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Pro-China Muizzu wins Maldives presidency

Detailed News On Page-08

Iran ready for cooperation with Pakistan

Detailed News On Page-08



Canelo Alvarez retains undisputed title

Detailed News On Page-06



Pakistan leaders condemn attack 'Terrorists' carry out attack in heart of Ankara

Prime Minister Anwaar-ul-Haq Kakar expressed solidarity with the Turkish people following the dastardly terrorist attack



NEWS DESK

ANKARA: Two terrorists carried out a bomb attack on Sunday outside the ministry buildings in Ankara with one of them blowing himself up while the other was "neutralised" by authorities, the Turkish interior minister said. Turkish Interior Minister Ali Yerlikaya said two police officers were slightly injured during the attack that echoed through the Turkish capital Ankara. "Two terrorists, who arrived in a light commercial vehicle in front of the gate of the General Directorate of Security, carried out a bomb attack. One of the terrorists blew himself up," wrote Ali Yerlikaya,

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Mastung blast toll rises to 60

DNA

QUETTA: The death toll from the Mastung suicide attack has risen to 60 on Sunday, with the tragic passing of another injured victim. Muhammad Rafiq, who had been receiving medical care at the Civil Hospital Trauma Center in Quetta, succumbed to his injuries today. The ghastly attack, which marked the second major explosion in the district in September, was carried out by terrorists near a mosque where 43 people lost their lives instantly while preparing for a celebratory procession in honour of EidMiladunNabi on Friday. Mastung's Deputy Superintendent of Police (DSP) Nawaz Gashkori was also among the deceased. Balochistan police chief said that the cop tried to stop the suicide bomber upon suspicion when the latter blew himself up. He said that three police constables were also among the injured.

Policeman martyred, 2 terrorists killed

ABBAS HASHMI

LAHORE: Punjab police foiled a terrorist attack on a patrolling post in the Kundal area of Punjab's Mianwali district, Inspector General of Police (IGP) Dr Usman Anwar said in a statement on Sunday. The Punjab police chief said the gun battle between the law enforcers and the militants erupted after 10 to 12 terrorists attacked a police check post in the wee hours of Sunday. At least two terrorists were killed by the firing of policeman deployed on the roof of a nearby building while one policeman was martyred in the exchange of fire. The terrorists attacked the police check post from two sides, the IGP said adding that the Counter-Terrorism Department (CTD) teams also participated in the operation. The operation against the terrorists was carried out carefully as it got dark in the hilly area, the IGP said. He said the police had information about the terrorist attack and added that foreign elements were involved in the recent wave of terrorist attacks in the country.

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Curbing terrorism PM summons apex committee meeting

The huddle will mull over launching a country-wide operation against illegal foreign nationals

MAHNOOR ANSAR

ISLAMABAD: Caretaker Prime Minister Anwaar-ul-Haq Kakar has convened National Apex Committee meeting on Tuesday to discuss the law and order situation. The meeting will be held in Islamabad and would be attended by civil and military top brass. Overall law and order situation in the country and progress on National Action Plan will be reviewed, said sources. Heads of intelligence agencies will brief the participants on law and order situation and measures taken to wipe out terrorists. The huddle will mull over launching a country-wide operation against illegal foreign nationals. On Saturday, Chief of Army Staff (COAS) General Asim Munir reaffirmed that Pakistan armed forces' operation against terrorists would continue unabated and they will not rest till the menace of terrorism is rooted out from the country, ARY News reported, quoting military's media wing. According to Inter-Services Public Relations, the Army Chief made these remarks during his visit to Quetta today, where he was briefed on recent terrorist attacks in Mastung and Zhob. The briefing was also attended by Caretaker Interior Minister Sarfraz Ahmed Bugti,

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800 Afghan nationals detained

KHAYAM ABBASI

ISLAMABAD: Around 800 Afghan nationals were detained from Islamabad and its surrounding areas during a recent search operation by the Counter Terrorism Department (CTD) and the intelligence agencies, it emerged on Sunday. The operation was carried out in Biharakahu, Tarnool, Mehrabadian, Golra, Shams Colony and other areas in the vicinity, reported Express News. As many as half of the 800 arrested were released after proof of residence was confirmed while at least 375 Afghan nationals remain in custody. Meanwhile, 25 of the 800 initially arrested were found to be awaiting document verification. The 375 Afghan national whose proof of residence could not be confirmed are likely to

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Briefs Pakistan reaffirms support for Azerbaijan

DNA

BAKU: Caretaker Planning Minister for Development and Special Initiatives Muhammad Sami Saeed has reaffirmed Pakistan's support for territorial integrity and sovereignty of Azerbaijan while highlighting the importance of the long-standing economic cooperation and friendship between the two countries. The minister made these remarks while speaking to the media after the opening ceremony of Second Azerbaijan National Urban Forum & Global Observation of World Habitat Day 2023, themed 'Resilient cities as a driving force of economic development and fighting inequalities'.

Ex-PM refuses to defend party's position

DNA

ISLAMABAD: PMLN leader Shahid Khaqan Abbasi addressing a news conference in Islamabad on Monday, June 6, Former Prime Minister Shahid Khaqan Abbasi has said that he could not defend his party's position and that only the party president could do so. When asked during an interview with a private television on Saturday, about the PMLN's future strategy, Abbasi said the party president should answer that. He stressed the importance of explaining why the party had changed its narrative and why it had drifted away from its previous stance.

Addresses rally at Shahdra Nawaz to steer country out of crisis: Maryam

Says only anti-constitutionalists worry about Nawaz Sharif's return

BUREAU REPORT

LAHORE, Pakistan Muslim League-N's Chief Organiser and Senior Vice President Maryam Nawaz claimed on Sunday Nawaz Sharif would restore Pakistan's economy and end terrorism after his return to the country. She expressed these views while speaking at a public rally at Shahdra. "On October 21, the people will prove that the leader is only Nawaz Sharif who is coming to take Pakistan out of crises due to his vision and passion to serve the country," she highlighted. "The reform of the system and the welfare of the people is the goal of Nawaz Sharif and he will save the people from inflation with

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Shehbaz spotlights Nawaz relief commitment

ADIL SHAHEEN

ISLAMABAD: Former Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif, discussing priorities for the upcoming general elections, emphasized Mian Nawaz Sharif's commitment to alleviating people's suffering, making it a central election focus and their vision for the country. In a statement posted on social media platform X, Shehbaz outlined the core priorities, which encompass aiding the underprivileged, rejuvenating the nation's economy, and eliminating terrorism. As the PML-N president, he reaffirmed

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Illegal organ transplant gang busted

DNA

LAHORE: Caretaker Punjab Chief Minister Mohsin Naqvi has revealed the arrest of an eight-member gang including its leader - a doctor - involved in illegal organ transplants in the province. Addressing a press conference in the CM's House in Lahore on Sunday, Naqvi said that the doctor, who also has a history of prior arrest, was leading the gang involved in the illicit activity. The caretaker provincial chief executive revealed that the gang used to charge between Rs2.8 million to Rs10m for a kidney transplant and the person who used to assist in the surgery was in fact a "motor mechanic".

Germany announces €2mn aid for Pakistan



NAZIR SIYAL

KARACHI: German Consul General in Karachi DrRudigerLotz said that Germany will provide €2 million in aid to Pakistan till 2027 under the World Food Program. He said this during a book launch event organised by German-Pakistan Chamber of Commerce & Industry (GPCCI) here in Karachi. The book launch event titled, "Landmarks of Pakistan" contained pen and ink drawings of historical places of Pakistan by

a German Painter, Ms. Ute Elpers. German Consul General in Karachi DrRudigerLotz said, "Tonight it is an event where we do not talk [about] politics or business but about culture. The book has landmarks covering the country, all four provinces of Pakistan. We have in the book the Faisal Mosque in Islamabad and the Quid-i-Azam Mausoleum in Karachi... and so on. What I found particularly charming is the old who loved this country, its people and culture and started to take her ink and pen to draw these buildings and the love of the country which she had never seen. Speaking at the event, caretaker Tourism Minister Arshad Wali Mohammad said, "Today we have gathered to celebrate a remarkable fusion of art, culture and international cooperation exemplified by this coffee table book, an initiative of the German Pakistan Chamber of Commerce and Industry (GPCCI). This project underscores the enduring ties between Germany and Pakistan highlighting cultural exchange and fostering mutual understanding".

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Saudi Arabia-Israel détente – at what cost?

ANALYSIS

ANSAR M BHATTI



IN a historic and groundbreaking development, Saudi Arabia has appointed Ambassador Nayef al-Sudairi as the Kingdom's first-ever envoy to Palestine. Ambassador Nayef al-Sudairi has arrived in Palestine, boldly affirming Saudi Arabia's commitment to the establishment of a sovereign Palestinian state with East Jerusalem as its rightful capital. In a series of diplomatic exchanges, Palestinian officials engaged in constructive discussions with their Saudi counterparts. As part of the Kingdom's commitment to recognizing Israel, both sides have to reach a significant understanding. Israel will have to halt the construction of new settlements, empower Palestinians with greater control over security and construction activities in the West Bank, endorse full Palestinian membership in the United Nations, and provide consent for the establishment of a Palestine Liberation Organization office in Washington and a US consulate in East Jerusalem. Saudi Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman (MBS) has made it clear that Saudi Arabia considers the establishment of an independent Palestinian state to be a crucial prerequisite for recognizing Israel. Moreover, MBS appears to seek

specific support from the United States for Saudi Arabia's efforts to regain ties with Israel. There are five key areas in which the Saudis hope for proactive actions from both the US and Israel. Saudi Arabia has consistently advocated for the establishment of an independent Palestinian state with Al-Quds (Jerusalem) as its capital. While there may be some skepticism about the seriousness of Saudi Arabia's commitment to this cause, the majority view is that Saudi Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman (MBS) is unlikely to grant Israel's demands without receiving substantial assurances in return. Saudi Arabia has chosen to approach the issue of recognizing Israel with caution, unlike the United Arab Emirates (UAE) and Bahrain, which swiftly established diplomatic relations with Israel. Consequently, both the UAE and Bahrain have seen an influx of Jewish residents, many of whom have acquired UAE residency status. It is believed that some members of the Jewish community in these countries aim to exert influence on their respective political landscapes, reflecting a strategy that has been observed in various places. That is how Jews operate everywhere. For example in Ukraine the Prime Minister Denys Shmyhal and other key officials happen to be the Jews and thus wield potential control over government affairs. Saudi Arabia is committed to enhancing its defense capabilities and reducing dependency on allied nations like Pakistan for its defense requirements. Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman (MBS) envisions a robust command

and control system operated by the Saudi armed forces. To realize this objective, Saudi Arabia aims to establish a comprehensive defense pact with the United States while also seeking the autonomy to develop its weapons without external pressures, including from the United States and Israel. Saudi Arabia is actively pursuing a strategic defense partnership with the United States because it earnestly believes that such a partnership will bolster Saudi Arabia's defense capabilities through access to advanced military technology, intelligence sharing, and training programs. This collaboration will ensure a more secure and self-reliant Saudi Arabia. Saudi Arabia recognizes the importance of having its own weapons development facilities. This approach will enable the nation to have greater control over its defense technology and reduce reliance on external suppliers. It is committed to ensuring that its weapons development program operates independently and free from external influences. Historically, Saudi Arabia has cultivated strong diplomatic ties with Republican administrations in the United States. However, its relations with Democratic governments have often encountered challenges. It is reasonable to assume that the Saudi leadership closely monitors the US presidential elections, as the outcome can significantly impact their foreign policy. Should the Republicans secure the presidency, Saudi Arabia may continue their cordial relationship, maintaining the status quo. However, if the Democrats maintain control of the

White House, the Saudi leadership may find it necessary to reassess and adapt their diplomatic priorities. In essence, Saudi Arabia's foreign policy is responsive to the changing dynamics of US politics, and they are prepared to adjust their strategies to ensure productive relations with whichever party holds power in Washington. Mohammad Bin Salman (MBS) is committed to fostering peace and reducing animosities in the Middle East by 2030. One of the most significant steps towards achieving this goal is establishing peaceful relations with long-time arch-rival Iran. Similarly, pursuing a truce in Yemen is a top priority for MBS. Peace with Iraq, Syria, Libya has already been achieved. Furthermore, the potential easing of tensions with Israel could reshape the entire political landscape of the Middle East. Under MBS's leadership, Saudi Arabia aspires to become a prominent figure in the Muslim Ummah. The country has recently joined the BRICS alliance, adding to its already substantial involvement in international forums such as the G7, OIC, G20, and the imminent G8. If Saudi Arabia can successfully secure peace with Israel, Mohammad Bin Salman is poised to emerge as the undisputed leader within the Muslim bloc, solidifying the nation's position on the global stage. Regarding the issue of Israeli recognition by the two major Muslim powers, Indonesia and Pakistan, there have been reports indicating that both countries have faced significant pressure to improve their re-

lations with Israel. Recently, high-level Indonesian officials engaged in several crucial meetings with Palestinian representatives to discuss the nature of the pressure exerted on them and the incentives offered if Indonesia were to recognize Israel. However, it's worth noting that the current Indonesian government under President Joko Widodo has firmly rejected any such move. Looking ahead, despite the upcoming Presidential elections scheduled for February 2024, many analysts believe that Indonesia's stance on the Israel-Palestine issue is unlikely to undergo a substantial change. Pakistan too may not change its stand on this issue no matter which political party forms government as a result of the upcoming general elections. Pakistan is likely to recognize Israel only when an Independent Palestine state is established with Al Qadus as its capital. Pakistan has traditionally been a supporter of the Palestinian cause and a vocal advocate for their rights. This support is not tied to any particular political party but reflects a broader national consensus. The Palestinian issue holds significant importance in the hearts and minds of the Pakistani people. In conclusion, while political parties may change in Pakistan, the country's stance on recognizing Israel is deeply rooted in historical, geopolitical, and national considerations. It is likely to remain unchanged until progress is made towards the establishment of an independent Palestinian state with East Jerusalem as its capital.

