



Islamabad POST

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Wang calls to avoid collective punishment of Gaza people

Detailed News On Page-08

Shamshad for enhancing trade coop with Morocco

Detailed News On Page-07



Angel wins in Shanghai for maiden LPGA title

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Briefs

Pak-China, interaction to propel bilateral ties

DNA



ISLAMABAD: Caretaker Federal Minister for Information and Broadcasting Murtaza Solangi has said that interaction in China between the top leadership of Pakistan and China would further enhance the bilateral relationship to the new heights as the caretaker Prime Minister Anwaar-ul-Haq Kakar would leave for China tomorrow to participate in Belt and Road Forum being hosted by the Chinese President Xi Jinping in Beijing. Speaking at a seminar "CPEC and My Life" the other day, the minister said he would like to know that people from the gross-root level were invited to speak about the positive impact of the CPEC on their lives.

Iran warns of uncontrollable situation

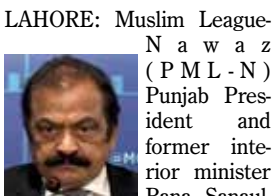
DNA



TEHRAN: Iran warned that "no one can guarantee" control of the situation if Israel invades Gaza, ahead of an expected ground offensive by Israeli forces. "If the attacks of the Zionist regime (Israel) against the defenceless citizens and people of Gaza continue, no one can guarantee the control of the situation and the non-expansion of the conflicts," Iran's foreign ministry quoted Foreign Minister Hossein Amir Abdollahian as saying during his meeting with Qatar's Emir Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad Al Thani, as Israeli troops massed on the border. "Those who are interested in preventing the scope of war and crisis from expanding, need to prevent the current barbaric attacks... against citizens and civilians in Gaza," he added. Amir Abdollahian also criticised the United States, which has given its unequivocal backing to Israel since the October 7 attacks.

New chapter will be added to history

BUREAU REPORT



LAHORE: Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) Punjab President and former interior minister Rana Sanaullah on Sunday boasted that on October 21 history would be created at Minare-e-Pakistan under the leadership of Nawaz Sharif. In a statement, he said norms and trends in Pakistan would change on October 21. The day would mark a new beginning with hope and trust and end an era of pessimism, he added. Sanaullah said the days of prosperity seen in 2018 "are bound to return. Masses and party workers enthusiasm is rising. Nawaz Sharif is returning to Pakistan to infuse hope."



ISLAMABAD: The Caretaker Chief Minister of the Punjab Mohsin Naqvi calls on the Caretaker Prime Minister Anwaar-ul-Haq Kakar.—DNA

Blinken in Israel after talks with MBS

Gaza braces for Israeli ground assault as US announces sending fighter jets

CENTRELINE REPORT

JEDDAH: US Secretary of State Antony Blinken, after a 'productive' discussion with Saudi Crown Prince Muhammad Bin Salman over the Israel-Hamas conflict, is set to extend his Middle East shuttle diplomacy by a day, returning to Israel on Monday. This move comes as Israel prepares for a potential ground offensive in the Gaza Strip, and the United States works to prevent the conflict from further escalation. Israel has vowed to retaliate against the Palestinian group Hamas for an attack on Israeli towns eight days ago, which resulted in the shooting of civilians and the taking of hostages,

Muslim world should stand united with Palestinians

NAZIR SIYAL

KARACHI: Jamate-Islami (JI) ameer Sirajul Haq said that the Muslim world should stand united with Palestinians. Addressing a public gathering, JI chief Sirajul Haq said that it is the Muslim Ummah's responsibility to stand for their Palestinian brothers and sisters as they are fighting against the Israeli forces. He said that Israel would face defeat just like Afghanistan defeated the Soviet Union, NATO and American forces.

marking one of the worst attacks on civilians in the country's history. Blinken, who arrived in Israel on Thursday and has since visited six Arab countries, is currently in Egypt and is expected to meet with President Abdel Fatah al-Sisi. The US has expressed growing concern about the conflict spreading across the region and has warned Iran against involvement. Blinken has sought cooperation from Arab allies and has engaged with China, a country with influence over Tehran, in an effort to contain the conflict. However, on Saturday, Iran issued a warning of "far-reaching consequences" if Israel's

Continued on Page 06

SIFC would unlock ease of doing business

Ambassador identified five areas ripe for investment in Pakistan - IT, energy, agriculture, mining and defence production

Washington: Pakistan's Ambassador to the United States Masood Khan says Pakistan's Special Investment Facilitation Council will act as a single window to facilitate investors, establish cooperation between all Government Ministries and Departments, and fast-track project development. Addressing a day-long "Future of Everything Summit" organized by Organization of Pakistani Entrepreneurs Chicago; he said the core objectives of the SIFC include revitalization of our economy, integrating it with international capital markets, and ensuring steadiness and continuity of policies by adopting best practices and providing salutary investment milieu. The Ambassador identified five areas ripe for investment in Pakistan

Continued on Page 06

Disrupted: 18 flights cancelled

ABBAS HASHMI

LAHORE: Eighteen domestic and international flights were either cancelled or delayed from Karachi, Lahore, Islamabad and Sialkot airports Sunday, causing great hardships to passengers who devised their travel plans for various destinations. In the case of Lahore's Allama Iqbal International Airport, bad weather was

Continued on Page 06

Pak hosting Afghans without any monetary benefit: UNHCR

The report says that 1.7 million Afghans are living in the country illegally without any proof and registration

KHAYAM ABBASI

ISLAMABAD: The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) has said that Pakistan has been hosting Afghan refugees for the last over 40 years without receiving any funds in return. On the other hand, the European Union Agency of Asylum and the International Federation of Journalists (IFJ) have termed the presence of millions of illegal immigrants on Pakistani soil a threat to the country. The report says that 1.7 million Afghans are living in the country illegally without any proof and registration. "Pakistan is not the only country which has decided to evict illegal Afghan nationals," it says, adding, "Iran, too, in 2021 had ordered over one million Afghans to leave the country." Since the Taliban's takeover of Afghanistan in August 2021, over 1,600,000 Afghans have sought refuge in the neighbouring nations of Pakistan, Iran, and Tajikistan, with over 70 per cent being women and children.

Afghanistan hit by third earthquake

NEWS DESK

KABUL: A new earthquake has hit western Afghanistan - several days after two large tremors in the region killed more than 1,000 people. The US Geological Survey (USGS) says the magnitude 6.3 quake struck near the city of Herat. It was at a depth of 6.3km (four miles). At least one person has died, according to local health authorities. Another 100 are being treated for injuries in the regional

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Continued on Page 06

Economic cost of Iran-Israel conflict

In a worst-case scenario, the world would be plunged into a recession

NEWS DESK

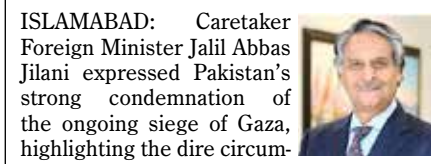
LONDON: The global economy would fall into recession with oil prices skyrocketing if Iran were to get involved in the Israel-Palestine conflict, Bloomberg reported this week. According to Bloomberg Economics, analysts are viewing the impact on global growth and inflation under three potential scenarios: with hostilities largely confined to Israel and the Palestinian territories; with the conflict spreading to Lebanon and Syria; and with a direct confrontation between Israel and Iran. While all the three scenarios are likely to cause a surge in oil prices, higher inflation and slower global economic growth, a full-blown war between Iran and Israel would cause the most damage, analysts say. "The wider the conflict spreads, the more its impact becomes global rather than regional... Conflict in the Middle East can send tremors through the world be

Continued on Page 06

PM visiting China Pakistan condemns Gaza siege

Israeli aggression; demands right of self-determination to Palestinians: FM Jilani

ANSAR M BHATTI/DNA



ISLAMABAD: Caretaker Foreign Minister Jilani expressed Pakistan's strong condemnation of the ongoing siege of Gaza, highlighting the dire circumstances faced by impoverished Palestinians subjected to relentless Israeli aggression. They have been enduring severe shortages of basic necessities, including water, food, and power, which has resulted in a severe humanitarian crisis. Jilani emphasized that Pakistan stands firmly against the tragic events unfolding in Gaza, characterizing Israel's actions as a form of genocide against the Palestinian population. He emphasized that the current grave situation is a direct consequence of seven decades of unlawful occupation

Continued on Page 06

UN expert warns of new 'Nakba'

LONDON: A UN expert has warned that Israel's attack on Gaza might lead to "mass ethnic cleansing" of Palestinians, which she said could be remembered as another "Nakba." Israel has told 1.1 million Palestinians to leave the north of the Gaza Strip ahead of a planned ground invasion by the Israel Defense Forces following the Hamas attack that killed over 1,300 Israelis on Oct. 7. Francesca Albanese, UN special rapporteur on the occupied Palestinian territories, said the forced expulsion of

Continued on Page 06

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15

Aggressive marketing to exploit potential of GSP Plus: PIAF

According to the trade statistics from ITC World Trademap, Pakistan's exports to EU, which were around 6.3 billion dollars in 2013, have increased over the time to 11.3 billion dollars in 2022, primarily due to the deeper market access provided by European Union under GSP Plus

FAISAL SHEIKH

ISLAMABAD: Stressing the need for an aggressive marketing plan to exploit the huge opportunity of enhancing exports to the EU countries, the Pakistan Industrial and Traders Associations Front (PIAF) has welcomed the European Union's decision to retain the GSP plus status for Pakistan for another four years till 2027.

Trademap, Pakistan's exports to EU, which were around 6.3 billion dollars in 2013, have increased over the time to 11.3 billion dollars in 2022, primarily due to the deeper market access provided by European Union under GSP Plus.

lack of transparency, and inadequate infrastructure. He called on the government to take urgent steps to remove these obstacles and make it easier for businesses to export to the EU.



ISLAMABAD: Ambassador of France Nicolas Galey meeting with Federal Minister for Privatization Fawad Hassan Fawad.—DNA

CDA starts installation of new street lights

DNA

ISLAMABAD :The Capital Development Authority (CDA) has started installation of new led lights, repair and maintenance of old street lights along the Streets, Service Roads and Main Avenues of the federal capital.

KP govt abolishes 2-year BA and BSc Program at all colleges

DNA

PESHAWAR: The Higher Education Department of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa has abolished the two-year associate degree program in all public colleges and initiated Bachelor of Science (BS) programs starting from this academic year.

the upcoming admission session. According to experts, this bold step aims to align the educational system with international standards and offer students a more in-depth learning experience.

students. The background of these associate degree programs dates back to 2012 and 2013 when BS degrees were not yet formally integrated into college prospectuses.

Doctor for regular eyesight check-ups

DNA

BAHAWALPUR :Principal, Quaid-e-Azam Medical College and Eye Specialist, Prof.Dr. Sofia Furrukh has stressed the need that people suffering from eye-related diseases should undergo medical check-ups regularly.

Railways reclaims 1,028 acres land from squatters

ISLAMABAD :Pakistan Railways has retrieved as many as 1,028 acres of its land worth millions of rupees from illegal occupants during various anti-encroachment operations across the country.

work were initiated and a joint procedure order was issued to all divisional superintendents for retrieval of Railways land from encroachment.

Police and district administrations of the relevant provincial governments," he added. He said the organization was taking several steps to retrieve encroached land from the land grabbers including a detailed survey being carried out to identify the encroached land, occupied by the individuals and under illegal occupation by various government departments.

