Wednesday, October 04, 2023 Aryna Sabalenka

Pakistan's Credible Daily Newspaper

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triumphs in thrilling China Open 2023

Detailed News On Page-06

EU FP chief in Kiev along with diplomats

A sister publication of CENTRELINE & DNA News Agency

Detailed News On Page-08



Pakistan calls for peaceful solution of Kashmir issue

Detailed News On Page-07



Apex committee takes key decisions

Pakistan sets Nov 1 deadline for illegal immigrants exodus

24 attacks conducted in Pakistan out of which 14 were carried out by Afghan people: interior minister



ISLAMABAD: Federal Interior Minister Sarfraz Bugti addressing a press conference. – DNA

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

ISLAMABAD: The Pakistani government Tuesday gave November 1 as a deadline to illegal immigrants residing in the country, warning that action would be taken against them after the time limit. Addressing a press conference following an apex committee meeting on the national action plan, the interior minister said that the huddle set November 1 as the deadline for the illegal immigrants to leave the county voluntarily. Caretaker Prime Minister Anwaar-ul-Haq Kakar chaired the high-level huddle, attended by

Continued on Page 06

Fiscal reforms critical for economic stability

WEB DESK

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan's economy slowed sharply in fiscal year 2023 with real gross domestic product (GDP) estimated to have contracted by 0.6 per cent, according to the World Bank.

In a report released on Tuesday, titled 'Pakistan Development Update: Restoring Fiscal Sustainability', the global body said the decline in economic activity in the country reflects the cumulation of domestic and external shocks including the floods of 2022, government restrictions on imports and capital flows, domestic political uncertainty, surging world commodity prices, and tighter global financing. The report said the previous fiscal year ended with significant pressure on domestic prices, fiscal and external accounts and exchange rate, and loss of investor confidence. "The difficult economic conditions record hig nng wit food prices, lower incomes, and the loss of crops and livestock due

cantly increased poverty." As per the report, the poverty headcount is estimated to have reached 39.4pc in fiscal year 2023, with 12.5 million more Pakistanis falling below the lower-middle income country poverty threshold (\$3.65/ day 2017 per capita) relative to 34.2pc in fiscal year 2022. "Careful economic management and deep structural reforms will be required to ensure macroeconomic stability and growth," said World Bank Country Director for Pakistan Najy Benhassine said in the report. He added: "With inflation at record highs, rising electricity prices, severe climate shocks, and insufficient public resources to finance human development investments and climate adaptation, it is imperative that critical reforms are undertaken to build the fiscal space and public means to invest into inclusive, sustainable, and climate-resilient development." Without a sharp fiscal adjustment and decisive implementation of

Continued on Page 06

also felt at New Delhi

DNA

KATMANDU: Two earthquakes rocked western Nepal on Tuesday, injuring 11 people, damaging homes and triggering a landslide that blocked a major highway, authorities said. The landslide after the quakes of magnitude 6.3 and 5.3 in the district of Baihang bordering India, blocked the road to the southern plains, interior ministry official Rama Acharya told media. The quakes, centred in Talkot and Chainpur, struck at an interval of about 30 minutes. Police official Bharat Bahadur Shah said 11 people - seven women and four men - were injured and were being treated in hospital. One woman was missing after being hit by Continued on Page 06

Civilian casualties doubled in September

Briefs

Sattar calls for transparent polls

NAZIR SIYAL



Alliance (GDA) on Tuesday called for the transparent polls. Addressing a press conference in Karachi flanked by GDA general secretary Dr Safdar Abbasi, MQM-P bigwig Farooq Sattar said: "There is a dire need to provide level playing field to all the political parties to ensure transparent general elections." "Despite the fact that Sindh chief minister has been changed, corruption still prevails in the province.

Australia down Pak by 14 runs

DNA HYDERABAD: Australia have



game at the Rajiv Gandhi International Stadium in Hyderabad. Despite brilliant knocks from skipper Babar Azam and Iftikhar, the Men in Green fell short in the chase of 352 and suffered loss in their second practice game. Earlier. Australian batters showed no mercy to Pakistani pacers in their innings as they posted a colossal total of 351 runs in 50 overs Glenn Maxwell played a fine knock, scoring 77 off 71 with ten boundaries that went all over the ground, he was followed by Josh Inglis who helped the Aussies accelerate their innings in the last 10 overs, scored 48 off 30 with a handsome 160 strike rate.

'Pre-poll rigging'

PTI demands recovery its leaders; workers

Party writes to PM Kakar, CEC; says enforced disappearances 'most serious of all constitutional violations'

KHAYAM ABBASI

ISLAMABAD: The Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) called upon the caretaker prime minister and the chief election commissioner on Tuesday to take immediate action in recovering their forcibly disappeared leaders and workers. In separate letters addressed to PM Anwaarul Haq Kakar and CEC Sikandar Sultan Raja, PTI's Secretary General Omar Ayub Khan raised alarm over the mysterious disappearance of the party's key leaders and workers. As per Khan's letter, copies of the letters have also been shared with the provincial chief ministers. In his letter, Khan has highlighted names of PTI leaders whose whereabouts are currently after arriving in the country on the unknown. These include Farrukh Habib, Sadaqat Abbasi, Usman Dar, Owais Younis, Irfan Saleem, Abdul Karim Khan, and Awami

NS not returning under any deal

Abbas Hashmi

LAHORE:Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) Punjab President Rana Sanaullah Tuesday dispelled the speculations that party supremo Nawaz Sharif return to the country is part of any deal. Addressing the media in Lahore, Sanaullah revealed that Nawaz will address the public gathering at 6pm on October 21 at Minar-e-Pakistan soon same day. "Nawaz Sharif will arrive in Lahore on October 21 at 5:30pm," he said. He mentioned that Nawaz is com-Muslim League (AML) Chief Sheikh Rashid. ing to lead the party at the request of

Continued on Page 06

Continued on Page 06

Press Freedom crackdown

Indian authorities raid homes of senior journalists, activists

Despite allegations of receiving illegal funds from China, NewsClick vehemently denies these charges

News Desk

NEW DELHI: Police in the Indian capital, Delhi, conducted raids on Tuesday morning at the homes of several prominent journalists and authors in connection with an investigation into the funding of the news website NewsClick. Despite allegations of receiving illegal funds from China. NewsClick vehemently denies these charges. The raids, which have raised concerns about press freedom, involved the seizure of mobile phones and laptops from those targeted. NewsClick, established in 2009, is an independent news and current affairs website known for its critical stance towards the government. In 2021, it faced a raid by tax authorities over allegations of violating India's foreign direct investment rules. Tuesday's coordinated raids at 30 locations mark one of the most extensive operations against India's media in recent years, prompting opposition leaders to criticise it as a "fresh attack on the media" by the Bharatiya Janta Party (BJP) government. Information and Broadcasting Minister Anurag Thakur has denied

Continued on Page 06

India, Canada row intensifies further

AGENCIES

NEW DELHI: India has told Canada that it must repatriate 41 diplomats by Oct. 10, the Financial Times reported on Tuesday. Ties between India and Canada have become seriously strained over Canadian suspicion that Indian government agents had a role in the June murder in Canada of a Sikh separatist leader and Canadian citizen, Hardeep Singh Nijjar, who India had labeled a "terrorist". India has dismissed the allegation as absurd. The Financial Times, citing people familiar with the Indian demand, said India had threatened to revoke the diplomatic immunity of those diplomats told to leave who remained after

Continued on Page 06



National Health Service Regulations and Coordination Dr. Nadeem Jan in Islamabad. - DNA

Nepal hit by two earthquakes

The tremors of the quakes

CENTRELINE REPORT

ISLAMABAD:Terrorist attacks in Pakistan have increased, with 136 people killed in 65 militant attacks across the country in September, a report published by an Islamabad-based think tank said. According to the Pakistan Institute for Conflict and Security Studies (PICSS) monthly report, 144 people were injured, including civilians and security personnel, with

Continued on Page 06

cases aren't filed against martial laws

Justice Akhtar questioned that if parliament has the right to legislate, can it give the authority to form benches to the government? Cipher trial to be