Youth must play role for responsible tourism

ADIL SHAHEEN

ISLAMABAD : Pakistan is a country blessed with great tourism potential and it is the role of youth that can bring a sense of responsible tourism among the masses as young content creators must provide positive guidance about Pakistani tourist spots to the world. Aftab Ur Rehman Rana, Managing Director, Pakistan Tourism Development Corporation (PTDC) said that during last few years, Pakistan witnessed an increase in number of both domestic and international tourists due to which the growing tourism industry is getting boost day by day while the private sector is also playing an important role in this regard besides the efforts of government. Over one million international arrivals of tourists were recorded till June 2023 and it will reach by two million by the end of this year after a 3 years span of crisis time in the tourism industry due to Covid-19 pandemic, MD PTDC said while talking to APP. The number of overseas Pakistan-

is in Northern Areas has also witnessed an increase during this year which is creating a positive impact on the economic health of the country and shows the growth trend of the tourism industry in Pakistan encouraging private sector and investment opportunities. He said that PTDC has recently launched the National Tourism Portal to guide the tourists about the tourist spots and support them from booking to travel information and facilities. In recent years, the young vloggers and adventure lovers have recorded much about Pakistan's beauty, natural environment, sustainable tourism, eco tourism and adventure tourism which has increased the movement of domestic tourists for recreational purposes but besides that the young generation in their tourist guide material must create sense of responsibility to save environment, discourage pollution and attract international audience to this piece of land, he suggested. MD PTDC said, Pakistan is a country full of diverse inventory of tour-

ism attractions, having worlds' tallest mountains on earth in the north and longest glaciers that provide great opportunity to promote various forms of adventure tourism. "We have hundreds of beautiful lakes with amazing landscapes and many of these lakes are only accessible through trekking routes. The Makran coast also has wonderful landscapes as on one side you can see the Rocky Mountains and other side there are most beautiful sandy beaches that is reflective of ideal marine environment in Pakistan," he said, adding that, in terms of human history, we have one of the oldest civilizations including Buddhist heritage of Gandhara, most renowned world Heritage sites, Hindu shrines, Sikh Gudawaras and shrines of Sufi Saints. From water sports to desert jeep rallies, paragliding, river rafting, para jumping, wingsuit flying and many more adventure activities have made Pakistan known to the world as a place of adventure sports and tourism that will not only boost economy but also project soft image of the country, he said.



ISLAMABAD : Ministry of law and justice organized a 6-day Accredited Civil/Commercial Mediation Training course.—APP

Health minister launches national polio vaccination drive

DNA

ISLAMABAD : Caretaker Federal Minister for Health Dr Nadeem Jan on Sunday launched the anti-polio campaign by administering polio drops to children. Addressing the occasion, he said that the second national anti-polio campaign of the year 2023 is being started across the country from October 2. The minister said that around 43 million children will be vaccinated in the national anti-polio campaign. Dr. Nadeem Jan said that there is no cure for polio and that only the polio vaccine can save children from permanent disability. He urged parents, civil society, teachers, scholars and religious scholars to play their roles in the eradication of polio. Dr. Nadeem Jan said that eradication of polio is essential for our national honor and respect. He said at one stage it was not possible to eliminate polio from Afghanistan and Pakistan. "Now we are close to eradicating polio." He said, "The fight to eradicate polio cannot be won without the help of parents." He appealed to citizens to cooperate with polio volunteers when they were at their doorstep. The minister said that work is being done under a comprehensive strategy for the eradication of polio. He said that the ministry has appointed top officers in Southern KP to stop the spread of the virus.

Governor urges engineers to play role in technologies

QUETTA : Governor Balochistan Malik Abdul Wali Khan Kakar on Sunday said he was happy to see such a congregation of engineers in his province. "We can make the best use of engineers for Balochistan. We appreciate their expertise", he added. He expressed these views while addressing the 28th Annual General Meeting (AGM) of the Pakistan Engineering Council (PEC) here. A large number of engineers from all over Pakistan participated in the moot. A sizeable number of young engineers from every corner of Balochistan also showed up for the meeting. The Balochistan Governor said the engineers should play their part in renewable technologies and power as our province was facing a very different situation in the power sector. We are facing days of load shedding in rural areas, he noted. He called upon engineers to work for the people of Balochistan. He touched on

the quality of works and referred to issues developed in the dams during recent floods in Balochistan. The meeting presided over by Chairman Pakistan Engineering Council Engr Najeib Haroon was graced by Balochistan Governor Malik Wali Khan Kakar, Minister for Education Qadir Buzdar Minister Information Jan Achakzai former Minister Science and Technology Changaiz Jamali and Senator Ruksana Zubari. Engr Najeib Haroon shared the performance of the Council during the last two years. He said over 2500 young engineers have been inducted in the industry under the Graduate Internship Program launched by the council. He further said this program would continue in the future. Engr. Haroon said the council is trying its level best to attract young people to engineering education as this trend is on decline because of other professions fields

in education. In order to do so the Council has started STEM education to engage school-going students so that engineering education could be encouraged. He shared the details of the efforts that PEC has taken to tackle the issue of cost escalation of development projects in the country. Talking about the issue of technologists, he said all three sections of engineering such as engineers, technologists and technicians have their separate domains. They shall continue playing their part in the development of the country, he noted. He informed the moot of the performance of the Committees of the Council working in various sectors. Being the Chancellor of universities, he stressed research and development in the universities of Balochistan. He said it's time to computerize every government department and the engineers must guide the public sector.—DNA

Seerat Rahmatul-lil-Alameen conference unites faith leaders against extremism

LAHORE : The leaders from diverse religious backgrounds and schools of thought on Sunday convened at the 'Seerat Rahmatul-lil-Alameen Conference' and denounced the pervasive threats of terrorism and extremism plaguing Pakistan. The conference, organized by the Pakistan Ulama Council here at the Al Hamra Hall, was attended by over 500 scholars, religious leaders, political figures, and representatives from all walks of life in a powerful display of unity. The event was chaired by PUC Chairman and International Interfaith Harmony Council President, Hafiz Muhammad Tahir Mahmood Ashrafi. They particularly highlighted the tragic events in Mastung and Hangu on Friday, 12th Rabiul Awwal, and expressed their unified stance

that terrorists aimed to sow chaos and harm innocent lives. They alleged that these criminal networks received support from anti-Pakistan forces and India. The religious and political leaders pledged unwavering support to Pakistan in its fight against terrorism, extremism, and sectarian violence. They emphasized the need to thwart inter-religious conflicts and plots of violence and offered their full cooperation in achieving these goals. Addressing a critical issue within Pakistan, the leaders stressed the importance of referring to non-Muslim Pakistanis as such, rather than using the term 'minority'. They underscored the state's responsibility to safeguard the lives, property, dignity, and honor of non-Muslim citizens and their places of worship. To ensure regional stability and peace, the

leaders called for strengthened relations between the Afghan interim government and Pakistan. They emphasized that both countries should collaborate to eradicate terrorism and prevent its resurgence. They firmly believed that peace in Afghanistan was intertwined with the peace of Pakistan. The leaders presented evidence of Indian involvement in acts of terrorism, not only in Pakistan but also in Canada and other countries. They called upon the international community to take an action against India to address this issue. In a joint declaration of the conference, the religious and political leaders presented several significant resolutions and demands. They fully supported the Pakistan Army, security agencies, and government initiatives to ensure the security and stability of Pa-

kistan. They decried recent incidents as part of a conspiracy to revive the war on terror and called for unity in opposing such acts. The leaders emphasized that the Constitution of Pakistan protected the rights of followers of all religions and sects. They called for using the term 'non-Muslim Pakistanis' for non-Muslims and urged the government to resolve issues related to non-Muslim places of worship. They urged the government to sit down with the Qadiani group and decide the design with reference to their places of worship and register their places of worship like other religions. The leaders announced plans for joint gatherings across the country against terrorism, extremism, and intolerance in Karachi, Quetta, Peshawar, and Islamabad during October.

Youth body recovered from river

DNA

DERA ISMAIL KHAN : A team of Rescue 1122 on Sunday claimed to have recovered the body of a youngster who drowned into Indus River two days ago. Muhammad Ali, son of Shahadat Ali, a 20 year old boy and resident of Bhakkar who came here for fishing was drowned into Indus River near Dera-Bhakkar Bridge on Friday, said a spokesman of Rescue 1122. After receiving information about the incident, Rescue 1122 team had started the rescue and search operation through boating and SCUBA diving on the same day. The operation remained continued under the supervision of Supervisor Khuram Sherazi on the directions of District Emergency Officer Owais Babar for the third consecutive day. The rescuers fished out the body on Sunday and handed it over to Bhakkar's emergency service Rescue 1122 who later handed over the body to its heirs.

Narowal DC inaugurates anti-polio campaign

NAROWAL : Deputy Commissioner Narowal Muhammad Ashraf inaugurated the anti-polio campaign, which will start from Monday, October 2. He administered polio vaccine drops to children under five years of age at the District Headquarters Hospital and also led an awareness walk regarding

the anti-polio campaign. Chief Executive Officer Health Narowal Dr. Naveed Haider, District Health Officer Dr. Mohammad Tariq, World Health Organisation representative Dr. Aqib, MS Dr. Afzal Rajpoot, District Coordinator for National Programme Dr. Zahid Randhawa, Medical Officer Dr. Rahat Ali, DSV

Mujahid Ali, DIO Ahsan-ul-Haq Chaudhry, In-charge of Dialysis Department Tariq Shaheen and others were also present. The deputy commissioner said that during the campaign, 3,65,198 children under five years of age would be administered polio drops for which 1,341 teams had been formed.—DNA

IAP acting chief promises timely business solutions

PESHAWAR : Industrialists Association Peshawar (IAP) acting president Ayub Zakori vowed to utilize all resources and energy for timely resolution of industrialists' issues and all affairs at the association level will be carried forward on fast-track grounds. He was chairing a meeting of the executive committee of the Industrialists Association Peshawar held here at IAP Conference Hall, said in a press release issued here on Sunday. Executive members Adeel Rauf, Sherbaz Bilour, Zarak Khan, Mohsin Wadud, Sajjad Zaheer, Farhad Afsandiyar, Shayan Imtiaz, Secretary General Muqtasid Ahsan and members IAP Riaz Arshed, Haris Mufti, Junaid Altaf and Saad Zahid were present during the meeting. The executive committee backed and supported acting president Ayub Zakori. The meeting thoroughly discussed the routine business of IAP. The acting president Ayub Zakori expressed his full commitment to carry the business of IAP with the same pace and energy.—DNA

IG Punjab rewards cops for foiling attack

Inspector General (IG) Police Punjab Dr Usman Anwar awarded cash prizes to four policemen deputed for foiling the terrorist attack during his visit to the Kundal check post in Mianwali

MEHTAB PIERZADA

LAHORE : Inspector General (IG) Police Punjab Dr Usman Anwar awarded cash prizes to four policemen deputed for foiling the terrorist attack during his visit to the Kundal check post in Mianwali on Sunday. According to the media reporters , IG Punjab awarded cash prizes of half a million rupees to CTD cops who launched the operation, while Rs3 million to all the cops deputed at the patrolling post. The Punjab Police, along with the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa government and the armed forces, will take full action against the terrorists in the difficult hilly areas, IG

Punjab Dr Usman Anwar said. Earlier, two militants were seriously wounded after the police foiled a terror attack on its patrolling post at Kundal in Mianwali on Saturday night. However, a cop named Haroon Khan was martyred in firing by the assailants. According to Inspector General of Police (IGP) Punjab Dr. Usman Anwar, who left for Kundal today to review the post-attack situation, said around 10 to 12 militants attacked the post, which led to an exchange of fire between the two sides which lasted for four hours. "At last two militants were killed when a policeman fired at them from a rooftop," he elaborated. Giving further

details, the IGP said the militants stormed the post from two sides. "However, to their surprise, policemen were fully alert to thwart the attack," he said, adding there were reports that two terrorists were seriously injured. "Search operation is continuing in the area," he said, adding, "The slain militants were involved in terror attacks across the country." Dr. Usman, during his visit to the area, will meet with the police personnel manning the post. He will also attend the funeral prayer of the deceased constable. He praised the Force for foiling the attack, and said he saluted constable Haroon for laying down his life while performing his duty. It is pertinent to mention here that terror attacks have been on the rise, especial-


ly for the last one month. Only a day before yesterday, on Friday, two incidents of terrorism, one in Mastung, Balochistan and the other in Hangu, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP) shocked the nation and reminded the nation of the lingering issue of militancy. As many as 60 people died in Mastung suicide blast while at least five people were killed and 10 others were injured in a blast at a mosque in Hangu. At a press conference on Saturday, Caretaker Interior Minister Sarfraz Bugti said the government would conduct an operation "as big as nee-ded" to restore the writ of the state. Mr Bugti blamed the Indian intelligence agency,



RAW, for involvement in terrorist activities in Balochistan. Chief of Army Staff General Syed Asim Munir also visited Quetta on Saturday, where he was briefed on recent terrorist attacks in Mastung and Zhob. "These terrorists and their facilitators, having no link to religion and ideology, are proxies of the enemies of Pakistan and its people," the army chief said in a statement. "These forces of evil will continue to face the full might of the state and security forces... and the armed forces, intelligence and law enforcement agencies shall not rest till the menace of terrorism is rooted out from the country," he added.

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National Days and Armed Forces Days

September

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

Hotels & Restaurants



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



Turkish Airlines.....8494949



Emergency

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



Enquiry

Edhi Ambulance.....115
PIA Flight Info.....114
PIA Cargo.....9280979
Railway 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



ISLAMABAD: Youngsters climb up the Jet aircraft model on green belt along the road side to play at Sector 1-9 in Federal Capital.—Online

ICCI greets Sakib on assuming charge of Chairman RWMC

The delegations discussed the important issues regarding the development of the business community and the twin cities and it was agreed that these chambers are also twin like the twin cities and the problems are common and should be solved together

FAISAL SHEIKH

RAWALPINDI: ICCI delegation led by President Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industries Ahsan Zafar Bakhtawari visited Rawalpindi Chamber of Commerce and Industries and congratulated President RCCI Saqib Rafiq on assuming the post of Chairman Rawalpindi Waste Management Company(RWMC) and presented bouquets. RCCI and ICCI have made joint efforts to solve the problems of the business community and for their welfare, it has been agreed to form a committee consisting of 6 members including presidents to promote relations and consult on important issues between the two business organizations and also to play a friendly cricket match. Yesterday, in a delegation-level meeting held at RCCI, President of ICCI Ahsan Zafar Bakhtawari congratulated Saqib Rafiq, President of RCCI on his election as the chairman of RWMC and said that the trust of the government on the business community is an honor for our community, we have to prove this choice hundred percent by showing performance. Now we have to prove by delivering instead of just paperwork that as before we are contributing to

the stability of the country's economy by paying the highest taxes. By carrying out the responsibility of this cleaning company in the true sense, we will take vigorous measures to reduce the problems of the citizens in terms of cleaning. Chairman RWMC and President RCCI Saqib Rafiq thanked the ICCI delegation for coming and presenting flowers and congratulations on assuming office and said that it is a welcome thing for the businessmen of the two cities to meet. The chambers of the twin cities are also twin and their problems are also the same, for their solution, joint efforts are necessary to convey an effective voice to the government houses.