HCC's July-Sept-2023 quarterly report released

PESHAWAR : The Health Care Commission (HCC) provides regular training to health care center staff on minimum service delivery standards, said the report released here Sunday.

report revealed. Expert evaluators reviewed 25 hospitals across the province with HCC teams inspected a total of 1,319 health facilities, out of which notices were issued to 454 and 163 were sealed for non-compliance, the report said.

eterization laboratories. The report reflects the Commission's commitment to improving patient safety and quality of healthcare in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Chief Executive Officer Dr. Nadeem Akhtar said.

Tribute paid to police martyrs

IG presented the shield to Dr. Amjad Saqib for his efforts to save the lives of police personnel as Assistant Commissioner Chiniot at the time of the tragedy. IG said that police have employed 1,352 children of martyrs

DNA

LAHORE : A special ceremony was held at Central Police Office in memory of the police martyrs of Chiniot 1990 in which great tributes were paid to the sacrifices of the police martyrs of Chiniot incident.

Lawyers show strong support for upcoming PSCBA elections

ABBOTTABAD :The lawyers here on Sunday expressed their unwavering support in the annual elections of the Pakistan Supreme Court Bar Association (PSCBA) during a consultative session organized by the Independent Lawyer Forum (Asma Jahangir Group).

Adventure tourism seeks digital media promotion

FAKHAR E ALAM

CHITRAL, The cold breeze with chirping birds coming from the majestic Trich Mir Mountain peak that recently received winter's first snowfall takes adventure tourists into a lap of serenity.

ideal destination for mountains and adventure sports. Besides exploring Trich Mir, a tourist could also enjoy the centuries-old Kalash culture that came here in the 18th century when 12 people of Kalasha migrated to Chitral from British India for trade, and business and established their base camps in various places for residence and settled in Chitral.

ern areas of KP, especially Swat and Chitral were going to become the winter tourism capitals of Pakistan due to its seven unique features including river rafting, trout fish, snowfall, paragliding, mountaineering, biking and skiing.

Life time Cost of Public Servants

It is essential for governments to evaluate the long-term financial implications of immediate job creation and to find a balance between short-term benefits and sustainable fiscal policies

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan Institute of Development Economics (PIDE), A Premier National Think Tank's current study has investigated the burden that each newly recruited individual (ranging from Grade 1-22) brings on the national budget.

providing employment opportunities to many individuals, especially within their own party or patronage network, politicians can cultivate a base of supporters who are more likely to vote for them in elections.

whether or not we have sufficient revenue streams to support the compensation for the next 30 years; if not, it's a good time to pause and consider the implications of adding a new worker to the system, given that the State of Pakistan and the government will be responsible for covering the cost through taxation.

posed being extra careful and cost-effective before deciding to keep an employee. This way, the institute can figure out how it can afford to pay the person for the rest of his or her working life.

CTD releases list of 128 terrorists

DNA

PESHAWAR : The Counter Terrorism Department (CTD) Sunday published the list of 128 more wanted criminals with the head money of each of the criminals enlisted in the released list.



National Days and Armed Forces Days

OCTOBER

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

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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 Inquiry.....117
Railway Exchange 9270831-5
WASA Rawalpindi. 5555489
CAA.....9281092



Hospitals

CMH.....5611111
MH.....5611116
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

Driving education reform DARE-RC's vision for informed policy making

His significant event brought together a diverse array of participants, including public sector representatives at federal and provincial levels, national and international knowledge partners, civil society organizations, development partners, and academia

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Education is the cornerstone of progress, and in recognition of its paramount importance, Oxford Policy Management (OPM) Pakistan organized a one-day Research Agenda Co-Creation Workshop under the Data and Research in Education - Research Consortium (DARE-RC) program. This significant event brought together a diverse array of participants, including public sector representatives at federal and provincial levels, national and international knowledge partners, civil society organizations, development partners, and academia. The workshop aimed at setting the direction for the entire program through charting out the contours of the research agenda with a focus on learners, learning environment, and the overall education landscape in Pakistan. The research agenda will serve as a roadmap to prioritize and define the areas in which rigorous and impactful research will be conducted as part of the DARE-RC initiative. The discussants included Waseem Ajmal Chaudhry, Secretary, Ministry of Federal Education and Professional training (MoFEPT); Abdur Rauf Khan Gandapur, Country Director at OPM Pakistan; Haris Khaliq, Program Director, DARE-RC;

Muhammad Zaigham Qadeer, Research Director at Pakistan

emphasis on strengthening the research capacities of local academic

Parliamentarians' caucus, Senate of Pakistan. The session was ad-

relevant expertise in translating learning objectives into effective teaching materials. He also pointed out the pressing need for comprehensive data to address the multifaceted issues being faced in the education sector. He hoped DARE-RC would be able to connect researchers across Pakistan and work collaboratively with government and policy actors to ensure the research aligns with real-world needs and priorities. The Federal Minister for Education welcomed the efforts of the NGOs and the civils society in raising the pertinent issues related to the sorry state of education affairs in the country. He rued the indifference shown by political parties towards ensuring that children, especially from the marginalized community in the country, have access to quality education. The DARE-RC program, championed by OPM and funded by the FCDO, has a mission to forge a comprehensive and accessible body of evidence pertaining to pivotal issues within the education service delivery framework of Pakistan. These issues encompass enabling greater access to education for girls, nurturing an environment for prolonged and improved learning, enhancing teaching quality, fostering accountability, reaching out to marginalized girls and boys, and leveraging technology to enrich the educational experience.



Institute of Education (PIE); Kim Bradford Smith, Education Team Lead, Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office (FCDO); Dr Jamila Razzaq, Research Director, DARE-RC; Dr Dilshad Ashraf, Deputy Research Director, DARE-RC; and Anza Saqib, Consultant Media and Research Education Parliamentarians' caucus, Senate of Pakistan. The session was addressed as Chief of Guest by Madad Ali Sindhi, Federal Minister, MoFEPT. In his opening remarks, Abdur Rauf Khan highlighted the role DARE-RC is going to play in shaping the education landscape. He was of the view that DARE-RC is committed to promoting data-driven education policy that is rooted in comprehensive research as the program places a strong

ic institutions and think-tanks, enabling them to actively contribute to the educational transformation of the nation. The discussants included Waseem Ajmal Chaudhry, Secretary, Ministry of Federal Education and Professional training (MoFEPT); Abdur Rauf Khan Gandapur, Country Director at OPM Pakistan; Haris Khaliq, Program Director, DARE-RC; Muhammad Zaigham Qadeer, Research Director at Pakistan Institute of Education (PIE); Kim Bradford Smith, Education Team Lead, Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office (FCDO); Dr Jamila Razzaq, Research Director, DARE-RC; Dr Dilshad Ashraf, Deputy Research Director, DARE-RC; and Anza Saqib, Consultant Media and Research Education

Parliamentarians' caucus, Senate of Pakistan. The session was addressed as Chief of Guest by Madad Ali Sindhi, Federal Minister, MoFEPT. In his opening remarks, Abdur Rauf Khan highlighted the role DARE-RC is going to play in shaping the education landscape. He was of the view that DARE-RC is committed to promoting data-driven education policy that is rooted in comprehensive research as the program places a strong emphasis on strengthening the research capacities of local academic institutions and think-tanks, enabling them to actively contribute to the educational transformation of the nation. In his address as the Guest of Honour, Waseem Ajmal emphasized the foundational challenges in the education sector and the crucial role of researchers and

White Cane Day and awareness walk at RCCI

Saqib Rafiq, President RCCI while addressing a ceremony to mark World White Cane at Chamber House, said that it is our moral obligation to look after the visually impaired people and provide them all possible facilities and opportunities to take part in normal activities of life



DNA

RAWALPINDI: The Rawalpindi Chamber of Commerce and Industry (RCCI) has stressed joint efforts for enabling blind persons to play an equal and active role in educational, economic, and social aspects of life like other citizens of the country. Saqib Rafiq, President RCCI while

addressing a ceremony to mark World White Cane at Chamber House, said that it is our moral obligation to look after the visually impaired people and provide them all possible facilities and opportunities to take part in normal activities of life. The white stick is the identity of the blind, said Saqib Rafiq. The Chamber

of Commerce is also working for special persons under its collective social responsibility, he added. The aim of celebrating White Cane Day and awareness walk was to show solidarity with the visually impaired and to highlight their problems. The ceremony was jointly organized by the Rawalpindi Chamber,

Punjab Special Education Department Rawalpindi Division, ZLK Securities and True Sight Organization for the Blind Rawalpindi. An awareness walk, symbolizing the collective effort to create a more inclusive society was also held. Blind students took the stage, demonstrating their remarkable talents through various performances.

China joint ventures brought transformative benefits to Pakistan

The continued partnership between the two nations holds immense potential for further progress

DNA

ISLAMABAD : Pakistan-China joint ventures brought transformative benefits to Pakistan, said Shah Faisal Afridi, a prominent business leader and advocate of economic development. China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) has provided unique opportunities for the tremendous growth of Pakistani businesses, he stated this during his recent visit to China for the third Belt and Road Forum for International Cooperation to be held in Beijing from October 17 to 18, according to Gwadar Pro. Faisal pointed out that the CPEC projects are not just about infrastructure development but also exceptional opportunities for entrepreneurs and are leading the revival of internationalization in Pakistan. As CPEC construction enters its second phase of industrial cooperation, it has created a more favorable environment for entrepreneurs to thrive. As the president of JW SEZ Group, which has established joint ventures with Chinese brands and companies including Haier, Foton, SAIC, Deli, Royal, Sinovac, and has become one of the major players in Pakistan's industries in home appliances, electronics, glass manufacturing, dairy, agriculture, automotive, real estate development, sports and healthcare, Faisal has been doing business with China for 23 years. He highlighted that Pakistan-China joint ventures have brought transformative benefits to Pakistan. "From addressing energy shortages to improving infrastructure, technology, and industrial growth, these collaborations have played a crucial role in enhancing Pakistan's economic development. The continued partnership between the two nations holds immense potential for further progress."



Work on key road projects in Balochistan to start soon

DNA

ISLAMABAD: The National Highway Authority (NHA) will soon start construction work on the Awaran-Nal section of the Ratodero-Gwadar Motorway (M-8) and the Zhoob-Qilla Saifullah section of the National Highway 50 (N-50). The projects are of utmost importance given the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) initiative, said Shahid Ihsan Ullah, Member (West Zone), NHA, during a live session, according to a Gwadar Pro's report. Shahid said that NHA has paid mobilization advance to contractors of all three packages of the 168-kilometre Awaran-Nal section of M-8. They have started a land survey and will soon launch construction activities, he added. Awaran-Nal is the last missing link in the M-8 Motorway, which links the Peshawar-Karachi Motorway with Gwadar near Sukkur in Sindh province. Work on the 146-kilometer Hoshab-Awaran section of the M-8 is already underway. The rest of the key artery is functional. In addition, NHA has awarded contracts for three sections of the N-50 Highway between Zhoob and Qilla Saifullah, and will soon mobilize contractors for physical works, Shahid said. Construction work is already underway on two packages of the N-50 between Qilla Saifullah and Kuchlak, a town near Quetta. "We are striving to open certain patches of the road for traffic in November as per instructions of Caretaker Prime Minister Anwar ul Haq Kakar," Shahid said.

