire Services Rawalpindi/ Islamabad.....1122 & 16  
Emergency Ambulance.1122 & Rescue Services.4451122  
Motorway Police.....9266044  
Motorway Police.9270601-20  
Women Police Stations Islamabad.....9222596  
Rawalpindi.....9270601-20



### Enquiry

Edhi Ambulance.....115  
PIA Flight Info.....114  
PIA Cargo.....9280979  
Railway Enquiry.....117  
Railway Exchange 9270831-5  
WASA Rawalpindi.5555489  
CAA.....9281092



### Hospitals

CMH.....5611111  
MH.....561116  
Cantt Hospital.....9270907-11  
DHQ.....5556311-4  
RGH.....9290301-7  
Holy Family.....9290322-7  
PIMS.....9261170-79  
Polyclinic.....9218300-09  
Shifa International 4603666



### Departments

CDA.....9221334-43  
CDA.....9208301-04  
Met Office.....9250360-6  
RDA.....5555864  
TMA.....5770886  
Cantonment Board 9270151-3

### Water Tank

Islamabad.....0321-5744480

# President for enhancing trade, cooperation with Jordan

The President said that Pakistan highly valued its ties with Jordan and wanted to further improve bilateral trade, economic, political and cultural relations for the mutual interest of the two countries

FAISAL SHEIKH

ISLAMABAD: President Dr Arif Alvi has asked Pakistan's Ambassador-designate to Jordan to work for further enhancing bilateral cooperation with the brotherly country in the areas of trade, economy, culture, and people-to-people contacts. He said that Pakistan cherished its close, friendly and fraternal relations with the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan which were rooted in shared religion, culture and history. Congratulating the Pakistan's Ambassador-designate to Jordan, Major General (r) Muhammad Ajmal Iqbal, the President said that Pakistan highly valued its ties with Jordan and wanted to further improve bilateral trade, economic, political and cultural relations for the mutual interest of the two countries. He expressed satisfaction over the current relations between the two countries, which were marked by warmth and commonality of views on both sides. The President emphasized the need for regular high-level exchanges, including the exchange of Parliamentary delegations,



holding of Bilateral Political Consultations and Joint Ministerial Commissions to improve socio-political and economic ties. He appreciated the commonality of views between Pakistan and Jordan on various issues concerning the Islamic world, especially Palestine and Islamophobia, and urged the need to work closely with other Muslim countries on such issues.

## CDA asked to start development works in G-9 Markaz on priority

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Ahsan Zafar Bakhtawari, President, Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry (ICCI) said that G-9 Markaz Karachi Company has grown into one of the largest commercial centres of the federal capital, but due to lack of better development, its traders are facing multiple problems. He stressed that CDA should start the development works in G-9 Markaz on priority basis including carpeting of roads, construction of a parking plaza, repair of footpaths, construction of filtration

plan & public toilets and restoration of streetlights. He said that the 40 years old sewerage system in G-9 Markaz has deteriorated and is leaking from various places. He urged that the CDA should replace the old sewerage system with a new one. He said this while addressing a delegation of Traders Welfare Association, G-9 Markaz, Islamabad that visited ICCI led by its President Raja Javed Iqbal. Haji Zafar Secretary General, Ch. Abdul Ghaffar Senior Vice President and others were in the delegation. Speaking on the occasion, Raja Javed Iqbal President and Haji Zafar Secretary

General, Traders Welfare Association, G-9 Markaz, Islamabad highlighted the major issues of their market. They said that G-9 Markaz is generating the largest chunk of revenue for CDA, but CDA is not focusing on better development of this major commercial centre, which is unfortunate. They urged that CDA should start development works in Karachi Company without further delay to facilitate the traders in promoting business activities. They assured that they would work with ICCI for the welfare of the trading community of Islamabad.

Zafar Bakhtawari former President ICCI and Secretary General UBG Pakistan said that resolving the key issues of the business community is the top priority of Ahsan Bakhtawari and assured that he would work harder in his remaining tenure for the development works in markets including G-9 Markaz Islamabad. Khalid Chaudhry Convenor ICCI Traders Committee and others also spoke on the occasion and emphasized that CDA should start development works in G-9 Markaz to bring it at par with developed commercial centres of the federal capital.

## Work on 884-MW SK Hydropower project in full swing

ISLAMABAD: Managing Director of China Energy International Group's Pakistan Wang Huihua on Tuesday said the construction work on the 884-megawatt Suki Kinari (SK) Hydropower Project was being carried out at a fast-track basis under China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) initiatives. The run-of-the-Kunhar-river hydropower project would create over 4,250 employment opportunities besides contributing significant electricity to the national grid, he said while talking to APP. Wang Huihua expressed confidence the SK hydropower project was expected to complete by the end of the current year or mid of 2024 as its powerhouse and reservoir section were in the final phases of completion. However, he said the 24-kilometer-long Hades Tunnel was the most challenging part of the project due to difficult terrain, harsh weather conditions during winter and water drainage problems. He said highly-skilled manpower coupled with state-of-the-art machinery had been deployed at the tunnel sites, adding "excavation and lining work is currently underway both upstream and downstream." Under the SK hydropower project, Wang Huihua said, around three billion units of affordable electricity would be added to the national grid per annum.—APP

## Birthday of famous singer Naheed Akhtar celebrated

ISLAMABAD: Fans celebrated on Tuesday the birthday of famous playback singer Naheed Akhtar also known as the "Nightingale of Pakistan". Born on September 26, 1956, in Multan Naheed Akhtar's career began in the 1970s when she sang a duet with Khalid Asghar in "Rag Malhar" at Radio Pakistan Multan. She has recorded songs in a range of styles, including Pakistani film music, pop, Ghazal, traditional Pakistani classical music, Punjabi folk songs, Qawwalis, Naat & Hamds, and others. She was first discovered for films in the mid-1970s by veteran music director M. Ashraf who pursued her to sing in films. M. Ashraf played a key role in grooming her talent. Her first film as a playback singer "Nanha Fariшта" was released in 1974 and in the same year, she sang songs in the blockbuster Shama. She was active in the Pakistani film industry all the way

through the 1980s. Overall as a playback singer, Naheed Akhtar has lent her voice to about 600 songs in over 430 Urdu and Punjabi films. She is considered one of the greatest female singers who ruled Bollywood during the 70s and 80s. Melodious songs such as "Piyar Kabhi Karna Na Kam", "Yeh Aaj Mujko Kia Hua, and "Kisi Meherbaan Nay Aa Ke Meri Zindagi Saja De", "Allah Hi Allah Kia Karo", "Jis Tarf Ankhon Uthain", "Teri Tasvira Hay", "Baant Raha Tha Jab Khuda", and "Per Kaheen Aankh Larai tau Larai Ho Gi" gave her immense popularity. Besides she also sang classical Ghazals including "Shabe Gham Mujh Se Mil Kar Aisi Roi", "Tumse Ulfat Ke Taqaezy", "Jahan Tera Naqsh e Qadam Dekhtay Hein", "Zinda Rahein To kya Hai" and "Khushi Se Dil Ne Sahein Bewafaiyan Kia Kia. During the late 1980s, she left singing.—APP

## Pakistan Navy ship gifted to United Kingdom as Goodwill

DNA

ISLAMABAD: The Transfer Agreement Signing Ceremony for the ex-Pakistan Navy Ship TARIQ to Falls of Clyde International (FOCI) of United Kingdom was organized at Pakistan High Commission in London. Chief of the Naval Staff Admiral Muhammad Amjad Khan Niazi graced the ceremony as Chief Guest. Former First Sea Lord and Chief of the Naval Staff Royal British Navy, Admiral Lord Alan West attended the ceremony as Guest of Honour. Ex PNS TARIQ was formerly decommissioned by Pakistan Navy on 4 Aug 23 and has been gifted by the Government of Pakistan to a UK based firm Falls of Clyde International (FOCI) that plans to convert the ship into a floating museum. The ship will be on static display at Clyde Maritime Heritage

Centre in Glasgow as a symbol of common naval heritage of the Royal and Pakistani navies. Speaking on the occasion, Admiral Lord Alan West said that the close relationship between the navies and nations of Pakistan and UK are clearly shown by the historic agreement focused on one ship that served both countries over many years. While addressing at the ceremony, Chief of the Naval Staff Admiral Muhammad Amjad Khan Niazi acknowl-

edged the meritorious services of PNS TARIQ for the defence of Pakistan. The

ship served for over 3 decades in PN & distinguished herself on many operational deployments, earning the reputation of a versatile, agile and ever-ready combat ship. The ship was famously involved in Search and Rescue mission in Maldives during the Indian Ocean Tsunami of 2005 which helped save precious lives of 377 tourists belonging to various nationalities.



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Chief Guest hoped that handing over of TARIQ to FOCI will further strengthen the bonds of friendship between UK and Pakistan as the ship will continue to symbolize the shared maritime heritage of both the navies in times to come. The historical ship served in the Royal Navy as HMS AMBUSCADE for 18 years and participated in the Falklands War before being

ship served for over 3 decades in PN & distinguished herself on many operational deployments, earning the reputation of a versatile, agile and ever-ready combat ship. The ship was famously involved in Search and Rescue mission in Maldives during the Indian Ocean Tsunami of 2005 which helped save precious lives of 377 tourists belonging to various nationalities.

## KSA Majlis-e-Shura official visit National Assembly

ISLAMABAD: A group of high-ranking officials from the Majlis-e-Shura of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia (KSA) here on Tuesday visited National Assembly of Pakistan. The visit was in line with the roadmap agreed upon by Speaker of the National Assembly, Raja Pervez Ashraf, and , Chairman of Majlis-e-Shura, Dr. Abdullah bin Mohammed bin Ibrahim Al Sheikh during their meeting, aimed at further strengthening cooperation and collaboration between the National Assembly of Pakistan and the Majlis-e-Shura. The Saudi delegation consisting of official of Majlis-e-Shura was briefed about important initiatives undertaken by the national assembly by its complete and comprehensive digitalization. The delegation expressed appreciation about progress of different projects undertaken by National Assembly of Pakistan. Later, the delegates also toured the Parliament House including National Assembly Hall.

## Parliamentary Affairs committee meets

FAISAL SHEIKH

ISLAMABAD: Meeting of Senate Standing Committee on Parliamentary Affairs was held here at Parliament House on Tuesday with Senator Taj Haider in Chair. The Senate Committee was briefed on the arrangements and preparations for the upcoming General Elections in the country. Secretary ECP, Omar Hamid Khan, apprised that the general election will encompass 266 National Assembly Constituencies and 593 Provincial Assemblies Constituencies, and there are 91,809 tentative polling stations nationwide, with 41,809 designated as normal, 32,508 as sensitive, and 17,411 as highly sensitive. Furthermore, it was informed that around 1 million Polling staff will be required for the upcoming general elections. The Committee inquired about the methods for the consolidation of results in the upcoming general elections. Secretary ECP stated that electronic devices having ECP developed software will be used to send snapshots of Form-45 to the Returning Officers, and the software is also equipped to keep track of time and place of snapshots in order to ensure the legitimacy of elections. Moreover, Secretary ECP stated that the preliminary delimitations will be published on 27th September, 2023. However, a period of approximately sixty days will be required for filing and disposal of representations. The Committee recommended that the time period for filing of representations should be curtailed from 30 days to 7 days, so that the general election could be held within 90 days. The Committee also drew attention of the ECP towards the Constitutional obligation to conduct general elections within 90 days after the dissolution of National Assembly. The Committee, however, recommended the ECP to announce the Election Schedule at the earliest to remove any uncertainty regarding the conduct of elections in the country.