He said that following the decree of cleanliness, he has made clean Rawalpindi as his target and will not rest until this target is achieved. Wherever our cooperation is needed in Islamabad, like the cleaning of Rawalpindi, we will certainly provide it. The delegations discussed the important issues regarding the development of the business community and the twin cities and it was agreed that these chambers are also twin like the twin cities and the problems are common and should be solved together. The delegations also gave suggestions regarding the improvement of sanitation in both cities. Chairman RWMC

and President RCCI Saqib Rafiq said for disposal of green waste, will be mixed with PHA and composted by burying it in a designated area in the joint venture. He congratulated the President ICCI for getting one year extension and joining the Board of Directors of CDA while the Islamabad delegation congratulated the RCCI panel on their victory in the Gymkhana Club. On the proposal of group leader RCCI Sohail Altaf, both delegations also agreed to form a six-member joint committee and on the proposal of ICCI President Ahsan Zafar Bakhtawari to play a friendly cricket match, decide the date of the match

and Senior Vice President RCCI Hamza Sarosh was entrusted with the duties of making the arrangements. The ICCI delegation included President Ahsan Zafar Bakhtawari, Senior Vice President Fad Waheed Sheikh, Vice President Engineer Azharul Islam Zafar, Ex-President Zafar Bakhtawari, Ex-President Atif Ikram, Ex-President Khalid Javed, Ex-President Ijaz Abbasi, Ex-Senior Vice-President Khalid Chaudhry, Saifur Rahman Khan, Chaudhry Muhammad Ali, Naeem Chaudhry, Munizah Majeed, Parveen Khan and others were included, while the RCCI delegation included Group Leader Sohail Altaf, Senior Vice President Hamza Sarosh, Vice President Faisal Shahzad, Zahid Latif Khan, Raja Amir Iqbal, Dr. Shamaail Daud Arain, Syed Aslam Shahidi, Najam Rehan, Usman Khalid Waheed, Chaudhry Naeem Rauf, Abdul Rauf, Waqas Bin Mehmood, Rafiq Khan, Khawaja Farooq Ali, Mudassar Maqbool, Chaudhry Jameel Ahmed, Shahid Qayyum, Kashif Rahim, Wasim Aslam, Martin Pervez, Mohammad Akram, Tariq Najeem Butt, Sadia Zia, Asad Aftab, Abu Bakr Siddique, Ikram-ur-Rahman Abbasi, Gul Zeba Jawad and others were included.



Sarfranga cold desert rally, a thrilling adventure

ISLAMABAD: Gilgit-Baltistan's Shigar District is all set to become the hub of adventure and excitement with the mega event of Sarfranga Cold Desert Rally is going to held from October 6th to 8th, 2023 with the collaboration of Tourism Department GB and Pakwheels to attract the international and local tourists. Secretary Tourism Gilgit Baltistan Asif Ullah Khan giving briefing to media persons at Serena Hotel about Sarfa Ranga Cold Desert Car Rally on Saturday said that Gilgit-Baltistan region, Pakistan, is known for its stunning beauty and natural attractions. This mega event will be held in

the Sarfranga Desert, one of the highest cold deserts on the planet, he added. The Chief Executive Officer of Pakwheels Sunil Munj while briefing about the salient features and events of Sarfranga Cold Desert Rally said that the rally will offer a unique and challenging experience to participants, with a variety of terrains to navigate, including sand dunes, gravel roads, and water crossings. It will also be a great opportunity for spectators to witness the thrill of off-road racing in a stunning setting. In addition to the rally, the event will also feature a variety of cultural and sporting activities, including

polo matches, zakh competitions, and cultural shows. This will be a great opportunity for visitors to experience the rich culture and traditions of Baltistan. Managing Director PTDC, Aftab Ur Rehman Rana, Deputy Commissioner Shigar, Secretary Tourism GB and media persons were also present in the press briefing. The Unique Features of the Sarfranga Cold Desert Rally are: Eco-friendly policies and activities: The Sarfranga Cold Desert Rally is committed to protecting the environment. The event will feature a number of eco-friendly policies and activities, such as using solar power and recycling waste. Youth engagement:

The rally is also aimed at engaging youth and promoting healthy and adventurous activities. It will be a great opportunity for young people to challenge themselves and explore their untapped potential. Cultural experience: The rally will be more than just a sporting event. It will also be a great opportunity for visitors to experience the rich culture and traditions of Baltistan. He said that the Sarfranga Cold Desert Rally is a unique and exciting event that offers something for everyone. Whether you are a thrill-seeker, a culture buff, or simply looking for a new and challenging adventure, the rally is definitely worth checking out.

Islamabad admin introduces online application for driving permits

ISLAMABAD: The district administration of Islamabad has introduced a new online procedure for applying and verifying International Driving Permits (IDPs) through online App to ensure provision of civic facilities with convenience. This move is aimed at making the process more convenient and efficient for residents of Islamabad. In a statement the Deputy Commissioner Islamabad, Irfan Nawaz Memon, said that residents can now apply for IDPs from the comfort of their homes using the City App. Furthermore, they simply need to send their documents through the City App and wait for a message from the District Administration. Once they receive the message, they can visit the facilitation center to collect their IDP within 10-15 minutes. The Deputy Commissioner also said that residents can verify the authenticity of their IDPs using the City App. In order to verify the IDPs, they simply need to enter the number of their National Identity Card and the Driving Permit Registration Number on the app. The app will then display whether the IDP is real or fake. The introduction of the online application and verification process for IDPs is part of the district administration's efforts to make government services more accessible and user-friendly, he added. The DC Islamabad said that the residents are encouraged to take advantage of this new service and avoid the hassle of having to visit government offices in person.—APP

Press freedom declining in India

ISLAMABAD: The Narendra Modi-led fascist Indian regime is trampling basic principles of press freedom and the Press freedom has been declining since Modi's rise to power in 2014. A report released by Kashmir Media Service, Sunday, said lawsuits, killings and intimidation of journalists is a common feature in Modi's India as different intimidating tactics are being used to harass journalists. It said India under Modi has passed laws to increase government surveillance and impact press freedom, adding there is a growing trend of judicial harassment and intimidation against those journalists who don't toe Bharatiya Janata Party's line and are booked under draconian laws for speaking truth. The report lamented that since 5 August 2019, journalists have reported an intensified crackdown by authorities in occupied Jammu and Kashmir. Media policy introduced in May 2020 is meant to further muzzle press in the territory, it deplored. It said India, under Modi, continues to slide down the World Press Freedom Index and since Modi became PM in 2014, India has slipped in rank from 140 to 150 in the World Press Freedom Index of 180 countries. The report said Modi's India is responsible for ordering the highest number of network shutdowns in the world.—APP

Incentives for industry must

DNA

ISLAMABAD: The Federation of Pakistan Chambers of Commerce and Industry Businessmen Panel (BMP) has called for putting the economy on a sustainable growth, asking the government to provide incentives to the trade and industry, as the business confidence has taken a significant hit due to lack of investment and growth, exacerbating economic challenges further. FPCCI former president and BMP Chairman Mian Anjum Nisar asked the government to address the underlying structural vulnerabilities through smooth energy supply at competitive rates, as country's overall export

proceeds continued to shrink, showing a pessimism about the conditions and prospects of the businesses amidst various economic crises to worsen business insecurity. Mian Anjum Nisar underscored the need for the government to take immediate steps to address the concerns of the business community, including implementing policies that support business growth, promoting employment and productivity through incentives, and addressing inflation and currency depreciation. Failure to do so will only exacerbate the country's economic challenges and hinder its ability to attract investment and create jobs. The BMP Chairman said that the gov-

ernment has increased the gas and electricity tariffs and, at the same time, also the subsidy has been phased out, which will further increase the cost of production. Month on month increases in consumer prices may be countered by a further mean reverting international commodity prices and some exchange rate stability due to decreased pace of depreciation. He added that the current vicious uncertainty, which is aggravating each other's impact, is eroding business confidence, as the political tug of war and the inconsistent approach of the government is leading to a trust deficit between the business community and the government and between the

international community and the government. The Businessmen Panel chairman said that the export 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. Quoting the data, he pointed out that remittances witnessed significant drop during the first half of the current year, exports declined, foreign direct investment dipped by 654 million dollars, portfolio investment plummeted from negative 45.5 to negative 1032 million dollars, Public Sector Development Program decreased by 122 billion rupees and credit to private sector from 1043.1 to 703.6 million.

Meher Kashif urges govt to privatize SOEs

ISLAMABAD: Coordinator Meher Kashif Younis urged the government to privatize state-owned enterprises (SOEs) in a foolproof and transparent manner incurring heavy losses of Rs 500 billion annually for decades, impacting the national kitty. Talking to a delegation of women entrepreneurs led by Ms. Maheen, he said that the manifestos of almost all the mainstream political parties throughout the country always advocated divestment of government stakes in SOEs to curtail losses and reduce government footprint in business but actual implementation has been delayed for over half a century, said a news release here. He said fresh official facts and figures revealed that due to mismanagement, the deficient SOEs inflicted overall huge losses of around Rs500 billion to the national exchequer during last year (2022). He said however privatization of the banking industry was one of the biggest success stories in Pakistan which transformed from loss-making to profitable entity. The overall performance of SOEs was not very healthy what is called "contrary to the expectations" adding that some of these were marred by gross bad governance. He said other targeted companies in the pipeline for sale in the next phase between 2023-24 must also be placed on top priority for transparent privatization. He said it's an established fact worldwide that business activities are always carried out by the private sector not the public sector as the private sector employ the best possible ways to run in profit earning entities through good governance and timely decision on the spot also matter rather than lackluster attitudes in the public sector. He emphasized the need to offer packages of incentives to buyers of loss-causing SOEs to run.

Anti-polio campaign to begin tomorrow across country

DNA

ISLAMABAD: A country-wide anti-polio campaign is commencing from Monday in which over forty million children will be administered polio vaccine along with the supplementary dose of vitamin A. Talking about anti-polio campaign in the country, caretaker Health Minister Dr Nadeem Jan urged parents to fully cooperate with the polio teams and ensure the administration of polio drops to their children. He said that eradication of Polio from the country is responsibility of every citizen. He said that incidence of polio has been reduced to only a few areas of the country. The health minister said that the global certification requires that no polio case emerges for the three consecutive years. He urged the educated people to create awareness among masses about the crippling disease.

Transporters continue to charge higher fares despite reduction in fuel prices

RAWALPINDI: Despite the reduction in fuel prices, the transporters in Rawalpindi are continuing to charge higher fares. The Rawalpindi district administration and the transport authority have failed to control the inflated fares in the area. As per details, the fare from Rawalpindi to Lahore is between Rs2,700 to 3,000. For Rawalpindi to Karachi, fare between Rs 6,700 to 7,000 is being charged. The fare from Rawalpindi to Multan is between Rs2,900 to 3,000. The masses have said the transporters used to jack up fares soon after the increase in fuel prices but now when the fuel prices have been lowered, they are unwilling to slash their fare rates.—DNA

Briefs

China's Xinjiang pipeline enterprise eyes cooperation with Pakistan

DNA

ISLAMABAD: A prominent oil and gas pipeline component manufacturer in northwest China's Xinjiang Uyghur autonomous region has expressed an interest in deepening collaboration with Pakistan. This was stated by Zhou ShanZheng, the company's deputy general manager, while responding to a question by China Economic Net(CEN) during a press interaction at Alashankou Strategically positioned at the Alashankou Comprehensive Bonded Zone, Xinbo Pipeline currently has 40% of its products supplying the domestic market, and the remaining 60% finds its market in Central Asian nations, in line with the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI), the deputy general manager told CEN reporter. "We have signed a deal with Kazakhstan to deliver 30,000 tons of pipelines annually," revealed Zhou, adding that orders from Uzbekistan are also on the rise. Zhou noted, the export-oriented growth is facilitated by multiple incentives and supporting policies at the bonded area, including streamlined export processes, tax breaks and financial assistance.

Pakistan, GCC initialize free trade agreement

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan and the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) have initialised a free trade agreement. In the Saudi capital, Riyadh, caretaker Commerce Minister Dr Gohar Ejaz and GCC Secretary General Jassem Mohamed held a delegation-level discussion. After the meeting, an agreement was signed for the promotion of free trade between Pakistan and the Gulf countries. Caretaker Commerce Minister Dr Gohar Ejaz and GCC Secretary General Jassem Mohamed Alabdaiwi inked the joint statement for the Pakistan-GCC FTA. "Both parties looked forward to the expeditious signing, ratification, and implementation of the agreement, which will mark a new chapter in the economic relations between our parties," a joint statement issued by both parties stated. The final round was held from September 26-28 at the GCC Headquarters in the Saudi capital.—APP

Eye infection wanes but still 1,134 new cases reported in Punjab

ISLAMABAD: A decrease in conjunctivitis cases was observed in Punjab, but still 1,134 new cases were reported on Sunday. The Primary and Secondary Health Department of Punjab released a report, revealing a decrease in the number of patients affected by conjunctivitis, commonly known as "pink eye," during the last 24 hours. However, 1,134 new cases have been reported during the period, highlighting the ongoing challenge. The year 2023 has seen a total of 395,929 reported cases of eye infections across 36 districts in Punjab. Lahore, the provincial capital, accounts for 23,633 cases this year, with an additional 236 new cases in the last 24 hours. Bahawalpur has experienced the highest concentration of conjunctivitis cases in 2023, with a staggering 77,672 cases recorded. Shockingly, 34 new eye infection cases were reported within the last 24 hours. Multan has reported 16,464 cases of conjunctivitis during the year, with 113 new cases documented in the latest 24-hour report. Faisalabad, another major city in Punjab, registered 31,006 eye infection cases, with 35 new cases reported in the last 24 hours. Rawalpindi, while having fewer total cases.—DNA



ISLAMABAD: Senator Mushahid Hussain Chairman Senate Defence Committee posing for a picture with guests during a function organized at the Islamabad Serena Hotel.—DNA

Book launch at IRS

Collected works on foreign affairs and security policy

DNA

ISLAMABAD: The Institute of Regional Studies (IRS) Islamabad organized a Book Launch ceremony for Professor Dr Huma Baqai's recently released book titled 'Collected Works on Foreign Affairs and Security Policy'. During the event, the discussants complimented Dr Baqai for putting together a much needed addition to the discourse on Pakistan's foreign relations and some of the

most pertinent nuances of security policy.

Senator Mushahid Hussain Sayed said that the essence of Prof Dr Baqai's book was that it had been written with an open mind without any pre-conceived notions and that it sought truth from facts instead of mere opinions. He further added that the era covered in the book was extremely significant as the instances quoted therein revealed absence of institutionalized decision-making as a major underlying factor behind poor policy-making over the years.