COURT REPORTER

ISLAMABAD: A full court bench of the Supreme Court has resumed hearing multiple petitions against the Practice and Procedure Act. The bench is being headed by Chief Justice of Pakistan Qazi Faez Isa while the proceedings are being broadcast live, as was the previous hearing in the case. The CJP remarked that the law affects the chief justice and senior judges. He added that on the one hand if the CJP's authority is not being reduced, it is being limited, but on the other the same authority is being divided between two senior judges. This will impact the next chief justices as well, which was why a full court was hearing the case, Justice Isa remarked. He also added that they wanted to wrap up the case today. Petitioner Niazullah Niazi's lawyer Akram Chaudhry argued that This law has been specified for a few

Tuesday issued a notification to hold Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) Chairman Imran Khan's trial in Adiala jail in the cipher case. The notification was issued after special court judge Abul Hasnat Zulgarnain wrote a letter to the Ministry of Law, asking it to issue a notification to hold the hearing of the cipher case in the Rawalpindi prison due to security concerns. In the notification, the law ministry said it did not have an objection to holding the PTI chief's trial in Adiala jail. A day earlier, the special court established under

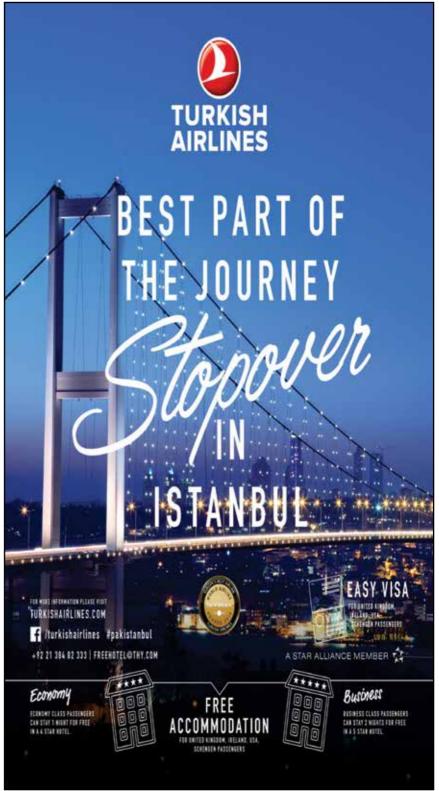
held in Adiala

ADIL SHAHEEN

ISLAMABAD: The Ministry of Law on

Continued on Page 06

Continued on Page 06



ISSI launches report on "human security through development"

ADIL SHAHEEN

ISLAMABAD: The Centre for Strategic Perspectives (CSP) at the Institute of Strategic Studies Islamabad (ISSI) launched a Special Report on "Human Security through Development" today. The Chief Guest on the occasion was Chairman, National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA), Lieutenant General Inam Haider Malik. Other discussants included: Ambassador Shafqat Kakakhel, Chairperson BoG, SDPI; Ms. Aisha Khan, Executive Director, Civil Society Coalition for Climate Change; Dr. Aliya Khan, Former Dean Faculty of Social Sciences, QAU, and Mr. Faheem Sardar, Senior Policy Specialist, NSD. In his address, Chairman NDMA Lieutenant General Malik emphasized the evolving geopolitical landscape worldwide, where human security challenges manifest uniquely in various countries. He underscored the importance of aligning human security goals with Pakistan's national capabilities to transform them into tangible realities. The Chairman stressed the necessity of making policy adjustments to advance development goals and objectives, stressing that every element of national power must contribute to the nation's development efforts. He emphasized the critical role of nurturing a skilled human resource base to effectively address challenges to national progress. Furthermore, the NDMA Chairman highlighted that Pakistan is transitioning from a reactive stance to a proactive approach in the context of disaster preparedness, disaster management and post-disaster rehabilitation and reconstruction. In this context, he enumerated the wide range of policy measures and concrete collaboration with national and international partners. In conclusion, he emphasized the importance of formulating National Development Goals tailored to Pakistan's specific needs, underlining that while the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) are valuable, each country should also focus on its unique developmental priorities as well. In his welcome remarks, Director-General ISSI Ambassador Sohail Mahmood emphasized the significance of the Special Report as a valuable addition to the ongoing discourse on human security in Pakistan. He noted that while traditional security concerns are vital, they often fall short in addressing the increasingly accentuating non-traditional security threats and challenges. Ambassador Sohail Mahmood pointed out that Pakistan's National Security Policy (NSP) has rightly prioritized human security as part of comprehensive national security framework, recognizing the numerous security challenges that have impeded the country's progress towards sustainable development. Among other things, he stressed the importance of nurturing the young generation, describing them as a valuable asset for the nation and

highlighting the need to enhance their skill development for increased human security. Furthermore, he emphasized that climate change stands as a significant human security issue for Pakistan and must be addressed with the utmost seriousness. Ambassador Sohail Mahmood concluded by thanking the contributors - noting that the Special Report underscores the necessity for a comprehensive approach to tackle the whole range of human security challenges effectively in a holistic and integrated manner and should serve as a road-map for all the relevant stakeholders. In her remarks, Director Neelum Nigar highlighted the significance of the CSP report for policymakers, practitioners, and academics, emphasizing its focus on the critical aspects of human security and development within Pakistan. She underscored the diverse backgrounds of the contributors, which enriched the report with a wealth of insights and perspectives on the subject of human security. Dr. Nigar emphasized that the report thoroughly covers challenges and opportunities in Pakistan's human security and development domain.



33 Pink toilets to be built for working women

actions initiated by NDMA including in

MULTAN :A plan to establish 'Pink toilets' for women in government offices of South Punjab has been launched as 433 toilets to be built for working women. The preparation of the plan has been started as per directions of Additional Chief Secretary South Punjab Sagib Zafar. A review meeting about the project was held led by Secretary Ser vices South Punjab Amjad Shoaib Khan Tareen in which Additional Secretary Specialized Healthcare Sadia Mahr, Additional Secretary Coordination Muhammad Faroog Dogar, Additional Secretary Primary and Secondary Healthcare Qamar-ul- Zaman Qaisrani, Additional Secretary Higher Education Ata-ul- Haq and others were present. Amjad Shoaib while addressing the meeting said that pink toilets would be built in government offices for working women and visiting women in different districts. He said that the Pink Toilets for Women project was part of the implementation of the Gender Action Plan regarding gender equality and informed that there were 450 separate toilets for women in government offices across the region. He directed all the concerned departments to submit an action plan for the construction of pink toilets within a week and convey the estimated cost and budget details in the action plan. Pink toilets will also be established at highways and other public places. Mr Tareen added that the situation of the existing toilets for women in government offices will also be improved while daycare centres and separate waiting areas also be established for women in the second

Chairman PRCS inaugurates BSL-III laboratory

MEHTAB PIRZADA

ISLAMABAD: In a significant stride towards enhancing public health services and reinforcing disaster response capabilities, Chairman Pakistan Red Crescent Society (PRCS) Sardar Shahid Ahmed Laghari, . officially inaugurated a cutting-edge Biosafety Level-III (BSL-III) laboratory at the PRCS National Headquarters today. This advanced facility, equipped with state-of-

DNA

Peshawar: Governor of

Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Haji Ghulam Ali has said that

China is a time tested and

true friend of Pakistan

who has always helped

Pakistan in difficult

times. The whole world

gives examples of Pakistan-China friendship

and this is the reason

why Pakistanis always

share in the happiness of Chinese people and

Celebrations held across

Pakistan on the occasion

of the 74th Independence

Day of the People's Re-

public of China is a clear

proof that Pakistan-Chi-

na friendship is sweeter

than honey, higher than

the Himalayas and deep-

er than the oceans. He

expressed these views

while addressing a color-

ful event organized by

China Window, a Chinese

the-art technology, is poised to offer a diverse range of laboratory tests to the public at significantly discounted rates, underscoring PRCS's steadfast commitment to community service. The ceremony was attended by Muhammad Abaidullah Khan, Secretary General of PRCS. ficers from the IFRC, Turkish Red Crescent, German Red Cross, Norwegian Red Cross, and PRCS staff. Adhering to stringent specifications set

by the WHO and other in-

ternational benchmarks, the PRCS PCR Lab with BSL-III standards sets a new standard for laboratory safety. Chairman Sardar Shahid Ahmed Laghari underscored the pivotal role this facility will play in mitigating health-related risks associated with handling infectious agents, toxins, and biological hazards. The labo-

ratory's strategic design aims to enhance safety operations and cultivate an environmental culture crucial for effective responses to pandemics and epidemics. During the inauguration, Chairman Laghari remarked, "The commencement of this cutting-edge BSL-III laboratory marks a significant milestone in our continuous efforts to serve the community and fortify our disaster response capabilities.