## Jazz, NUST to power Pak '5G Innovation Hackathon'

ISLAMABAD: The National University of Sciences and Technology (NUST) and Pakistan's largest digital operator Jazz have partnered to bring Pakistan's first '5G Innovation Hackathon.' The ground-breaking initiative aims to harness the immense potential of 5G technology and other cutting-edge innovations. It will sure augur well for addressing critical challenges in Pakistan's key sectors, including health, education, financial services, disaster management, climate change, agri-tech and Industry 4.0. Jazz and NUST have also welcomed Code for Pakistan (CFP) as the implementation partner, having many years of experience in holding successful hackathons. In addition, the National Information Technology Board (NITB) and Opps, a mobile & consumer electronics manufacturer, have also joined hands for the hackathon. By bringing together bright minds, developers and entrepreneurs, the hackathon would serve as a breeding ground for novel ideas and solutions that could shape the future of telecommunications in Pakistan. The event would not only empower local talent but also ensure Pakistan's presence at the forefront of the digital revolution, paving the way for a more connected and innovative future. Chief Regulatory Affairs Officer at Jazz, Syed Fakhar Ahmed said, "Empowering a developing nation like Pakistan to overcome its longstanding challenges lies in the pursuit of viable solutions through digital technology, a mission championed by events like the 5G Innovation Hackathon. As Pakistan's foremost digital operator and a trailblazer in digital innovation, Jazz is proud to have established Pakistan's first 5G Innovation Lab at NUST, and envisions the hackathon to bridge the gaps that challenge our nation, one 5G innovation at a time." Principal and Dean, SINES, NUST, Dr Hamid Cheema said, "We are thrilled to host the 5G Innovation Hackathon at NUST, an event that brings together the brightest minds in innovation and technology to ignite creative sparks that will shape the future. I thank Jazz, NITB, and CFP for collaborating on this timely initiative as the country prepares to embark on breakthrough 5G-powered solutions that could reshape lives and livelihoods.—DNA

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## Briefs

## Senate body on power meets

DNA

ISLAMABAD: The Senate Standing Committee on Power met on Tuesday under the Chairmanship of Senator Saifullah Abro here at Old Pips Hall, Parliament Lodges. The meeting was attended by Senator Bahramand Khan Tangi, Senator Muhammad Asad Ali Khan Junejo, Senator Saifullah Sarwar Khan Nyazee, Senator Sana Jamali, Senator Dilawar Khan, Senator Haji Hidayatullah Khan and Senator Fida Muhammad. At the outset of the meeting, Senator Saifullah Abro expressed reservations on the absence of Chairman NE-PA and all its provincial Members from the Committee meeting. He said that NE-PA seems to avoid the meetings of Senate Power Committee because they do not have the courage to answer the questions raised by the Members on this forum. The Committee chaired immediately sought details on the incumbency report of AS Power Division from January 2021 - December 2021 to determine as to why the Chairman NE-PA is absent from the Committee meeting today and also with regard to agenda item pertaining to illegal extension of KAPCO Power Plant. The Chairman Committee inquired on the amount of energy payment made to KAPCO Power Plant whose agreement was already expired in June 2021, the officials replied that Rs. 151 Bn was paid as Energy payment to KAPCO Power Plant out of which 95 pc were fuel charges. The committee members inquired on the reasons of illegal extension and said that whatever work between KAPCO Power Plant and Power Division took place after the expiry of the agreement may deem to be illegal. The committee chair said that not even the extension was illegal but the Power division does not even hold the authority to give extensions to IPPs.

## 'Islamic calligraphy embarks with divine revelation'

RAWALPINDI: Senator Talha Mehmood on Tuesday said that calligraphy was purely an Islamic art that embarked with divine revelation. He said this while addressing an Islamic Calligraphy exhibition of Af-tab Ahmed Khan (late) organized at the Punjab Arts Council (PAC) in connection with the celebration of Eid Milad-ul-Nabi (SAW). Talha said that 42 scribes of revelation were highly regarded in Islam and the purpose of this exhibition was to spread the message of love to the Holy Prophet (SAW). He lauded the artist's role of their great love for the religion of Islam through their works of art and beautiful colors. Naheed Manzoor on the occasion said that the name of writing the words in the colors of aesthetic taste and passion with a pen on the canvas was calligraphy. "When the calligrapher borrows these words from Quran, Hadith and spirituality.—APP



ISLAMABAD: A vendor is arranging water melons import Afghanistan at his pavilion to attract at Weekly Margala Bazaar, as the due to the off season of that fruit, people are surprise watching water melons, in Federal Capital. —Online

## DC orders dengue spray, fogging key buildings

The ICT spokesman Dr Abdullah Tabasum said that the Deputy Commissioner has assured that all possible resources will be used to control the deadly virus in Islamabad

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Deputy Commissioner Irfan Nawaz Memon, to combat the rising dengue fever cases, has ordered anti-dengue teams to carry out dengue spraying and fogging key areas of the city, including the buildings of Supreme Court, Election Commission, PM Secretariat and NADRA Headquarters. DC Memon also directed officials to improve sanitation arrangements in

different areas of the city to prevent dengue and to launch an awareness campaign among the people about anti-dengue measures.

He further emphasized the need to spray dengue in schools and colleges of Islamabad. In a statement, the ICT spokesman Dr Abdullah Tabasum said that the Deputy Commissioner has assured that all possible resources will be used to control the deadly virus in Islamabad. He added that the rural area of Islamabad is among the top

priorities of the administration and every possible step will be taken to protect the lives of the citizens.

Deputy Commissioner Islamabad's timely action is a welcome step in the fight against dengue fever. It is important for the public to cooperate with the authorities and take all necessary precautions to protect themselves from this deadly disease. Talking to APP, medical expert Doctor Attiya Karim Khan said that the dengue fever is a mosquito-borne

viral infection that can cause flu-like symptoms, such as fever, headache, muscle and joint pain, and nausea. In severe cases, dengue fever can lead to life-threatening complications, such as hemorrhagic fever and dengue shock syndrome, she added. Dr Attiya further said that there is no specific treatment for dengue fever, but early diagnosis and supportive care can help to improve the prognosis. She said that, the best way to prevent dengue fever is to avoid mosquito bites.

This can be done by using mosquito repellents, wearing long sleeves and pants, and using mosquito nets when sleeping. Dr Attiya urged the public to take following precautions to protect themselves from dengue fever: use mosquito repellents, wear long sleeves and pants, use mosquito nets when sleeping, remove stagnant water from around your home, keep your home clean and tidy, seek medical attention immediately if you experience any symptoms of dengue fever.

## Footwear exports increase by 7.74% in August

ISLAMABAD: The export of footwear products witnessed an increase of 7.74 percent during the Month of August 2023 as compared to the same month of last fiscal year, the Pakistan Bureau of Statistics (PBS) reported. Pakistan exported footwear products worth \$16.770 million during August 2023 as compared to the exports of \$15.565 million during August 2022. Among footwear varieties, the exports of leather footwear increased by 2.12 percent to \$13.961 million in August compared to exports of \$13.672 million in August 2022 whereas the exports of canvas footwear increased from zero to \$0.290 million, showing cent percent growth. The exports of all other footwear varieties increased from \$1.893 last August to \$2.519 million in August 2023, showing a growth of 33.07 percent. However, the exports of the commodity during the first two months of the current fiscal year witnessed a decrease of 12.75 percent when compared to the corresponding period of last year, PBS reported. The footwear exports during July-August (2023-24) were recorded at \$28.261 million against the exports of \$32.392 million in July-August (2022-23). During the period under review, the exports of leather footwear declined by 15.89 percent, from \$27.976 million to \$23.531 million this year. However, the exports of canvas footwear increased from \$0.158 million to \$0.165 million, a growth of 264 percent. The export of other footwear commodities declined by 2.44 percent to \$4.154 million from \$4.258 million last year. It is pertinent to mention here that the country's overall trade deficit contracted by 40.29 per cent during the first two months of the current fiscal year compared to the corresponding period of last year. The trade deficit during July-August (2023-24) was recorded at \$3.763 billion as against the deficit of \$6.302 billion in July-August (2022-23), showing negative growth of 40.29 per cent.—APP

## Xinjiang Grand Bazaar reflective of neat blend of tradition

DNA

ISLAMABAD: The rhythmic beats of the Naghra kettle-drum reverberate through the air as a Uyghur musician, dressed in a blue robe, strikes the drum with practiced taps. His red-robed companion plays a lively melody on the suona, the music drifting through the entrance of a newly opened fruit themed supermarket. Drawn to the vibrant sounds, a twenty-something passer-by joins the duo for an impromptu traditional Xinjiang dance, China Economic Net (CEN) reported on Tuesday. Established in 2003, the Xinjiang Grand Bazaar spans an expansive 100,000 square metres with more than 3,000 stores. The bazaar has increasingly become a tourism hot spot, with a daily visitor count exceeding 120,000 and surpassing 150,000 over the weekends since this August. Behind this uplifting development is that the bazaar goes beyond its role of a marketplace to showcase the region's unique architectural, culinary and cultural traditions, and its innovation



capabilities. At the entrance of the Xinjiang Grand Bazaar lies an 80-metre dome-roofed sightseeing tower. Adopting traditional Uyghur architectural design, the two-storey platform offers a panoramic view of the entire bazaar and its surrounding area. "I just love this tower. It has an amazing appearance, and it provides so unique a view," Mr Liu, a visitor from China's coastal city of Hangzhou told China Economic Net (CEN) reporter. To promote the culture of naan, a traditional Xinjiang flatbread that resembles a pizza without sauce, a naan-themed museum was established. The museum educates visitors about the history of naan bread, the different types of naan

across Xinjiang and the raw materials and tools for naan making. Also highlighted at the bazaar are traditional culinary delights such as Kao Bao Zi (meat-filled baked buns) and Xinjiang lamb skewers and traditional dance and music performances. Building on the cherished traditional elements, the bazaar has also explored new avenues for development. The first way is to combine cultural elements with contemporary designs to develop a range of creative tourism and culinary products. For example, in 2020, the bazaar partnered with a tourism company based in Fujian to craft official merchandise featuring silk apparel, hats, and scarves, and traditional Uyghur musical instruments. The bazaar has also engaged the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) countries for exchange and inspirations. In the 2023 Silk Road Culinary Festival held at the bazaar from September 23rd to 28th, culinary and tourism enterprises from countries along the Silk Road including Russia, Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan and Kyrgyzstan are invited to showcase their unique offerings.