Mr Zahid Hussain, Senior Journalist commented that Prof Dr Baqai had produced a seminal book capturing the past six years of international relations that had witnessed some monumental developments. He added that book was a very timely addition to the contemporary discourse as it also shed ample light on the return of the Taliban to power as well as the changing dynamics of the Pak-US ties. Ambassador Naghmana Hashmi congratulated Dr

Baqai on the publication of her book. She said that the book was an excellent resource to understand the recent developments in foreign affairs and offered a detailed analysis of the geopolitical, geo-economic and geo-strategic developments that affected Pakistan. Ambassador Nadeem Riyaz, congratulated Prof Dr Baqai and said that not only the book was a timely contribution but its most laudable aspect was its readability. Dr Huma Baqai thanked the IRS, particularly Ms Reema

Shaukat for organizing the Book Launch ceremony. She detailed the various stages of data collection during the writing of the book and commented that the intellectually-starved youth of Pakistan was direly in need of a direction. Some notable attendees at the event included, Ambassador Sohail Mehmood, Mr Chaudhary Faisal Mushtaq, Major General Asif Yasin Malik, Dr Salma Malik, Dr Khalid Banuri and other worthy members of the academia and civil society.

ICCI holds annual general meeting

DNA

ISLAMABAD: The Islamabad Chamber of Commerce & Industry (ICCI) held its 39th Annual General Meeting, which was attended by a large number of members. The AGM approved ICCI Audit Report 2022-23 and ICCI Budget 2023-24. The AGM also approved the appointment of ICCI auditors for the year 2023-24. Speaking on the occasion, Ahsan Zafar Bakhtawari, President, Islamabad Chamber of Commerce & Industry highlighted the key achievements of his one-year tenure and briefed the participants about the important problems of the business community. He

said that his major achievement was to organize award ceremonies for the business leaders to recognize their services for the business community and give them respect and honor in society. He said that business role model awards were organized in ICCI in honor of prominent investors of Islamabad, Sardar Muhammad Ilyas Khan and Chaudhry Abdul Majeed, and this practice will be continued in the future. He said that due to the improvement in cotton production, Pakistan is expecting US\$25 billion in exports this year. He said that the establishment of the SIFC through the efforts of the COAS is a welcome step to encourage investment in the country. He said that bad times have passed and now we are moving towards a bright future. Ahsan

Bakhtawari said that he has got another year to serve the business community and vowed that he would work harder to address the major issues and facilitate them in business development. He said that ICCI has signed an MoU for the establishment of an Expo Centre in Islamabad and added that ICCI would organize more exhibitions including exhibitions of women entrepreneurs in the coming year to promote business activities and exports. He thanked all the participants for attending the AGM and assured that ICCI would continue to work for the welfare and betterment of the business community. ICCI Group Leader Khalid Iqbal Malik said that Ahsan Bakhtawari is making great efforts to solve the problems of the business community

and hoped that he will deliver up to the expectations of the members in next year. He said that Ahsan Bakhtawari has given a fund of one crore rupees from his own pocket for the development of markets, while one crore rupees will be given by the ICCI and another two crores will be given by other prominent businessmen. In this way, the Chamber will start development works in the markets with 4 crore rupees. He said that for the first time, the sitting President ICCI has been given representation in the CDA board, which is a very positive development. He said that Ahsan Bakhtawari would work in CDA Board to protect the interests of the business community. He thanked the members of ICCI for their active participation in the AGM, which reflected their trust and confidence in the Chamber.

SM Tanveer assures for new Industrial Estate in Chakwal

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Punjab Industry and Agriculture Minister SM Tanveer said that we have managed the sinking economy of Pakistan in the last few months and we will start a new journey of development and prosperity in the province in the next few months. He said that under the management of Chakwal, Rawalpindi and Islamabad Chambers of Commerce, a new industrial estate will be established at Neela Dulla Interchange in Chakwal, which will usher in a new era of development and prosperity in the area. He said

this while addressing the annual dinner hosted by the Chakwal Chamber of Commerce and Industry. Punjab Health Minister Dr. Jamal Nasir said that he is busy day and night to improve healthcare facilities for the people of Punjab. He said that under the leadership of Chief Minister Punjab, they are adding a new chapter of development in the province Chakwal Chamber of Commerce President Waqar Bakhtawari demanded the establishment of a new industrial estate at Neela Dulla Interchange. He said that for the promotion of tourism, tourism infrastructure

should be improved in Punjab including Chakwal, which will bring beneficial results for the economy. He further demanded that steps should be taken to make inactive dams in the Potohar region active soon. President Islamabad Chamber of Commerce Ahsan Bakhtawari said that a new industrial estate is the urgent need of the hour to create new employment opportunities and promote investment in the region and hoped that under the leadership of Minister of Industry and Agriculture of Punjab SM Tanveer, this project will be completed soon.

IFAD-financed projects to boost development

DNA

MURREE: To foster rural development while striving to reduce poverty, enhance food security, and empower rural communities in Pakistan, the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) organized a two-day "Portfolio Overview Workshop" in Murree from September 25-26. The event also marked the presence of Fernanda Thomaz Da Rocha, the newly appointed IFAD Country Director for Pakistan, and Arnoud Hameleers, IFAD Country Director for Bangladesh, along with Project Coordinators, Directors, country team members, partner organization representatives, and local experts from the Project Management Units. The workshop brought together key stakeholders to discuss challenges and collaborative solutions for the IFAD-financed projects. Participants explored ways to connect farmers and producers, integrate high-value and climate-resilient crops, strengthen farmers' organizations, and promote private sector engagement. Lauding

the initiative of reviewing the portfolio together with the government and relevant stakeholders, Arnoud Hameleers says, "these processes are instrumental in enabling experts to identify areas of challenge within implementation. And this is where we start addressing the challenges and finding resolutions to them." Fernanda Thomaz Da Rocha conveyed her appreciation to the attendees at the workshop and introduced herself to both the internal and external stakeholders on this occasion. She emphasized the longstanding partnership between IFAD and the Government of Pakistan. "Such collaborative workshops strengthen this alliance in advancing rural development and reducing poverty in the region," she added. Da Rocha also spoke about key challenges, including climate change, social and economic empowerment of women and youth, and the need to strengthen farmers' organizations in the journey of rural development. She stressed, "we need to step up our mission to better integrate climate change considerations into our projects and enhance

the resilience of rural communities. Engaging youth in productive activities and value chains is crucial for Pakistan's future." Commending the initiative by the IFAD Country Office, Azam Khan, Deputy Secretary, Economic Affairs Division said, "this workshop offered the project teams a platform to present their progress, performance, and future plans." Emphasizing IFAD's core mission of supporting rural communities, Khan also commended the strong collaboration between the government and Pakistan and IFAD in the fight against rural poverty. The workshop ended with an interactive session where the project implementors discussed the areas of improvement in implementation and the roadblocks they face. They collaboratively brainstormed and exchanged ideas to find solutions. In Pakistan, IFAD supported a total of 29 projects with over 800 million in financing. Currently, there are five ongoing projects in the country. Together with the government, IFAD has positively impacted 2.8 million households in rural areas of the country.

SC to hear plea seeking to declare Elahi's detention illegal on Oct 6

DNA

ISLAMABAD: A three-member bench of the Supreme Court will hear a plea seeking to declare the detention of PTI president Chaudhary Pervaiz Elahi illegal on October 6. The bench will be headed by Justice Sardar Tariq, while Justice Mansoor Ali Shah and Justice Musarrat Hilali will be its members. The petition was filed by Qaisra Elahi, wife of Chaudhary Pervaiz Elahi. Meanwhile, a three-member bench headed by Justice Ejazul Ahsan will hear the appeals pertaining to Orange Line Train project on October 4. The companies that completed the project had moved court for non-payment. The committee established by court had submitted an implementation report during the last hearing. A full court will hear the case against SC Practice and Procedure Act on October 3.

EU mission has new DHM

DNA




ISLAMABAD: Philipp Oiver Gross has joined the European Union mission as the Deputy Head of Mission. He has moved from Brussels to Islamabad after working with He is delighted to be back. Had the chance to visit Islamabad in 2011. He likes the green and peaceful nature of the city. He is looking forward to explore the beauty of the North of Pakistan.

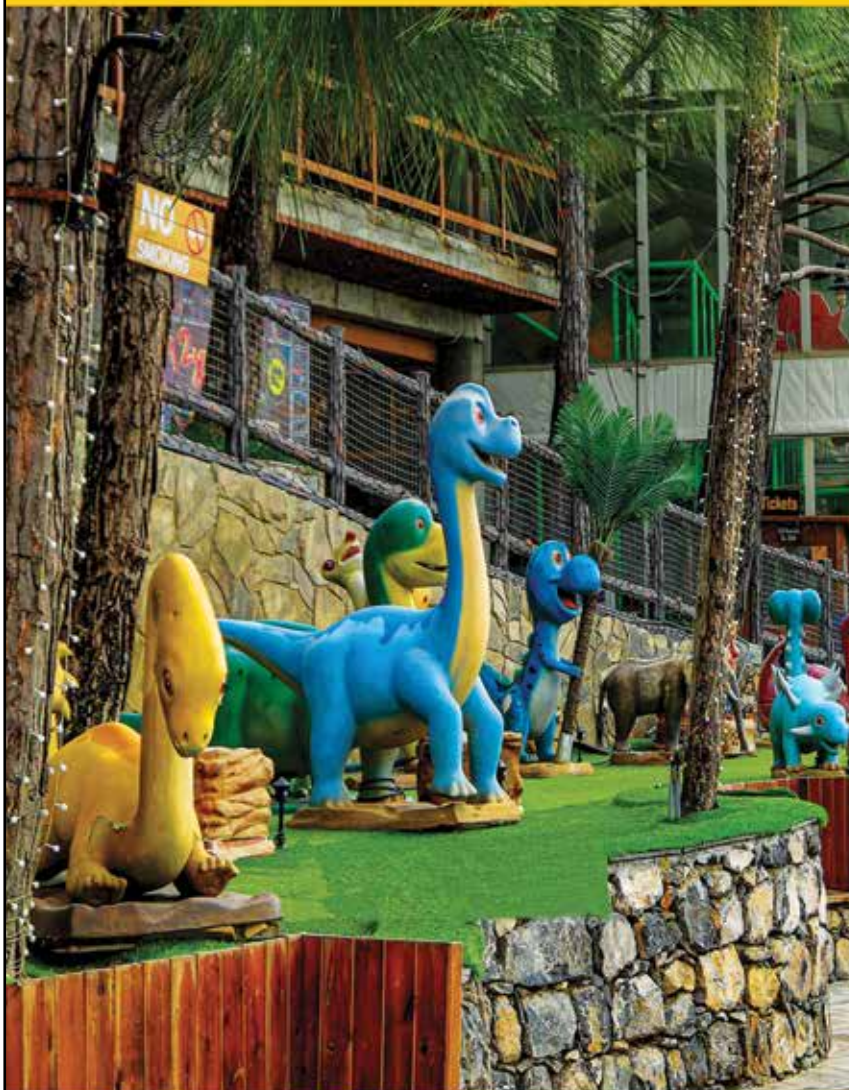
HEC announces Commonwealth Scholarships

DNA

ISLAMABAD: The Higher Education Commission (HEC) has announced the Commonwealth Scholarships for masters and PhD programmes for the year 2023. The Commonwealth Scholarship Commission (CSC) provides the UK government's Commonwealth scholarship scheme to the students led by international development objectives. The CSC has funded more than 30,000 individuals to study in the UK and gain skills, acquire knowledge, and build networks to tackle the global development challenges. The students of Pakistan and Azad Jammu and Kashmir (AJK) can apply for the scholarships till October 17 (Tuesday) on the CSC portal. According to the HEC's website, there are 26 nominations available for masters, 30 for PhD and 10 for teaching faculty PhD.



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China's Uyghur campaign remains a concern

China's government insists it is a "law-based country." But in reality, China is governed by a secretive party-state that uses the law as a tool for political repression. In the case of prominent Uyghur ethnographer Rahile Dawut, the "law" has become a cover for injustice. Six years after she was first detained, we learn that Ms. Rahile was sentenced to life in prison — a shocking punishment for one of the world's leading exponents of Uyghur culture and traditions. Ms. Rahile was tried in 2018 for "splittism," or separatism, which China considers a threat to state security. She was convicted and filed an appeal, which was rejected, according to the Dui Hua Foundation, a group based in San Francisco that seeks freedom for Chinese political prisoners. The foundation said in a Sept. 21 statement that, after years of inquiries, it had learned of the life sentence from a reliable Chinese government source. Little is known about the secret trial or why such a draconian penalty was imposed. But the sentence adds to the evidence that China's rulers are executing a cultural genocide of the Uyghurs, a Turkic Muslim ethnic minority, and others in the Xinjiang region, attempting to eradicate their language, culture and traditions and replace them with those of the Han Chinese majority. A human rights lawyer, Rayhan Asat, whose brother Ekpar Asat has been detained in Xinjiang since 2016, told Voice of America, "If you look at historical examples, when the state attempts to commit genocide, they tend to go after the brightest and the finest of the society, who would preserve their culture, who would preserve the collective dignity of the people." The Uyghur Human Rights Project has found that a minimum of 312 Uyghur, Kazakh and Kyrgyz intellectual and cultural elites were detained or imprisoned as of late 2021, and probably many more. Also sentenced to a life term was Uyghur university professor Ilham Tohti. Uyghur journalists for Radio Free Asia have also been threatened. Ms. Rahile, 57, is a leading scholar of Uyghur culture and folkways. She recalled in an interview with China Art News in 2011 that she had been exposed to vivid Uyghur folk stories, dances and literature when she was at Xinjiang University, which required students to immerse themselves in the rural lifestyle of southern Xinjiang region. Later she earned a doctorate in Beijing in folklore, and returned to Xinjiang University, the region's premier school, and founded a folklore center there. She was often a guide to visiting foreign scholars and argued that folk art was not the stuff of museum displays but needed to be protected as a part of everyday life and learning. She lectured widely, according to the foundation, including at Harvard University, Cornell University and the University of British Columbia. She was a visiting scholar at the University of Pennsylvania, Washington University and Indiana University. It was previously disclosed that plans for the Uyghur genocide began after an outdoor market attack in southern Xinjiang in May 2014 in which 31 people were killed and which China blamed on Uyghur separatists. Chinese leader Xi Jinping vowed to wipe out religious extremism. Over the following years, China built high-security reeducation camps in which more than 1 million Uyghurs were incarcerated.