Pakistan's exports to China surged by 100%

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan's exports to China in September 2023 have surged by an impressive 100.5% compared to the corresponding month during the previous financial year, according to the Trade Development Authority Pakistan (TDAP)'s latest report. The total value of Pakistan's exports to China in September 2023 amounted to \$350.2 million, marking a robust 100.5% increase compared to the exports valued at \$174.7 million during the corresponding month in the previous financial year. According to a Gwadar Pro's report, in September, Pakistan's total exports to all partner countries of the world were recorded at \$2.465 billion, with China's share amounting to \$14.20 million. During the first quarter of FY 23-24, Pakistan's exports to all partner countries of the world reached \$6.899 billion. Of this total, exports to China amounted to \$729.7 million, accounting for approximately 10.57% of Pakistan's overall exports.—DNA

Poliovirus detected in sewage samples

DNA

ISLAMABAD : Caretaker Prime Minister Anwar-ul-Haq Kakar, at the invitation of Chinese President Xi Jinping, is undertaking a visit to Beijing to participate in the third Belt and Road Forum from Tuesday. This was stated by Foreign Minister Jilil Abbas Jilani, while briefing media in Islamabad on Sunday. Jilil Abbas Jilani said the Prime Minister will also address the high-level forum with a theme of "Connectivity in an Open Global Economy". "The visit will also provide an opportunity to review the entire gamut of entire cooperation and Pak-China strategic cooperation. The visit also marks the ten years of CPEC and Belt and Road Initiative," he added. He said the Prime Minister will have bilateral meetings with the Chinese leadership, including President Xi Jinping, Premier Li Qiang and other leading personalities.

Rapid urbanization ruining Capital's habitat, ecosystem

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Once enjoying a unique status for its serene evenings and amusing landscape, the capital is fast losing its beauty, tranquility, biodiversity and habitat due to rapid urbanization in the suburbs of the main city. Enjoying a unique identity as the only capital in the world with nature and human settlements coexisting simultaneously in an ecosystem, is now helplessly losing its wetlands, forest cover and water resources. Even rare species like Asian Leopards are under threat of displacement or rather extinction at the hands of urbanization, exploding population, expanding road infrastructure and lack of attention by the city developers towards nature. "Gone are the days when sitting anywhere in the Capital - any green belt or park - used to amuse residents arousing within them a feeling of love for

nature," said an elderly Muhammad Bashir, who had come to the city for a job in mid-seventies. "Couple of decades, it was calm and cool with lush green belts, flowers-filled parks, the Lotus Lake, Shakarparian, Damn-e-Koh and the Pir Sohawa - all presently a friendly and natural feeling," he stated. "But, now the situation has changed entirely. The serenity has been replaced with blowing horns and unpleasant noise due to massive construction and traffic load and air is adulterated with emissions, making us feel fowl like never before," Bashir said. The total area of the federal capital is 906 square kilometers with a specified additional area 3,626 square kilometers including the Margalla Hills National Parks in the north and northeast. The city is divided into five zones and Zone-IV is the largest in terms of area whereas Zone-I is the largest in terms of developed residential area. There is barely any sector of

the metropolis that lacks trees or any open space like greenbelts or parks. But, with the population influx, the roads are falling short of traffic and green belts are littered with waste and in some places drying up due to improper attention. The city also receives a whopping 1143 millimeters of average rainfall per annum but still, it is grappling with the issue of water scarcity because it has to employ the resource initially established for 200,000 people, to now for over two million people. The International Water Management Institute (IWMI), Pakistan Council of Research on Water Resources (PCRWR) and the Capital Development Authority (CDA) jointly executed a rainwater recharging wells project to replenish the aquifer of the capital that had dropped to an alarming level. The initiative in its pilot phase injected almost 1.8 million gallons of rainwater into the aquifer that was drying up due to massive wa-

ter drilling by households. "The water courses passing through scientifically developed F-6 and F-7 sectors were once the ideal habitats for the most trafficked mammal Pangolins," said an official of Islamabad Wildlife Management Board. "We received several calls by residents reporting the presence of Pangolins in these areas that were rescued by the Board workers," the official said, mentioning that Margalla Hills is also home to leopards, jackals, barking deer and many other elusive animals, birds and insects. "Then there is a variety of plants that ensure healthy ambience and much-needed oxygen for the capital residents," he added. "All these plant and animal species contribute to a naturally rich ecosystem of Margalla Hills National Park." With the rising population pressure, the civic authorities are compelled to widen roads and launch new residential sectors with massive construction activi-

ty to facilitate the populace. Recently, Margalla Avenue has been developed as an alternate route to avoid traffic jams on the way to entering the capital, and enter the capital from residential areas like Taxila, Sangiani and Wah Cantt to avoid usual traffic jams. The Avenue will be entering near Sangiani to travel all along from Shah Allah Ditta, D-12 sector and will culminate at Margalla Avenue denuding the forest cover and creating a fissure between the natural habitat as it will be barricaded from both sides. According to the Capital Development Authority officials, the road infrastructure was important and crucial as the population had increased exponentially with over a million vehicles registered in the capital. "Therefore, if only one-third of these vehicles travel on the roads, the existing infrastructure falls quite insufficient to bear the traffic load. That's why we need new roads," the officials argued.

Briefs

Chemical
Factory in
Gwadar Free
Zone North
under plan

DNA

ISLAMABAD: In a new development, a chemical factory is going to be established in Gwadar Free Zone North (Phase II). According to Gwadar Port Authority (GPA) official, an Islamabad based firm named Acrez Mark Private Limited plans to establish a chemical factory in Gwadar Free Zone. "The firm has expressed its plan to construct a Pthalic Anhydride production plant in Gwadar Free Zone. The industry would stretch to 218 acres," GPA official told Gwadar Pro. "The total project cost is a whopping \$83 million. With a total production capacity of 40,000 tons per year. Acrez plans to export 4300 containers abroad," he added. To materialise the project, he said, the company requires 3 megawatts electricity. Future expansion plans include the production of plasticisers.

Five FIA
officials
suspended

ISLAMABAD: The Federal Investigation Agency (FIA) Lahore has suspended five officials allegedly involved in a case of kidnapping of a man for Rs 30 million ransom. According to sources, the suspended officials have been instructed to report to the Cyber Crime Circle in Islamabad as part of the disciplinary proceedings. All the suspended officials were ordered to report to the Cyber Crime Circle Islamabad. A case has also been registered against the accused in Anti-Corruption Circle Lahore. These developments come when a Lahore citizen identified as Majid, lodged a complaint with the Lahore FIA cyber-crime cell.—DNA

Engine driver
injured in
train clash

DNA

ISLAMABAD: An engine driver of a train was injured in a collision with a dumper truck near Tarnol a small town of Islamabad city on early Sunday morning. According to details, the train's driver was injured after it derailed from the railway lines following the mishap, a private news channel. The train was coming from Multan to Rawalpindi. Receiving the information about the accident, the security personnel arrived at the scene and launched the rescue process. Moreover, assistance from a crane was also taken for early clearance of the area.

Industrialists demand cut
in policy interest rate

He stressed that the government should extend full cooperation to ICCI for the establishment of a new industrial estate in the region that would produce multiple benefits for the economy

DNA

ISLAMABAD: A delegation of Islamabad Industrial Association (IIA) led by its President Muhammad Ahmed Waheed visited Islamabad Chamber of Commerce & Industry (ICCI) and congratulated Faad Waheed on assuming charge as the Acting President ICCI. Khalid Iqbal Malik Group Leader, Khalid Javed, Mian Akram Farid, Tariq Sadiq, Mian Shaikat Masud, Nasir Khan, Karim Aziz Malik, Nasir Qureshi, Ch. Waheed ud Din, Zafar Bakhtawari, Muhammad Ejaz Abbasi, Iftikhar Anwar Sethi, Ch. Mukhtar, Usman Khalid, Dr. Muhammad Usman, Mirza Muhammad Ali, Shaikat Ali, Malik Sohail Hussain, Ashfaq Chatha, Khalid Chaudhry and others were in the delegation.

Addressing the delegation, Faad Waheed, Acting President, Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry said that the 22 percent policy interest rate is a major hurdle in promoting industrial activities and stressed that the government should bring it down to single digit level that would help boost industrialization, promote investment, enhance exports, cre-



ate jobs and revive the economy. He said that the industry in Pakistan is facing the highest interest rate in the whole Asia as the interest rate in Japan is -0.1%, Taiwan 1.88%, Thailand 2.5, Malaysia 3%, China 3.4 %, Vietnam 4.5%, and Indonesia & Hongkong 5.75%, Bangladesh and India 6.5%. He said that the high interest rate has made our industry uncompetitive in the international market due to which our exports are not

growing up to the desired level. He said that the best way to revive the economy is to focus on export-led growth of the economy for which single digit interest rate is the key requirement. Muhammad Ahmed, President, Islamabad Industrial Association said that the private sector is the engine of growth for the economy, but the bank's net lending to the private sector in Pakistan has plunged 90 percent during the first 10 months of the current

fiscal year, due to which the industry has experienced negative growth in many sectors. He said that it has become almost impossible for small and medium industries to get credit from banks at such high interest rate due to which its expansion has come to a halt. He said that the high interest rate is a major hurdle in promoting new investment in Pakistan and stressed that the government should look into this serious issue to facilitate the growth of business

and investment in the country. Engr. Azhar ul Islam Vice President ICCI said that many investors are keen to set up industries in the federal capital but due to absence of a new industrial zone, they are unable to make new investments. He stressed that the government should extend full cooperation to ICCI for the establishment of a new industrial estate in the region that would produce multiple benefits for the economy.

Traffic
Wardens to
crack down
on smoke-
vehicles

DNA

RAWALPINDI: Chief Traffic Officer (CTO) Rawalpindi Taimur Khan has directed all circle In-charges to take strict action against smoke emitting vehicles. The CTO said smoke emitting vehicles were not only polluting environment and creating respiratory problems but could also cause of road accidents. He directed the officers concerned to play their due role to control environmental pollution. He informed that special campaigns were also run by the City Traffic Police (CTP) while under a campaign the citizens were educated regarding traffic rules and road safety. Education Wing of Traffic Police was making efforts to spread awareness so that the road journey could be made safe and sound, he added. The CTO urged the people to cooperate with traffic wardens as they were on the roads to facilitate them. A special squad was available on Helpline 1915 to help and facilitate the citizens, he added. According to a spokesman, CTP on the directives of Additional Inspector General, Traffic Mirza Faran Baig would take action in accordance with the law.

KSA urged to intake of over
1 mln Pakistanis annually

DNA

ISLAMABAD: The Special Assistant to the Prime Minister (SAPM) on Overseas Pakistanis and Human Resource Development (OP&HRD) Jawad Sohrab Malik held a meeting with His Excellency, Nawaf bin Said Al-Malki, the Ambassador of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia (KSA) here to partake in the emerging manpower opportunities for the Saudi Vision 2030. Malik requested the KSA to

employ a significant number of workforce from Pakistan for the completion of the Saudi Vision 2030, said a press release here Saturday. "Currently, about 5 million Pakistanis proceed to Saudi Arabia annually. There is a real prospect of this figure rising to over 1 million," he continued. According to him, this mix of skilled, semi-skilled, and unskilled manpower from Pakistan has enabled Saudi Arabia to meet its diverse workforce needs effectively.

SAPM underlined Pakistan's capacity to provide over 1 million persons having varied skills to be employed under the job opportunities created by Saudi Vision 2030, according to which the Saudi economy is diversifying and embracing further areas. He appraised the Saudis of how our government is building a skilled Labour Force Pool in order to tap the huge potential of our bulging youth in areas of digitization, services, and tourism.

The Saudi Ambassador expressed support for the proposal forwarded by Jawad Sohrab Malik on enhancing the share of Pakistan's manpower resources. Appreciating the dynamic and visionary leadership of the Kingdom, Jawad Sohrab Malik expressed his gratitude to His Royal Highness, the Crown Prince, Muhammad Bin Salman for extending his consistent and resolute support for Pakistan on various economic, strategic and bilateral issues.