## Islamabad civil defense arrests 15 beggars

DNA

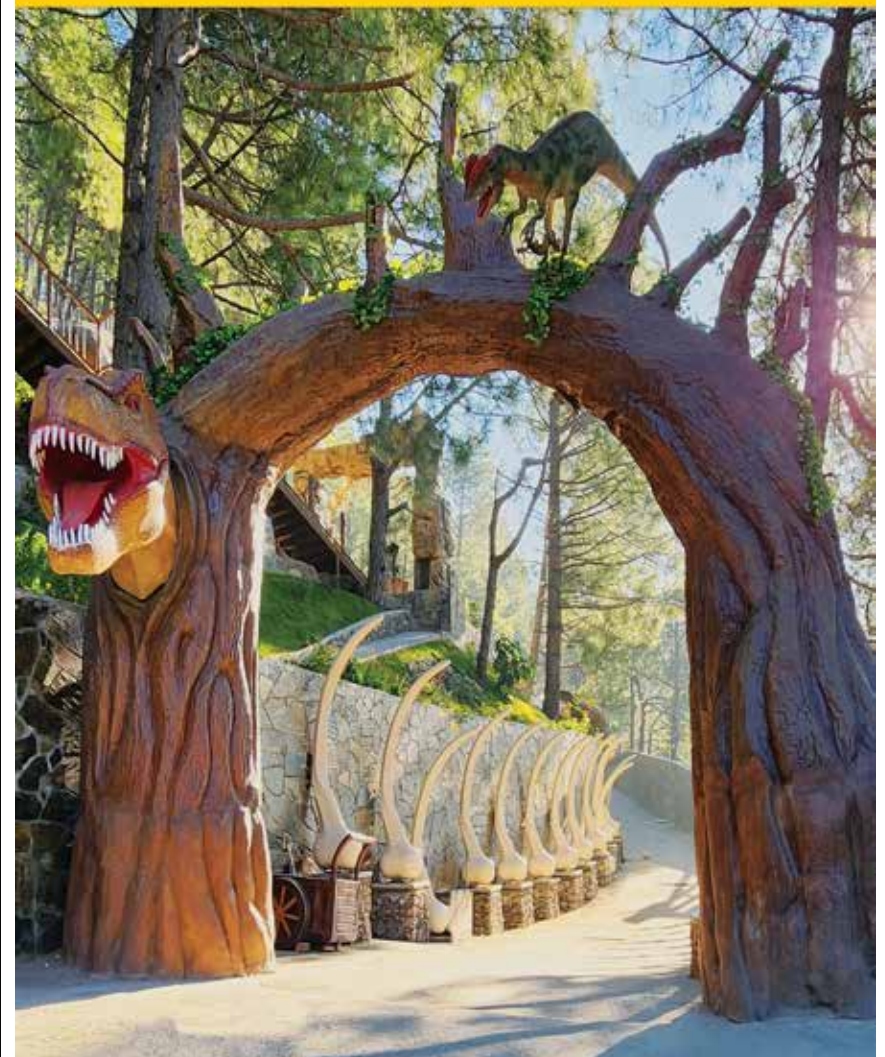
ISLAMABAD: In a major crackdown on professional begging, the Islamabad Civil Defense arrested 15 beggars from different areas on Tuesday. The operation was carried out under the supervision of the Assistant Commissioner Secretariat Aneel Saeed and the Assistant Director of Civil Defense, on the directions of Deputy Commissioner Islamabad Irfan Nawaz Memon. The beggars were arrested from various areas of the city, including Margalla Road, Aabpara Market, and Faisal Mosque. They were then transferred to the police station for further action. The minor children who were begging were sent to the Edhi Center. The operation against beggars is being carried out daily under the supervision of Assistant Commissioners in Islamabad. The operation aims to discourage professional begging and to protect the citizens from harassment.

## Balochistan's development depends on utilizing its mineral resource

ISLAMABAD: Caretaker Interior Minister Sarfraz Bugti on Tuesday said that full utilization of mineral resources was needed for the development of Balochistan and situation in the province could be improved by increasing political commitment and capacity. Addressing a concluding ceremony of a seminar titled "Balochistan Rural Development and Community Empowerment," the minister thanked European contributors on behalf of people of Pakistan for holding the event. He asked the European union to continue its efforts for holding such informative seminars which could help to sensitize people of the province living in remote areas. The minister said that non-Balanced development was the problem of all developing countries and politics over this issue was not the solution to the problem. He said that the country would have to focus on plan for development of our new generation. The minister said that everyone should hold themselves accountable before pointing a finger at anyone. "I belong to a rural area. When the state gave me an opportunity, I reached this position through hard work," he said adding that every individual could get opportunities and success through hard work. Later, the minister also participated in the High Achievers Awards ceremony organized by Roots International Schools and Colleges. Addressing the function, he congratulated the best performing students, adding the high performing students had achieved the success through their hard work.



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ISLAMABAD: H.E Hamad Obaid Alzaabi the Ambassador of UAE in Islamabad, meets Esther Pérez Ruiz, IMF Resident Representative in Pakistan, as joint work and bilateral cooperation and matters of mutual interest were discussed.—DNA

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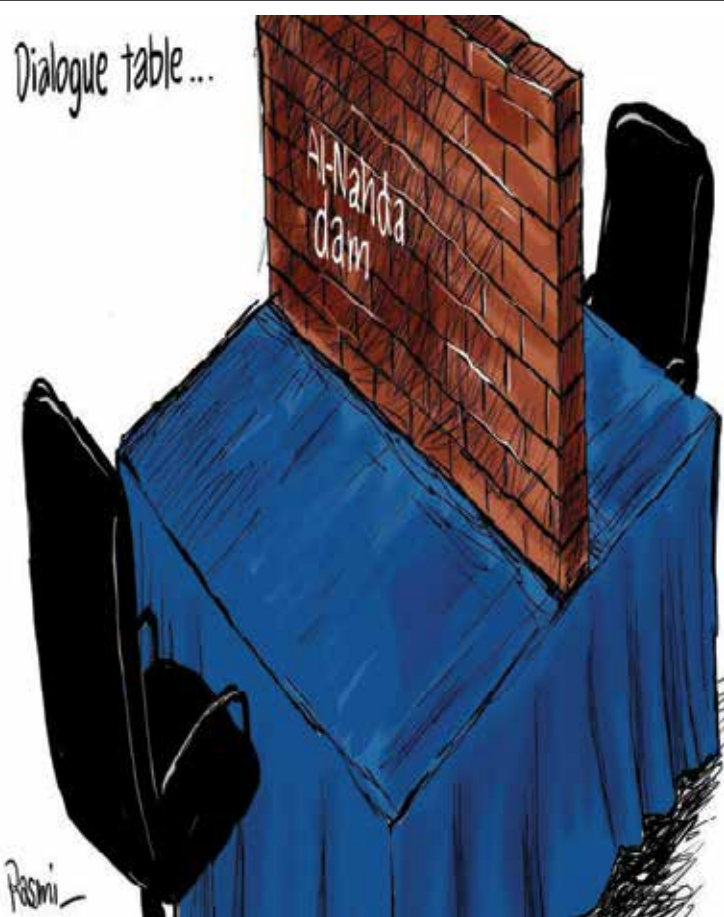
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Email: dailyisbpost@gmail.com

Phone: 051-2266165 / 051-2261960

Off 11: Awan Plaza, Block 18-A, G-8 Markaz Islamabad



## What is the SFIC up to?

The Special Investment Facilitation Council (SIFIC), unveiled in June this year, seems to be a concerted effort by the military leadership to bolster the struggling economy of our nation. Although the precise mechanisms by which this novel initiative will rejuvenate Pakistan's ailing economy remain unclear, it has ignited a significant debate: Was there a genuine necessity for such an entity when pre-existing institutions like the Board of Investment (BOI) have, thus far, failed to yield tangible results? Is it wise to establish additional institutions, potentially funded by the public treasury, when previous institutions of a similar nature have failed to deliver desired outcomes? What sets apart the SFIC from the BOI, addressing the gaps that were evident in the latter? Assuming that SFIC aims to distinguish itself from other institutions, the key question for attracting foreign investments is the quality of our business environment. Unfortunately, our current conditions fall short. Conversations with diplomats in Islamabad reveal that foreign investors are primarily concerned about law and order, legal procedures, and a conducive business environment for their operations. There is no doubt that the blue economy plays a pivotal role in shaping a country's overall economic landscape in today's world. Countries such as Indonesia and our neighboring nation, India, have made significant efforts to prioritize and harness the potential of the blue economy. It is quite striking that the concept of the blue economy seems conspicuously absent from our national priorities. Notably, even the newly-formed SFIC lacks representation from the maritime ministry, indicating a lack of recognition for Pakistan's untapped potential in the blue economy. This represents a missed opportunity for the SFIC, which should ideally be an inclusive organization, capable of leveraging resources from all available sectors. Undoubtedly, Pakistan is in dire need of immediate measures to bolster its economic well-being. However, it is imperative that any new initiatives are meticulously planned and executed, preceded by thorough research and analysis. Rushing into initiatives without a comprehensive approach can risk yielding suboptimal outcomes. Economic stability is undeniably intertwined with political stability, and the most viable path to attaining this political stability hinges on conducting free, fair, and punctual elections. This is a fundamental step in ensuring that the nation's governance is representative and accountable to its people.

## Lifting punitive tariffs to strengthen diplomatic progress

The Donald Trump administration's Section 301 tariffs against China, launched in July 2018, undoubtedly initiated the straining of Sino-US relations. So it is understandable that with the Joe Biden administration trying to repair relations, China has urged it to lift the punitive tariffs, which have proved harmful to both sides, at an early date. Although the Biden administration started a review of the impact of these tariffs last year, the move was largely out of the need to check the then rampant inflation by reducing consumer prices. The review should be carried out every five years according to the US' rules. So it is good to hear that the trade chief of the Biden administration said the review might be finished this year for the sake of stabilizing Sino-US economic and trade relations. At the Transatlantic Forum on GeoEconomics hosted by the Atlantic Council in Berlin on Friday, United States Trade Representative Katherine Tai noted that the Biden administration will "wrap this up hopefully by the end of this year". The Biden administration should give serious consideration to whether the irrational tariffs should be extended for another five years, but any political calculation that it can partly lift tariffs as a bargaining chip is fundamentally flawed. Since the struggle between the Democrats and the Republicans is hotting up ahead of next year's presidential election, the Republicans will definitely ferociously attack the Biden administration if it ends their strategic legacy. But that is a price the Biden administration should be willing to pay as the impact on the US economy, if the tariffs are extended for another five years, means it will have to bear an even greater cost. As the trade war drags on into the fifth year, the US side has already recognized that its rigorous technology export and investment controls and other extreme "de-risking" measures, which are in essence trade bullying and economic coercion, cannot sever its economic and trade ties with China. The structural differences of the US and Chinese economies and their "different philosophical underpinnings", as Tai put it, make the two economies complementary and only underscore the potential for cooperation. Notably, it was also on Friday when China and the US announced they would form their respective economic and financial working teams. They also hinted that more such working groups may be established in the future to cover trade and climate change. As Tai has also repeatedly expressed her willingness to visit China at a proper time over the past half a year, her China trip in the foreseeable future would not be a surprise after the Biden administration's top diplomat and chiefs of finance and commerce and special envoy for climate change have all visited the country since June. The positive momentum in Sino-US ties should be cherished by both sides. Since it is up to the doer to undo what has been done, the Biden administration should take the initiative to end the tariffs to consolidate the progress made in repairing bilateral relations.

# Elections without PTI...

Qamar Bashir



With the elections now just four months away, ideally, political parties will have ample time to refine and reconsider their manifestos, redefine their messaging and focal points, and offer the people of Pakistan a vision of a promising and inspiring future. This newfound clarity on the election date brings an opportunity for political renewal and the chance to inspire hope and dreams of a brighter tomorrow for the citizens of Pakistan. But far from ideal, the political landscape remains complex and marred with uncertainties. The recent overturning of the amendment to the NAB

The Election Commission, under the weight of severe public outcry and the collective demand of all political parties (with the exception of PML(N)), has declared that the general elections will take place at the end of January 2024. This announcement, while arriving nearly 90 days later than constitutionally required, has been met with a relatively muted reaction from political parties. It appears that, rather than dwelling on the inordinate delay, political parties are content with the assurance that elections will indeed occur, dispelling earlier predictions of indefinite postponement by political pundits and analysts.

With the elections now just four months away, ideally, political parties will have ample time to refine and reconsider their manifestos, redefine their messaging and focal points, and offer the people of Pakistan a vision of a promising and inspiring future. This newfound clarity on the election date brings an opportunity for political renewal and the chance to inspire hope and dreams of a brighter tomorrow for the citizens of Pakistan. But far from ideal, the political landscape remains complex and marred with uncertainties. The recent overturning of the amendment to the NAB (National Accountability Bureau) ordinance has dealt a significant blow to the core objectives of the government formed by the constituent parties of the Pakistan Democratic Movement (PDM). The leadership of both the PPP (Pakistan Peoples Party) and PML(N) now finds itself once more under the influence of the establishment, with the same formidable threat that PDM parties had previously managed to blunt now looming ominously over their heads. Furthermore, the recent nullification of the Supreme Court Procedure and Practices Act by the outgoing Chief Justice has shattered the hopes of both Nawaz Sharif and Jehangir Tareen to participate in the 2024 elections. This legal development has created additional complications and uncertainties in an already intricate political landscape.