continues

QUETTA: On the special instructions of the Ministry of Energy Power Division, operations against electricity thieves and defaulters Quetta Electric Supply Company (QESCO) are in full swing in all operation circles. A handout issued by the QESCO, said that so far, 5117 connections have been found involved in electricity theft across the province. Illegal connections included 3049 domestic, 1986 commercial and 82 industrial. He further said that as many as 1265 applications have been filed for legal action against electricity thieves in police stations and levies stations, and so far 380 FIRs have been registered against electricity thieves in all areas of the province including the provincial capital Quetta. Of which 66 FIRs have been registered in the provincial capital Quetta, 89 in Lorelai, 65 in Khuzdar, 93 in Sabi, 46 in Pishin and 21 in Makran. Apart from this, a total of 166 electricity thieves have been arrested so far, against whom legal proceedings are ongoing. Meanwhile, 25 lakh 30 thousand unit detection fines have been charged

to the electricity thieves. A fine of 13.83 million rupees has been imposed on all the electricity thieves, while 9.26 million rupees have been collected from the electricity thieves so far.-APP Governor hails PAK-China friendship at celebration

chaired by PDMA Director General, Janat Gul Afridi. Director General Janat Gul Afridi said, "We have initiated the Winter Contingency Planning process involving all stakeholders, and the plan is expected to be finalized by mid-November. We have developed data collection tools and shared them with stakeholders, including information on district/sector-specific hazards, vulnerability profiles, hazard impacts, damages, compensation details, resource mapping, needs assessments, and coordination efforts." He added, "Through the upcoming

contingency plan, our aim is to mitigate potential losses caused by winter-related natural hazards including extreme low temperatures, fog/smog, snowfall, rainfall, landslides, flash floods and seismic activity in the mountainous north and west." The Winter Contingency Plan will categorize districts based on Vulnerability and Risk Assessment, ranging from very high to low vulnerability levels. Each weather pattern will have its own set of contingencies. The unique geography, terrain, and natural resources of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa expose the province to various climate-re-

a market-based field there-

fore, graduates have great

career opportunities in de-

velopment agencies, donor

agencies, national and in-

ternational NGOs, private

sector, government institu-

tions, and educational insti-

tutions. In their practical

life, Development Studies

graduates would be able to

play a key role in achieving

the United Nations Sustain-

able Development Agenda

at the national and global

He further said that many

new undergraduate and

postgraduate degree pro-

grammes have been start-

ed during the tenure of

Vice-Chancellor Prof. Dr.

Jahan Bakht and the uni-

versity is on the path of fur-

ther development under his

leadership.



ISLAMABAD: Caretaker Federal Minister for Railways, Shahid Ashraf Tarar chairing a meeting at Ministry of Railways in Islamabad.-APP

AUP starts BS in

response to development

needs at local, national,

regional and global levels.

It would enable graduates

to develop the theoretical,

conceptual and analytical

skills needed to understand

the process of socio-eco-

nomic development and the

challenges it faces, he said.

This course is important

for development workers

and practitioners, social

workers, social science

researchers, development

tors, policymakers, and ac-

ademics. Upon successful

completion of the course,

graduates would have a

better understanding of

contemporary development

issues and the role of com-

munities, civil society, the

private sector and govern-

ment agencies in address-

ing these issues. Dr. In-

administra-

consultants,

Crackdown against power theft

development studies PESHAWAR: The Institute of Development Studies (IDS), University of Agriculture Peshawar (AUP) has started a new degree program for BS Development Studies Director IDS Professor Dr. Inayatullah Jan and his team thanked the Vice-Chancellor Prof. Dr. Jahan Bakht and the Syndicate members for approving the degree programme. Dr. Inayatullah said that Development Studies is an emerging social, economic, political, cultural, environmental and gender-oriented field. The course covers several interrelated subjects such as economics, sociology, political science, gender studies, ecology, statistics, social science research, and others. This course is designed in

PDMA for winter contingency plan to minimize disaster risks was convened with the Pro-

vincial Line Departments,

PESHAWAR : The Provincial Disaster Management Authority, under the guidance of the Relief, Rehabilitation and Settlement Department Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, on Tuesday commenced the process of developing the Winter Contingency Plan for 2023-24 in consultation with all relevant stakeholders. The primary objectives are to minimize disaster risks, identify hazards, assess risks, and map available resources to enhance preparedness and ensure a coordinated and prompt response. In this context, a crucial pre-winter planning and orientation meeting

lated challenges.—APP













IG PUNJAB visited Mianwali and PHP check post

briefed IG Punjab about the

cultural center estab-

lished in Peshawar, on

the occasion of China's

National Day. Caretaker

Provincial Minister for

Information and Culture

Barrister Mian Feroz

Jamal Shah Kaka Khel,

Provincial Minister for

Sports, Youth Affairs and

Science and Technology

MEHTAB PIERZAD

phase.-DNA

LAHORE ;Inspector General Police Punjab Dr. Usman Anwar visited Mianwali, met the brave soldiers who foiled the attack of terrorists at PHP check post Kundal, bravely fought and killed two terrorists in counter action. IGP encouraged all the force with cash reward, praised their bravery. He also attended the funeral prayer of Shaheed Head Constable Haroon Khan at Police Lines Mianwali, met the family members and assured them of all possible support from the department. According to the details, IG Punjab Dr. Usman Anwar, Additional IG Special Branch Zulfiqar Hameed, Additional IG CTD Waseem Sial, Additional IGP PHP Rao Abdul Karim, DIG IT Ah-

san Yunus along with other

officers reached Mianwali and moved to Kundle Check Post. IG Punjab Dr. Usman Anwar met the brave jawans posted at the patrol post who foiled the terrorist attack. DIG Patrolling Police Athar Waheed and the soldiers posted at the frontline briefed the IG Punjab Dr. Usman Anwar about the terrorist attack last night. IGP praised the bravery of officials posted at the top of check post including Raees, Imtiaz, Shah Jahan and others, gave them cash prizes for excellent performance. IGP Punjab awarded 05 lakh to the CTD jawans who conducted the counter operation. Rs 03 million to all the staff posted at the check post. Additional IG Patrolling Rao Abdul Karim, Additional IG CTD Waseem Sial, Additional IG Special branch Zulfigar Hameed, DPO Mianwali and other officers

search and sweep operation against the attacking terrorists, IG Punjab Dr Usman Anwar said that the Punjab Police, along with the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa government and the armed forces, will take full action against the terrorists in the difficult hilly border areas. IG Punjab Dr. Usman Anwar said that Kundal check post will be named after Shaheed Head Constable Haroon Khan, border area patrolling police posts will be strengthened and equipped with latest facilities. IG Punjab said that the morale of Police force is extremely high, cowardly terrorist attacks cannot lower our morale.IG Punjab encouraged the brave officials of Patrolling Post Kundal for their excellent performance. Later, IG Punjab Dr. Usman Anwar reached Police Lines Mianwali where he attended the funeral prayers

of martyred Head Constable Haroon Khan. All the other officers including RPO Sargodha, DPO Mianwali were also present in the funeral prayer. Active troop of punjab police saluted the dead body of the martyr.After performing the funeral prayers, the body of the martyr was sent to his native place for burial.IG Punjab paid tribute to the unparalleled sacrifice of martyred Head Constable Haroon Khan and said that sacrificing one's life for the sake of the country is the work of great people. Head Constable Haroon Khan presented his life in the line of duty. IG Punjab further said that the welfare of martyr Head Constable Haroon's family will be taken care of. On late saturday night, terrorists attacked the EsaKhel Kundal Patrolling post in Mianwali, which was foiled by the Punjab Police team by tak-