Constant decline in the
dollar rate welcomed

DNA

ISLAMABAD: FPCCI's presidential candidate, Atif Ikram Sheikh, welcomed the steady decline in the US dollar on Sunday, terming it highly satisfactory for the masses and the business community. This daily decline has become a routine, improving foreign exchange reserves and the confidence of investors, he said. He said that despite the higher supply of dollars, the pressure on the exchange rate is still there as demand

from importers is increasing each day, which must be controlled and monitored while energy prices should be reduced. Atif Ikram Sheikh, who has also served as VP FPCCI, Chairman PVMA, and President ICCI, said in a statement issued here today that administrative measures are not enough in the long run; therefore, exports, remittances, and revenue should be increased, and expenses should be controlled. He recalled that the serious foreign exchange crisis had damaged the economy a lot, but now it seems to be ending.

Domestic and foreign investors remained worried for years, and their goods at the port were not being cleared due to a lack of foreign exchange. He added that due to this crisis, hundreds of containers were piled up at ports while importers were facing demurrage and detention charges. The business leader said that our total annual income is sixty billion dollars while imports are almost 80 billion dollars, and therefore it is impossible to run the country without borrowing.

SDPI organizes journalist
capacity development workshop

ISLAMABAD: The experts at a media training on Loss and Damage Fund and climate finance mechanisms Saturday called for expedited climate action with localisation of climate finance instruments, and enhanced community engagement in rolling out policy interventions to establish projects to benefit international funding facilities. The Sustainable Development Policy Institute (SDPI) organised a one-day journalist capacity development workshop on Climate Action at the launch of four thematic policy papers. Deputy Executive Director, SDPI presented a detailed account of the four thematic policy papers shedding light on climate finance, Sendai Framework on Disaster Risk Reduction, capacity issues and institutional shortcomings and Pakistan's case on loss and damage fund reparations. Dr Shafqat Munir said climate action is a shared responsibility and demands a collective response from all as a whole of society approach. "We as humans need to take stock of our carbon footprint that impacts the earth due to our actions and activities," he added. He explained that climate action is needed everywhere as Pakistan is the fifth highest livestock producer in the world that has made it among the biggest methane emitters. Commenting on the research papers by SDPI, he said access to

climate finance is difficult to access globally, whereas the best way is to provide a bankable project against our nationally determined contributions (NDCs) with a policy framework made on it. "We need to club the three initiatives Resilient Recovery, Rehabilitation and Reconstruction Framework (4RF), National Adaptation Plan and NDCs and develop a project on it to tap climate finance for targeted interventions," he added. He also noted recommendations stating engagement of climate investment funds (CIFs) and significant bilateral multilateral funds in addition to already engaged avenues, and alignment, coherence and synergy of existing policies at national and international level. He also underlined that the country had technical and human resource capacity issues, whereas transparency in utilisation of funds was a major priority area for international climate finance institutions that needs to be focussed by the government. The SDPI paper focused on community based disaster risk management engagement and the key sectors lacking proper actions. He said major challenges to institutional capacities are enforcement and evaluation in project implementation whereas public awareness and institutional coordination also needed due attention of the quarters concerned.—DNA

PKM Project: model of
sustainability in Pakistan

DNA

ISLAMABAD, Oct 15 (): The PKM project improves Pakistan's road network and its comprehensive transportation system, shortens travel time for travellers and freight, and reduces the drive from Multan to Sukkur from 11 to 4 hours, according to China State Construction Engineering Corporation (CSCEC) Pakistan PKM Project Sustainability Report. The report was released at a seminar celebrating the 10th anniversary of the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI), held by KASB KTrade Securities, a well-known financial think tank in Pakistan, according to Gwadar Pro. CSCEC PKM represents the highest standard in Pakistan with the highest design level and the most advanced intelligent system. It adopts Chinese SBS modified asphalt technology and is the only one with full greening along the route and strong flood resistance



capacity. Environmental protection is integrated into the entire project process, including management, design, and construction. A total of 335,800 trees were planted in the project. The green area on both sides of the road is equivalent to 775 football fields, and the green area of other areas and service areas is equivalent to 81 football fields. During construction, 9 schools, 800

km of road, 20 bridges, 62 wells, and more than 300 watercourses for the villages have been repaired along the route. CSCEC has also organized medical teams to provide free diagnosis for more than 3,900 residents and distributed 13,200 boxes of medicines to the locals. The project provided over 28,900 direct jobs to locals and trained over 4,500 equipment operators and

over 2,300 management and technical personnel, boosting local employment. PKM starts from Sukkur, Sindh and reaches Multan, the economic center of Punjab in the north, with a total length of 392 km and a design speed of 120 km per hour. The construction of the project includes 100 bridges, 468 underpasses, 991 culverts, 11 interchanges, 6 pairs of service areas.

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Call for immediate cease-fire to prevent humanitarian catastrophe

As the Israel-Palestine conflict drags into the second week, the severest Israeli-Palestinian violence in half a century appears spiraling out of control, and turning into a regional crisis that would not only lead to a massive humanitarian disaster but also imperil regional and global peace and stability. The international community, influential players in the region in particular, should take an impartial stance, strongly condemn the violence against civilians and do their utmost to broker an immediate cease-fire. For, once Israeli forces begin ground operations in the Gaza Strip to root out the Hamas leaders and militants, the more than 2 million Palestinians trapped there risk becoming collateral damage. Since Hamas launched the surprise attacks on Israeli targets on Oct 7, about 4,000 people have been killed on both sides. The tit-for-tat military operation Israeli forces have launched against Hamas has sealed off the Gaza Strip and escalated the humanitarian crisis. Like other members of the international community, China is saddened by the loss of innocent lives on both sides and shudders at the thought of a humanitarian catastrophe befalling the Gaza Strip as Israel puts boots on the ground. As a responsible country, China has stepped up efforts to coordinate with other countries to mediate peace. For instance, in his phone call with US Secretary of State Antony Blinken on Saturday, Foreign Minister Wang Yi stressed that major powers be objective and impartial, and abide by international law when dealing with regional hotspot issues. Indeed, a major reason the Ukraine crisis is dragging on is because some Western countries have kept pouring oil on the flames of the Russia-Ukraine conflict. Given this fact, the Israel-Palestine conflict couldn't have broken out at a worst time. Palestinian lives are at stake, so is regional and global peace. This is a time for cooperation between the members of the international community, so that joint efforts can be made to put an end to the violence and revive the stalled Middle East peace process. Violence perpetuates violence, spilling more blood of innocents and instilling permanent animosity and hatred among members of both sides. Like UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres said, the escalation in violence in Gaza "only perpetuates the cycles of death, destruction and despair, and pushes farther to the horizon any hopes of coexistence and peace". To really protect their people, Israeli and Palestinian leaders both should stop hostilities, so as to pave the way for a political settlement to the conflict. And both sides ought to work with the international community to implement the "two-state solution", because it is the only way out of the situation and will restore permanent peace in the region.

Better grasp ties, uphold strategic partnership

The 12th round of China-EU High-level Strategic Dialogue in Beijing from Thursday to Saturday went almost unnoticed given the global media's focus on the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. Yet as its title indicates, the dialogue, featuring Foreign Minister Wang Yi and European Union foreign policy chief Josep Borrell, may have far-reaching significance for both sides. As Wang told Borrell, the dialogue comes at a time when the world, including China and the EU, has reached a critical crossroad. So how Beijing and Brussels position themselves and recalibrate their policies toward each other is of strategic significance. Through much of the decades following the founding of the People's Republic, particularly since China launched reform and opening-up, relations between China and European countries have been on good terms. The increasingly close economic and trade bonds that have been forged between China and the EU are conducive to not only developing constructive relations, but also to helping improve both sides' economic well-being. Amid the unprecedented changes across the world, however, the China-EU relationship, which has by and large been undisturbed by past political turbulence, is no longer immune to global geopolitical developments. From the China-US differences triggered by the launching of a trade war by the United States and three long years of the COVID-19 pandemic to the Russia-Ukraine conflict and now the Israel-Palestine conflict, with Israel launching massive airstrikes on the Gaza Strip, much has happened in the past few years, putting China-EU relations to test. Beijing and Brussels do hold very divergent views on global issues because they perceive international affairs and events differently. Since such differences show the two sides' respective outlook on the world order and global governance, there is a need for them to readjust their policies. The EU has redefined China as a "systemic competitor" and made "de-risking" from China a key component of its new policy toward China. This is difficult to accept for Beijing, because, just as Wang Yi and Vice-President Han Zheng told Borrell, they see no fundamental conflict of interests, no geopolitical contradictions between China and the EU. As a result, both Chinese officials urged the EU to "correctly" understand Sino-EU ties, stick to the strategic partnership they have formed, and oppose "de-risking". The China-EU dialogue suggested some of the differences between the two sides might continue, preventing Beijing and Brussels from engaging in cooperation to the extent they want to. But the fact that they agreed to sustain constructive and responsible engagement in handling China-EU as well as global affairs is something worth celebrating. Since both sides have their eyes on the summit meeting near the end of the year, this certainly is worth being matched with closer communication over a wider range of issues.

Stability instability paradox

Afnan Wasif



One could understand the phenomenon by considering the examples without involving nuclear weapons. For example, when a defaulting country borrows money from international monetary institutions, it helps to avoid default (stability at the strategic level) but causes inflation or higher taxes (instability at the lower level) – a difficult situation for the general masses. The same applies to the states with hostile

A phenomenon that was devised to understand the role of nuclear weapons and the concept of mutually assured destruction in the overall stability of a region. The concept of MAD prevails during the confrontation between two states having nuclear weapons. Consequently, the presence of nuclear weapons maintains stability at the strategic level due to MAD but at the same creates a venue for instability at lower or sub-strategic level. One could understand the phenomenon by considering the examples without involving nuclear weapons. For example, when a defaulting country borrows money from international monetary institutions, it helps to avoid default (stability at the strategic level) but causes inflation or higher taxes (instability at the lower level) – a difficult situation for the general masses. The same applies to the states with hostile relationships having nuclear weapons. Nuclear weapons avert the escalation of a conflict to a level of full-scale war but create instability at the lower level and induce states to wage limited conventional wars below the nuclear threshold. The likelihood of a limited conventional war increases under the nuclear overhang. Application of Stability Instability Paradox during the Pre-nuclearization Era of India-Pakistan The issue of Kashmir is a territorial dispute between India and Pakistan since 1947 – partition of subcontinent. In 1948, for the first time, Pakistan and India fought to annex the territory of Jammu and Kashmir. Both armed forces engaged in direct war causing heavy casualties on both sides. In 1965, the same had happened again between India and Pakistan. Both states bore heavy damage in terms of human lives and finances. In both wars, the pivotal cause was the Kashmir issue. In 1971, again Indian and Pakistani armed forces came across and fought fiercely. These three wars were characterized by the full mobilization of the armed forces, heavy casualties, and territorial losses (1948, 1971). As a matter of fact, in these three wars, both In-

dia and Pakistan were not in possession of nuclear weapons. In hindsight, the absence of nuclear weapons eventually led the conflict to the level of full-scale conventional wars. It provides substantial evidence that the absence of nuclear weapons even provokes instability at the strategic level and instability at the lower level becomes obvious. The main reason behind the engagement of both states in full-scale conventional war was the absence of the concept of MAD associated with nuclear weapons. The benefit outweighed the cost as one actor – India – was enjoying conventional superiority in these wars. There was no such instrument that could avert a conflict to a full-scale conventional war at that time. Application of Stability Instability Paradox during the Post-nuclearization Era of India-Pakistan In 1974, India did nuclear tests. In response to those tests, Pakistan announced the capability to detonate nuclear weapons in 1984. Now, fear was instilled in the minds of decision-makers on both sides. And that fear was of mutual assured destruction as nuclear weapons are the weapons of mass destruction. In this scenario, the cost outweighs benefit and no rational actor dares to even think about full-scale conventional war because it could end up with a nuclear war. Hence, it can be concluded that the presence of nuclear weapons brings stability at the strategic level. But at the same time, it exposes room for instability at the lower level. These arguments can be substantiated by two historical events that happened between India and Pakistan namely the Brasstacks Crisis and the Kargil War. In the Brasstacks crisis, India carried out military exercises that lasted from November 1986 to January 1987. More than half a million men comprising 10 divisions and three brigades were involved. Pakistan considered it as a direct threat to its physical existence. At that moment, instability prevailed but did not escalate to full-scale war because Dr. Abdul Qadeer gave a statement that Islamabad would not hesitate to use nuclear weapons if

it faced an existential threat. Eventually, Indian forces backed off. The threat of the use of nuclear weapons led to the De-escalation of the crisis. Hence, nuclear weapons maintained stability at the strategic level but instability at the lower level.