Rishi Sunak's nerve crucial for success

A prime minister who has no idea whether he will spend the money to complete the single largest infrastructure project in the UK can hardly be said to have a long-term plan. Rishi Sunak's procrastination over the fate of HS2 undermines any faith the public and business might have in the government to bring together the expertise and funds to meet a significant challenge. Such was the chaos inside No 10 on the eve of the Tory conference that the transport secretary, Mark Harper, could not answer even the most basic question asked of him on BBC radio on Saturday morning: have HS2 plans changed since June's update to parliament? Harper has occupied the transport minister's chair for almost a year and understands the issues, but cannot say how or where the line will go while Sunak and his advisers row over the ultimate destination. A high-speed rail link from London to Manchester with a spur to Leeds — as it was conceived by New Labour, backed by the coalition government and then Boris Johnson — was always going to be a complicated and expensive project. Laying new track across congested and wealthy parts of England, insisting on expensive tunnelling to keep it out of sight, was never a cheap option. The Treasury was sceptical from the beginning. It was reasonable for the public to believe that honest assessments would unearth every possible pitfall. As with any large project, there was the potential for significant cost overruns driving up the final bill, and delays that would mean the service arrived many years late. It was reasonable for the public, having witnessed one government after another mismanage major projects, to believe that honest assessments would unearth every possible pitfall, putting a cap on the likely expense. Now the government has revealed that it was hopelessly optimistic, or succumbed to the optimism bias from those it employed to implement the project. Sunak wants to engineer a rethink that some of his inner sanctum have hinted could result in the whole scheme becoming little more than a shuttle between west London and a terminus outside Birmingham. Such a truncated version of the original plan would cut the north of the country from the south and lock in profound regional inequality for another generation. Worse, it would be a shock to the entire railway and engineering industry, undermining what credibility is left in the UK's ability to build major infrastructure. While it is true that London's Jubilee and Elizabeth lines have proved astonishingly successful, both were over budget and late. It's easy to find projects that have done worse. The Scottish parliament and the Edinburgh tram rank among the worst examples in the world for cost overruns. In the regions, huge sums have been spent on new nuclear power stations that already look likely to be delayed and over budget by a considerable margin, although the risks are being run by private companies. One thread that runs through these projects is exceptionalism in their design. And how they lack the Lego-like quality that allows them to be modular and adaptable. The two tube lines have unique stations based on individual designs. The Scottish parliament looks like no other building, and so on. Each breaks the golden rule of project management, which says that everything has been done before. High-speed rail certainly has. HS2 should be built and constructed as a high-speed line.

Story of Nawaz's political career

Waheed Hussain



The circumstances in which Nawaz left the country were uncondusive for him at that time. When he was leaving for London on 19 October, 2019, the doctors' team (both government and private) through a detailed medical examination reported that the former prime minister was suffering from "immune system disorder" and his blood "platelets" counts were low to a dangerous level, considered a serious

According to the PML (N) leadership, former Prime Minister and "Quaid" of the Party, Muhammad Nawaz Sharif is traveling back home on 21st October. Well, a long-awaited return of a native to his country. For any political leader; the party workers, voters and general public, are all like a family member. If an individual cannot distance himself or herself from a family for a long time, similarly, the political leaders, especially those who have been serving the masses for years and years cannot live in isolation. People are like an oxygen for a public leader without whom his or her existing becomes impossible. Same goes to Nawaz as well. Muhammad Nawaz Sharif looks like a Shakespearean tragic hero, who as a statesman and political leader went through persistent mental agony and physical pain. There is a famous saying that when you make choices you have to pay the prices, no doubt, Nawaz Sharif has paid a big price during his long political career.

The circumstances in which Nawaz left the country were uncondusive for him at that time. When he was leaving for London on 19 October, 2019, the doctors' team (both government and private) through a detailed medical examination reported that the former prime minister was suffering from "immune system disorder" and his blood "platelets" counts were low to a dangerous level, considered a serious threat to his life. He was serving 10 years in prison, the punishment awarded by the National Accountability Bureau Judge Muhammad Bashir in the Avenfield Apartment Corruption reference. His daughter Maryum and son-in-law Captain (R) Muhammad Safdar were also penalized in the same reference as co-accused. However, former PM Nawaz, his daughter Maryum Nawaz and PML (N) party leaders have rejected the court decision, declaring it the worst kind of a "political victimization."

If we see the series of political events which were unfolded in the country after the Panama Papers scandal, which appeared in the local as well as the international media in April 2016, they indicate that taking advantage of the news, some important office holders of that time, targeted Nawaz Sharif only. The purpose of those individuals was to sideline Nawaz from the electoral and power politics.

Former Chief Justice of Pakistan Saqib Nisar's judicial activism against an elected prime minister through the Panama Papers scandal was a well scripted plan to remove him from the power and pave the way for the PTI Chief Imran Khan to occupy the most powerful office on the Constitutional Avenue Islamabad. And of course, the same target was achieved after a controversial election in 2018.

The decision against Muhammad Nawaz Sharif and his family was announced on July 6, just three weeks before the

electoral process sending a very clear message to everyone that who would rule the country. When other parties were holding election rallies and campaign, Nawaz and his daughter were in jail. It was unfair?

That's why during last few years we have been hearing Nawaz Sharif and his daughter Maryum Nawaz complaining for not being provided a level playing field during 2018 elections. Nawaz and his daughter want a level playing field in any future elections. By the way today PML (N) seems to be partially satisfied with the present political and electoral conditions for the upcoming elections. The interim setup was installed with the Nawaz's approval. He has confidence in the Army leadership, newly appointed CJP and Chief Elections Commissioner. Apparently, media is also friendly so far.

On the other hand, the PPP and PTI were raising their voices for the level playing field. From power politics point of view, it was really difficult to explain the phrase "level playing field." In Pakistani politics mostly the players (or the competing teams) believe in the match fixing.

Let us look at the Nawaz's past career as the Chief Executive of the country. In his first tenure As Prime Minister (1990-1993) Nawaz Sharif introduced policy of privatization and economic liberalization including the "Yellow Cab Scheme" a policy to provide respectable source of income to the jobless people. In the second term as PM (1997-1999) he launched 'Motorway Scheme' to build the communication infrastructure of the country providing an opportunity to the businesses and economy to grow.

Despite western opposition and pressure, he as the prime minister responded to the India nuclear tests by conducting nuclear explosion at Chagai, Balochistan, declaring Pakistan as the first Muslim, while, 7th nuclear power of the world. In the third term (2013-2017) as the Chief Executive of the country Nawaz Sharif signed a historic China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) a project opening various economic and social development avenues for the country. The project brought billions of dollars investments in the infrastructure, communication, energy and other sectors. Due to numerous political reasons Nawaz was never allowed to complete his tenure as the prime minister of Pakistan. He and his party believe that certain elements in the establishment and judiciary had conspired against his governments in the past, resultantly which hindered the economic progress and prosperity in the country. Nawaz had always complained that if his governments had been allowed to complete five-year term, today, the country would have not been passing through the worst economic and financial difficulties. There is no second opinion that polit-

ical instability and bad law and order situation in any country could prevent the domestic and foreign investments.

Even the remittances by overseas Pakistanis are badly affected as well. Nawaz Sharif is a prominent political leader. He is basically the political party himself. Without his presence PML (N) may not be able to perform well both in the field as well as in government. The recently ended 16 months coalition government of PDM led by Shabbaz Sharif, the president of the party, was a nightmare for masses. The historic inflation and uncontrolled price hike have damaged the reputation of PML (N). That's why the aspirant candidates both for the national as well as provincial assemblies were really nervous to go into elections. As Nawaz, family members and the party leaders confirmed, that, the former PM is set to come back to Pakistan on 21th of this month. Nawaz must have got a clearance from the legal team that once he is in the country, he will not face any of the cases, which disqualified him for holding any public office and send him to jail in 2018. He must have got a nod from the establishment without which he will never take any risk of trying to fish in the troubled waters. If Imran Khan remains out of elections process as the PML (N) was demanding and calling it as a level playing field. Meaning by that in 2018, Nawaz was disqualified, put behind jail during elections, barred to lead the party elections campaign. Similarly, PML (N) wants Imran to be disqualified, remain in prison during the next elections leaving an open ground for Nawaz League particularly in Punjab. This it calls a level playing field with reference to PTI. On the other hand, PPP and PTI were also complaining of level playing field. Both believe that PML (N) is being given a free hand and open space even during the care taker set up. If all goes well, as Nawaz and his party were aspiring, the biggest challenge would be that how he would convince the masses to vote for a party, which has desperately disappointed the people during Shabbaz premiership. Narratives are key to success. Political narratives change the minds of the people. What narrative Nawaz will carry to the public? Will Nawaz launch his campaign with the accountability of the former generals and judges, as he has recently told the media? Or will he provide a practical solution to the economic and financial challenges the country and masses were facing? With which narrative will he land in the battle field accountability or the relief to public? Accountability of the former generals and judges sounds very aggressive and popular; however, some believe this will defocus Nawaz from the actual issue of economic reforms and growth agenda. Let us see where Nawaz wants to take himself and his party?

Journalists' Safety in upcoming Elections

Qamar Bashir



According to RSF, Pakistan has witnessed a worsening situation for journalists in the lead-up to the general elections. It is against this backdrop that RSF is calling upon both mainstream and provincial leaders of contesting political parties to include their commitment to defending freedom of expression and journalist safety in their party manifestos. One of the primary concerns of this joint statement is the high

As Pakistan gears up for its general elections, concerns about the safety and freedom of the press have taken center stage. Reporters Without Borders (RSF), in collaboration with prominent journalism advocacy groups, is launching an urgent appeal to the country's political parties contesting in the elections. A diverse array of press clubs, journalist unions, and organizations have signed a joint statement, emphasizing the gravity of the situation and the need for collective action. They are urging these parties to commit to concrete measures aimed at safeguarding press freedom and ensuring the protection of journalists.

According to RSF, Pakistan has witnessed a worsening situation for journalists in the lead-up to the general elections. It is against this backdrop that RSF is calling upon both mainstream and provincial leaders of contesting political parties to include their commitment to defending freedom of expression and journalist safety in their party manifestos. One of the primary concerns of this joint statement is the high level of impunity for crimes against journalists and media personnel in Pakistan. In fact, Pakistan was one of the five countries chosen for a pilot project of the UN Plan of Action on the Safety of Journalists and the Issue of Impunity. A recent report by Freedom Network found that an alarming "96% of journalist killings" in the past decade resulted in no convictions. This impunity places journalists at extreme risk and deprives Pakistani citizens of their fundamental rights to access information and freedom of expression, which are enshrined in the 1973 Constitution of Pakistan under Articles 19 and 19A. Their concerns with regard to impunity are absolutely valid and vindicated in the UNESCO report, 2023 on the safety of journalists and the media in Pakistan. This report, while painting a grim picture of the situation in the country, found that Pakistan is one of the deadliest countries for journalists in the world, with 97 journalist murders since 1992, and no one convicted of any of these crimes. The report also found that journalists in Pakistan face a wide range of threats and challenges, including arbitrary detention, harassment, and intimidation. The report states that "the impunity for crimes against journalists in Pakistan is a major obstacle to the free and independent practice of journalism." The appeal was preferred while knowing very well that all political parties irrespective of their bending towards leftist, centralists or rightists already have a dedicated section in their manifestos on safeguarding media freedom. The Pakistan People's Party (PPP) declared in its manifesto, "In our commitment to upholding democratic values, the PPP pledges to protect and promote freedom of the press. We recognize the vital role that media plays in a democratic society and will actively work to ensure an environment in which journalists can operate freely and without fear. We are committed to enacting and upholding legislation that protects journalists, guarantees access to information, and prevents impunity for crimes against media personnel." Pakistan Muslim League

(Nawaz group) (PML-N) in its manifesto recognizes the importance of a free press as a cornerstone of democracy, it says, "We are committed to fostering an environment where journalists can work without fear of harassment or violence. We will actively pursue measures to safeguard the independence of media organizations and ensure that laws and regulations protect journalists and their right to report without undue influence." Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) stands for transparency and open access to information. Its manifesto says, "We acknowledge the significance of a free press in holding the government accountable. We will work towards strengthening media institutions and safeguarding the rights of journalists. PTI is committed to promoting press freedom and will take steps to ensure that journalists can perform their duties without any threats or intimidation." Jamaat Ulema-e-Islam (Fazlur Rehman group) (JUI-F) in its manifesto declares, "JUI-F believes in democratic values, including the importance of a free and responsible press. We are committed to upholding the rights of journalists and ensuring they can report independently. We will work towards creating an environment where media outlets can operate freely, without undue government interference." Jamaat-e-Islami (JI) declares, "JI recognizes the role of the media as a watchdog in a democratic society. We pledge to protect press freedom and work towards creating an atmosphere where journalists are safe to perform their duties. We will advocate for laws that safeguard media independence and ensure that crimes against journalists are swiftly and justly addressed." All journalists organization knows very well that the political parties never resort to kinetic use while dealing with media, they may use PEMRA to issue directives to advise media to adhere to the code of conduct but since, every order of the PEMRA is appealable therefore, the media houses immediately get the stay order. The second tactic the government uses is the allocation of advertisements to either punish or reward non compliant media houses or newspapers but they never resort to using aggressive tactics to either silence or intimidate the journalists and the media houses. Question arises who in Pakistan uses violence, intimidation, bomb blast and assassination attempts to silence the journalists or media houses. The answer is not very difficult. All those organizations, terrorists, criminals and mafias which have the means and reasons to do so. These elements the world over use similar tactics to silence or intimidate the journalists and media houses. They use physical violence that can include beatings, torture, and even murder. In some cases, journalists and media workers are targeted with acid attacks or other forms of disfigurement. They threatened the media persons with violence against themselves, their families, or their friends. They may also be threatened with economic ruin or other forms of harm. They may be sued for defamation, sedition, terrorism or other crimes. They may also be arrested and detained on false charges. They may also

be subjected to cyber attacks where their websites may be targeted with cyberattacks, such as denial-of-service attacks or hacking. Terrorist, criminal and mafia groups may pressure businesses to boycott or withdraw advertising from media outlets that are critical of them. They may also threaten to target the businesses themselves. One or all such tactics have also been employed in Pakistan which are well documented by the Committee to Protect Journalists (CPJ) reports on Pakistan, published in 2022 and 2023. The CPJ report for 2022 recorded that; at least 50 journalists were in prison in Pakistan on charges such as sedition and defamation in 2022. Journalists were repeatedly harassed and attacked amid political unrest in May 2022. Pakistani journalists abroad face terrorism investigations at home. The offices of Geo News, ARY News, and Samaa TV were set on fire by supporters of Khan's PTI party. The CPJ report also highlights the impunity that perpetrators of attacks against journalists enjoy in Pakistan. In 2022, no one was convicted of any of the 97 journalist murders that have taken place in Pakistan since 1992. This issue of gagging the media both by the state and non-state actors is deep rooted and anchored in fear of the truth and intolerance of diversity of opinion and views which is the hallmark of any political dispensation. Addressing this fear necessitates a comprehensive strategy. Ensuring the safety and security of journalists and media houses is paramount for preserving democracy and upholding the fundamental principles of freedom of expression. To achieve this, governments should enact and enforce protective legislation that specifically shields journalists from threats and attacks. These laws should be complemented by mechanisms for reporting threats, specialized units within law enforcement agencies, and campaigns that raise public awareness and promote tolerance for diverse viewpoints. Training and capacity-building initiatives for journalists and media personnel are crucial, as is the protection of freedom of information laws. International cooperation and civil society engagement play pivotal roles in advocating for journalist rights and holding both governments and media organizations accountable. Legal reforms should be pursued to prevent the misuse of laws that can stifle media freedom, ensuring that a free press can thrive within a secure environment. The importance of these practices lies in their role as guardians of democracy, enabling journalists to fulfill their critical role as watchdogs and informers of the public. Additionally, they ensure the public's access to reliable information, uphold human rights, bolster a nation's international reputation, and contribute to conflict resolution efforts. Ultimately, these measures collectively foster an environment in which journalists can report without fear, allowing press freedom to flourish as an essential pillar of democratic societies.