The PML(N) party appears to be in a weakened state when it comes to public popularity. After being in government for over 16 months, they have faced criticism for their handling of the economy, which has brought the country to the brink of financial collapse. Despite this, they continue to emphasize their efforts to save the country from default, without acknowledging the heavy burden this has placed on the people. The consequences of their economic policies are evident in the form of hyperinflation, rising prices, a sharp increase in the exchange rate of the dollar, and one of the highest interest rates in the world, all of which have made essential goods and services unaffordable for the poor, middle-class, and even the upper-middle class. Millions of people have fallen below the poverty line, and unemployment rates have surged. As a result, many people are struggling to make ends meet, leading to widespread frustration and discontent among the public.

In this context, PML(N) and its allied parties have lost their narrative against price hikes, as many people view them as a major contributor to the inflation and economic hardships faced by the population. Indeed, the perceived alignment of PML(N) with the establishment, their willingness to follow orders without question, their embrace of the Army chief's economic and financial revival doctrine aimed at attracting billions of dollars in investment and their support for laws granting unprecedented powers to the caretaker government in terms of entering into strategic

agreements with foreign countries, traditionally the prerogative of the elected government, have all contributed to their image as being closely aligned with the military establishment. Their perceived failure to protect media freedom and prevent media censorship, as well as their apparent inability to safeguard the rule of law and the principles of the constitution, their perceived failure to insulate the courts from external pressures and influence, as well as allegations of using aggressive means to influence judicial decisions, have further eroded public trust in their commitment to democratic principles. Their perceived alignment with the establishment and the actions taken in support of these policies have, in turn, diminished their ability to maintain a popular anti-establishment narrative. Ultimately, these factors have contributed to a sense of frustration and disillusionment among the public, leading to skepticism about the ability of political parties to govern effectively and address the needs and aspirations of the people. It is evident that the PTI party and its leadership are contending with substantial challenges, marked by persecution and harassment. A significant number of their leaders find themselves either in hiding or incarcerated. Notably, the Chairman's unwavering resolve and refusal to be deterred by these circumstances stand out. His ability to withstand immense pressure, maintain his determination, and remain resolute in the face of adversity serves as a testament to his unwavering courage and commitment. The Chairman's steadfastness has the potential to inspire loyalty among PTI members and supporters, while also becoming a symbol of resilience in the face of perceived political persecution. In a decade-old interview, Mr. Imran Khan declared that he fears only Allah, cannot be influenced or silenced, and follows his own ideology. His philosophy revolves around obeying Allah's commands and giving back to society what he has received. His vision in government is to establish a welfare state where everyone is treated equally, irrespective of wealth or power, creating conditions for people to lead fulfilling lives in line with Islamic teachings. He has backed these words with actions, even in the face of adversity, death threats, and assassination attempts. He hasn't sought clemency, freedom, or compromised his principles for a comfortable life abroad. His unwavering character, courage, and determination set him apart from politicians aligned with the establishment.

While in France, I observed several aspects of a welfare state. Citizens with incomes below 900 per month receive state stipends of 900. The state supports families with multiple children, cares for orphans, aids businesses affected by disasters without applications, and offers free quality education and healthcare to those in need.

Notwithstanding the popular support for PTI, in a recent interview with a foreign channel, the caretaker prime minister asserted that free and fair elections could proceed without the PTI leadership participating. He firmly stated that actions and consequences would persist for all individuals, regardless of age, gender, or profession, who were in any way linked to the events of May 9th. The Army leadership, in their recent corps commander meeting, reiterated their commitment to pursuing those involved in the May 9th incident, promising further consequences and repercussions. Exclusion of PTI from the electoral process has the potential to unleash a cascade of repercussions, including severe political instability, economic turmoil, and widespread social unrest. PTI supporters have an array of avenues to channel their deep-seated discontent, and the situation demands prudent management to avert a

full-blown crisis. PTI supporters, alongside human rights organizations and legal fraternity, may orchestrate peaceful nationwide protests and demonstrations. Their collective outcry would serve as a resounding condemnation of sidelining the nation's largest and most popular party from the electoral landscape. This wave of public dissent could disrupt normal life, placing businesses, education, and essential services under strain, ushering in a period of social tumult and uncertainty. The digital sphere, both within and outside Pakistan, stands as a potent realm for political activism. PTI supporters can harness platforms such as Twitter, Facebook, and Instagram to broadcast their grievances far and wide. Trending hashtags and viral campaigns can elevate awareness about their cause, fomenting a groundswell of support that transcends geographical boundaries. PTI supporters facing exclusion from the electoral process may leverage international channels to garner support and seek intervention. They could engage in diplomatic efforts to rally foreign governments, international bodies, and human rights organizations to condemn this exclusion and demand a fair and transparent election. Additionally, they may explore legal remedies to challenge their exclusion, potentially by filing petitions in the judiciary. Such petitions could assert that their fundamental rights to participate in a democratic process are being infringed upon. The exclusion of PTI from the electoral process would inflict severe damage on the credibility of the entire election system, threatening to plunge Pakistan into a maelstrom of political instability. Such a move risks stoking polarization and fomenting tensions among various political factions, adding fuel to an already volatile situation. The ensuing political instability, sparked by PTI's exclusion, would cast a dark shadow over investor confidence, imperiling economic stability. Foreign and domestic investments, the lifeblood of economic growth, may wither, thrusting Pakistan into a daunting era of economic hardship. Moreover, the repercussions may not be confined to Pakistan's borders. Its international relationships, built on trust and cooperation, could be strained as global observers and partners express grave concerns over the perceived injustice and lack of fairness in the electoral process. The ripple effect of such a crisis could resonate far beyond the nation's borders, painting a bleak picture of instability and uncertainty. Now is the time for all stakeholders, including the government, election commission, judiciary, political parties, and institutions, to set aside personal and institutional vendettas. We must consider every citizen a patriot without casting doubt on their loyalty. Coercion and brute force should be replaced with love and affection to win true loyalty, as intimidation only begets obedience, not love. The government and institutions should emulate a caring mother, nurturing every citizen without subjecting them to humiliation. Releasing political prisoners is an act of magnanimity that honors the nation and empowers people to choose their true representatives. The caretaker government, establishment, and election commission should prioritize fairness, transparency, and open dialogue with all political stakeholders. Upholding democratic principles and ensuring a level playing field for all parties is the path to maintaining stability and credibility in the electoral process. It's time to unite and build a stronger, more harmonious nation.

—The writer is Former Press Secretary to the President Former Press Minister to the Embassy of Pakistan to France Former MD, SRBC

## US presidential election 2024: Trump's potential return as Republican candidate?

Kerry Boyd Anderson

At the start of 2023, Trump and DeSantis were much closer in the polls, but DeSantis has lost ground since then. Currently, Trump is far ahead of his competitors. In national primary polls, Trump polls at 55.2 percent, according to the FiveThirtyEight model. Florida Governor Ron DeSantis is a distant second at 13.2 percent, followed by entrepreneur Vivek Ramaswamy at 7.4 percent, former South Carolina

The Republican process of choosing a nominee for president is well underway, with a second televised debate scheduled for Wednesday. However, former President Donald Trump currently is far ahead in polls, raising the question of whether it is time to just acknowledge that he will be the party's nominee. A core part of US elections is the selection of each political party's nominee. The Republican and Democratic parties, as well as some smaller parties, hold elections to choose a candidate for many political positions, including president. The specific rules and procedures vary by party and state. For the presidential nominee, most states hold "primary" votes to choose the candidate, while a few hold a "caucus." If a party has a president in the White House who can run for a second term, then usually it is assumed that the president will be the party's nominee. President Joe Biden technically faces two competitors, but he is highly likely to be the Democratic nominee. The Republican Party is holding a primary contest to choose its nominee, following the usual pattern for the party that is out of power. However, one of the Republican candidates is a former president — a historically unusual situation.

At the start of 2023, Trump and DeSantis were much closer in the polls, but DeSantis has lost ground since then. Currently, Trump is far ahead of his competitors. In national primary polls, Trump polls at 55.2 percent, according to the FiveThirtyEight model. Florida Governor Ron DeSantis is a distant second at 13.2 percent, followed by entrepreneur Vivek Ramaswamy at 7.4 percent, former South Carolina Governor Nikki Haley at 5 percent and all other candidates polling lower. At the start of 2023, Trump and DeSantis were much closer in the polls, but DeSantis has lost ground since then. Another useful indicator is the number and type of endorsements that a candidate receives

from other party leaders. FiveThirtyEight's endorsement tracker (which counts and weighs endorsements) shows Trump far ahead with 360 endorsement points compared to 43 for DeSantis and all other candidates at 16 or fewer. Fundraising is another important indicator but is very difficult to accurately track. Candidates' principal campaign committees are legally required to disclose fundraising numbers. Trump's campaign reported that it had raised \$17.7 million between April 1 and June 30, behind DeSantis' \$20.1 million. However, Trump and other candidates receive financial support from multiple other sources that are not reported in the same way, which makes it difficult to know which candidate is truly ahead in fundraising. Trump has significant fundraising abilities, but media reports suggest that he also is spending a lot, including in response to four legal indictments against him. Trump's huge lead in polls and endorsements, combined with his massive name recognition and fundraising apparatus, put him far ahead in the race for the Republican nomination. The reality is that he is very likely to be the Republican nominee.

It remains possible that Republicans who do not want Trump to run again for president might rally around one competitor. Indeed, Trump is behaving as though he does not have serious competition — and he might be right. He skipped the first official debate among Republican candidates, opting to do an interview with right-wing media figure Tucker Carlson instead. He also plans to skip the second debate; instead, he plans to give a speech to auto workers in Detroit. Nonetheless, Trump faces some potential risks on the road to nomination. His legal problems might drain some of his funds and distract him from campaigning. It is very unusual for a leading candidate to face serious indictments in the middle of a campaign. However, while some of Trump's opponents might have hoped that

his legal woes would undermine support for him, the Republican base is so far undeterred. Polls suggest that, while a slight majority of Americans support the indictments, a strong majority of Republicans do not. Conservative media tends to either downplay the legal accusations against Trump or portray them as part of an unjust conspiracy against him. Trump's legal problems are more likely to be a challenge in a general election against Biden than in a primary election against other Republicans.

While Trump has a devoted base of supporters and high approval ratings among Republicans, he also has opponents within the party. He easily leads in terms of major endorsements, but he also faces some high-profile Republican critics. Trump's recent comments on abortion have been more moderate than many religious conservatives support, which might chip away at his support among that cohort; but on the other hand they have previously supported him despite a lifestyle and comments that are far from a Christian ideal. It remains possible that Republicans who do not want Trump to run again for president might rally around one competitor, such as DeSantis or Haley. However, they would have to do so soon in order to have time to build support, endorsements and fundraising for one candidate to match or beat Trump's figures. A few months ago, DeSantis seemed the likely choice, but some Republicans who object to Trump also object to DeSantis and he has not performed well in national campaigning. The Republican race for the presidential nomination is not over yet — but almost. If Republicans rally around one competitor to rival Trump, and if other risks damage the support for Trump and increase concerns about his electability, then the race for the nomination might heat up. If that does not happen soon, Americans are very likely to face a Trump-Biden rematch.

## Briefs

## No support or opposition to any party

FROM PAGE 01  
Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) Chairman Imran Khan's arrest in the Al-Qadir Trust case on May 9 this year. Hundreds of PTI workers and senior leaders were put behind bars for their alleged involvement in violence and attacks on military installations. Regarding the alleged involvement of the United States in the PTI chief's ouster from power in April 2022 via a no-confidence vote, PM Kakar said that the PTI has backtracked on its 'foreign conspiracy' narrative. "How would we or anyone in Pakistan believe in such a conspiracy [...] when people who brought it to the public domain backtracked on that and said that it was probably for public consumption," he maintained. PM Kakar further said that in some Asian states, political leaders sometimes do such acts for populist reasons.