Dr.Najibullah

Iranian Consul General

Ali Banafsha Kha, Secre-

tary Information Abdul

Jabbar Shah, MD Bank of

Khyber Muhammad Ali Gul-

faraz, Director Information

Mohammad Imran, Pres-

ident of Sarhad Chamber

of Commerce and Industry

Fawad Ishaq, President of

Marwat,

ing timely action. Haroon Khan, head constable of the patrolling police, embraced martyrdom in the terrorist attack, the terrorists were forced to escape due to timely action by police force. IG Punjab Dr. Usman Anwar said that more than 10 terrorists tried to attack from 02 sides, the police was fully alert even late at night, immediate countermeasures were taken, the terrorists tried to enter the building for a long time. The police retaliated and foiled the terrorist attack. Later, CTD Punjab Police in retaliatory action killed 02 terrorists after 04 hours of intense fighting while 01 terrorist was seriously injured, IG Punjab Dr. Usman Anwar said that the killed terrorists were involved in many terrorist acts across the country, search and sweep operation is going on in the area.

Peshawar Press Club Ar-

shad Aziz Malik, high civil

and government officials,

writers, poets, intellectuals,

artists, representatives of mi-

nority communities and peo-

ple from different walks of life

attended the function. On this

occasion, a cake was also cut

in connection with the Na-

tional Day of China.

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National Days and Armed **Forces Days**

OCTOBER

Oct 01/China **National Day** Oct 01/Cyprus **National Day**

Oct 01/Republic of Korea **Armed Forces Day** Oct 01/Nigeria **Armed Forces Day** Oct 02/Guinea

National Day Oct 03/Germany **Unification Day**

Oct 03/Republic of Korea **National Foundation**

Oct 05/Indonesia **Armed Forces Day** Oct 06/Egypt Armed Forces Day Oct 09/Uganda

Independence Day Oct 12/Spain **National Day**

Oct 23/Hungary **National Day**

October 24/United **Nations United Nations Day**

Oct/25/Romania **Armed Forces Day** Oct 26/Austria **National Day**

Oct 27/Turkmenistan **Independence Day**

Oct 28/Czech Republic **National Day** Oct 29/Turkey Republic Day

Hotels & Restaurants



Serena Hotel....111 133 133 Marriott......051-28261210334-5421812



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



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



Departments

2 cpai (iii (ii)		
CDA	9221334-43	
CDA	9208301-04	
Met Office	9250360-6	
RDA	5555864	
TMA	5770886	
Cantonmont B	oard 0270151 2	

Water Tank

Islamabad.....0321-5744480

Alvi stresses competitive job opportunities for professionals

The president pointed out that the women doctors who quit their professional fields while in a struggle to balance their family lives was a huge loss to the country. He urged them not to walk away from their professions and contribute towards the betterment of society

FAISAL SHEIKH

ISLAMABAD: President Dr Arif Alvi on Tuesday said Pakistan was in high need of retaining its skilled professionals including doctors and nurses, and stressed that the present situation necessitated an effective strategy to prevent brain drain. "Offering competitive job opportunities and creating a favourable work environment is essential to reduce the loss of our precious intellectual elite," he said in his address here at the convocation of the dentistry and nursing departments of the Foundation University School of Health Science (FUSH). President Alvi said the country invested its resources in doctors, engineers, and other professionals, however, the flight of skilled human capital had a negative impact on the economy and developmental growth. He said the effective way to reduce the need for skilled doctors to seek employment abroad was to create better employment opportunities for them within the country. Pakistan, he said, needed 900,000 nurses compared to the available 300,000 at present to cope with the requirements in the

said only nine percent of students of F.Sc (Faculty of Sciences) Pre-Medical got admission to medical colleges in Pakistan, while the statistics were 25 percent in India and Bangladesh. The situation needed a strategy to set up more medicine schools

field of health services. Dr Alvi betterment of society. Also, he said, creating a harassment-free environment for women doctors at workplaces and welcoming them to productive circles after their maternity leave was important. The president advised the medical graduates to adopt the values of empathy and kindness

best quality dental education to undergraduate and postgraduate students covering all aspects of patient care and management. The nursing department, he said, was delivering excellent education and producing high-quality graduates. The president gave away medals and merit certifinursing were given degrees. Commandant Armed Forces Institute of Dentistry Major General Nadeem Ahmed Rana, Rector Foundation University Nasir Dilawar Shah, Registrar Amir Gulzar, faculty members, and parents of the graduates attended the ceremony. The FUSH consists of Founda-

51 suspects were also interrogated. According to police spokesman, the search operations to net criminals and proclaimed offenders were regularly being conducted under National Action Plan in different areas of the district particularly to ensure law and order. 8 gamblers arrested

DNA

during raid

Kahuta police

conducts

search

operation

DNA

RAWALPINDI: Police on

special directives of City

Police Officer (CPO) Khalid

Mehmood Hamdani on

Tuesday launched a search

operation in Matoor and

adjoining areas, said a

police spokesman. He in-

formed that heavy police

contingent, Elite Force,

Special Branch personnel

and Ladies police under

the supervision of Kahuta

SHO Police Station carried

out operation in the area.

During operation, police

searched 21 houses while

RAWALPINDI : Police have arrested 8 gamblers and recovered bet money Rs 91,770, 04 mobile phones, and 03 motorcycles from their possession during crackdown here on Tuesday. According to a police spokesman, Jatli police conducted a raid at a house and held 08 gamblers who were identified as Bilal, Ghaafar, Jabbar, Sarfraz, Azhar, Aamir, Usman and Sakhawat. Police have registered separate cases against all of them and further investigation was in progress. SP Saddar Muhammad Nabil Khokhar appreciated the performance of the police team and said that gambling is the root of cause of other social evils. The accused involved in such crimes cannot escape from the grip of the law. Strict action against gamblers will be continued without any discrimination, he added.

Weather

forecast for

Islamabad.

Rawalpindi

DNA

ISLAMABAD : Pakistan

Meteorological Depart-

ment (PMD) has forecast

mainly dry weather for Is-

lamabad, Rawalpindi and

most parts of Pakistan

during the next two days.

According to the synoptic

situation, continental air

to accommodate greater number of students, he added. The president pointed out that the women doctors who quit their professional fields while in a struggle to balance their family lives was a huge loss to the country. He urged them not to walk away from their professions and contribute towards the

while treating their patients. He highlighted the importance of preventative rather than curative medicine by educating the masses about communicable diseases and oral hygiene.

Director of Foundation University School of Health Sciences, Major General (retd) Imran Fazal said the institution was providing

cates to the graduates. The best graduates of the previou year as declared by the university included Dr. Eman Ahsan, Dr. Beenish Hassan, Dr. Iqra Batool, and Dr. Sehreen Javed. A total of 54 graduates of Bachelor of Dental Sciences (BDS), 23 of Bachelor of Science in Nursing and 34 graduates of pre-Bachelor degree in tion University Medical College (FUMC), Foundation University College of Dentistry (FUCD), Foundation University College of Physical Therapy (FUCP), Foundation University College of Nursing (FUCN) the University Secretariat and Fauji Foundation Hospital (FFH) (Teaching Hospital of FUMC).

Systems limited, Temenos revolutionize banking future

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Bank of the Future Forum 2023, one of the key banking and financial conferences in Pakistan, co-hosted by Systems Limited and Temenos, is set to take place on 5th October 2023 at PC Hotel Karachi. The 12th edition of BOFF will welcome over C-Level executives from banks and financial institutions, regulators, fintechs, investors, analysts

unparalleled experience that will reshape the banking landscape.