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

Briefs

Terrorists' carry out attack in...

FROM PAGE 01
the minister, on X. He added that one blew himself up and the other was "neutralised", which usually means was killed. "Our struggle will continue until the last terrorist is neutralised," Yerlikaya wrote. A loud explosion in the Kizilay area, in the heart of the city, was reported at around 9:30am local time followed by reports of gunfire. Security forces have since set up barriers in the area, while TV footage showed bomb squads working near a parked vehicle in the area, located near the Turkish Grand National Assembly and other government buildings. Ankara Chief Public Prosecutor's Office launched an investigation into the terrorist attack, according to Anadolu Agency. Following the explosion, police forces took increased security around the area. The main Ataturk Boulevard was closed to traffic due to the explosion, close to one of the gates of the Grand National Assembly. Special operations police also were dispatched to the scene. The Grand National Assembly will open in the afternoon after a 3-month break. Turkish media earlier reported that an explosion was heard near the parliament and ministerial buildings, and broadcasters showed footage of debris scattered on a street near the Interior Ministry.

Nawaz to steer country...

FROM PAGE 01
the PML-N to start a new era of employment, peace and development for the youth and workers," she maintained. She further said that Nawaz Sharif will be accorded rousing welcome upon his return adding only Nawaz Sharif can steer the country out of existing crisis. She said Pakistan will embark on road to peace and progress when Nawaz Sharif will once again assume charge of the country. She said those who tried to eliminate Nawaz Sharif are behind the bars now.

Shehbaz spotlights Nawaz...

FROM PAGE 01
his party's steadfast dedication to tackling the issues affecting ordinary citizens. Shehbaz emphasized that with Nawaz Sharif at the helm, Pakistan would be committed to addressing crises, stabilizing the economy, providing relief to citizens, promoting national unity, and eradicating terrorism. He also underscored their party's strong focus on empowering and educating the youth, ensuring a bright future for them. Their election strategy and vision for the country prominently prioritize addressing the challenges and suffering endured by the public. Shehbaz Sharif also oversaw the arrangements for Mian Nawaz Sharif's arrival in Pakistan on October 21 and instructed party leaders to enhance coordination with various organizations to ensure a well-coordinated and seamless reception for their party leader.

Policeman martyred...

FROM PAGE 01
Everyone knows the motives behind terrorism, IG Anwar said adding that the terrorists will be identified in the next two to four hours. Meanwhile, a CTD spokesperson in a statement said as many as two terrorists were killed while search operation that was launched to apprehend the remaining terrorists. The entire area has been cordoned off, the spokesperson added. For the past year now, Pakistan has been gripped by a spate of terror attacks, with Balochistan and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa particularly being under the radar of militants targeting security forces and civilians to deteriorate peace. On Friday, two separate suicide bombings in Balochistan's Mastung and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa's Hangu left several people dead and many others injured. Earlier this month, a report compiled by PICSS stated a sharp increase recorded in militant attacks across the country in the month of August with 99 terror incidents reported.

Alvarez dominates Jermell to retain undisputed title

In a battle of undisputed champions, Mexico's Alvarez knocked down Charlo in the seventh round as he defended his WBO, WBC, WBA and IBF belts, becoming the first to defend all four for a third straight time

SPORTS DESK

LOS ANGELES: Saul "Canelo" Alvarez reaffirmed his super middleweight supremacy on Saturday with a devastating unanimous-decision victory over Jermell Charlo to retain his undisputed world title. In a battle of undisputed champions, Mexico's Alvarez knocked down Charlo in the seventh round as he defended his WBO, WBC, WBA and IBF belts, becoming the first to defend all four for a third straight time. Judges Max DeLuca and David Sutherland scored it 118-109 and Steve Weisfeld saw it 119-108 for Alvarez, who was the aggressor from the start. He sent Charlo, the undisputed super welterweight world champion, to the canvas for just the second time in his career in the seventh, rocking him with a right to the temple then following up with an uppercut that had the American sagging to a knee. "You know, I worked all the fight to go in the body," Alvarez said. "And then I changed the punch and that's what happened." Alvarez said he'd planned to attack Charlo's body, and he went after it early, digging in from the right and left. "We worked for that, we worked to work



in the body," Alvarez said. "We know he's a great fighter. He knows how to move in the ring and we worked that in the gym for three months. "Three months in the mountains without my family, without everything. But I still love boxing," the 33-year-old star said. "Boxing made me the person I am today.

Boxing is my life." Charlo, fighting above the 154-pound limit for the first time, never found an attacking rhythm as Alvarez dictated the pace, effectively cut off the ring and consistently backed his opponent up. Alvarez improved to 60-2-2 with 39 knockouts and backed up his claim that a high-al-

titude training camp in the California mountains had restored the fitness and strength that seemed to be lacking in two unimpressive victories over Gennady Golovkin and John Ryder since he failed foray at light heavyweight against Dmitry Bivol. Alvarez, now looking toward a title defence next May to coincide with the Mexican Cinco de Mayo holiday, said it didn't matter that he didn't get a knockout. "I feel great," he said. "That's why we fight 12 rounds, right. If I don't get that knockout I get 12 rounds to show I'm the best, right?" "I'm the best," Alvarez said. "Who's better? Nobody can beat this Canelo." Certainly Charlo had no answer for him as he fell to 35-2 with one drawn and 19 knockouts. "I just feel like I wasn't me in there," said Charlo, adding: "It's boxing. Sometimes you win and sometimes you lose." Charlo, who had a height and reach advantage despite stepping up in weight, and weighed in at the same 167.4 pounds as Alvarez, barely threw a punch in the opening round, and his efforts to get Alvarez off balance proved fruitless. Both fighters were more aggressive in the third, Alvarez connecting with a left hook to the body and right to the head before digging in with a right to the body.

Shadab Khan aims to perform in World Cup

HYDERABAD: All-rounder Shadab Khan has expressed hope to regain his form and perform with a 'new mindset' in the ICC World Cup 2023, scheduled to be played from October 5 to November 19. Shadab Khan, during a press conference before Pakistan's practice session in Hyderabad, expressed his wish to give his best for Pakistan in the World Cup 2023 and put Asia Cup 2023 memories in the past. "I admit I haven't been in good form lately, and it drained me mentally as I was playing continuously but could not perform at my best," said Shadab Khan. "However, the past is in the past. The rest I got has made me feel better and I hope to perform at my best during the World Cup for my team with a new mindset." Shadab Khan had a forgettable stint at the Asia Cup 2023 as he only managed to pick six wickets in five games at an average of 40.83, while with the bat, he scored a meagre 13 runs from five outings. Shadab Khan also backed teammate and opening batter Fakhar Zaman, who also struggled during the Asia Cup, scoring 65 runs in the four innings at an average of 16.25. "Fakhar Zaman is a world-class player, although he is not been consistent this year, but he is an impact player. We have complete faith in his abilities and we believe that he will help Pakistan win matches in the World Cup," he added. He also stressed the fact that fitness and bowling are key to winning the mega-event in India. - DNA

19th Asian Games Pakistan to face Iran in Asian Games Kabaddi

Pakistan Kabaddi team will start their journey against the defending champion Iran on today in the first match of the ongoing 19th Asian Games Kabaddi event at Hangzhou

AFZAL JAVED

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan Kabaddi team will start their journey against the defending champion Iran on Monday (Today) in the first match of the ongoing 19th Asian Games Kabaddi event at Hangzhou, China. The Pakistan Kabaddi team, who won the bronze medal in the last edition of Asian games, already reached Hangzhou to participate in the mega event. Pakistan Kabaddi team includes

Muhammad Imran (Captain), Waqar Ali, Akhlaq Ahmed, Sajjad Shaukat, Adil Hussain, Muzammil Zafar, Muzammil Ullah, Tahseen Ullah, Muhammad Sufian, Usman Ahmad, Umair Khan and Afaq Khan while Nabeel Ahmed Rana, Badshah Gul, Muhammad Kamran will be act as coach and manager with team. The Asian Games kabaddi competitions will start on October 2 and will run till October 7 at the Xiaoshan Guali Sports Centre in Hangzhou. The Pakistan team staged in

Group B of their respective event along with defending champion Iran, Korea and Malaysia while India, Japan, Bangladesh, Thailand and Chinese Taipei placed in Group A in a round-robin format. The top two teams from each group will advance to the semi-finals to be held on October 6 and final will be played on October 7.

Pool round matches:

October 2: Pakistan vs Iran
October 3: Pakistan vs Korea
October 4: Pakistan vs Malaysia.

Real Madrid reclaim top spot in La Liga



GERONA: Real Madrid jumped to the top of the La Liga 2023/24 points table after thumping second-ranked Girona 3-0 at Estadi Montilivi. Girona started the game on song with three attempts within the first ten minutes. However, they were unable to take the lead before Real Madrid turned the game around and gained an advantage over the home side as they managed to score in the 17th minute through a pass from Bellingham to Joselu, who turned it in past goalkeeper Paulo Gazzaniga. The visitors did not wait much and extended their lead to 2-0 four min-

utes later when Aurelien Tchouameni headed in from a corner. Girona failed to make a comeback after that and Real Madrid sealed the victory with a third goal in the 71st minute as Jude Bellingham, fired in a volley during a counter-attack. Jude Bellingham has scored six goals in the ongoing La Liga season after arriving from Borussia Dortmund in the summer following a huge transfer deal. The only negative for Real Madrid in this match was that defender Nacho was sent off for an ugly high tackle on Portu, who went off injured towards the end of the match. In other La Liga

fixtures, Real Sociedad outclassed Athletic Club with a thumping 3-0 victory at Anoeta Stadium, which helped them jump to the fourth spot in the ongoing season, while Getafe and Villarreal settled for a goalless draw. Robin Le Normand opened the scoring for Real Sociedad in the 30th minute before Takefusa Kubo extended their lead three minutes into the second half. Mikel Oyarzabal then scored the third goal for the home side from the right side of the box to the bottom right corner courtesy of an assist by Martin Zubimendi with a through ball. - Agencies

Mickey links up Pakistan squad in India

HYDERABAD: Mickey Arthur, Director of Pakistan's men's cricket team, has joined the Pakistan squad in Hyderabad, India on Sunday for the ICC World Cup 2023, scheduled to commence on October 5. Pakistan team is scheduled to face Australia in their second warm-up match on October 3, at Rajiv Gandhi International Stadium in Hyderabad, before kicking off their ICC World Cup 2023 campaign with the match against Netherlands on October 6 at the same venue. Pakistan lost their first warm-up match against New Zealand by five wickets as New Zealand batters chased down a mammoth 346 total with 38 balls to spare. Mickey Arthur was appointed Director of the Pakistan men's cricket team earlier this year. In this role, Arthur is involved in designing, formulating and overseeing strategies behind the Pakistan men's team. "I am absolutely thrilled to be rejoining the Pakistan cricket team and look forward to working with the group," Mickey Arthur said after his appointment. Arthur has served as the head coach of Pakistan from 2019 to 2019. During his tenure, the Pakistan team became the number one team in the Tests and T20I rankings, as well as winning the Champions Trophy in 2017. "Since moving on, I have kept a track of the players and their collective performances. This is a talented bunch with the potential to be number one across all formats and my endeavour is to put in place strategies and create an environment that can contribute in further enhancing their performances so that we can extract the best out of them." Mickey Arthur is part of the coaching staff for the ICC World Cup 2023, as well as the away series against Australia and the home series against the West Indies.

Pakistan squad for ICC World Cup 2023: Babar Azam (c), Abdullah Shafique, Fakhar Zaman, Imam-ul-Haq, Iftikhar Ahmed, Mohammad Rizwan (wk), Shadab Khan, Mohammad Nawaz, Usama Mir, Haris Rauf, M Wasim Jnr, Hasan Ali, Shaheen Shah Afridi, Saud Shakeel, Salman Ali Agha. - DNA

Russia's Kudermetova wins Pan Pacific Open

Kudermetova won the Pan Pacific Open in Tokyo, upsetting tennis' world number four Jessica Pegula in straight sets. The 19th-ranked Kudermetova overwhelmed American 7-5, 6-1 in an hour and 24 minutes

OUR CORRESPONDENTS

TOKYO: Russia's Veronika Kudermetova won the Pan Pacific Open in Tokyo on Sunday, upsetting tennis' world number four Jessica Pegula in straight sets. The 19th-ranked Kudermetova overwhelmed the American 7-5, 6-1 in an hour and 24 minutes. "I knew it would be a tough final... I need to fight for every ball and today it worked really well," she said. "I'm really happy that I managed to win my second title," said the 26-year-old, who won her first WTA singles title in Charleston in 2021. She beat Pegula in three sets on the clay in Madrid this year. "I played better today than in Madrid," Kudermetova said, adding that Pegula "always fights and plays solidly every match". "Today I followed my



game and my plan" to play aggressively, she said. Kudermetova had a tough semi-final, needing three hours and 25 minutes to defeat Anastasia Pavlyuchenkova. She stunned four-time Grand Slam champion Iga Swiatek in the quarters. Pegula was aiming for her second title of the season following victory last month in Montreal. Kudermetova "put a lot of pressure on me at the beginning so it made it very tough", the American said. "Luckily I was able to get back to the first set but I just don't think I was serving well enough... She was a better player today." The 29-year-old went into the US Open dreaming of a first ever Grand Slam title, but her campaign came to an abrupt halt as compatriot and close friend Madison Keys recorded a dominant win in just 61 minutes.

PM summons apex...