## Imran Khan transferred to Adiala Jail

FROM PAGE 01  
He said that the court was told that the A and B classes had been abolished in the jail facility. The chief justice remarked that the PTI chairman deserved a better class as he was the former prime minister of the country. He said that Imran Khan was an educated person. Interestingly, in a surprising turn of events, before transferring from Attock Jail to Adiala Jail, PTI Chairman Imran Khan submitted an appeal to the court not to move him from Attock Jail to Adiala Jail and withdrawn his previous application to shift to Adiala Jail.

## SIFC to resolve issues...

FROM PAGE 01  
debate, the committee formulated workable options, by drawing consensus among stakeholders, to resolve key impediments to investment environment in the country. The plans were also finalized to resolve issues related to four key sectors (Agri, IT, Minerals and Energy) besides, adding new projects to the forum.

## Dollar continues downward...

FROM PAGE 01  
the rupee was majorly driven by the government's crackdown against the illegal currency trade. The analyst did not see any fundamental reason behind the flight of the local unit against the greenback. "I feel that it might not sustain for very long." Responding to a question, Ali said that he did not think that the dollar would fall to Rs250, adding that it might just come down to the level where the rupee was when the caretaker government took over.

## IB seeks withdrawal of its...

FROM PAGE 01  
Ahmed's lawyer has filed a petition seeking the adjournment of the Faizabad sit-in review case and against the judicial observations against Rashid. The petition said that Rashid was in custody and could not be contacted. "Sheikh Rashid's lawyer Amanullah Kanrani has been appointed as a provincial law minister, hence, he cannot appear in the Faizabad sit-in case," read the plea. This legal saga began on April 15, 2019, when the then-federal government, along with entities like the Defence Ministry, Intelligence Bureau, Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) government, AML chief, Mutahidda Quami Movement (MQM), and the Pakistan Electronic Media Regulatory Authority (Pemra), among others, filed review pleas contesting the apex court's judgement.

## Babar Azam aims to leave AC behind to win ICC World Cup

Intended to learn from the mistakes made in Asia Cup 2023 and to give the best to win the ICC World Cup 2023 in India: Babar Azam

## OUR CORRESPONDENTS

LAHORE: Pakistan's all-format captain Babar Azam on Tuesday, intended to learn from the mistakes made in Asia Cup 2023 and to give the best to win the ICC World Cup 2023 in India. Babar Azam, while speaking at a press conference ahead of Pakistan's departure for India, admitted that Pakistan did not play at their best in Asia Cup 2023, however, the team intends to improve. "We could not deliver the way we should have, but we have learnt from our mistakes, as individuals and as a team. We have discussed all our mistakes as a team with the support staff," he said. "Asia Cup was a different tournament, the World Cup is entirely different in dif-

ferent conditions, so we will plan accordingly and give our best to win the World Cup," he further added. The 28-year-old batter also backed Pakistan's squad for ICC World Cup 2023 amid criticism over the form of some players. "I believe in my team more than myself. I know my players, they are capable of winning matches singlehandedly," said Babar Azam. "These are the same players who helped Pakistan become the number-one team. I know they will give their best in the World Cup." He also showed confidence in vice-captain Shadab Khan and allrounder Mohammad Nawaz, who failed to live up to the mark in the Asia Cup. "Our spinners have had a few bad days but they are not ordinary players. They have reached here on the



Pakistan's warm-up matches schedule:  
September 29 – vs New Zealand in Hyderabad  
October 3 – vs Australia in Hyderabad

Pakistan's schedule for the ICC World Cup 2023:  
October 6 – vs Netherlands in Hyderabad  
October 10 – vs Sri Lanka in Hyderabad  
October 14 – vs India in Ahmedabad  
October 20 – vs Australia in Bengaluru  
October 23 – vs Afghanistan in Chennai  
October 27 – vs South Africa in Chennai  
October 31 – vs Bangladesh in Kolkata  
November 4 – vs New Zealand Bengaluru (Day match)  
November 11 – vs England in Kolkata

back of their performances and I have full faith in them going into the World Cup." Babar Azam has represented Pakistan in 106 ODI matches, however, he will be playing in India for the first, like most of his teammates. He shared his excitement of playing in front of the Indian crowd. "I am excited to play in Ahmedabad as it is the biggest stadium in the world and will be jam-packed," he said. "I will try my best to perform up to my potential. However, I am not worried about my individual accolades, I want to make sure whatever I do helps the result for the team." He also urged Pakistanis to support and pray for the team. "The morale of the team is high and we are very confident. We will try to come back with the

World Cup, we request you all to back us and pray for us." Pakistan's contingent will depart for India in the wee hours of Wednesday and will reach Hyderabad via Dubai on Wednesday night. Pakistan squad for ICC World Cup 2023 Babar Azam (c), Abdullah Shafique, Fakhar Zaman, Imam-ul-Haq, Iftikhar Ahmed, Mohammad Rizwan (wk), Shadab Khan, Mohammad Nawaz, Usama Mir, Haris Rauf, M Wasim Jnr, Hasan Ali, Shaheen Shah Afridi, Saud Shakeel, Salman Ali Agha. Travelling reserves: Mohammad Haris, Abrar Ahmed, Zaman Khan. The day matches will start at 10:00 am Pakistan Standard Time (PST) while all other matches will be day-night fixtures, starting at 01:30 pm (PST).

## Naila granted permits to conquer China's peaks



## DNA

ISLAMABAD: Pakistani mountaineer Naila Kiani, who is also a resident of Dubai, United Arab Emirates, has successfully obtained the permits required to

summit China's formidable 8,000-meter peaks, marking a major step in her 14-peak mission. Just days after successfully summiting her ninth from the world's towering 8,000m peaks, Naila now turns her sights towards the towering

heights of Shishapangma and Cho Oyu, both nestled in the breathtaking landscapes of China. "Securing permits for ascending these two Chinese mountains is an intricate and highly regulated process. Naila's success in

obtaining these permits means that she can now look forward to climbing her 10th and 11th summit from her 14 peak mission. She is expected to make the trip from Kathmandu, Nepal, just days after her successful summit of Manaslu," Pakistan Press Counselor in Dubai, said in a press release, on Tuesday. As Naila Kiani prepares to embark on her challenging ascent of Shishapangma and Cho Oyu, the residents of Dubai, the nation of Pakistan and mountaineering community worldwide eagerly anticipate what would mark a momentous achievement of her mission, it was added. Naila Kiani is an accomplished Pakistani mountaineer and adventurer. Her passion for pushing the limits of human endurance led her to embark on a mission to ascend all fourteen of the world's highest peaks, earning her recognition in the global mountaineering community.

## Morocco, Algeria set to host AFCON

JOHANNESBURG: Morocco and Algeria are favoured to be named hosts of the 2025 and 2027 Africa Cup of Nations tournaments respectively, with an announcement to be made in Cairo on Wednesday. Both are seeking to stage the 2025 edition of the premier African sport event, along with Zambia and a joint Nigeria-Benin bid. Algeria also entered the 2027 contest, as did Botswana, Egypt, Senegal and a combined Kenya-Tanzania-Uganda challenge. After a number of deadlines passed without the hosts being revealed, a senior African Football Confederation (CAF) official told AFP "the two hosts will definitely be named on September 27". Executive committee members will vote after studying independent appraisals of each 2025 and 2027 candidate, but politics and a promise of regional rotation have complicated matters. North African neighbours Algeria and Morocco have an adversarial political relationship, which entered the football arena this year. A ban on Moroccan aircraft flying over Algeria led to the withdrawal of the team representing the kingdom from the 2022/2023 African Nations Championship (CHAN) for home-based players. Morocco had won the previous two editions and when their request to fly directly to Algeria was denied, they boycotted the tournament, robbing it of one of the title favourites. Both countries boast superb stadia and infrastructure and football-loving populations, and are capable of delivering world-class Cup of Nations tournaments. But both would like to be the 2025 hosts with leading Moroccan and CAF official Fouzi Lekjaa causing a mid-year stir when he told local politicians that the kingdom would be chosen. Domestic media quoted him saying "the Fes stadium will have the honour of hosting CAN (Cup of Nations) 2025 matches when Morocco wins the organisation". - Agencies

## PML-N lashes out at Bugti statement...

FROM PAGE 01  
abroad for medical treatment in November 2019 after a court suspended his sentence in a corruption case. The former premier, who has been living in London since then, has recently announced his return to the country on October 21 this year. Speaking to a local TV channel, the caretaker interior minister said if Nawaz was not granted bail then the authorities would arrest the former PM from the airport. Bugti cited Nawaz's 2018 return to the country when he along with his daughter Maryam Nawaz was arrested at Lahore airport as the duo returned from London. "I don't think that he does not want to be arrested as in the past, he, along with his daughter, returned to the country despite knowing that they would be arrested..." the interior minister remarked. Reacting to the Bugti's remarks, Sanaulah said the minister crossed his limits by making such a statement.

## Israeli minister's first public...

FROM PAGE 01  
change the geopolitics of the Middle East. Last week, Israeli Foreign Minister Eli Cohen said "six or seven" Muslim countries could "make peace" with Israel if it signed a peace agreement with Saudi Arabia. He also stated that "peace with Saudi Arabia means peace with the greater Muslim world". "There are at least another six or seven countries that I have met with – significant Muslim countries with which we do not have relations – that are interested [in peace]," the minister added. Normalisation with Israel, however, would break Riyadh's decades-long stance against recognising Israel before it resolves the conflict with the Palestinians.

## Federal Cabinet okays...

FROM PAGE 01  
the influx of approximately 400,000 Afghans into Pakistan after the United States completed its withdrawal from Afghanistan in 2021. At least 0.7 million Afghans have not renewed their proof of residence in Pakistan, aggravating the issue of illegal residency. The eviction plan will be executed in three phases. In the first phase, individuals residing in Pakistan without proper documentation and those who have failed to renew their visas will be deported. Subsequently, the second phase will focus on addressing the status of Afghan citizens, while the third phase will target proof of residence card holders. The Ministry of Interior collaborated with all relevant stakeholders, including the Afghan government has formulated this comprehensive plan.

## AFN becomes best performing...

FROM PAGE 01  
shops called sarrafs. Sarrafs are everywhere, in markets and shops in cities and villages. The biggest sarraf market is in Kabul, called Sarai Shahzada. It is like the financial centre of Afghanistan, where thousands of dollars are traded every day. The central bank says there is no limit to trading. Because of the financial sanctions, most money sent to Afghanistan from other countries is now sent through an old money transfer system called Hawala which is a big part of the sarrafs' business. The United Nations (UN) says Afghanistan needs about \$3.2 billion in aid this year. It has already sent about \$1.1 billion. Last year, the UN sent around \$4 billion in aid because half of Afghanistan's 41 million people were facing starvation. The Taliban has imposed tight currency controls since they retook Kabul in August 2021. These controls ban locals from using the US dollar and Pakistani rupee, and ban online trading.