With "Cloud Banking" as the distinguished theme this year, BOFF will feature an array of notable community including several Temenos experts taking center stage to share their industry-leading insights and showcase live demonstrations. These thought leaders will shed light on trending topics such as Em-

and media, promising an bedded Finance, BaaS, Customer experience, Digital Transformation, Cloud and Security. As a part of the extensive

agenda, several breakout sessions will be held allowing the attendees to have speakers for the banking a deep dive into key topics such as optimizing collection processes, core banking modernization, and future of corporate lending. BOFF 2023 will proudly welcome a prestigious lineup of Sponsors, including Nevis Security, HID Global, Salesforce, Red Hat, Hysab Kytab, and Validata to showcase their latest innovations and initiate targeted conversations with an exclusive audience from banking sector. BOFF 2023 stands out as a oneof-its-kind conference on a massive scale. It brings together the entire Pakistani banking community under one roof, creating an unprecedented opportunity for networking, knowledge sharing, and

collaboration.

PHA utilizing all resources to make city green

RAWALPINDI: Director General (DG) Parks and Horticulture Authority (PHA) Rawalpindi, Ahmad Hassan Ranjha here on Tuesday said that the authority was utilizing all available resources to make city clean and green. He informed that the authorities concerned had been directed to complete ongoing renovation work of all the parks. The DG said that efforts were also being made to repair faulty lights, swings and walking tracks besides improving security of the parks. The PHA officers had also been instructed to utilize all available resources to ensure the provision of best recreational facilities to the public in all the parks of the town, he added. He said PHA was striving to reduce air pollution and make the city green. The PHA was planting maximum saplings and enhancing greenery particularly in parks and green belts of the city, he added.-APP

CII chairman clarifies misinterpretation of presidential statement

ISLAMABAD : Council of Islamic Ideology (CII) Chairman, Dr. Qibla Ayyaz, on Tuesday clarified that his statement regarding the constitutional authority of the president to pardon was being presented out of context on some news channels, websites and in WhatsApp groups. He categorically stated that the issue of presidential pardoning authority was clearly mentioned in Article 45 of the Constitution and was not on the agenda of the recent council's meeting. In response to a journalist's question, Dr. Qibla referred to a previous recommendation made during the 188th council session on October 22, 2012 and subsequent council session 217 on January 7 to 8, 2020. These discussions were held in light of the Ministry of Law and Justice's inquiry into the proposed amendment bill by former Senator Siraj-ul-Haq regarding the presidential pardoning authority, he added. Regarding the presidential authority to pardon, Dr. Qibla further said the council had previously stated, "The President of Pakistan does not have the authority to pardon Hudood and Qisas punishments according to the Quran and Sunnah, and granting such authority is against the Islamic Shariah. However, in cases where the rights of individuals are not involved, the President has complete discretion to pardon the punishment. Additionally, the President can either grant a full pardon or reduce the punishment according to his discretion."-APP

Economist emphasizes protecting Pakistan's GSP Plus status

DNA

ISLAMABAD: A prominent economist, Dr. Aadil Nakhoda Tuesday stressed the vital importance of preserving Pakistan's GSP Plus status, warning that its loss could result in a substantial loss exceeding \$ 3 billion and worsen the nation's balance of payments. Speaking at the 7th Islamabad Policy Exchange event, Dr Adil, the author of "Pakistan and EU Trade Potential: The Bottlenecks and Roadmap for Reforms," urged Pakistan to diversify its products and improve quality to access untapped European markets. Nakhoda's report, co-published

by Policy Research Institute of Market Economy (PRIME) and the Friedrich Foundation, analyzes Pakistan's trade with the EU, highlighting the risks of Generalised Scheme of Preferences (GSP) Plus withdrawal and the need for regulatory improvements. It emphasizes the need for Pakistan to prioritize consumer satisfaction, eliminate regulatory obstacles, provide exporters with knowledge of global standards, diversify its exports, and promote Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) for economic growth. Emphasizing the need for Pakistan to broaden its product variety and enhance quality through

strategic diversification to ucts, stating that Pakistan access untapped European markets, he stressed the importance of Pakistan strategically diversifying by expanding its product range and improving quality to tap into untapped EU markets. The report, examines key facets of Pakistan's trade with the European Union, highlights the implications of a possible withdrawal of the GSP Plus status and provides essential guidance for policymakers and businesses. While analyzing unit value and Revealed Comparative Advantage (RCA) data, the author highlighted the success stories of Vietnam and India in exporting high-value, quality prod-

must prioritize consumer satisfaction in export markets. The report emphasized the significance of enhancing the regulatory landscape and fostering a business-friendly environment. Dr. Nakhoda's research findings highlighted that the regulatory framework is intricate and leads to distortions, thereby increasing the expenses associated with conducting business. He emphasized that to boost exports, it is imperative to eliminate regulatory obstacles and lower the operational expenses for companies. Additionally, he pointed out that Pakistani exporters require instruction.

Govt to improve education standard for development

DNA

Madad Ali Sindhi said that the government has formulated the first ever National Technical and Vocational Education and Training Policy, which aims to cater to the needs of the industrial sector by adding value to human capital through imparting requisite training and skills. He lauded the initiative of ICCI for organizing the business plan competition among university students that has provided them a good opportunity to show their innovative business ideas and entrepreneurial skills. He said that his ministry is ready to collaborate

scale the education sector in order to produce trained and skilled manpower for business and industry.

Speaking on the occasion, Ahsan Zafar Bakhtawari, President, Islamabad Chamber of Commerce & Industry said that the purpose of organizing the business plan competition among university students is to provide them a good platform to present their innovative business ideas and get the attention of investors for their

fer to send their children to private schools and stressed that improving the education standard of public schools should be the top priority of the government to educate the nation and achieve better development. He said that a model school in Islamabad should be handed over to ICCI to make it a role model for other public schools. He proposed that to improve the standard of education in public

He hoped that many business ideas presented in the business plan competition would get the attention of investors for commercialization. He resolved that ICCI would continue to organize such events to foster a culture of innovators and start-ups so that many of them could emerge tomorro's rising business enterprises. Faad Waheed, Senior Vice President ICCI said that the industry is facing the shortage of skilled workers to improve industrial productivity and stressed for close academia-industry linkages to produce demand-driven students for industry. The students of COMSATS, Riphah University, Institute of Space Technology, Capital University of Science & Technology, HITEC University Taxila, National University of Science & Technology, NUST Business School, Quaid-e-Azam University, International Islamic University Islamabad, Shifa Tameer -e-Millat University and Fatima Iinnah Women University participated in the business plan competition. Adnan Mukhtar, Convener, ICCI HEC Committee coordinated with the universities to organize the

be constituted and ICCI should also

ISLAMABAD: Madad Ali Sindhi, Federal Minister for Federal Education and Professional Training said that the government is working to improve the state of education in the country in order to ensure holistic development and better economic growth. He said that education is the basic right of every child and an important tool for the progress and development of any nation and human resource development through better education is the central pillar of the government's policy. He said this while addressing as chief guest the interuniversity business plan competition organized by ICCI in collaboration with universities.

with ICCI in various initiatives to up-

commercialization. He stressed that the government should take solid measures to create a conducive environment for innovators and start-ups and focus on fostering a culture of entrepreneurship in the country in order to turn around the economy and achieve sustainable economic

Ahsan Bakhtawari said that due to the falling standard of education in the public schools, the people pre-

be given representation in it. He further proposed that surplus land of public schools be given on lease rent to generate funds for schools. schools, a Board of Governors should

is prevailing over most parts of Pakistan. Remaining Time -10:50 Under the influence of these conditions, dry weather is likely to prevail over most parts of the country during the next couple of days. However, rain-thunderstorm is likely at isolated places in upper Pakhtunkhwa Khyber and Gilgit-Baltistan on Monday night. On Tuesrain-thunderstorm is likely at isolated places in Gilgit-Baltistan and adjoining areas. In Islamabad, maximum temperature is likely to remain in the range of 32-34 degrees Celsius on Tuesday and 33-35 on Wednesday. In Rawalpindi, maximum temperature is likely to remain in the range of 32-34 C on Tuesday and Wednesday. Meanwhile, hot and dry weather prevailed in most parts of the country during the last 24 hours. However, scattered rains occurred in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and Gilgit-Baltistan. Rainfall (mm): Skardu 06, Pattan 03 and

Upper Dir 02 Turbat remained the hottest place in the country where mercury rose as high as In Islamabad, maximum

temperature was recorded at 32 C. Relative humidity in the evening was recorded at 74 per cent. In Rawalpindi, maximum temperature was recorded at 32 C. Relative humidity in the evening was recorded at 55 per cent.