Another classic example to understand the stability instability paradox is the Kargil War. In 1999, the Pakistani army fought with the Indian Army at Kargil. It was waged after the introduction of nuclear weapons in South Asia – both India and Pakistan had nuclear weapons. It is considered a limited conventional war as it involves limited use of force and is confined to a specific territory. Interestingly, this war was also not escalated to a level of full-scale war as it might cause the use of nuclear weapons which have the capability of destruction at a massive level. The matter ended up without reaching full mobilization of the armed forces because that situation could cause massive destruction which was undesirable for both the actors. Conclusion Conventional asymmetry provides a sense of superiority to India so as she explores venues to engage in limited conventional wars (instability at the lower level) with Pakistan while keeping the crisis under the nuclear overhang. Pakistan is bound or compelled to retaliate with nuclear weapons as it cannot sustain Indian aggression in conventional terms. Consequently, after the introduction of nuclear weapons and the concept of mutually assured destruction (MAD), any crisis does not escalate to a level where Pakistan feels its existence in a threat and is bound to use its nuclear weapons against Indian aggression – an undesirable action for India – which in turn brings stability to the strategic level but also make it vulnerable to engage in a limited conventional war causing instability at the lower level. The author is a student of Strategic Studies at National Defence University, Islamabad. He tweets at @afnanwasif

The vital role of Hemoglobin in red blood cells

Seerat Fatima



Anemia is a widespread health condition affecting many people. It results from a significant reduction in the body's red blood cells, primarily due to an iron deficiency. As mentioned earlier, iron is essential for the production of hemoglobin, a protein found in red blood cells. When the body lacks iron, hemoglobin levels decrease, leading to a significant impact on oxygen supply to the body's organs. Anemia is a serious

Red blood cells play a crucial role in human blood circulation. Approximately half of the blood composition consists of red blood cells. The primary function of red blood cells is to transport oxygen from the lungs to all parts of the body, including tissues. A biomolecule containing iron, particularly known as hemoglobin, is responsible for carrying oxygen in red blood cells' cytoplasm. Each red blood cell contains roughly 270 million hemoglobin molecules, taking up the most space within the cell. Medically, red blood cells are termed erythrocytes, and they divide rapidly, with approximately 2.4 million new red blood cells forming every second. In some cases, red blood cells do not function properly, or their levels decrease, leading to severe health effects. Anemia is a widespread health condition affecting many people. It results from a significant reduction in the body's red blood cells, primarily due to an iron deficiency. As mentioned earlier, iron is essential for the production of hemoglobin, a protein found in red blood cells. When the body lacks iron, hemoglobin levels decrease, leading to a significant impact on oxygen supply to the body's organs. Anemia is a serious and commonly occurring medical condition, especially among young children and pregnant women. It affects approximately 1.2 billion people worldwide. According to the World Health Organization (WHO), 40% of children and 30% of pregnant women globally suffer from severe iron deficiency. In Pakistan, it is estimated that nearly 49% of the population is affected by iron deficiency. A closer look at the statistics reveals that most children, both boys and girls, are iron deficient. Children under the age of five are particularly affected, with a prevalence ranging from 40% to 70%. This widespread anemic condition is concerning and alarming. Anemia, especially due to iron deficiency, can be diagnosed through various tests and by observing

symptoms. The diagnostic process includes a blood test and a physical examination. It is crucial to assess hemoglobin levels in the blood, as low hemoglobin levels indicate anemia. Hematocrit, which measures the volume of red blood cells in the blood, is also checked, as is the serum ferritin level, which indicates the amount of iron stored in the body. If physical assessment and medical tests do not yield satisfactory results, it is a clear indication of iron deficiency. Iron deficiency is one of the most common micronutrient deficiencies worldwide. Several underlying factors contribute to severe iron deficiency in the human body. Anemic patients, particularly those with iron deficiency, exhibit specific symptoms. Iron is primarily responsible for binding oxygen in hemoglobin and transporting oxygen through red blood cells in the body's circulation. Insufficient oxygen reaching body cells and tissues can lead to muscle weakness and fatigue. Pale or washed-out skin, especially on the face or nail beds, is a visible sign of hemoglobin deficiency in the blood. Iron deficiency can result in inadequate oxygen transport, causing breathing difficulties and shortness of breath. In response to oxygen deficiency, blood vessels constrict, leading to cold hands and feet, a noticeable symptom of anemia. Inadequate oxygen supply to the brain can cause headaches and, in severe cases, nervous disorders. Iron plays a vital role in proper brain function; its deficiency can lead to significant problems. In children, iron deficiency can delay brain development, while in adults; it can cause behavioral changes and reduced concentration. Iron is not only a component of hemoglobin but is also found in a muscle protein called myoglobin. The heart muscle, or myocardium, stores oxygen for the heart's proper functioning and supplies oxygen when needed in excess. Iron deficiency can disrupt heart rhythm and lead to uncomfortable sensations in the legs, especially at night. Numerous factors contribute to different types of anemia, but iron deficiency anemia is primarily caused by inadequate dietary intake and can be treated with a healthy diet. An iron-deficient diet

is the main cause of anemia. Adjusting meal plans and choosing foods rich in iron can help address these deficiencies. Animal-derived foods, such as red meat, poultry, chicken, fish, and shellfish, are excellent choices for anemic individuals. Additionally, some plant-based foods contain iron, including beans, lentils, soybeans, nuts, and seeds like almonds and sunflower seeds, as well as dark leafy vegetables, especially spinach, and dried fruits like apricots. Vitamin C-containing fruits, including all citrus fruits, are crucial for iron absorption in the body, so consuming vitamin C alongside iron-rich foods is important. Certain beverages, such as tea and coffee, can hinder iron absorption in the human body and should be avoided. Proper cooking methods are essential, as excessive cooking can reduce the iron content of some foods, especially vegetables. Severe blood loss can lead to a significant reduction in iron levels in the body. Gastrointestinal bleeding during conditions such as ulcers or hemorrhoids can result in substantial iron depletion. Regular blood donation can also contribute to iron deficiency. Regular checkups are important in this regard, and any symptoms of anemia should be monitored and taken seriously. People should adopt healthy measures to prevent the development of serious health conditions, including anemia. Infants and children require more iron for proper and rapid growth, and the demand for iron also increases during pregnancy. Unfortunately, pregnant women often experience high iron deficiency. In Pakistan, the prevalence of iron deficiency anemia among pregnant women is reported to be between 30% and 50%, with higher rates in urban areas. There is an urgent need to raise awareness among people about the importance of iron in their diet. Individuals, especially children and women, should take their dietary habits seriously to meet their iron requirements.

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Briefs

Pakistan...

FROM PAGE 1

of Palestinian territories. Addressing a press conference, the foreign minister said Israel should respect and implement the international laws, the United Nations Security Council and the Organization of the Islamic Cooperation (OIC) resolutions over the Palestinians' rights to self-determination for an independent state. He said that an emergency and extraordinary meeting of the Executive Committee of the OIC would be held in Jeddah on October 18 to discuss the ongoing situation in Palestine. Israel had committed aggression and conducted aerial aggression over Gaza which resulted in the deaths of scores of women and children, he said, adding that any attempt to equate Israel, an aggressor, with the Palestinians' struggle for self-determination was unacceptable. Foreign Minister Jilani further stressed a separate status of Palestine under the two-state policy as accepted by the international community with an independent state of Palestine having pre-1967 borders with Al-Quds Al-Sharif as its capital.

UN expert...

FROM PAGE 1

Palestinians from Gaza would be another "Nakba" – the Arabic word for "catastrophe" – if the invasion goes ahead. The expression comes from the term applied to the first mass expulsion of 750,000 Palestinians from their homes in 1948. "There is a grave danger that what we are witnessing may be a repeat of the 1948 Nakba, and the 1967 Naksa, yet on a larger scale. The international community must do everything to stop this from happening again," said Albanese.

"Israel has already carried out mass ethnic cleansing of Palestinians under the fog of war. Again, in the name of self-defence, Israel is seeking to justify what would amount to ethnic cleansing."

Blinken in...

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bombardment was not halted. Earlier, Blinken held a "very productive" meeting with Saudi Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman during which he discussed the ongoing war between Israel and Hamas. The top US diplomat met the Saudi royal in Riyadh in a critical diplomatic engagement as Israel prepared to launch a ground assault in the Hamas-controlled Gaza Strip and Washington worked to contain the conflict.

"Very productive," Blinken replied to a question from a reporter as he returned to the hotel where the US delegation was staying. A US official said the meeting lasted for just under an hour and took place at the Crown Prince's private farm residence.

"The Secretary highlighted the United States' unwavering focus on halting terrorist attacks by Hamas, securing the release of all hostages, and preventing the conflict from spreading," the State Department spokesperson Matthew Miller said in a statement.

SIFC would...

FROM PAGE 1

IT, energy, agriculture, mining and defence production. He said SIFC will shorten lengthy business processes, develop a whole of the government approach and tap Pakistan's potential in key sectors of information technology, energy, mining, agriculture and defence production by generating and attracting foreign direct investment," he continued. Masood Khan said Pakistan and the United States have strong strategic and economic ties for the past 76 years and this partnership continues and we foresee brighter prospects for its growth.

He said both sides are enhancing the space for economic partnership encompassing trade, investment, energy,

Malaysia National Sports Day

New Game "Sepak Takraw" adds excitement

DNA

ISLAMABAD : The Malaysian High Commission in Islamabad organized a Sports Day at the premises of the High Commission. The event was held in conjunction with the National Sports Day of Malaysia. His Excellency Ambassador Mohammad Azhar Mazlan, Malaysian High Commissioner to Pakistan officiated the event at 0800 hours. In his remarks, the High Commissioner underscored the importance of a balance healthy lifestyle. He also iterated the role of sports diplomacy in fostering closer relations between Malaysia-Pakistan. Present were the enthusiastic Malaysian and Pakistani staff members of the High Commission and their family as well as Malaysian diaspora living in Islamabad and surrounding areas. The National Sports Day was being organized not only throughout Malaysia but also at its embassies abroad every year on the second Saturday in October. The main objective was to promote and instill the spirit of healthy lifestyle among Malaysians young and old emphasizing on the importance of regular exercise as well as to unite Malaysians from all walks of life through sports. A number of games were played at the compound of the High Commission such as aerobics, badminton, netball, table tennis and volleyball. A new game "Sepak Takraw" was introduced this year. To their delight, those present had the opportunity to play the popular Southeast Asian traditional game where the player kicks and balances a rattan woven ball on the air before passing it to another player. The event ended with a community luncheon at 1300 hours.