## Pakistan beats India, takes fifth spot in volleyball

BEIJING: Pakistan downed India by 3-0 in men's volleyball match on Tuesday to clinch fifth place in the competition at the ongoing 19th Asian Games at Hangzhou, China. The national team defeated the traditional rivals in straight sets, maintaining a scoreline of victory as 25-21, 25-20 and 25-23. Pakistan dominated proceedings throughout the match and registered a comprehensive victory over India. This is the first time in 33 years that the side secured a spot in the top five since 1990. Earlier, in a thrilling quarter-final match, Qatar emerged victorious against Pakistan. The clash saw the 51st-ranked Pakistan team going up against the 17th-ranked Qatar side. The match began with Pakistan displaying a strong performance right from the first set. At one point, Pakistan held a five-point lead, but Qatar mounted a remarkable comeback, overcoming deficits of 20-15 and 24-22 to snatch the first set from Pakistan. However, Qatar was unable to maintain their momentum. In the third set, Pakistan dominated Qatar right from the start. Unfortunately for Pakistan, in the fourth set, Qatar didn't leave any room for a comeback and clinched the victory. The final score of Qatar's triumph over Pakistan stood at 24-26, 19-25, 25-23, and 18-25. Remember, the Men in Green beat South Korea 3-0 to reach the quarter-final with the scores of 25-19, 25-22 and 25-21. Pakistan also cemented their place in the top six teams with their win over South Korea. This was when the side reached the top six for the first time since the 1994 Asian Games. Earlier, Pakistan topped group B by registering remarkable wins over considerably weak Chinese Taipei and Mongolia sides. The Green Shirts beat Chinese Taipei in straight sets, 25-18, 25-20, 25-19. - Agencies

## Rybakina withdraws from Pan Pacific Open

TOKYO: Former Wimbledon champion Elena Rybakina pulled out of the Pan Pacific Open in Tokyo, days after slamming the WTA for the introduction of performance byes at the tournament. Byes are usually awarded to top-seeded players, but performance byes allow for players who have played well in the previous week to move directly into the second round of the following tournament. Byes for the Pan Pacific Open were given to Maria Sakkari, who won the Guadalajara Open title on Saturday, and Caroline Garcia, who reached the semi-finals. Both players are ranked lower than Rybakina, who was drawn against Linda Noskova in the first round. "As a player I want to give my all on the court and at the moment my body is not ready to do that," Rybakina said on Instagram. - Agencies

## China win Asian Games' first-ever eSports gold

The young spectators waved flags and banners in support of the host country, as well as photos of their favourite players. "Chinese eSports, step onstage and create legends!"

HANGZHOU: Hosts China on Tuesday won the Asian Games' first-ever gold in eSports in a landmark for gaming, beating Malaysia 2-0 in the smartphone game Arena of Valor. eSports is making its debut as a medal event at the Games in Hangzhou, seen as a major step towards the Olympics one day. Medals are up for grabs in seven gaming titles, including Arena of Valor, League of Legends and EA Sports FC Online. In the fantasy-themed Arena of Valor, players take on virtual avatars, each with different traits and strengths, and work together with teammates to destroy enemy towers before reaching the enemy team's crystal. Emotions were high at the packed 4,500-capacity

Hangzhou Esports Center where the crowd was dominated by China fans. The young spectators waved flags and banners in support of the host country, as well as photos of their favourite players. "Chinese eSports, step onstage and create legends!" one banner read. Team China stepped out on to the stage to roars from the crowd, while Malaysia were greeted with polite applause. China immediately outpaced Malaysia in destroying enemy towers in the first round of the best-of-three match, putting the Southeast Asian team on the defensive. Players sat almost perfectly still in rows of gaming chairs onstage, only moving their hands rapidly to control

their on-screen "heroes". Underlining just how popular it is, eSports is the only competition at the Games where tickets were allocated through an initial online lottery, before being opened up last week for direct purchase. Thailand nabbed the sport's first-ever Asian Games medal earlier in the day, beating Vietnam to win Arena of Valor bronze. "I'm playing for my country and I'm so excited to win a medal for my country," Thai player Kawee Wachiraphas said. Chinese eSport fan and spectator Gong Lin told AFP before the match she had faith the home team would win, especially because of their captain Luo Siyuan. "I have a lot of confidence in him particularly," she said. - Agencies

## Pak dominates Bangladesh in Asian Games hockey

The Pakistan hockey team on Tuesday beat Bangladesh to record their second victory in the ongoing Asian Games 2023

## SPORTS DESK

LAHORE: The Pakistan hockey team on Tuesday beat Bangladesh to record their second victory in the ongoing Asian Games 2023 being held in Hangzhou, China. Taking on Bangladesh in their second pool match, the Green Shirts were put on the back foot as Bangladesh capitalising on a penalty corner, secured an early lead at the 19-minute mark. Pakistan levelled the score 1-1 courtesy of Afraz who laid the foundation of Pakistan's 5-2 victory over Bangladesh. Men in Green capitalised on their comeback with back-to-back goals after Shahzeb Khan and Mohammad Imad

Schedule of Pakistan hockey team's remaining matches  
September 28 – vs Uzbekistan  
September 30 – vs India  
October 2 – vs Japan

found the back of the net in the 40th and 43rd minute respectively. Bangladesh fought fiercely to close the lead and scored their second goal at the 46-minute mark. However, Pakistan's lead was solidified courtesy of Sufyan Khan who thundered a rapid flick from a penalty corner pushing the score to 4-2. The final blow was dealt by Pakistan's drag flick specialist Arbaz Ahmed who executed a flawless drag flick scoring the fifth goal for the Men in Green. Green Shirts will now face Uzbekistan on September 28. Earlier, in their opening

match, Pakistan outclassed Singapore by securing an 11-0 victory on Sunday. Pakistan's Ahammad, Arshad Liaquat, and Arbaz Ahmad scored two goals each. Mohammad Shahzaib Khan, Abdul Waheed Rana, Zikriya Hayat, Afraz, and Abdul Rehman all scored one goal. The ongoing Asian Games 2023 had 12 hockey teams divided into two groups of six. Pakistan, along with India, Japan, Bangladesh, Singapore and Uzbekistan are placed in Pool A. Meanwhile, Pool B comprises Korea, Malaysia, China, Oman, Thailand, and Indonesia.



## Briefs

## Ukraine claims Russian fleet commander killed

ANKARA : Ukraine claimed that its forces killed 34 Russian officers including the commander of Russia's Black Sea Fleet in a strike on the naval headquarters in the Crimean city of Sevastopol, Ukrainian media reported Monday.

The commander of the fleet, Viktor Sokolov, was not named directly in the statement. The Special Operations Forces of the Armed Forces of Ukraine provided an update on enemy losses following a special operation carried out last week to destroy the Minsk large landing ship and the headquarters of the Russian Black Sea Fleet, Ukraine's state news agency Ukrinform reported. "Another 105 occupiers were wounded. The headquarters building cannot be restored," the report said, citing a post on Telegram by the Special Operations Forces. "Given that the Minsk large landing ship was supposed to go on combat duty the next day, the personnel were present at the ship. Irreversible losses amounted to 62 occupiers," said the forces. Ukraine on Friday launched a missile attack on the headquarters of Russia's Black Sea Fleet in Sevastopol, said Russian authorities. "The opponent launched a missile attack on the (Black Sea) fleet headquarters. A fragment fell near the Lunacharsky Theater," Sevastopol Governor Mikhail Razvozhnev said on Telegram.—DNA

## Australian women, children seek repatriation from Syria

DAMASCUS : More than 30 Australian women and children living in "appalling conditions" in a Syrian detention camp have launched court action to compel Canberra to bring them home. Their case opened at the High Court in Melbourne on Tuesday, nearly a year after Australia repatriated the last group of four women and 13 children — the wives, sons and daughters of the Daesh terrorist group fighters — from Syria. "The situation of the remaining persons detained is stark and dire," said Peter Morrissey, counsel for the charity Save the Children, which is acting on their behalf. "Save the Children Australia represents women and children charged with no crime, detained in piteous and appalling conditions," he told the court.

"Their health, safety and dignity are seriously compromised by any standard. Their detention in the camps has endured for several years." Save the Children is asking the court for a writ of habeas corpus (or unlawful detention), requiring the government to bring the 11 women and 20 children from Al Roj camp in Syria before the court in Australia.—APP

## Hundreds dead from dengue fever in Sudan

PORT SUDAN: Outbreaks of dengue fever and acute watery diarrhea have "killed hundreds" in war-torn Sudan, medics reported Monday, warning of "catastrophic spreads" that could overwhelm the country's decimated health system. In a statement, the Sudanese doctors' union warned that the health situation in the southeastern state of Gedaref, on the border with Ethiopia, "is deteriorating at a horrific rate," with thousands infected with dengue fever. Though Gedaref has been spared the direct effects of the brutal war between the regular army and the paramilitary Rapid Support Forces, it has nonetheless been impacted by mass displacement and other humanitarian crises. Over five months into the war, 80 percent of the country's hospitals are out of service, according to the UN. Even before the war, Sudan's fragile healthcare system struggled to contain the annual disease outbreaks that accompany the country's rainy season starting in June, including malaria — endemic in Sudan — and dengue fever.—Agencies

## 1st Saudi ambassador presents credentials to Palestinian president

DNA

RAMALLAH: The first Saudi ambassador to Palestine, Naif bin Bandar al-Sudairi, presented his credentials to President Mahmoud Abbas today.

"We welcome His Excellency the Ambassador of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia to the State of Palestine, who has presented credentials to His Excellency President Mahmoud Abbas," Hussein al-Sheikh, secretary of the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO)'s Executive Committee, said on X social media platform.

On Aug. 13, the official Saudi Press Agency reported that al-Sudairi, who is also Saudi ambassador to Jordan, "formally presented a copy of his credentials as Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary, Non-Resident Ambassador to the State of Palestine and Consul General in Jerusalem." Al-Sudairi is the first Saudi ambassador to Palestine. The Kingdom had a Consulate General in Jerusalem, but it was closed with Israel's occupation of the city in 1967, when the West Bank, including East Jerusalem, was under Jordanian administration at the time.



RAMALLAH: Foreign Minister Malki receives a copy of the credentials of the nonresident Ambassador of Saudi Arabia and the Consul General in Jerusalem, to the State of Palestine

## Russia bids to rejoin UN's Human Rights council

FOREIGN DESK

MOSCOW : Russia is seeking to rejoin the United Nations human rights council in an election that will be seen as a key test of its international standing. It was expelled from the UN's pre-eminent human rights body last April after its forces invaded Ukraine. But now Russian diplomats are seeking to get their country re-elected to the council for a fresh three-year term.

The vote will take place next month. Russia promises to find "adequate solutions for human rights issues" and seeks to stop the council becoming an "instrument which serves political wills of one group of countries", understood to be a reference to

the West. Diplomats said Russia was hoping to regain some international credibility after being accused of human rights abuses in Ukraine and within its own borders. The latest evidence of those abuses was presented to the human rights council on Monday in a report from its Commission of Inquiry on Ukraine. Erik Mose, chair of the commission, said there was continuing evidence of war crimes including torture, rape and attacks on civilians. A separate report two weeks ago by the UN's special rapporteur for Russia, Mariana Katzarova said the human rights situation in Russia had also "significantly deteriorated", with critics of the invasion subjected to arbitrary arrest, torture and ill treatment. The UN

human rights council is based in Geneva and has 47 members, each elected for a three-year term. In the next elections, due on 10 October, Russia will compete with Albania and Bulgaria for the two seats on the council reserved for central and eastern European countries. The Alley of the Flags at the United Nations European headquarters is seen during the Human Rights Council in Geneva, Switzerland, September 11, 2023. The Alley of the Flags at the United Nations HQ in Geneva, where the Human Rights Council meets. The vote will involve all 193 members of the UN general assembly in New York. Diplomats there said Russia was campaigning aggressively, offering

small countries grain and arms in return for their votes. As such, they said it was entirely possible Russia could get back onto the council. The Russian position paper — circulated at the UN — says it wants to "promote principles of cooperation and strengthening of constructive mutually respectful dialogue in the council in order to find adequate solutions for human rights issues". Its core pitch is that Russia would use its membership "to prevent the increasing trend of turning the HRC into an instrument which serves the political will of one group of countries". It said it does not want that group "punishing non-loyal governments for their independent and external policy".