Briefs

Islamabad excise staff to provide on-site services at Kachnar Park

ISLAMABAD: In an effort to make it easier for residents to register, transfer and pay token tax on their vehicles, Islamabad Excise Staff, on Tuesday, will be present in the parking lot of Kachnar Park from 3 to 5 pm. In addition to the excise staff, the Facilitation Center Doorstep ICT Vehicle will also be present at the event, said ICT Spokesman Dr Abdullah Tabasum. This vehicle provides a variety of services. including issuing domicile certificates, birth certificates, powers of attorney, international driving permits, fuel permits, and motor vehicle registrations. This is a great opportunity for residents to get all of their vehicle-related needs taken care of in one place. The excise staff and Facilitation Center Doorstep ICT Vehicle staff will be on hand to answer any questions and help residents through the process.—APP

IRSA releases 156,800

cusecs water

ISLAMABAD: Indus River System Authority (IRSA) Tuesday released 156,800 cusecs water from various rim stations with inflow of 90,100 cusecs. According to the data released by IRSA, water level in River Indus at Tarbela Dam was 1537.77 feet and was 139.77 feet higher than its dead level of 1,398 feet. Water inflow and outflow in the dam was recorded as 48,000 cusecs and 85,000 cusecs respectively. water level in River Ihelum at Mangla Dam was 1224.05 feet, which was 174.05 feet higher than its dead level of 1,050 feet. The inflow and outflow of water was recorded as 10.300 cusecs and 40,000 cusecs respectively. The release of water at Kalabagh, Taunsa, Guddu and Sukkur was recorded as 91,700, 80,200, 92,200 and 44,200 cusecs respectively. Similarly, from River Kabul, a total of 13,800 cusecs of water released at Nowshera and 5,900 cusecs released from River Chenab at Mara-

Over 100.000 patients receive free treatment in GDA hospital

DNA

GWADAR: The GDA Hospital Gwadar has made significant strides in addressing the primary healthcare needs of the local community, having provided medical treatment to over 100,000 patients in the past year, with a primary focus on maternal and child health issues. During a meeting held here, Dr. Aftab Ahmad, the Head of Indus Campus at GDA Hospital, presented a comprehensive progress report to the Director General of GDA, Mujeeb Ur Rehman Qambarani, and Dr. Shahzad Alam, the Health Consultant to the Chief Minister of Balochistan. Last year, the Gwadar Development Authority (GDA) entered into a strategic partnership with Indus Hospital, a trusted name in the realm of social services and healthcare. Under this agreement, the management of GDA Hospital was handed over to Indus Hospital, ensuring the delivery of top-tier healthcare services to the local population. "Over the past year, our hospital has played a pivotal role in providing free healthcare service es to the residents of Gwadar, making a significant impact on the local community's well-being," said Mujeeb Ur Rehman Qambarani. According to the statistics presented by Dr. Aftab Ahmad during the meeting, a total of 99,309 individuals sought medical attention at the Outdoor Patient Departments (OPDs) of GDA Hospital in the past year. Out of them, 47,379 were females who visited the Family Medicine Clinic, while 30,989 patients sought care at consulting clinics. Additionally, 20,941 individuals sought medical attention in the Emergency Room (ER) department of the hospital.

15 police officers declared Ghazis of Punjab province

DIG Logistics Athar Ismail, AIG Admin Ammara Athar, SP Headquarters Abdullah Lak and ASP Gulberg Shahrabano and other officers were also present in the ceremony, DPR Punjab Police further added

QAZI SHOAIB KHAN

ATTOCK: In compliance with the directives of the Inspector General Police Punjab Dr. Usman Anwar the Ghazi Committee while reviewing the cases of various districts, units and field formations including Attock has declared 15 officers as Ghazis of Punjab Police.

The Director Public Relations Punjab Police Syed Mubashar Hussain says on Tuesday. As per available details, ASI Muhammad Ali, Head Constables Muhammad Yousuf, Arshad Ali, Naseer Ahmed, Constables Saqib Razzaq, Muhammad Nafees. Saeed ur Rehman, Mahmood Khan, Asad Ali, Shaukat Ali, Nadeem Abbas, Adeel Nisar, Shahzad Ahmed, Saeed Ahmed, Muhammad Nasir, Asif Ali and Driver Constable Shahzad Khan were declared as Ghazi. IG Punjab Dr. Usman Anwar said that Ghazi

personnel injured by bullets while protecting the life and property of the citizens are valuable assets of Punjab Police and priority measures will be continued for their best treatment and early recovery. IG Punjab said that the names of Ghazi officers and personnel will be engraved on the Ghazi wall in the Central Police Office. IG Punjab said that the above-mentioned officials were seriously injured in the encounter with terrorists and dacoits while on duty. The brave officials deserve to be declared Ghazis for their exemplary courage, commitment and bravery in the line of duty. Additional IG Welfare Muhammad Riaz Nazir Gara presided over the Punjab Police Ghazi Committee meeting, DIG Welfare Ghazi Muhammad Salahuddin, AIG Welfare Naveed Ajmal, AIG Finance Syed Ali, AIG Logistics Ismail Kharak and AIG Discipline Ahsan Saifullah also participated. Meanwhile, following the direction of IG Punjab Dr. Usman Anwar, the up gradation

of police offices and provision of modern facilities in various districts of the province is continuing, in continuation of which a MOU has been signed between the Punjab Police and a private company (Inter loop). IG Punjab Dr. Usman Anwar and senior officials of the private company signed the MOU in a ceremony held at the Central Police Office. IG Punjab Dr. Usman Anwar said that under the MOU, Model Day Care Center will be built in Police Lines Qila Gujar Singh Lahore; Interloop will also assist in establishing the architectural layout plan for four Day Care Centers in Punjab.IG Punjab Dr. Usman Anwar said that the establishment of Model Day Care Center will provide women police employees with the best possible facility to take care of their young children, similarly care of young children of women employees, basic education of play group and other modern facilities will be available at these Day Care Centers. IG Punjab said that under the MOU, the

Interloop limited will provide furniture and various facilities for the use of children in the day care center. IG Punjab Dr. Usman Anwar said that the Model Day Care Center will be a special facility for the welfare of young children of police employees, with the facility of day care center available, women police officers will be able to perform their professional duties more diligently. Musadaq Zulqarnain from Interloop limited said that Interloop will operate/ manage the Day care Center initially for a period of 12 months for which all expenses on the operation during this period will be borne directly by the Interloop. Upon completion of the above said period of one year further operations of the Day Care Center will be the responsibility of Puniab Police. DIG Logistics Athar Ismail, AIG Admin Ammara Athar, SP Headquarters Abdullah Lak and ASP Gulberg Shahrabano and other officers were also present in the ceremony, DPR Punjab Police further added.