Italy cruise as Denmark edge towards Euro 2024 spot



FOREIGN DESK

PARIS : Reigning champions Italy eased to a 4-0 victory over Malta in Euro 2024 qualifying, while Denmark strengthened their position and dented the hopes of outsiders Kazakhstan. Giacomo Bonaventura curled in his first Italy goal and Domenico Berardi produced a fine strike of his own to double the lead in Bari. Berardi struck again in the second half before Davide Frattesi rounded off a comfortable evening for Luciano Spalletti's side who kept hold of second place in Group C of Euro

2024 qualifiers ahead of next week's showdown with England. "That match is where we will really see how much potential we have," Spalletti told broadcaster RAI. Italy, with a game in hand, closed to within three points of England going into their clash at Wembley. "It will definitely be emotional, I have amazing memories from that stadium," said Berardi, who played in Italy's Euro 2020 shoot-out final win over England. "We'll go there trying to do what we did today, play our own game and look to win." Ukraine are level with Italy after a 2-0 win over North Macedonia in Prague.

Georgiy Sudakov put Ukraine ahead on 30 minutes and substitute Oleksandr Karavaiev sealed victory deep into stoppage time, ahead of their visit to Malta next week. Denmark avenged their shock loss to Kazakhstan in March as Robert Skov netted twice in a 3-1 win in Copenhagen. Jonas Wind set the Danes, semi-finalists at Euro 2020, on their way before Skov scored a quick-fire double either side of half-time. Kazakhstan pulled one back via Yan Vorogovskiy but they fell four points off the pace in Group H of Euro 2024 qualifiers. "First of all, we must be happy about a victory in a

European qualifier at home. It hasn't been plain sailing in this group," Denmark coach Kasper Hjulmand told broadcaster TV2. "It was an extremely important home game, and we were forced to win. The pressure was there, and we got the victory we had to." Benjamin Sesko's brace powered Slovenia to a 3-0 win over Finland in Ljubljana. Sesko's first came from the penalty spot and the RB Leipzig forward added another with a clinical finish, taking him to eight goals in his last 11 international appearances. Defender Erik Janza grabbed a late third for Slovenia, who lead Denmark at the top on goal difference.

Angel wins in Shanghai for maiden LPGA title

SHANGHAI: Angel Yin won on the LPGA Tour for the first time as she held her nerve on the first playoff hole to beat world number one Lilia Vu in Shanghai on Sunday. On a dramatic final day that saw the lead change hands repeatedly at Qizhong Garden Golf Club, the Americans both finished 14-under after four rounds, a shot ahead of the chasing pack, to ensure they went to a playoff. In hazy conditions at the \$2.1 million event, overnight co-leader Yin birdied the par-four 18th in the sudden-death playoff. It was Yin's first victory on the LPGA Tour in her 159th start. "Feels amazing. I got to say," said the 25-year-old, who is ranked 35 in the world. "I was playing today and I was like, wow, winning is tough. It's not easy. "So hats off to Lilia for playing so well last day again, and obviously she's been playing really well." Vu had shot a final-round four-under-par 68 and Yin, who shared the overnight lead with Sweden's Maja Stark, carded a 70 to take them into the playoff. Vu said she was happy with her performance during the week but felt she was not at her best in the final round. "I made a lot of mistakes today, to be honest, and I felt like this was definitely not my A-game," she said. "Today was just Angel's day, I'm happy for her," she added. South Korea's Choi Hye-jin, who started the day in 24th position, rocketed up the leaderboard with an eight-under 64 for third place on 13-under for the tournament. Choi at one point held the clubhouse lead. In the end, she finished alongside Germany's Esther Henseleit, Liu Yu of China and the Thai duo of Ariya Jutanugarn and Pavarisa Yoktuan. —DNA

Babar, Rizwan were timid

AHMEDABAD: India's all-rounder Hardik Pandya commented on Pakistan's dismal performance with the bat against arch-rivals India on Saturday, asserting that Babar Azam and Mohammad Rizwan were timid amid their partnership. Pakistan, at one stage, were looking in a strong position to amass the 300-run mark. The tide changed when skipper Babar Azam was dismissed for 50 by India pacer Mohammed Siraj. It sparked a collapse and the side were dismissed for just 191. Hardik Pandya said he knew India was in the game as Pakistan captain Babar Azam and wicketkeeper Mohammad Rizwan settled the side with a timid batting approach. "Babar [Azam] and [Mohammad] Rizwan were timid," Hardik Pandya said. "They didn't take any chances, which is why we thought we were always in the game. There wasn't much in the pitch for the bowlers. They didn't try going for shots or attack us, which is why we were able to bowl dot balls. "I have seen that if two players bat in the same way, if one gets out, then it opens up a lot of doors." — Agencies

Disrupted...

FROM PAGE 1

the reason behind this episode as violent thunderstorms with hail hit the metropolis Saturday night till wee hours on Sunday. As a result, airport sources say, multiple flights were diverted to Islamabad and Multan after weather conditions did not allow these planes to land in Lahore. On the other hand, two Fly Baghdad flights IF-331 and IF-332 from Karachi to the Iraqi capital were cancelled. Similarly, two domestic PIA flights PK-503 and PK-504 one from Karachi to Gwadar and the other Gwadar to Karachi – had also been cancelled. At the same time, four more flights from Islamabad to Gilgit – PK-601, PK-602, PK-605 and PK-606 – were also cancellation list.

Pak hosting...

FROM PAGE 1

The latest figures from the UNHCR estimate that over 3,700,000 Afghans currently reside in Pakistan, with only 1,330,000 registered as refugees. Pakistan is not a signatory to the UN Refugee Convention and lacks a national asylum system. The UN's contractee for refugee registration, the Society for Human Rights and Prisoners' Aid (SHARP) has been criticised for its protracted administrative processes, leaving many in Pakistan without a way to attain protection or the required documentation. The visas of many refugees who initially held regular entry permits have now expired. In response to the new order, the Federation of Afghanistan Journalists in Exile (FAJE), a newly formed organisation advocating for journalists in Afghanistan and the diaspora, called on the United Nations, Pakistani authorities, and international organisations to increase support measures for Afghan journalists in exile.

Afghanistan...

FROM PAGE 1

hospital, the World Health Organisation said. More than 90% of those who died in the earlier quakes were women and children, the UN's children agency Unicef said. In its report, the USGS said the epicentre of the latest tremor was 30km north-west of Herat, Afghanistan's third-largest city close to the Iranian border. Last Saturday's earthquake hit Zindajan, a rural district some 40km from Herat. The tremor saw entire houses, which were too fragile to withstand the quake, reduced to rubble. Villagers used shovels and bare hands to search for missing people. Medicines Sans Frontiers Afghanistan Programme head, Yahya Kalilah told the AFP news agency the casualties would likely be low because people were already sleeping outside in tents.

"In terms of psychology, people are panicked and traumatised," he said. "People are not feeling safe. I will assure you 100%, no one will sleep in their house."

Economic...

FROM PAGE 1

cause the region is a crucial supplier of energy and a key shipping passageway," they wrote. In that event, oil prices could spike to \$150 a barrel. Global inflation would be likely to surge to 6.7% from the current IMF 2024 forecast of 5.8%. Global growth would be likely to shrink by 1% from the current projections for next year, to 1.7%. This would be the worst figure since 1982, and, in monetary terms, would cost the global economy roughly \$1 trillion. "The spare production capacity in Saudi Arabia and the UAE may not save the day if Iran decides to close the Strait of Hormuz, through which one-fifth of the world's daily oil supplies pass. There'd also be a more extreme risk-off shift in financial markets," analysts warn. The effects would be felt quickly, analysts claim, because many countries are still battling inflation caused by the West's Ukraine-related sanctions on Russia.

Italy commits to boost trade and visas for Pakistanis

CM Mohsin Naqvi said that Pakistan and Italy are friendly countries and the time has come to convert this friendship into beneficial economic relations

DNA

ISLAMABAD : Ambassador of Italy, Andreas Ferrarese met Caretaker Punjab Chief Minister Mohsin Naqvi in Punjab House Islamabad on Sunday to discuss increasing cooperation in the fields of culture, tourism and trade. In the meeting they also discussed measures regarding maximum exchange of trade and cultural delegations. The Italian ambassador reiterated his commitment to continue supporting Pakistan for the extension of GSP plus status. On the occasion, CM Mohsin Naqvi said that Pakistan and Italy are friendly countries and the time has come to convert this friendship into beneficial economic relations. He said the fields of culture



and commerce are interlinked and Punjab government wants to increase cooperation with Italy in these fields. "We welcome Italy's support for the training of Police Liaison Officers", says Mohsin Naqvi. The Chief Minister said that facilitation of work visa and active role of Trade Commission is key to increase trade. Mohsin Naqvi said that we are starting one window operation to promote investment in Punjab and if Italian investors will come to Punjab, they will be provided all possible facilities. The Italian Ambassador said in the meeting that Trade Commission has started work to increase mutual trade and steps are being taken to facilitate work visa and further cooperation in the fields of culture, tourism and trade will be promoted.

Briefs

50 killed as wooden boat capsizes in DRC

KINSHASA : At least 49 people have been killed, and 120 others are missing after a boat capsized on a river in northwest Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), according to an official. The accident occurred in Mbandaka city on the Congo River in Equateur Province, according to provincial Deputy Governor Taylor Nganzi. "The boat was travelling to Bolomba, a territory more than 300 kilometres from the port of Bankita in Mbandaka city, when it tipped over at night, which is illegal," Nganzi told reporters. "On board were passengers and cargo, which included construction materials," he said. "The search for the missing is ongoing." Nganzi said the dead included children, noting the death toll was provisional. The accident was attributed to overloading. The private boat was carrying 500 bags of cement and iron bars, according to witnesses. River transport is common in DRC due to mostly impassable roads, but vessels are prohibited from travelling at night to minimise accidents.

'Ring of Fire' eclipse mesmerizes Skygazers

ALBUQUERQUE : Skygazers across the Americas turned their faces upwards for a rare celestial event: an annular solar eclipse. A crowd of people wearing protective eyewear gathered in Albuquerque, New Mexico, one of many across the western United States watching as the Moon passed between the Sun and Earth at its furthest point from our planet. Since it is so distant, it did not cover the Sun completely, creating a "ring of fire" effect that brought cheers from the crowd in Albuquerque. "It's majestic. We're in awe," said one viewer, Shannon Cozad. In the course of just a few hours the most striking "path of the annularity" was crossing a handful of major cities, including Eugene, Oregon and San Antonio, Texas, with partial eclipse phases lasting an hour or two before and after. "It's kind of like a black hole," said Mubaraq Sokunbi, an excited eight-year-old who was at a hot air balloon festival in Albuquerque with his family. —APP

Inflation falls to 1.7% in September 2023

RIYADH : According to a report issued by the General Authority for Statistics (GASTAT), the Consumer Price Index (CPI) increased by 1.7% in September 2023, compared to September 2022, down from 2.0% in August 2023. This stability is due to the early economic measures taken by the Kingdom to counter the global rise in inflation rates. CPI measures the prices paid by consumers for a fixed basket of goods and services consisting of 490 items. The respective prices are collected through field visits to points of sale.