## Black people face racial bigotry in France

PARIS : Although nine out of 10 Black people in France report that they are exposed to discrimination, the government ignores the problems caused by racism in the country, French politician and activist Patrick Lozes has said. In an interview with Anadolu news agency on Monday, Lozes, the founder and president of the Representative Council of Black Associations (CRAN), evaluated the racism and discrimination that Black people in France face daily. Drawing attention to a survey conducted by the independent research company Ipsos on Black people in France, Lozes said: "What the participants of the survey say is that there is discrimination in many areas of life. An overwhelming majority, 91 percent of Black people in France, say they are exposed to discrimination in daily life. This means that discrimination is a huge concern for almost every Black French." Noting that Black people face discrimination when looking for a home and a job, Lozes explained: "When you call and say you want a house, the person you are talking to tells you on the phone that the house is available, but when he realizes that you are Black, he may say that the house is not available. 'You will not be promoted. When you apply for a job, you send your resume and a few minutes later you are informed that the position is now filled. However, the position is still open to someone else who applied for the same position a few minutes after you.'—DNA

## Book on Pakistan's Nuclear Deterrence Launched in Brussels

DNA

ISLAMABAD : The Embassy of Pakistan in Brussels hosted the launch of the book titled "The Security Imperative — Pakistan's Nuclear Deterrence and Diplomacy" authored by Ambassador Zamir Akram at the Brussels Press Club on Monday. The event was attended by Brussels based Ambassadors, members of the diplomatic corps, and representatives from the think tank community and academia, a press release received here said. In his remarks, Ambassador Zamir Akram highlighted that Pakistan's determined pursuit of nuclear deterrence was not motivated by considerations of prestige and great power ambitions but driven by its acute, existential and evolving security challenges. He

emphasized that the book provides a practitioner's insight into the pivotal role played by Pakistan's deft diplomacy in enabling the acquisition of nuclear deterrent capability. In her concluding remarks, Ambassador of Pakistan to European

Union, Belgium and Luxembourg, Anna Baloch acknowledged the role that Ambassador Zamir Akram had played in projecting Pakistan's nuclear diplomacy. She underscored the need for fostering collaborations in an intercon-

ected world to address global challenges. Ambassador Zamir Akram's presentation of the book was followed by an interactive and candid discussions with the audience on various facets of nuclear deterrence, the future of the UN

disarmament machinery and pathways for addressing regional and global security challenges. With a long and illustrious career in the Foreign Service of Pakistan, Ambassador Zamir Akram is a revered authority in the domain of Arms Control and Disarmament diplomacy. His last assignment was Pakistan's Permanent Representative to the UN and international organizations in Geneva including the Conference on Disarmament. He is presently serving as advisor to the Strategic Plans Division.



## China-Pak crop pest management seminar held in Chengdu

BEIJING: A China-Pak crop pest management seminar was held in Chengdu, China Economic Net (CEN) reported on Tuesday.

It was aimed at strengthening the mutual learning and cooperation between China and Pakistan in the fields of crop pest management technology, prevention and control measures and management standards. The seminar on Methods and Standards of Crop Pest Management in China and Pakistan was organized by International Standardization Talent Training Base (Chengdu).

Co-hosted by University of Agriculture Faisalabad (UAF) and University of the Punjab online, it was attended by technicians of agricultural enterprises engaged in crop pest control and experts of related scientific research institutes from both countries. Honored guest Dr. Abid Ali, Associate Professor, Department of Entomology at University of Agriculture Faisalabad, gave a keynote speech titled Standard System and Current Situation of Pest Control of Major Crops in Pakistan. "We are facing growing severe pressure from pests, which is a serious threat to survival and security for Pakistan, an agricultural country. Climate change and high temperatures have intensified pests, in the meantime, extensive cropping signifies a lack of systematic and

scientific control. Moreover, blind abuse of pesticides has led to more and more pests becoming resistant further. Such a vicious cycle keeps the cost of plant protection high." After analyzing the complex situation of crop pest management in Pakistan, Dr. Ali took several major pests such as Fall Armyworm (FAW) as examples to introduce Pakistan's current management system (chemical control), and pointed out that Pakistan lacks adequate pest monitoring and forecasting systems, which means that pesticides still dominate prevention and control measures. Statistics shows that Pakistan's annual pesticide use has soared from 50,000 tons/year in 2001 to 200,000 tons/year in 2020 in the past 20 years. Therefore, studying the population distribution of

natural enemies of pests in different phenological stages and crops will help Pakistan establish a biological management system, by which reduce the use of pesticides. "China has leading technology in the field of biological control. Through learning related experience, it will be of great benefit to the promotion of biological control in Pakistan." Another attendant, Liu Jie, Deputy Director, National Agro-Tech Extension and Service Center, detailed Monitoring and Warning Technology of Agricultural Pests and Diseases Based on IoT and Big Data, focusing on cutting-edge Agro tech such as intelligent testing equipment, which can rely on automatic image recognition to detect and report all insects that enter the trap range, and identify the type,

quantity, and gathering period of pests in certain area. "In the context of global economic integration, high-speed circulation of global agricultural products through trade networks has brought a greater variety of pests to a certain extent. In addition to climate change, the threat of invasive alien species driven by socioeconomic factors has greatly intensified," Liu stressed. "Currently, China has established a remote sensing dynamic prediction model that combines multi-scale monitoring results of pests and diseases with epidemic migration patterns of pests and diseases, realizing remote dynamic prediction of remote sensing and migration paths of major pests and diseases areas. We take delight in sharing experiences in this regard between the two countries." Besides, China's standard system for the management of major food crop diseases and pests, along with China's prevention and control policies and measures for major agricultural pests and diseases were also amplified by experts. It was noted that China and Pakistan will kick start a series of tests, demonstrations and joint research on integrated disease control technologies for crop pests and diseases of common concern, as well as technical personnel training and personnel exchange and training.



## Study reveals 1,300 hunger deaths in Tigray

TIGRAY : Researchers say they have verified at least 1,329 deaths from hunger in Ethiopia's northern Tigray region since a ceasefire ended a two-year conflict there in November. A study by local health authorities and Mekele University in the regional capital found that hunger is now the main cause of death in Tigray, accounting for more than 68 percent of deaths investigated by the researchers. The study is based on a household census conducted by health workers from August 15-29 in nine subdistricts of Tigray and 53 camps for internally displaced people. Tigray in total has 88 subdistricts and 643 displacement camps, so the number of hunger deaths across the region is almost certainly far higher. One factor is the suspension of food aid by the United States and the United Nations after the discovery in March of a huge scheme to steal humanitarian grain in Tigray. The pause was extended to the rest of Ethiopia in June after the theft was found to be nationwide. Ethiopia's government wants the suspension ended. The US government and the UN want the government to give up its control of the food aid delivery system.

The number of deaths from all causes recorded by the researchers in the Tigray areas studied rose sharply after the aid suspension, almost doubling from 159 in March to 305 in July.—APP

## UAE forecasts 3% economic growth in 2023

RIYADH: The UAE is expected to achieve 3 percent economic growth in 2023 driven primarily by the non-oil sector, as outlined in a report by Standard and Poor's. The analysis from the ratings agency forecasts a further expansion rate of 4 percent next year. S&P is bullish regarding the prospects of the UAE's tourism industry, attributing its growth to the successful hosting of major events and activities. Trevor Cullinan, a sovereign ratings analyst at the agency, pointed to the impressive expansion of the UAE's non-oil sector, citing significant strides in services and industrial domains, reported the Emirates News Agency, also known as WAM. Identifying key sectors that are steering the UAE's economic growth, Cullinan mentioned oil and gas, wholesale trade, and industry, as well as real estate, construction, and financial services. He expects the non-oil sector to sustain its momentum, with factors like an influx of expatriates and tourists, positive sentiments among investors and consumers, and private sector development playing pivotal roles. These projections align with the "We Are the UAE 2031" vision, a national strategy aimed at boosting trade and increasing the tourism sector's contribution to the gross domestic product through collaborative efforts between government entities and the private sector, the WAM report stated.—DNA

## Deutsche bank subsidiary fined \$25m for violations

ISTANBUL : A Deutsche Bank subsidiary has agreed to pay a total of \$25 million in penalties for anti-money laundering violations and misstatements about investments, the US Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC) announced Monday. Charges against DWS Investment Management Americas Inc. include the failure to develop a mutual fund anti-money laundering (AML) program, and misstatements regarding its environmental, social and governance investment process, the SEC said in a statement. "The SEC's order finds that DWS advised mutual funds with billions of dollars in assets yet failed to ensure that the funds had an AML program tailored to their specific risks, as required by law," said Gurbir S. Grewal, director of the SEC's Division of Enforcement.—Agencies

## Briefs

**LHC gives police 'last chance' to recover Sh. Rashid**

DNA

RAWALPINDI: The Lahore High Court (LHC) on Tuesday expressed its displeasure over the detention of former interior minister Sheikh Rashid and gave authorities a "last chance" to recover the PTI ally by October 2. "In failing to do so, strict action will be taken against the force."

Justice Sadaqat Ali Khan, from the Rawalpindi bench of LHC, heard the case of the Awami Muslim League (AML) chief and reprimanded Regional Police Officer (RPO) Syed Khurram Ali for failing to recover the veteran politician. The judge also inquired about the progress made in the case. Rashid was at his home in a private housing society on the outskirts of Islamabad on Sept 17 when purported Rawalpindi Police personnel and some officials in plain clothes, raided the residence and detained him and three others. However, in a statement issued later that night, a spokesperson of the Rawalpindi Police denied the arrest and claimed Rashid was not in their custody. He has been missing since. Rashid's counsel, during the hearing, told the court that Rawalpindi police had been contacting them to issue a statement on Rashid's behalf, claiming that he went away on his own and was not arrested by the authorities. "They say that Sheikh Rashid will be released after the statement," he said.

**CPWB demands long-term national policy**

ISLAMABAD: Chairperson of the Child Protection and Welfare Bureau, Punjab, Sarah Ahmad Tuesday, has demanded the government to establish a long-term national policy aimed at providing a systematic and sustainable framework for the rehabilitation and empowerment of the street families in the country. Talking to a private news channel, she said that the purpose of the policy is to provide clear guidelines for the rescue, reintegration, and re-socialization of street children, adding that over 15 lakh children are living on the streets of Pakistan presently. CPWB has chalked out a rehabilitation plan for all of the categories of street children, she added. She said children are our assets and the most vulnerable segment of our society, adding that the protection of children is a responsibility of the state. The work done by the Child Protection and Welfare Bureau in this regard is highly sensitive and challenging, mentioned. "We are striving hard to eradicate child neglect, child abuse, and domestic violence against children", she further mentioned. - APP

**Good news for Hajj pilgrims**

DNA

ISLAMABAD: The caretaker government has prepared the Hajj policy 2024 which have some good news for Pakistan Hajj pilgrims. The Caretaker Minister for Religious Affairs Aneeq Ahmed said in a statement that the federal cabinet will approve the Hajj policy within 10 days as the delay in approval of the Hajj policy resulted in several problems. He said that the policy also includes 40 days and short-duration Hajj. Pakistan Hajj pilgrims will not get lost now as the ministry will provide them with two suitcases with specific colour and designs, he added. The Minister further said that the documents of Hajj pilgrim including passport, residence and other details will be available in the QR code on the suitcase. Additionally, the pilgrims will be able to talk on call to Pakistan with unlimited call time.