Energy Minister, Secretary hold meeting with Adnoc company's delegation

ISLAMABAD: Caretaker Minister for Energy Muhammad Ali, Secretary Petroleum on Tuesday held a meeting with a delegation of Adnoc which is the leading diversified energy group owned by Abu Dhabi government. Mr. Abdulla Qubaisi from Adnoc along with Mr. Emmanuel De Reynies, Global Head of Trading Adnoc were in presence, said a press release issued here. Matters pertaining to LNG and crude supply came under discussion during the meeting, it was further said. Minister Muhammad Ali is engaging with energy giants of the world to capitalize opportunities and cooperation avenues to boost Pakistan's energy sector.—APP

PHA utilizing all available resources to make city green

RAWALPINDI: Director General (DG) Parks and Horticulture Authority (PHA) Rawalpindi, Ahmad Hassan Ranjha here on Tuesday said that the authority was utilizing all available resources to make city clean and green. He informed that the authorities concerned had been directed to complete ongoing renovation work of all the parks. The DG said that efforts were also being made to repair faulty lights, swings and walking tracks besides improving security of the parks. The PHA officers had also been instructed to utilize all available resources to ensure the provision of best recreational facilities to the public in all the parks of the town, he added. He said PHA was striving to reduce air pollution and make the city green. The PHA was planting maximum saplings and enhancing greenery particularly in parks and green belts of the city, he added.—APP

Ethiopia's entry into BRICS to boost South-South cooperation: Envoy

ISLAMABAD: H.E. Jemal Beker Abdula, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia (FDRE) to Islamic Republic of Pakistan on Tuesday said entry of his country into BRICS would give a major boost to southsouth cooperation and promote sustainable socio-economic development across the globe. H.E. Ambassador Jemal

Beker emphasized on Ethiopia's regional and international influence, immense natural resources and geostrategic importance, highlighting its peace and security as conflict resolution capabilities and economic potential amid the rapidly changing global landscape during a meeting with Brazilian Ambassador to Pakistan H.E. Olyntho Vieira. He said Ethiopia's entry into BRICS would not only expand the group's influ-



ence but also bolster its collective strength and institutional capabilities.

The ambassador stressed on Ethiopia's modernized economy, citing reforms initiated by H.E. Dr. Abiy Ahmed, Prime Minister of FDRE, in agriculture, agro-processing, mining, manufacturing, ICT, and tourism sectors.

He said collaboration within BRICS would promote economic integration, technology transfer, knowledge

sharing, environmental sustainability, access to quality education and health facilities and infrastructural development of the group members

Moreover, H.E. Ambassa-

dor Jemal Beker underscored Ethiopia's commitment to global peace and sustainable development, stressing on its strong belief in collaboration over competition.

He pointed out Ethiopia's historical role as one of

the founders of the League of Nations and the United Nations, emphasizing the nation's dedication and commitment to ensuring justice, peace, and security on the world stage.

Brazilian Ambassador H.E. Olyntho Vieira lauded Ethiopia's constructive role in the rapidly changing global dynamics and emphasized the significance of southsouth cooperation in promoting equal socio-economic development worldwide.

Services' exports increase by 2 percent to \$1,135 mln

ISLAMABAD: The exports of services increased by 2 percent during the first two months of the current fiscal year as compared to corresponding period of last year, Pakistan Bureau of Statistics (PBS) reported. The services exports during July-August (2023-24) were recorded at \$1,135 million as compared to the exports of \$1,112 million during July-August (2022-23). The services' imports into the country also increased by 24.69 percent by going up from \$1,281 million last year to \$1,598 million during the first two months of current fiscal year. Based on the figures, the services' trade deficit increased by 174.22 percent during the period under review by going up from \$168 million last year to \$463 million this year. Meanwhile, on year on year (YoY) basis, the services' exports from the country increased by 2.34 percent by going up from \$586.29 million in August 2022 to \$600.03 million during August 2023. The imports also went up by 9.11 percent by growing from \$723.35 million to \$789.26 million, according to PBS data. On month on month (MoM) basis, the services exports increased by 12.14 percent in August 2023 when compared to exports of \$535.07 million in July 2023. However, imports on MoM basis declined by 2.45 percent during the month under review when compared to imports of \$809 million in July 2023. Meanwhile, the merchandize the trade deficit contracted by 42.25 per cent during the first quarter of the current fiscal year compared to the corresponding period of last year. The Trade deficit from July-September (2023-24) was recorded at \$5.289 billion as against the deficit of \$9.159 billion in July-September (2022-23), showing negative growth of 42.25 per cent. During the period under review, the exports decreased by 3.78 per cent to \$6.899 billion compared to the exports of \$7.170 billion during the corresponding period of last year, according to the latest PBS data.-DNA

Railways start renovation of major railway stations

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan Railways has started for upgradation of five major railway stations across the country on modern lines to facilitate the passengers and help the department to generate more revenue. "The purpose to upgrade the railway stations is to make them commercial hubs for business activities and facilitate the passengers," an official in the Ministry of Railways told APP. He said the stations included Karachi, Lahore, Faisalabad, Peshawar and Quetta, while the department was taking other steps to improve the performance of Pakistan Railways and would provide maximum facilities to the masses. The government has allocated Rs 50 million in the Public Sector Development Programme (PSDP), in last three years for the up-gra-

dation and renovation of railway stations across the country, he added. The official said the renovation of the railway stations had been approved by the Central Development Working Party (CDWP) and the department had already upgraded six railway stations in different parts of the country. The names of the upgraded railway stations were Bahawalpur, Raiwind, Narowal, Okara, Sahiwal and Gujranwala. The basic aim of the upgradation was to facilitate the passengers and improve the outlook and modernize the railway stations. Pakistan Railways had upgraded the passenger waiting halls, prayer area, operation offices, water filtration plant, toilets, passenger shelter, platforms, ticket counters, parking area and external development work.—APP

Inland study tour of Pak Navy staff course

DNA

ISLAMABAD: A delegation of the Pakistan Navy led by Rear Admiral Javaid Iqbal HI(M), Commandant of the Pakistan Navy War College, along with officers from the Pakistan Navy, visited the Ministry of Maritime Affairs on their Inland Study Tour to Islamabad. The delegation was warmly welcomed by SAPM on Maritime Affairs, Vice Admiral (retired) Mr. Iftikhar Rao, who played a pivotal role in facilitating this enriching experience. SAPM accompanied by Secretary Ministry of Maritime Affairs, Dr. Iram Anjum Khan, and a team of dedicated officials from the ministry provided the officers of the Pakistan Navy with an in-depth over-

ture of MOMA. During the meeting, SAPM on Maritime Affairs Mr. Iftikhar Rao briefed the officers of the Pakistan Navy on the multifaceted roles and responsibilities of the Ministry of Maritime Affairs. He highlighted the crucial role the ministry plays in the development, regulation, and management of Pakistan's maritime resources and affairs. The officers, displaying their keen interest in the workings of the ministry, actively participated by asking insightful questions. These inquiries covered various aspects of maritime governance, including maritime security, port management, environmental protection, and international collaborations. The visit to MOMA is part of the ongoing inland study tour of the 53rd PN Staff Course, aimed at providing the course participants with first-hand exposure to key institutions and organizations that contribute to Pakistan's maritime inter-

The SAPM on Maritime Affairs expressed its appreciation for the proactive engagement of the officers and their dedication to enhancing their knowledge of maritime affairs. This visit exemplifies the spirit of cooperation and collaboration between the Pakistan Navy and the Ministry of Maritime Affairs in strengthening Pakistan's maritime capabilities. The meeting concluded with an expression of gratitude and exchange of souvenirs be-

Seerat conference on October 16

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Madad Ali Sindhi said that National Rahmatul-lil-Alameen Authority's mandate is critical for nation building. He highlighted the importance of the mission of the organization. Madad said that the event will be organized under the umbrella of Ministry of Federal Education. NRA in collaboration with Allama Iqbal University will host the event. In the meeting chairman NRA pre-

sented the concept note of the event to the minister. Madad Ali Sindhi said that the organizers should invite PM of Pakistan as the chief guest so that the importance of Seerat Nabi can be appropriately highlighted. Minister was briefed that the event will be at large scale and International Islamic Universities will also be invited to participate.

This conference is in continuation of the Minister's earlier direction to continue month long events of Seerat Nabi (PBUH) in the holy month of Rabi ul Awwal.



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The conservative tax debate

n January 2000, Tony Blair made a surprise pledge that the UK would reach the European average for health spending. Gordon Brown, the then Labour chancellor, was so incensed, it was widely reported, that he told Mr Blair: "You've stolen my fucking budget." Mr Brown had good reason to be peeved. He wanted praise for rescuing the health service, and public support for his tax-andspend policies. Yet when, in June this year, NHS England published its welcome long-term workforce plan, there was pin-drop silence about how the £50bn scheme would be funded. Paul Johnson of the Institute for Fiscal Studies says that "arguably the next 15 effing budgets have been stolen". The politics of the Tory party lie behind the veil currently being drawn over fiscal decisions. Rishi Sunak has been either chancellor or prime minister during a parliament that has seen UK taxation at its highest level since records began 70 years ago. Mr Sunak's decision in 2021 to freeze income tax thresholds helped the Treasury to reap about £100bn a vear in extra taxes.