FROM PAGE 01

Chief Minister Balochistan and key provincial ministers along with senior civil and military officials. COAS Munir paid rich tribute to martyrs, saying that such terror incidents on 12 Rabi-ul-Awwal, depicts the "ill intent of the Khawarij, who have the backing of state sponsors of terrorism". He said these terrorists and their facilitators, having no link with religion and ideology, are proxies of the enemies of Pakistan and its people. "These evil forces will continue to face full might of the state and security forces backed by a resilient nation," he vowed. COAS Muniremphasised that People of Pakistan have rejected terrorists' pseudo ideology and propaganda of their backers and they are fully committed to peace, economic progress and human development which indeed is causing lot of distress to forces of evil in and outside of the country. The Army Chief also visited CMH Quetta, where he met the injured and families of Mastung incident who are being provided full medical care by Pakistan Army. He also lauded the bravery and resilience of Balochistan Police and Law Enforcement personnel. Read More: Mastung blast: Social media account linked to 'RAW' claims responsibility. The Army Chief assured full cooperation and support to the families of shuhada and assured them that terrorists, their abettors and facilitators will not be spared

800 Afghan nationals detained

FROM PAGE 01

released at the border to return back to Afghanistan. Read CTD dismantles TTP sleeper cell in Swabi According to Express News, several lists based on classified intel were compiled by the CTD and intelligence agencies and the operation is to be expedited in the coming days. The law enforcement authorities claim that several suspected criminals were identified in these lists made of Afghan nationals. Earlier this week, Islamabad decided to send back all "illegal" Afghan refugees in a major policy decision amid ongoing tensions between the two neighbouring countries. Official sources told The Express Tribune that the caretaker federal cabinet, through a circulation summary, approved the decision to repatriate as many as 1.1 million Afghan refugees residing in Pakistan illegally. However, there was no official confirmation yet from the interim government. Caretaker Interior Minister Sarfraz Bugti has yet to respond when approached for his comment. The sources added that as many as 400,000 Afghans entered Pakistan illegally since the return of the Afghan Taliban to Afghanistan in August 2021, adding that there have been another 700,000 Afghans identified who have been living in the country illegally.

Germany announces €2mn aid...

FROM PAGE 01

Ute Elpers (1935-2019) was a highly gifted artist trained as a porcelain and ceramic painter who worked as a technical drafter in road and bridge construction. She also learned the art of using special ink pens. In 2003 Ute became a member of the Humanity Care Foundation based in Muenster, Germany. She was encouraged by Col FolkerFlasse (ret'd), President of Humanity Care Foundation, a charitable organization registered in Germany and Pakistan, to support its humanitarian work in Pakistan. In 2005 Ute started her pen and ink drawings of historic buildings, monuments, mausoleums, shrines and landscapes. She portrayed through her pen and ink drawings the rich and diverse architectural and cultural heritage of Pakistan.

Briefs

390 dengue fever deaths recorded in BD

DHAKA : Bangladesh continues to break records for dengue fever death with September being the deadliest month since 2000. September claimed 396 deaths with almost 80,000 registered hospitalizations alone. August saw 342 deaths from the mosquito-borne disease, according to the Directorate General of Health Services. The health authority reported 14 new deaths Saturday, including eight from the nation's capital of Dhaka, with no sign of improvement in the worsening situation. The number of fatalities stood at 989, including 639 in Dhaka. Dengue cases rose to 203,406 with 2,425 additional hospitalizations, according to DGHS data. The fatalities and hospitalizations are at their highest since the country started recording dengue cases in 2000. In 2022, Bangladesh reported 281 deaths.—DNA

Many people affected by floods in SL

COLOMBO : Over 5,000 people from three districts in Sri Lanka have been affected by floods by Sunday morning, the country's Disaster Management Center (DMC) said. The water levels at Gin, Nilwala and Kalu rivers and Attanagalu Oya river continued to rise and were causing minor flooding in some areas, the DMC said. The DMC said landslide warnings had been issued for eight districts - Galle, Matara, Hambantota, Kalutara, Kandy, Kegalle, Matale and Ratnapura. Water levels at Kelani River, which flows through highly populated areas, were also rising, the DMC said. Colombo Fort (138.5 millimeters) had received the highest rainfall in the 24 hours that ended at 8 a.m. on Sunday, the Department of Meteorology said.—APP

S. Korea's export falls in last month

SEOUL : S. Korea's export falls for 12th month in September. South Korea's export fell for the 12th consecutive month due to weak global demand for locally-made products, especially semiconductors and oil products, government data showed Sunday.

Export, which accounts for about half of the export-driven economy, shrank 4.4 percent from a year earlier to 54.66 billion U.S. dollars in September, continuing to decrease since October last year, according to the country's Ministry of Trade, Industry and Energy. Import tumbled 16.5 percent to 50.96 billion dollars last month compared to the same month of last year. Affected by the faster fall in import than export, the trade balance recorded a surplus of 3.7 billion dollars.

Historic Japanese prison becomes luxury hotel

ANKARA : A Japanese resort operator plans to convert a historic former prison in western Japan into a luxury hotel set to open in the spring of 2026. The facility in Nara city dates back to the early 20th century, Tokyo-based Kyodo News reported on Sunday.

Hoshino Resorts, the resort operator, said multiple cells of the iconic red brick building are being combined to create 48 rooms for guests, promising an "extraordinary stay" in the "Hoshinoya Nara Prison" with refurbished interiors. The rooms will retain some period features, such as keeping the windows high up the walls to prevent jailbreaks. The new hotel was earlier slated to open its gates in the summer of 2024, but some factors, mainly the need for an earthquake resistance survey, delayed the opening. The site is near Nara Park, which has tourist attractions, including numerous deer and the Todai-ji temple complex.—APP

UK considers sending instructors to train Ukrainian troops

They say this is in accordance with international law. Well, in that case, strikes on German factories where these missiles are made would also be in full compliance with international law," Medvedev said.

KYIV: The British government could send military instructors to Ukraine to train Kyiv's armed forces inside the country, according to British Defense Minister Grant Shapps. The suggestion was promptly slammed by Russia on Sunday, saying British soldiers in the country would be legitimate targets. Shapps said he had spoken with army chiefs about moving "more training" into Ukraine to help its fight against Moscow and called on British defense firms to set up production in the country. Talking to The Sunday Telegraph newspaper, Shapps - who took over the defense portfolio from Ben Wallace at the end of August - said he has also spoken to Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy about the Royal Navy helping to defend commercial vessels in the Black Sea. And he said Britain was looking for ways to help Ukraine get in shape for NATO membership. Shapps visited a military base on Salisbury Plain earlier Friday where he was briefed by Gen. Sir Patrick Sanders, Chief of the General Staff, and other senior figures. He said: "I was talking about eventually getting the training brought closer and actually into Ukraine as well. 'Particularly in the west of the country, I think the opportunity now is to bring more things in country, and not just training. We're see-



ing BAE, for example, move into manufacturing in country. "I'm keen to see other British companies do their bit as well by doing the same thing." More than 20,000 recruits from Ukraine have received training in the U.K. since the start of 2022, but NATO

members have avoided training programs in Ukraine due to the risk of personnel being drawn into combat with Russia. The Defense Secretary said he had spoken to Zelenskyy on Wednesday and hinted Britain could play a more active role in the Black Sea, where Russia has targeted

cargo ships. "Britain is a naval nation so we can help and we can advise, particularly since the water is international water," he said. "It's important we don't allow a situation to establish by default that somehow international shipping isn't allowed

in that water. "There's a lot of places where Britain can help advise." Russia warning Meanwhile Sunday, former Russian President Dmitry Medvedev suggested that British soldiers training Ukrainian troops in Ukraine would be legitimate targets for Russian forces, as would German factories producing Taurus missiles should they supply Kyiv.

Medvedev, who is deputy chairman of Russia's Security Council, said such steps by the West were bringing World War III closer.

In a post on Telegram, Medvedev directed his ire toward British Defense Minister Shapps's comments on training Ukrainian armed forces. "(This will) turn their instructors into a legal target for our armed forces," Medvedev wrote on Telegram. "Understanding perfectly well that they will be ruthlessly destroyed. And not as mercenaries, but namely as British NATO specialists."

Medvedev then turned his focus to Germany, vilifying those who want Berlin to supply Ukraine with Taurus cruise missiles that could strike Russian territory and try to limit Moscow's supply to its army. "They say this is in accordance with international law. Well, in that case, strikes on German factories where these missiles are made would also be in full compliance with international law," Medvedev said. "These morons are actively pushing us towards World War III," Medvedev said.

Kosovo demands Serbia withdraw troops from border

WEB DESK

BELGRADE : Kosovo demanded that Serbia withdraw its troops from their common border, saying it was ready to protect its territorial integrity. "The military units of the Serbian army deployed their military and gendarmerie capacities to 48 forward operating bases located along the border line of the Republic of Kosovo, several kilometers deep within Serbian territory. This deployment also includes anti-aircraft systems and heavy artillery," the government said in a statement. It argued that the deployment threatens the territorial integrity of Kosovo and the international military presence in the country. "We have expressed our concern many times about the existence

of these 48 bases of the Serbian army and gendarmerie (on the borderline) and emphasized that these bases serve to support the already proven fact of a possible military attack against the Republic of Kosovo. We call on Serbian institutions and (Serbian) President (Aleksandar) Vucic to immediately withdraw all military units from the Kosovo borderline and to close and demilitarize 28 forward military bases and 20 gendarmerie bases that pose a permanent threat to our country," it said. Kosovo police announced it seized weapons Saturday after searches were carried out on the escape route used by a Serbian armed group that attacked and fought with police in Kosovo on Sept. 24. Rocket launchers, heavy weapons and military equipment such as bullet-proof vests were among the

items that were seized. US National Security Advisor Jake Sullivan expressed concerns about Serbian military activity on the Kosovo border in a telephone call Friday with Kosovo Prime Minister Albin Kurti. A fight broke out last Sunday in the village of Banjska in northern Kosovo - a region with a large ethnic Serb population - near the Serbian border, where a gunfight left a police officer dead and another injured. The area has been the scene of unrest since April, when local ethnic Serbs boycotted elections in northern Kosovo, followed by protests against the election of ethnic Albanian mayors. The last week has seen a "large Serbian military deployment along the border with Kosovo" including advanced artillery, tanks, and mechanized infantry unit, according to the US Nation-

al Security Council, whose spokesman called the deployment "a very destabilizing development." Kosovo called on Serbia to pull back its troops Saturday, and NATO Secretary-General Jens Stoltenberg, wrote Friday on X after an alliance meeting: "NATO Allies met today & expressed deep concern about tensions in northern Kosovo. NATO's KFOR mission will always take the necessary actions to maintain a safe & secure environment & freedom of movement for all." Albanians are by far the largest ethnic group in Kosovo, followed by Serbs, with about half living in the country's north. Kosovo declared independence from Serbia in 2008 and gained recognition from many countries, including Türkiye. But Belgrade has never recognized Kosovo and claims that its territory is still part of Serbia.

Nigeria announces measures amid looming strikes

ABUJA : Nigeria's President Bola Ahmed Tinubu on Sunday proposed a temporary minimum wage hike and more cheap gas-powered public transport among other measures to help offset the impact of his economic reforms as labour unions threatened a national strike. Speaking in a national broadcast to mark Nigeria's 63rd independence day anniversary, Tinubu's announcement came after he ended a long-standing fuel subsidy that cost the government billions of dollars a year and also liberalised the naira currency. Government officials say the reforms were needed to revive Africa's largest economy and investors have applauded them, but Nigerians are struggling with a tripling of fuel prices and inflation now at 25 percent. "Reform may be painful, but it is what greatness and the future require," the president said. "There is no joy in seeing the people of this nation shoulder burdens that should have been shed years ago. I wish today's difficulties did not exist. But we must endure if we are to reach the good side of our future." The Nigeria Labour Congress (NLC) and the Trade Union Congress (TUC) - the two major unions who represent industries from aviation workers and nurses to teachers and bankers - called an indefinite strike for October 3 because they say the government failed to address their concerns. There was no immediate response from unions on the new measures announced by Tinubu, though they have promised to go ahead with the planned strike.—Agencies

China's farm produce foreign trade up 2.8 pct

DNA

BEIJING : China's foreign trade of agricultural products went up 2.8 percent year on year in the first eight months of this year, official data showed. The total value of China's farm produce exports and imports stood at 225.39 billion U.S. dollars during the period, according to the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Affairs. In breakdown, the country's exports of such agricultural products edged up 0.2 percent year on year to 63.9 billion dollars, while the figure for imports hit 161.49 billion dollars, rising 4 percent from the same period last year. China's trade deficit of agricultural products came in at 97.59 billion dollars in the same period, up 6.6 percent on a yearly basis, the data showed.

SA issues 136 industrial licenses in August

RIYADH: Saudi Arabia's economic activity gained momentum with the Ministry of Industry and Mineral Resources issuing 136 industrial licenses in August compared to 102 in July. According to the Saudi Press Agency, the food product manufacturing sector received 29 permits, followed by the non-metallic mineral industry with 21. Moreover, the rubber and plastics industry obtained 15 permits, and 12 licenses were issued in the paper production sector. The SPA report added that the ministry issued 795 industrial licenses between January and August. The number of factories during this period reached 11,110, taking the total investments made by these firms to SR1.489 trillion (\$400 billion). The SPA report further noted that investment volume in August for new licenses stood at SR1.6 billion. Small enterprises accounted for 83.09 percent of the total licenses issued in August, followed by medium enterprises with 16.18 percent and micro-enterprises with 0.74 percent. The report added that national factories held the most significant chunk of the total licenses at 76.47 percent, followed by foreign establishments and joint-investment firms with 16.18 percent and 7.35 percent, respectively. On the other hand, 87 factories started production in August, with an investment of SR1.5 billion. Of these plants, 79.31 percent were national factories, 12.64 were foreign establishments and 8.64 percent were joint investment firms. Meanwhile, the ministry issued 36,293 certificates of origin in August, up from 34,926 in July. The initiative is seen as a part of the ministry's efforts to boost exports across various sectors.—Agencies

Poland opposition rally draws crowds, hopes breakthrough

FOREIGN DESK

WARSAW : Polish opposition leader Donald Tusk said "hundreds of thousands" of protesters had gathered in central Warsaw on Sunday to oppose the conservative government ahead of general elections on October 15. Called by Tusk, the former premier and head of the centrist Civic Coalition bloc, the rally sought to mobilise the electorate for the crunch vote. "When I see these hundreds of thousands of smiling faces, I have a good feeling that the breakthrough moment in the history of our homeland is coming," Tusk said. "A great change is taking place - this is a mark of the great Polish revival," Tusk told sup-

porters who flooded the city centre, many holding Polish and European Union flags. Participants began gathering in Warsaw in the early hours, with people travelling from across Poland to rally against the government. Kazimierz Figal said it took him seven hours to get to the capital from southwest Poland. "We've had enough of what we witness now - our freedom is being curbed. We want democracy, for our children and grandchildren," the 65-year-old told AFP. Lech Walesa, a former Polish president, Nobel Peace Prize winner and leader of the fight against communism, said earlier he planned to march, along with the leaders of some other opposition parties.