Turkey digs yield clues to human history

KARAHANTEPE : The dry expanses of southeastern Turkey, home to some of humanity's most ancient sites, have yielded fresh discoveries in the form of a stone phallus and a coloured boar. For researchers, the carved statue of a man holding his phallus with two hands while seated atop a bench adorned with a leopard, is a new clue in the puzzle of our very beginnings. The 2.3-meter (7.5-foot tall) work was discovered at the end of September at Karahantepe, in the heart of a complex of some 20 sites that were home to thousands of people during the Stone Age. Karahantepe is part of the network around UNESCO-listed Gobekli Tepe, a place where our prehistoric ancestors gathered to worship more than 7,000 years before Stonehenge or the earliest Egyptian pyramids. —APP

Pakistan, Morocco discuss economic partnership

During the meeting, they discussed economic partnerships and cooperation in various fields. Both also expressed their mutual determination to strengthen their collaboration

NEWS DESK

ISLAMABAD : The Caretaker Federal Minister for Finance Dr Shamshad Akhtar on Saturday held a meeting with the Moroccan Minister for Trade and Industry, Ryad Mezzour, during her visit to Morocco. During the meeting, they discussed economic partnerships and cooperation in various fields. Both also expressed their mutual determination to strengthen their collaboration. Earlier, Chief Executive Officer of Global Growth and Opportunity Division, Bill and Melinda Gates (BMG) Foundation, Mark Suzman, met the Caretaker Minister for Finance, Revenue and Economic Affairs, Dr. Shamshad Akhtar. The meeting was held on the sidelines of annual meeting of the World Bank and International Monetary Fund (IMF), said a press release issued by the Ministry of Finance. Building on previous discus-



sions in Pakistan, the meeting centered on Pakistan Digital Stack like the next generation of Raast-supported Digital Public Infrastructure (DPI) which Pakistan can introduce with BMG Foundation's help. The meeting was followed by the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between Ministry of Finance, Government of Pakistan with BMGF on the Pakistan Digital Stack. This MoU solidifies the Foundation's continued support for this digital infrastructure project, following the success of the Raast - Pakistan Instant Payment System. The National Financial Inclusion Council, chaired by the Finance Minister, will oversee the implementation of the Digital Pakistan Stack, marking a significant step toward fostering inclusive economic growth and development in Pakistan. Additionally, during her visit to Morocco, Finance Minister Dr Shamshad Akhtar participated in an event discussing the IMF assistance programme, where she emphasised the cooperation between international financial institutions and governments.

Higher energy and food prices keep inflation elevated: BMP

DNA

ISLAMABAD: The inflation measured by the Sensitive Price Indicator (SPI) continued to increase in the wake of higher prices of food and energy despite a recent cut in the prices of petroleum products, as essential commodities have still not seen a decline in prices, leaving trade and industry frustrated. FPCCI former president and Businessmen Panel Chairman Mian Anjum Nisar, quoting the Pakistan Bureau of Statistics (PBS), observed that the index spiked 38.28% when compared with the corresponding week of last year, as out of the 51 essential commodities covered by SPI, prices of 17 (33.33%)

items increased, rates of another 17 decreased and prices of the remaining 17 items remained unchanged compared to the previous week. On a weekly basis, the price of tomato rose 6.28%, egg 3.48%, powdered salt 2.75%, cooked beef 1.06%, garlic 1.04%, tea (prepared) 0.73%, beef 0.39% and potato 0.35%. Among non-food commodities, the electricity charges for Q1 rose 8.59%, energy savers 0.55%, shirting 0.47% and liquefied petroleum gas (LPG) 0.31%, according to the PBS. The year-on-year trend depicted price increases in the range of 58-137% among different items. Mian Anjum Nisar said that Pakistan has been facing a high inflation for the past couple of years partly due to massive depreciation of the rupee against the US

dollar and partly due to a surge in global commodity prices like energy cost. The country largely meets its energy demand through expensive imports. The monthly inflation reading, measured by the Consumer Price Index, hit a four-month high at 31.4% in September 2023 after reaching a six-decade high at 38% in May. Inflationary pressures are expected to slow down from January 2024 onwards. The latest rupee appreciation of 10.62% in the past 27 working days to over three-month high at Rs277.62/\$ is expected to encourage the government to make a deep cut in petroleum product prices in the upcoming fortnightly review for the second half of October. However, the likely surge in gas prices under a con-

dition of the International Monetary Fund (IMF) loan program may keep inflation elevated and not allow it to fall significantly in the near future. He, stressing the need for putting the economy on a sustainable growth trajectory by providing incentives to the industry, lamented that the economy is facing multiple challenges of falling exports, high inflation, low growth and declining foreign reserves, with fiscal accounts under immense pressure on account of heavy interest payments. Businessmen Panel (BMP) Chairman said that the drop shows the government would find it difficult to achieve the industrial growth and export target, leading to more pressure on foreign exchange reserves of the country.

SFD Inks \$100m loan for Grenada climate project

RIYADH: Affirming its commitment to assisting developing nations, the Saudi Fund for Development has signed a loan agreement with Grenada to provide \$100 million for a climate-smart infrastructure project. The Caribbean country has now become the 91st nation to receive financial assistance from SFD, according to a press release. The signing took place on the sidelines of the 2023 Annual Meetings of the World Bank Group and the International Monetary Fund in Marrakech, Morocco. The loan is expected to help develop climate-smart infrastructure in the towns of St. George's, Grenville, and neighboring areas in Grenada. The project will include constructing breakwaters, developing hydro and sewage networks, modernizing the waste treatment system, and using remote sensors to monitor air pollution, thus helping the Caribbean nation become more environmentally friendly and climate-smart. The assistance provided by the organization is expected to generate both direct and indirect employment opportunities in the region. "The project also reflects the importance that SFD places on mitigating climate change through smart and environmentally friendly projects," said SFD in a press statement. This is not the first time that SFD has provided financial assistance to Caribbean nations. Earlier in January, the organization inked an \$80 million financing agreement for the University of the West Indies.

Australia rejects indigenous referendum, setback for reconciliation

SYDNEY: Australia decisively rejected a proposal to recognize Indigenous people in the constitution, in a major setback to the country's efforts for reconciliation with its First Peoples. Australians had to vote "Yes" or "No" in the referendum, the first in almost a quarter of a century, on the question of whether to alter the constitution to recognize Aboriginal and Torres Strait Island people through the creation of an Indigenous advisory body, the "Voice to Parliament." Nationwide, with almost 70 percent of the vote counted, the "No" vote led "Yes" 60 percent to 40 percent. Australian broadcaster ABC and other TV networks have projected that a majority of voters in all six of Australia's states would vote against altering the 122-year-old constitution. A successful referendum requires at least four of the six to vote in favor, along with a national majority. Prime Minister Anthony Albanese acknowledged it was not the outcome he had hoped for but said the country would have to seek a new way forward for reconciliation. "Our nation's road to reconciliation has often been hard going," Albanese said in a televised news conference. "Tonight is not the end of the road and is certainly not the end of our efforts to bring people together." Academics and human rights advocates fear the win by the "No" camp could set back reconciliation efforts by years. —APP

Malaysia looks forward to closer ties with GCC

COLOMBO, Sri Lanka: Malaysia is looking forward to working closely with the Gulf Cooperation Council through the Association of Southeast Asian Nations, Foreign Minister Zambry Abdul Kadir told Arab News ahead of the ASEAN-GCC summit in Riyadh. Member states of ASEAN, of which Malaysia is a founding member, have been increasing ties in recent years with GCC members, which consist of Saudi Arabia, Oman, Qatar, Bahrain, Kuwait and the UAE. Top leaders of the two regional blocs are scheduled to meet in the Saudi capital later this month for their inaugural joint summit. "We are looking forward to working closely with GCC ... at the ASEAN level," Zambry told Arab News on the sidelines of the Indian Ocean Rim Association meeting in Colombo. "These are the two regions, GCC and ASEAN, that can play a vital role for the future social, economic and political development." Malaysia was appointed as country coordinator on behalf of ASEAN to organize the "historical summit," Zambry said. "We are playing a crucial role to make sure that ASEAN and GCC will become one of the most formidable multilateral (relationship) ... for the years to come." As ASEAN countries engaged more with Gulf states last year, London-based think tank Asia House said it was expecting ties to become more important between the two regions. In a December 2022 report, Asia House said there are "natural synergies" between ASEAN and Gulf visions for economic growth, as their countries invested more in digitalization, manufacturing and logistics infrastructure to boost exports. Malaysia has also been forging closer bilateral cooperation with Gulf countries. Prime Minister Anwar Ibrahim was on a state visit to the UAE in early October for talks on a free trade pact, during which Abu Dhabi Future Energy Company PJSC (Masdar) committed to invest up to \$8 billion to develop renewable energy projects in Malaysia. The agreement was "a beginning for a larger cooperation" between Malaysia and UAE, Zambry said. Malaysia is eyeing a boost in relations with Saudi Arabia as well, with which the Southeast Asian nation said it has "very special ties." "We hope that we will be able to remain so and that we will further strengthen our relations, but in different fields," Zambry said. "Saudi Arabia always remains special to Malaysia." — DNA

N.Korea sending Russia military equipment

WASHINGTON : US officials have accused North Korea of supplying vast amounts of military hardware to Russia for use in Ukraine. Pyongyang has supplied up to 1,000 containers of "equipment and munitions" in "recent weeks", National Security Council Spokesperson John Kirby said. Officials also released photos of what they said were 300 containers assembled for transport in Najin, North Korea. Last month, North Korean leader Kim Jong Un visited Russia to discuss potential military cooperation. Moscow's military is believed to be burning through huge amounts of artillery shells and missiles in its ongoing invasion of Ukraine, and has been seeking to replenish its supplies from some of its isolated allies. Some analysts believe that Mr Kim's regime could be sitting on huge stores of arms, but could be reluctant to hand over too much given its relative lack of resources. US intelligence agencies tracked the deliveries, which officials said took place between 7 September and 1 October. Speaking at a news conference on Friday, Mr Kirby said the equipment was exported via sea and rail to a supply depot in southwestern Russia, near Tikhoretsk, about 180 miles (290km) from the Ukrainian border.—Agencies

Poland votes in closely watched election

WARSAW : As polls open at 7 am (0500GMT) in parliamentary elections on Sunday, Poland's ruling nationalist Law and Justice (PiS) party is hoping to win an unprecedented third term in office. Voting in the closely watched race ends at 9 pm (1900GMT), and the first results are due later in the evening. The previous election in 2019 saw the reelection of a majority nationalist conservative United Right (ZP) coalition government, without a majority in the Senate. Poland has a party-list PR voting system for its 460-seat lower house of parliament. Parties win seats based on the aggregate vote for their candidates in each constituency and then spread the seats to candidates with the highest totals. For the 100-seat Senate, candidates are elected on a first-past-the-post basis. The system is a party-list proportional representation using the D'Hondt method in multi-seat constituencies. There is a 5% threshold for parties and 8% for coalitions to win seats in parliament. The elections are accompanied by a four-question referendum. One question asks Poles if they want the EU-imposed "admission of thousands of illegal immigrants from the Middle East and Africa." Critics argue that the ruling PiS has tilted the election system through adjustments.—Agencies

Alarming lack in birth registration of girl children

Every year 15 October is celebrated as international Rural Women Day according to the UN General Assembly's resolution

DNA

ISLAMABAD: During the second session of the 1st day of 16th Annual Rural Women Conference held here in Islamabad, recognizing the alarming lack in birth registration of girl children and marginalized segments of the society, the speakers and the participants urged the government to devise effective mechanisms involving communities, while taking into account innovative solutions utilizing digital technologies. Today (Sunday) is the 1st day of the conference. Every year 15 October is celebrated as international Rural Women Day according to the UN General Assembly's resolution A/RES/62/136 of 18 December 2007. Through the resolution, member states recognized the significance of the role that is played by the rural women admitting their contributions in enhancing agricultural and rural development, improving food security and end poverty. On Tuesday 17th October, the conference will culminate in award ceremony and celebrating the successes of the rural women who are



participating actively in the 3-day conference representing 150 plus districts of the country. PODA's 3-day conference is a regular feature in Islamabad since 2008. The theme of the ongoing conference is "Stop Child Marriages for Sustainable Development, Climate and Democracy". "Due to lack of official identity (ID) girls are deprived of their fundamental human rights including right to legal identity, citizenship, education, marriage, reproductive health, inheritance, government assistance, services and lead a dignified life as these

are the rights enshrined in the Constitution of Pakistan," said Sameena Nazir. Birth registration helps to decreasing the risks of child marriage, child labor and children being treated as adults in the criminal justice system," said by the Founder and President of PODA during the second session of the day. "This very basic human right will provide a strong foundation for achieving gender equality and empower women and girls," said a speaker "Gender equality is goal 5 of SDGs which is translated into all SDGs," she explained. After the inaugural plenary, the day's proceedings were focused on the rights of girl-child and registration issues linked with an alarming neglect to register birth of girl children. The PDHS survey of Pakistan identifies that here 42% children under the age of five are not registered. However, in newly merged districts of FATA, the birth registration rate is far low. According to UNICEF it was 1% in 2017 in former agencies. Being a signatory to the

Convention on the Rights of the Child, Government of Pakistan is committed to provide children their basic rights to survival, development, protection and participation. The speakers included: Leher Mirza, Sudi Kohli-Sindh, Sofia Javed from Khyber pakhtoon khaw, women boxer, Sughra Rahman from Sahiwal, Dr. Yasmin Gul-Swat, Shahida Wafa Alvi from Muzafargarh - writer and journalist and Sadaf Raza from Justju Foundation Sindh, Fareeha Ammar - UN Women,

Darakhshan Saleh-Sindh commission on status of women and Ms. Kanwal Liaqat, MPA, PML-N, Lahore, Ms. Sabeen Rizvi, MNA, General Secretary Parliamentarian's Forum, PML-N also spoke on the occasion. Ms. Raina represented transgender community said that government institutions should come-forward to ensure hundred percent birth registration. It should not be left to the will of the families and others, she explained.