# Humble, polite handling may prove beneficial with Afghans

Compare to 2022, volunteer repatriation of Afghans to their motherland from Pakistan is encouraging in current calendar year. Last year around 6035 individuals returned to Afghanistan whereas till end of August 2023, more than 10600 people returned to Afghanistan

SHAMIM SHAHID

PESHAWAR: From last several weeks, crackdown against Afghan nationals is in progress throughout the country, especially in Karachi where biggest population of Pukhtoons exists. As a result of crackdown, hundreds of Afghans including women and children are being arrested, detained and later on forcibly deported to Afghanistan. However, in Karachi like city a large number of Pushtoons have also been arrested but later on made free on showing their original National Identity Cards, issued by NADRA and other related documents issued by lawful authorities of Pakistan. Whatever may be results of this crackdown against the Afghans it has generated anger and unrest not only amongst the Afghans scattered throughout the country but also at different international forums. Besides, illegally residing Afghans, the law enforcing agencies are also picking up and detaining those Afghan nationals who are in possession of POR ( Proof Of Registration) and Afghan Citizens Cards (ACC), issued by NADRA with collaboration of UNHCR. On such grounds, the Afghan Refugees Commissionerate had addressed a letter to Inspector General Police Khyber Pakhtunkhwa to stop arrest of those people who are in possession of POR and ACC. But the situation was further aggravated when caretaker Prime Minister Anwar Ullah Kakar time and again repeated the words insisting on repatriation of Afghans to their motherland and the Federal Interior ministry directed provinces to come up with data

of Afghans either are in possession of cards and documents or illegally residing. Besides others, the Taliban leaders and commanders who are in occupation of important offices are also showing concern and resentment over crackdown against countrymen in Pakistan. According to UNHCR data at the moment, around 2.780 million Afghans are residing in Pakistan. Amongst them 1.3 million are in possession of POR cards, 0.88 million are in possession of ACC and the remaining 600,000 are stated illegal or in lack of proper registration and other documents validating their stay. All these around 600,000 people entered Pakistan after fall of Kabul to Taliban on August 15th 2021 last. However certain officials believe that strength of Afghan nationals in Pakistan is over three million.

Compare to 2022, volunteer repatriation of Afghans to their motherland from Pakistan is encouraging in current calendar year. Last year around 6035 individuals returned to Afghanistan whereas till end of August 2023, more than 10600 people returned to Afghanistan. Couple of days back, Pakistan allowed return of those Afghans who are lacking POR and ACC cards through Afghanistan National Identity Cards called Tazkira. Getting opportunities over 60,000 people have crossed over Torkhama to Afghanistan during a period of three days. No one can deny the fact that increasing economic crises of Pakistan also affecting the Afghan nationals and now almost of jobless, poor are making efforts to go back. However, they considering host government's policies a major hurdle before them. Earlier in end of 80's, 90's

and even after 9/11 till 2015, Pakistan had permitted all Afghans to take away all belongings along with. But now these people are compelled to go empty hands. Couple of days back, the Afghan Jirga in its meeting at Karachi while showing resentment over arrests and detention, requested Pakistan to review its crackdown focused policies as they want repatriation to the motherland with honour and dignity. Former long term diplomat in Pakistan Abdul Jabbar Naeemi, has also asked Pakistani authorities to review its decisions of arrests, detention and finally forced deportation to Afghanistan. Similarly, almost nationalist parties like Awami National Party, Pakhtunkhwa Milli Awami Party, Quami Watan Party and others are also unhappy with policies of sticks and guns. Even while addressing rallies and meetings at Karachi, ANP Khyber Pakhtunkhwa President Aimal Wali Khan threatened staging protests against Sindh government if it continues arrests of those Afghans who are in possession of cards and documents. Due to external aggression and internal hostilities, the Afghans are depending in Pakistan since mid of 70's. During this period millions of Afghans remained as refugees and dwellers of tent villages and mud houses throughout the country. Unfortunately, almost state organs of Pakistan have followed policies if US led allies which is considered major stakeholder in the decades old Afghan conflict. After Mujahideen, Pakistan had also used the Taliban, particularly its Haqqani faction a "stick yard" for safeguarding its interests in Afghan conflict. But first the Geneva Accord of April

1988 had affected Pakistan when three out of seven Jihadist parties refused to continue its participation in armed resistance against former USSR installed regime of Dr. Najibullah. Pakistan suffered the second set back when its most loyal Engineer Gulbadin Hekmatyar kept away from Kabul after fall of Dr. Najibullah government. During this period, Pakistan made a visible return from 1996 till November 2001 with patronization of Taliban first regime. Similarly post 9/11 situation was considered a severe setback for Pakistan. However, despite jubilating fall of Kabul to Taliban in mid of August 2021 last, now Pakistan is considered a stranger in Afghanistan as US is indirectly monopolizing Afghanistan's internal and external policies through Qatar and Saudi Arab. Keeping in view the ground realities, Afghanistan is seem no more depending in Pakistan. Almost of its transit trade has been diverted to Iran and other Central Asian Republics. The new economic phenomenon of "One Belt One Road" has made highlighted the importance's of Afghanistan instead. On certain issues, almost high ranking Taliban (Emirate-Islami Afghanistan) leaders publically expressing reservations over Pakistan's Afghan policies. Chief of Jamiat Ulema Islam F Maulana Fazal Ur Rahman has recently suggested, "constitution of a joint commission" for settling issues between Pakistan and Afghanistan. In past suggestions of recommendations of such type of bodies proved nothing else a futile exercise due to lacking of confidence in each other's.

## IHC to hold open court hearing on cipher case

DNA

ISLAMABAD: The Islamabad High Court (IHC) Tuesday ruled that the next hearing of Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) Chairman Imran Khan's bail plea in the cipher case will take place in an open court. IHC Chief Justice Aamer Farooq issued a two-page written order in response to the prosecution's request for in-camera proceedings. The Federal Investigation Agency (FIA) had initially sought closed-door hearings, citing the presence of "privileged" and "sensitive" documents and information. The court has, consequently, instructed the FIA prosecutors to submit a separate petition for in-camera proceedings during the upcoming hearing. The order further said that the special prosecutor for the agency had contended that when the bail application before the trial court was argued, the public was isolated, however, the official conceded that the petitioner argued its case in open court. However, the order mentioned that the PTI counsel said he had no objection if unnecessary people were barred from the courtroom.

## 'May 9 orchestrators will have to face law'

DNA

ISLAMABAD: As the former ruling party has been trying to extract some concessions after the May 9 fall-out, sources say the reports circulating about a deal reached between the establishment and the PTI are totally false. They further said that the meetings held by Muhammad Ali Durrani - a member of the federal cabinet of Shaukat Aziz during Pervez Musharraf's rule - were designed by himself. In this connection, the sources noted that the PTI was trying to give an impression of normalizing the relations with the establishment through a deal with some circles spreading the rumours that those responsible for the May 9 mayhem would get leniency. The basic aim behind this campaign, they added, was an attempt to obtain political advantage before distribution of tickets for the upcoming general elections.

# Anti-Muslim hate speech in India concentrated around elections: Report

Maharashtra, Karnataka, Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan, and Gujarat witnessed the highest number of hate speech gatherings, with Maharashtra accounting for 29% of such incidents, the report found

NEWS DESK

WASHINGTON: Anti-Muslim hate speech incidents in India averaged more than one a day in the first half of 2023 and were seen most in states with upcoming elections, according to a report by Hindutva Watch, a Washington-based group monitoring attacks on minorities. There were 255 documented incidents of hate speech gatherings targeting Muslims in the first half of 2023, the report found. There was no comparative data for prior years. It used the United Nations' definition of hate speech as "any form of communication... that employs prejudiced or discriminatory language towards an individual or group based on attributes such as religion, ethnicity, nationality, race, colour, descent, gender, or other identity factors." About 70% of the incidents took place in states scheduled to hold elections in 2023 and 2024, according to the report. Maharashtra, Karnataka, Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan, and Gujarat witnessed the highest number of hate speech gatherings, with Maharashtra accounting for 29% of such incidents, the report found. The majority of the hate speech

events mentioned conspiracy theories and calls for violence and socio-economic boycotts against Muslims. About 80% of those events took place in areas governed by Prime Minister Narendra Modi's Hindu nationalist Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), which is widely expected to win the general elections in 2024. Hindutva Watch said it tracked online activity of Hindu nationalist groups, verified videos of hate speeches posted on social media and compiled data of isolated incidents reported by media. Modi's government denies the presence of minority abuse. The Indian embassy in Washington did not respond to a request for comment. Rights groups allege mistreatment of Muslims under Modi, who became prime minister in 2014. They point to a 2019 citizenship law described as "fundamentally discriminatory" by the United Nations human rights office for excluding Muslim migrants; an anti-conversion legislation challenging the constitutionally protected right to freedom of belief, and the 2019 revoking of Muslim-majority Kashmir's special status. There has also been demolition of Muslim properties in the name of removing illegal construction and a ban on wearing the hijab in classrooms in Karnataka when the BJP was in power in that state.

# Pakistan for promoting media cooperation with SCO states

NANJING: Caretaker Federal Minister for Information and Broadcasting Murtaza Solangi on Tuesday said Pakistan was fully committed to promote cooperation with Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) member states in the field of media. Addressing the participants of the SCO Television Festival here, Murtaza Solangi said that Cooperation among its members in the fields of radio, television and other audio-visual products was a manifestation of the success of the organization. "Collaboration in mainstream media and social media is very important to promote communication at the public level", Murtaza Solangi opined. In order to promote cultural affinity, the minister said the media organizations of SCO member countries needed to increase ties in various fields including joint publication projects and documentaries. The minister said that seven decades old Pakistan-China friendship was unique and both countries had the status of "iron brother" to each other. Pakistan and China had centuries-old cultural linkages, which have been further strengthened by the China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) framework, said Murtaza Solangi. He said that Pakistan and China were celebrating the 10th anniversary of the China Pakistan Economic Corridor this year. The CPEC has taken the shape of historic economic cooperation between the two neighbour countries. The minister said that China and Pakistan had declared 2023 as the year of tourism exchange between the two countries and its aim was to promote exchanges at the public level as well as create a vibrant tourism and cultural ecosystem for the mutual benefit of the people of the two countries. Murtaza Solangi maintained that the SCO was a useful and promising platform for member countries of the region to promote comprehensive and sustainable cooperation in social, economic, communication, media and cultural fields. The minister invited media organizations of the member countries of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization to partner with Pakistan in various projects including joint production. - Agencies

# China, Japan and S. Korea agree to hold summit

SEOUL: High-level officials from China, Japan and South Korea have carried out in-depth discussions on working for the steady resumption of trilateral cooperation and agreed to hold a foreign ministers' meeting in the coming months, as well as maintain communication on holding a leaders' meeting at the earliest opportunity convenient to all three countries. Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesperson Wang Wenbin briefed on Tuesday. According to the spokesperson, the meeting, held in Seoul on Tuesday, was attended by Nong Rong, China's assistant minister of foreign affairs, Takehiro Funakoshi, Japan's senior deputy foreign minister, and Chung Byung-won, South Korean deputy foreign minister. It was agreed that trilateral cooperation serves the common interests of the three parties

and it's necessary to work together to step up practical cooperation in such fields as culture and people-to-people exchanges, economy and trade, scientific and technological innovation, sustainable development and public health to make new progress in trilateral cooperation and make new contribution to regional peace, stability and prosperity, Wang said. As the chair of the trilateral cooperation mechanism, South Korea proposed a trilateral summit in late December. Japanese broadcaster TBS reported. Chinese analysts said that it is still too early to commit to an actual meeting of the leaders in the near future, and that South Korean President Yoon Suk-yeol and his government need to make practical efforts to mend ties with China that have bottomed out due to Seoul's extreme pro-US foreign poli-

cy. If conditions for a leaders' meeting are achieved, and it could take place within this year, before South Korea's legislative elections in April 2024 - a pivotal moment of reckoning for Yoon and a litmus test of the sitting president's performance - it would be good news for Yoon, who faces slumping approval ratings, Wang Junsheng, a research fellow of East Asian studies at the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences in Beijing, told the Global Times on Tuesday. Yoon took an extremely pro-US foreign policy path immediately after he took the reins of the presidency in 2022, which has harmed ties with its largest trading partner China, weighing on the country's domestic economy with mounting unemployment rates, especially among young professionals. - Agencies

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Ph: +92 51 228 7691 | +92 51 228 7692 | Fax: +92 51 228 7693