"We know what (the ruling party) fears the most - the cooperation with the opposition," said Wlodzimirz Czarzasty, a co-leader of the New Left party. The ruling party, which frequently clashes with the EU and faces accusations of undermining the rule of law, holds a comfortable lead in polls, with around 35 percent of voting intention according to IBRIS polling. The Civic Coalition opposition alliance has long trailed in second place, with 27 percent of voting intention in the IBRIS poll. But according to Tusk, internal polls commissioned by his own party show that the Law and Justice party's lead has narrowed to just two percentage points. "The opportunity is within reach,

nothing has been decided yet," Tusk told his supporters earlier this week as he addressed crowds in Elblag, northern Poland, promising to hold the authorities accountable following the vote. "Many of them will go to jail for blatant theft, for violating the law and the constitution," he said. Law and Justice leaders are holding their own rival rally in the southern city of Katowice on Sunday. Bartlomiej Pielat travelled from Katowice to Warsaw to take part in the opposition rally. "Breaking fundamental civil rights and women's freedom to choose how they wish to live, pitting Polish people against each other... I hope the march will mobilise people to change it", the 29-year-old said.

6 dead in nightclub fire in Spain

DNA

MADRID : At least six people were killed in a nightclub fire on Sunday morning in Murcia, southeastern Spain, the emergency services said, with four more injured in the blaze.

In a statement on social media, emergency services said the latest count recorded "six fatal victims", and said rescuers had managed to enter the building after first being alerted at 6:00 am local time (0400 GMT) that a fire had broken out in the nightclub.

They said they finally managed to enter around 0800 GMT and discovered four bodies, then two others around forty minutes later.

Four others were injured, two women aged 22 and 25 years old and two men in their forties, all suffering with smoke inhalation. According to photos released by the emergency services, the fire broke out in the "Teatre" nightclub, also called "Fonda Milagros". The photos showed water hoses from fire trucks still spraying the blackened facade of the club.

Thick smoke could be seen billowing from the roof of the nightclub building. "Emergency services are still hard at work to put out the fire that occurred in the Teatre nightclub," the Murcia town hall said, adding it "deeply regrets" the accident and offering condolences to those affected.

UN adopts new global rules to reduce chemicals harm

NEWS DESK

UNITED NATIONS : A new global framework to reduce environmental risks from chemicals and waste was adopted at a United Nations conference, with countries committing to phase out the most harmful ones, according to a UN press release. Agreed at the fifth International Conference on Chemicals Management (ICCM5), in Bonn, Germany, the Global Framework on Chemicals sets concrete targets and guidelines across the lifecycle of

chemicals. Andersen, Executive Director of the UN Environment Programme (UNEP), welcomed the new framework. "Everyone on this planet should be able to live and work without fear of falling sick or dying from chemical exposure. Nature, free from pollution, should be able to thrive and support humanity for millennia to come," she said. "This is why this framework provides a vision for a planet free of harm from chemicals and waste, for a safe, healthy, and sustainable future." The framework is based on 28 targets, designed to im-

prove responsible management of chemicals and waste. These targets also aim to establish stronger connections with other important global agendas, including climate change, biodiversity, human rights, and health. Governments have committed to setting up policies and regulations aimed at reducing chemical pollution by 2030 as well as promoting safer alternatives. Industries also pledged to manage chemicals in a manner that reduces pollution and its adverse impacts. By 2035, the framework aims to phase out highly hazardous pesticides

in agriculture where the risks have not been managed. In addition to the Global Framework, the Conference also adopted the Bonn Declaration. The Declaration aims to "prevent exposure to harmful chemicals, and phase out the most harmful ones, where appropriate, and enhance the safe management of such chemicals where they are needed." It also encourages countries to support the transition to circular economies, fostering the development of safe alternatives and substitutes for chemicals. This approach aims to not only safeguard health

and the environment but also reduce waste and enhance recycling efforts. Ms. Andersen urged all parties to start acting immediately. "The World Health Organization (WHO) tells us that direct chemical pollution of the air, land, water, and workplace is causing two million deaths per year," she said. "As any athlete will tell you, beating a target is better than meeting a target, so I call on governments, the chemicals industry, and everyone involved to go above and beyond what has been agreed to protect people and the planet upon which we all depend."

Briefs

Inflation shows slight dip

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Amidst the relentless grip of inflation, Pakistan has witnessed a slight respite with a marginal 0.02% decrease in the weekly inflation rate recorded this week. However, the annual inflation rate remains alarmingly high at 37.33 percent. The most severely affected segment of the population falls within the monthly income bracket of Rs29,518 to Rs44,175, grappling with a staggering 39% inflation rate, according to data released by the Federal Bureau of Statistics. The weekly report on inflation trends highlights that during the past week, prices of 14 essential items increased, while 14 others saw a decline, with 23 essential items maintaining stable prices. The overall inflation rate for the week, as per the report, stands at 37.33%. Notable changes in prices over the past week include a substantial rise in onion prices by Rs17.63 per kilogram and garlic by Rs21.58 per kilogram. Essentials like yogurt, mung dal, firewood, milk, and matches also became more expensive, while tomatoes witnessed a decrease of Rs7 per kilogram. Live chicken became cheaper by Rs15.14, and sugar saw a decline of Rs2.49 per kilogram. Additionally, domestic Liquefied petroleum gas (LPG) cylinders witnessed a reduction of Rs13, and a 20 kg bag of flour became cheaper by Rs19.12.

Fazl says nation should welcome Nawaz

DNA

SAHIWAL: Jamiat Ulema-e-Islam Fazl (JUI-F) head Maulana Fazlur Rehman said that the nation should welcome the Pakistan Muslim League-N (PML-N) supremo Nawaz Sharif on his return to Pakistan. As per details, the JUI-F chief said it is good if the former prime minister Nawaz Sharif is returning to Pakistan and the people of Pakistan should welcome him. Maulana Fazl lambasted the PTI chief saying that he landed the country in an economic crisis meanwhile his cases are in court and the disqualification will confirm that he will stay out of elections. He stated that the ECP has announced election in January as holding elections is their constitutional right. It is pertinent to mention here that former prime minister Shehbaz Sharif announced Nawaz Sharif's return to Pakistan on October 21. "he will be given a splendid welcome on his arrival in Pakistan", he added. He said that the party supremo was removed from power through a conspiracy and the rigging in the 2018 general elections left Pakistan behind in the region. "We held consultations with the senior leadership of the party and decided that Nawaz Sharif will return to Pakistan in October and lead the election campaign," Shehbaz Sharif said while talking to journalists in London.

Iran ready for coop with Pakistan

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Iran says its armed forces are ready for any form of cooperation with Pakistan in the fight against terrorism. The assurance was given by Chairman Chiefs of Staff of Iranian Armed Forces, Mohammad Bagheri, to Pakistani Chief of Army Staff Syed Asim Munir in a message to extend his sympathy over a deadly terrorist attack at a religious gathering in Mastung. Iranian Army Chief expressed condolences to Pakistan's Army Chief, Armed Forces, government and people, and prayed for speedy recovery of those injured in the tragic incident.

Two-week Exercise Eternal Brotherhood-II concludes

Multinational Joint Special Forces Exercise Eternal Brotherhood-II has been conducted among Special Forces of Pakistan, Kazakhstan, Qatar, Turkiye and Uzbekistan in Counter Terrorism domain. Two weeks long Exercise Eternal Brotherhood-II commenced on 17 Sept 2023 in Barotha

STAFF REPORT

RAWALPINDI: Multinational Joint Special Forces Exercise Eternal Brotherhood-II has been conducted among Special Forces of Pakistan, Kazakhstan, Qatar, Turkiye and Uzbekistan in Counter Terrorism domain. Two weeks long Exercise Eternal Brotherhood-II commenced on 17 September 2023 in Barotha. Corps Commander 11 Corps attended the Closing Ceremony as Chief Guest along with Director General Military Training and General Officer Commanding Special Service Group. Besides the Exercising troops; officers from the friendly countries also witnessed the Closing Ceremony. Special Forces of participating countries displayed their professional excellence on the final day. The exercise was aimed at further harnessing the historic military to military relations amongst brotherly countries and helped nurture joint employment concepts against counter terrorism besides; identifying areas of mutual interest for future military collaborations.



Cackdown against foreigners with expired visas

DNA

ISLAMABAD: In a major move, the federal government has announced strict measures against foreigners whose visas have expired. Sources within the government report that authorities will take decisive action against those individuals whose visas have expired by October 3, causing over 6,000 foreigners to hastily leave the city of Islamabad. With the impending deadline just around the corner, sources confirmed that further processing of visa violations will be expedited to maintain law and order within the capital city. The crackdown on visa violators has been prompted by a sharp increase in

the number of illegally staying foreigners in Islamabad, which has surged to a concerning 398 individuals. To address this issue, authorities have registered 43 cases against foreign nationals across different police stations. The government's decision to take stern action against foreigners with expired visas comes as part of a broader effort to regulate immigration and ensure national security. This move aims to maintain the integrity of visa regulations and safeguard the interests of both Pakistani citizens and legally residing foreigners. Officials have urged all foreigners currently residing in Islamabad to ensure their visa documentation is up-to-date and in compliance with local laws. Failure to do so may result in detention and deportation.

IMF talks likely in October end week

ISLAMABAD: The talks for the second tranche of the International Monetary Fund (IMF) bailout will likely to be held in the last week of October. An online meeting of the Federal Board of Revenue was held with the IMF. The officials have told the IMF that Pakistan will not impose a new tax, sources said. The FBR has been confident to attain the tax recovery target without imposing new tax, sources said. Sources said that the global lender has expressed its satisfaction with performance of the FBR. The IMF will be informed about economic performance of

the country in the first week of October. Taxation data of the first quarterly of the ongoing fiscal year, July to September, will likely to be shared with the IMF in the next week, sources said. A plan of crackdown against tax theft has also been shared with the IMF, sources added. It is pertinent to mention here that the development budget is likely to be reduced by Rs 150 to Rs 200 billion amid International Monetary Fund (IMF) pressure. It was disclosed in a meeting of the Federal Minister of Finance Dr. Shamshad Akhtar with the provincial finance ministers. - DNA

ADB Capital Management Reforms unlock \$100 bln

DNA

ISLAMABAD: The Asian Development Bank (ADB) on Friday approved capital management reforms that unlock \$100 billion in new funding capacity over the next decade to address the regions overlapping, simultaneous crises. The expansion of available funds will be further leveraged through mobilizing private and domestic capital to move from the billions to trillions required to tackle the climate crisis. The reforms were introduced through an update of ADBs Capital Adequacy Framework (CAF), according to ADB press statement received here. They expand the banks annual new commitments capacity to more than \$36 billionan increase of approximately \$10 billion, or about 40%. The expansion is achieved by optimizing ADBs prudential level of capitalization while maintaining its overall risk appetite. The reforms also create a Countercyclical Lending Buffer to support ADB developing member countries (DMCs) facing unexpected crises. The measures, which will enable ADB to provide up to \$360 billion of its own financing to its DMCs and private sector clients over the next decade, are designed to ensure ADB maintains its AAA credit rating and its ability to provide DMCs with funding at low cost and with long maturities. The reforms further safeguard ADBs AAA credit rating through the introduction of a recovery plan that would prevent capital erosion during periods of

financial stress. ADBs capital adequacy framework is reviewed every 3 years. These important reforms will significantly expand ADBs ability to support a broad range of critical development efforts across Asia and the Pacific, including greater concessional resources for our vulnerable members, said ADB President Masatsugu Asakawa. Our decision today is part of ADBs response to the call for multilateral development banks (MDBs) to do more with our resources and faster, he said adding these resources would help the region manage a complex set of overlapping crises, address gender inequality, and provide for basic needs in the context of the existential challenge of climate change. This extra lending power will be extended and leveraged further by renewed efforts to mobilize private and domestic capital and maximize the impact of our work, the ADB president added. Private capital mobilization will play a critical role in leveraging billions to trillions, by expanding private sector involvement in the development agenda. Upstream actions will help improve macroeconomic policy and the institutional and enabling environment for private sector investment, spurring increased domestic and foreign investment. Midstream advisory support will help create project pipelines and prepare bankable projects that can attract private-sector investment. Downstream financing will be structured to crowd in private capital in development projects, including de-risking for the private sector.

Pro-China Muizzu wins Maldives presidency

MALE: A pro-China candidate has won presidential elections in the Maldives, defeating an incumbent who had strengthened relations with India. President Ibrahim Mohamed Solih accepted defeat in the run-off poll, congratulating his rival Mohamed Muizzu who won 54% of the vote. Mr Muizzu, mayor of the capital Male, campaigned with the slogan "India out". Mr Solih will serve as caretaker president until his successor is inaugurated on 17 November. In power since 2018, the 61 year old from the Maldivian Democratic Party (MDP) strengthened relations with India, with which Male has strong cultural and financial ties. He called it an "India-first" policy. The Maldives have long been under India's sphere of influence. Maintaining its presence there has given Delhi the ability to monitor a key part of the Indian Ocean. Mr Muizzu, 45, from the Progressive Alliance coalition favours better relations with China. China, with its rapidly expanding naval forces, wants access to such a strategically important location - something its rival India wants to prevent. - Agencies

Afghan embassy suspends operations in India

NEW DELHI: More than two years after the Taliban took control of Kabul following the fall of the Western-backed government, the Afghan embassy in India officially shut down on Sunday. Most foreign nations, including India, do not recognise Afghanistan's Taliban-led government as the country's ruler, leaving many Afghan embassies and consulates across the world in limbo. Diplomats appointed by the former government refused to cede control of embassy buildings and property to Taliban representatives. "It is with profound sadness, regret, and disappointment that the Embassy of Afghanistan in New Delhi announces this decision to cease its operations," said an embassy statement posted on the social media platform X. India will take control of the embassy in a caretaker capacity, it said. The unsigned statement claimed that maintaining operations had become "increasingly challenging" due to staff and resource reductions, including a "lack of timely and sufficient support from visa renewal for diplomats". - Agencies

Indian HC blocked from Glasgow gurdwara visit

GLASGOW: The diplomat was approached by Sikh activists outside a Glasgow Gurdwara India has complained to the Foreign Office after a top diplomat was confronted by protesters at a gurdwara in Glasgow. The High Commission of India said Vikram Doraiswami had been invited to the place of worship to discuss community and consular issues. But he left after he was confronted by a small number of activists on Friday. A Sikh youth group later claimed there was a longstanding ban on Indian officials visiting gurdwaras. The confrontation follows an international row over suggestions Indian agents may be linked to the murder of a Sikh separatist in Canada. - Agencies

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