Briefs

Deal between PIA, Indonesian leasing company finalized

DNA

ISLAMABAD: An agreement between the Indonesian company and Pakistan International Airline (PIA) has been finalized regarding custody of two PIA planes due to non-payment of lease amount. According to sources, both the aircraft - Airbus 320 - will soon join the PIA fleet. Earlier, PIA had decided to buy the two planes instead of paying lease payment. In this regard, a four-member committee arrived in Kuala Lumpur to negotiate with the leasing company to take over the aircraft.

The four-member committee was consisted of Secretary Aviation, CEO PIA retired Vice Air Marshal Amir Hayat, Chief Engineer Amir and Deputy Engineer. However, the leasing company did not extend the lease of these airplanes due to non-payment of dues in 2021 and PIA had to pay the parking fee of the planes to the leasing company due to non-regular returns. Sources revealed that the monthly parking fee of both airplanes is \$0.6 million per month which has been pending for two years. The payment of fines and dues exceeded the original value of the planes that is why PIA had to decide to buy the aircraft instead of paying all dues but the deal failed due to lack of funds with PIA. However, the leasing company agreed to negotiate with PIA in Kuala Lumpur on the inclusion of third party. According to PIA spokesperson, both airplanes are worth \$30 million and as soon the planes' deal is finalized, an engineering team will audit the planes and money will be paid and the planes will be handed over to PIA.

Israel's action go beyond self-defense

DNA

BEIJING: China's top diplomat Wang Yi said Israel's actions have gone beyond the scope of self-defense, expressing concerns about the escalating Israel-Palestine conflict as Israel ordered one million people from the northern part of Gaza to evacuate within 24 hours as it prepared for a ground assault. In his phone call with Saudi Foreign Minister Prince Faisal bin Farhan Al Saud on Saturday, Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi said China opposes and condemns all acts that harm civilians, as they violate basic human conscience and the fundamental principles of international law. Israel's actions go beyond the scope of self-defense. It should heed the calls of the international community and the UN Secretary-General and avoid collective punishment of the people of Gaza, Wang said. Israel was preparing on Saturday to launch a ground assault in the Hamas-controlled Gaza Strip, after telling Palestinians living in the densely populated territory to flee south toward a closed border with Egypt, Reuters reported.

Serena Hotels host grand Mehfil-e-Mushaira at ISH

Renowned poets of Pakistan spell-bound audiences with their poetry; CEO Serena Hotels Aziz Boolani assures to continue this practice and expand its ambit to other cities as well

MAHNOOR ANSAR

ISLAMABAD: Serena Hotels recently orchestrated a grand Mushaira entitled Mehfil e Sukhan, a distinguished poetic gathering that showcased the brilliance of some of the most esteemed poets of our era.

The evening, characterized by enchanting verses, featured the literary prowess of renowned poets including Anwar Masood, Itfikh Arif, Kishwar Naheed, Anwar Shaoor, Dr. Pirzada Qasim, Asghar Nadeem Syed, Dr. Fatima Hassan, Akhtar Usman, Ajmal Siraj, Nasira Zuberi, Ashfaq Nasir, Umair Najmi, Rubab Tabassum, and Farjaad Mehd.

The event was graced by the esteemed Nazamat of Shakeel Jazib, a distinguished personality celebrated for his profound understanding of poetic traditions and significant contributions to the literary realm.

This poetic extravaganza promised an evening replete with soul-stirring verses, eloquence, and profound thoughts, thereby creating an atmosphere that deeply resonated with poetry enthusiasts and literary aficionados alike. The primary objective of the event was to celebrate the rich heritage of Urdu poetry, providing an esteemed platform for poets to share their thoughts, emotions, and perspectives with a captivated audience.

The Mushaira Mehfil e Sukhan stands as a testament to Serena Hotels' unwavering commitment to the promotion of cultural and artistic expressions.

By fostering an environment where creativity flourishes, the event underscored Serena Hotels' dedication to connecting people through the universal language of poetry. CEO Serena Hotels Aziz Boolani assures to continue this practice and expand its ambit to other cities as well. He said the Serena Hotels took this initiative last year and after its resounding success it decided to not only continue this practice to expand its ambit to other cities as well.



Major upset of World Cup 2023 Afghanistan beat the defending champions by 69 runs

DNA

NEW DELHI : Afghanistan outclassed "mighty" England by 69 runs to record the first major upset of the ongoing World Cup 2023. Chasing a target of 285, England were bowled out 215 in the 41st over with Afghanistan securing a historic 69-run victory against the defending champions. Today's win is Afghanistan's first-ever victory over England in one-day internationals (ODIs) and their second World Cup win. Batting second, the defending champions faced challenges on the tricky Delhi wicket from the starting overs as pacer Fazal Farooqi removed England's reliable opener, Jonny Bairstow with an inswinging on the first ball of his spell. Joe Root looked in sharp touch after arriving but Mujeeb Ur

Rahman's peach of a delivery sent him back to the pavilion for just 11 runs. Skipper Jos Buttler struggled from the moment he stepped on the field with the bat and was removed for just nine runs courtesy of a beauty by Naveen-ul-Haq. Harry Brook was the only English batter to hold his ground and play a long innings as the youngster scored 66 off 61 with eight boundaries but he, too, couldn't do much and lost his wicket to Mujeeb. Buttler's men struggled badly on the dead and slow pitch and kept on losing wickets at regular intervals, losing all of their batters for 215 runs. Rashid and Mujeeb took three wickets each, Mohammad Nabi got two, while Farooqi and Naveen picked one. Batting first, Rahmatullah Gurbaz provided his side a flying start as they were 75/0 in just the first nine overs.

Gurbaz showcased his brilliant batting skills and played a rapid knock, scoring 80 off just 57 balls which included 12 boundaries, eight fours and four sixes. The left-handed batter was on his way to complete a well-deserved century but a misunderstanding with his captain Hashmatullah Shahidi got him run out just 20 runs shy of a hundred. After Gurbaz's wicket, Afghanistan lost wickets in quick succession but Ikrum Ali Khil's 58 and valuable knocks by Rashid (23) and Mujeeb (28), respectively, powered Afghanistan to a fighting 284-run total. Adil Rashid bagged three wickets for 42 runs while Mark Wood, using his sheer pace, got two to his name. Things have gotten difficult for Buttler as his side only has one win in three matches and they play an in-form South Africa next on October 21 in Mumbai.

NZ set for right wing coalition after national win

AUCKLAND: The opposition National Party has won the New Zealand election, taking enough seats to form a coalition with its allies on the right wing of politics. Incumbent prime minister Chris Hipkins, of Labour, phoned National's leader Chris Luxon to concede defeat. Mr Luxon thanked National voters and said they had "reached for hope" and "voted for change". It marks a rapid elevation for Mr Luxon, who became an MP in 2020 and National leader only a year later. The New Zealand Herald reported that National was projected to win 50 seats with around 39% of the vote. That tally combined with the 11 projected seats of Act, a natural ally on the right, would give it the thinness of majorities—DNA

Voters urged to verify voter status by texting 8300

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Eligible voters can verify their registration status on the voter lists by texting their Computerized National Identity Card (CNIC) number to 8300 as the Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) is permitting citizens to register, transfer, or rectify their voting information until October 25th. To an ECP official, after sending SMS to 8300, an automated response will be generated, furnishing information such as the name of the electoral area, block code, and serial number. Each registered voter has the option to verify their details by visiting the District

Election Commissioner's office in their respective area, where the complete electoral roll is accessible. The addresses and contact information for the DEC's offices across the four provinces can be found on the Election Commission's website. He mentioned that voters have the option to download Form-21 (for voter registration or transfer), Form-22 (for raising objections or addressing omissions in voting), and Form-23 (for correcting personal details). These forms can then be submitted to the appropriate offices of Form Registration Officers and Assistant Registration Officers. He mentioned that citizens can obtain information by dialling the ECP helpline at

051-8848888, where they will receive responses from a telecomputerized system. It is important to mention here that the ECP had removed restrictions on voter lists nationwide, enabling eligible individuals to register, transfer or update their voting information until October 25th. The ECP suspended the electoral rolls on July 20th this year by utilizing clause 39 of the Election Act 2017. He called upon all eligible citizens to verify the accuracy of their voter registration, make necessary modifications, and process any transfers to align their details with their computerized national identity card information by October 25, 2023.

Indus Shield-2023: 14-nation air exercise at PAF base

Indus Shield-2023 has brought together elite air forces from 14 countries and will serve as a platform to showcase their professional prowess. The participating nations include Pakistan, Turkiye, Saudi Arabia, Qatar, UAE, Egypt, Oman, Bahrain, Azerbaijan, Indonesia, Morocco, Uzbekistan, China and Hungary

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan Air Force's 14 nation air exercise, Indus Shield 2023, is in full swing at an operational air base of PAF. The top-notch exercise stands out as one of the mega aerial warfare exercises of the region and is marked as a significant milestone in the realization of PAF's commitment to enhance its aerial capabilities alongside bolstering international cooperation. The

participation of the exercise encompasses fighter jets alongside pilots, ground crew and Air Defence Controllers from the leading Air Forces of the world. Indus Shield-2023 has brought together elite air forces from 14 countries and will serve as a platform to showcase their professional prowess. The participating nations include Pakistan, Turkiye, Saudi Arabia, Qatar, UAE, Egypt, Oman, Bahrain, Azerbaijan, Indonesia, Morocco, Uzbekistan, China

and Hungary. The exercise holds great importance as it signifies the leading role of the Pakistan Air Force in spearheading technological advancements, promoting modernization, evolving air combat tactics, and addressing contemporary aerial defence challenges. Exercise Indus Shield also underscores the mutual commitment of participating nations to achieve shared objectives and addresses the evolving dynamics of

aerial warfare in the face of common security threats. As the international community turns its attention to Pakistan, PAF is poised to become the center of global focus for honing modern air combat tactics and strengthening interoperability between participating nations. Exercise Indus Shield-2023 is not only providing an opportunity to participating air forces to demonstrate their skills and capabilities.

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