Mr Sunak wants to be known as a tax cutter, but the evidence suggests that he does not deserve such a title. With notable chutzpah, Liz Truss - whose tax-cutting agenda detonated her short-lived role as prime minister - is now calling for Mr Sunak to lower levies on business, and winning support from Conservative MPs. The danger from Ms Truss is not of a political comeback but that she potentially exposes Mr Sunak to fellow Conservatives as a Tory who values "balanced budgets" over lower taxes. Despite the higher tax take, the NHS is going backwards, prisons are falling apart and sewage is being pumped into rivers. Mr Sunak is spending more on public services. But Covid, higher inflation and a decade of spending cuts have whittled away at the state's ability to function effectively. Debt interest in 2023 will eat up around a tenth of government spending - £110bn, a sum bigger than every department budget apart from health. Mr Sunak is on the hook for the money because the high cost is down to inflation not dropping fast enough. The Conservative electoral coalition is built around home-owning voters who are either retired or close to retirement. Margaret Thatcher, revered as a tax cutter, drew far more support from the working age population. That perhaps explained why her governments constantly reiterated the trade-off between taxation and welfare spending. The problem, for a Tory party that says it wants low taxes, is that older voters do not want cuts in NHS, pensions or social care spending. But scrapping or significantly postponing the section of the HS2 rail line between Birmingham and Manchester would undermine Mr Sunak's pledge to make "long-term decisions for a brighter future". The prime minister could, like Ronald Reagan, cut taxes and learn to love deficits - and higher government debt ratios. In August alone, the state spent £12bn more than it got back in taxes. But Mr Sunak sees his fiscal orthodoxy as a dividing line not only between him and his internal party rivals but also with Labour. Without unlocking growth, Mr Sunak faces being a high-tax politician who fails to spend the money to fix Britain, at a time when the public expect more from the state now than in decades past. No wonder the prime minister is courting unpopularity.

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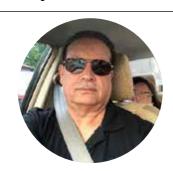


School phone ban: A distraction debate

hat smartphones cause problems in schools is not a novel observation. It is roughly a decade since they became ubiquitous in the UK - along with many other countries - including among teenagers. Since then, day-to-day experience and research have created widespread awareness of the social and behavioural difficulties with which they are linked – despite their huge popularity and undoubted entertainment value. Most secondary schools have clear policies about mobile phone use. Hardly any permit it during lessons, although rules about break times are variable. So the announcement by the education secretary, Gillian Keegan, that the government is to issue a ban in England, deserves to be viewed as a political stunt rather than a serious contribution to schools policy. The idea itself is not a bad one. Government guidance can play a role in shaping public understanding on tricky issues like this one, where social norms are developing around what is still a new technology. A clear instruction from ministers that smartphones should be off-limits throughout the school day, and not just in classrooms, should make it easier for headteachers to make this a rule and insist that it is kept. But the fact that this was the measure trailed in advance of Ms Keegan's speech to her party's conference only goes to show how little she has to show for her first year in the job. The reality is that the Conservatives' record on schools is one of failure. Problems including the shortage of teachers, and particularly experienced teachers, require not just attention but a detailed response from ministers. A recently agreed 6.5% pay rise indicated that they are not completely in denial. But with the number of teachers quitting at a record-high level - almost 9% of the entire workforce resigned last year - the idea that smartphones are the main problem facing schools would be laughable if it weren't insulting. The state of school buildings points to another grave lapse by policymakers. Last month it was revealed that 174 schools have sections made from reinforced autoclaved aerated concrete (Raac), a material with a short lifespan that should have been scheduled for replacement as part of a long-term plan. There are worrying indications too about pupil behaviour. A recent survey of more than 6,000 teachers by the NASUWT, a union, found that 90% of respondents had experienced verbal abuse or violence from pupils, with 37% specifying that they had been physically attacked, and 89% saying that the number of violent pupils has increased. These are appalling findings, and the union's call for clearer government guidance on behaviour management, in particular the use of suspensions and exclusions, should command attention. Social media use is one factor cited by teachers in this context, along with vaping and worsening mental health. The impact of smartphones on concentration, as well as the way they distract from real-life interactions and enable bullying, should be taken seriously. Regulation of the internet has been far too lax, and parts of the delayed online safety bill should increase protections. But the impact of the pandemic on children's social skills, and the need for effective behaviour policies, are seen as higher priorities by those working in schools.

Afghan-India honeymoon is over

Qamar Bashir



While publicly stating aims like leveraging Afghanistan's strategic location as a gateway to Central Asia and fostering goodwill with the Afghan government and people, both India and Afghanistan acknowledged the complexities of their alliance. They recognized that India's involvement was primarily driven by self-interest, and questions lingered about the longterm sustainability of these efforts given the ever-evolving political and security dynamics in Afghanistan. Ehsanullah Ehsan, a central leader and former spokesman for the Pakistani Taliban, revealed

ndia invested heavily in Afghanistan, allocating more than \$3 billion for aid and reconstruction initiatives. These efforts encompassed the development of critical infrastructure, including roads, bridges, dams, power stations, schools, hospitals, and the Afghan Parliament building. India also extended humanitarian aid, providing food, clothing, medicine, and shelter, along with scholarships for Afghan students and training for Afghan security forces. This support included weapons, equipment, and military vehicles for the Afghan National Security Forces (ANSF). The primary, albeit undeclared, objective of India's engagement with Afghanistan was to counter Pakistan's influence in the region. While publicly stating aims like leveraging Afghanistan's strategic location as a gateway to Central Asia and fostering goodwill with the Afghan government and people, both India and Afghanistan acknowledged the complexities of their alliance. They recognized that India's involvement was primarily driven by self-interest, and questions lingered about the long-term sustainability of these efforts given the ever-evolving political and security dynamics in Afghanistan. Ehsanullah Ehsan, a central leader and former spokesman for the Pakistani Taliban, revealed in a 2021 foreign media interview an alleged collaboration between Afghan security forces, specifically the NDS (National Directorate of Security), and India's intelligence agency, RAW (Research and Analysis Wing), in stan. According to Ehsan, he was involved in such activities from sanctuaries on the Afghan side of the border. Ehsan disclosed that the TTP (Tehrik-i-Taliban Pakistan), which had sought refuge in Afghanistan since June 2014, established connections with the Afghan intelligence agency, NDS. Through this link, they established contact with operatives of India's RAW. Ehsan claimed that NDS and RAW facilitated the harboring of anti-Pakistan militants and assisted in establishing "special committees" in Afghanistan to maintain contact with the NDS. The statements made by Ehsanullah Ehsan in his interview had brought to the forefront allegations of clandestine collaboration and assistance provided to elements opposed to Pakistan by Afghan and Indian intelligence agencies and raised concerns about the nature of regional dynamics and the potential implications for security and stability in the region. The abrupt withdrawal of the previous Afghan government and U.S. forces in 2021, leaving behind military and civilian hardware worth billions of dollars, not only dashed the United States' aspirations for Afghanistan but also eroded India's influence within the Afghan government. The rapid rise of the new Taliban regime, which has established itself as the de facto governing authority, albeit awaiting international recognition, may have signaled a reluctance to serve as a tool of Indian policy against Pakistan in the region. Furthermore, it underscores the age-old axiom that India primarily acts in its own self-interest and may change its loyalty when its interests demand it. India, after a careful assessment of the costs and benefits associated with maintaining friendly relations with the Taliban, as well as the desire to appease the United States have chosen the latter path. The benefits it stands to gain from its association with the United States appear to outweigh any potential loss in its

status as the largest regional donor to Afghanistan over the past two decades. The withdrawal of U.S. military forces from Afghanistan had sharply diminished its role and influence within Afghanistan. Currently, India has not publicly disclosed any immediate plans to reopen its embassy in Kabul which it shut down immediately after withdrawal of US forces in 2021. Whereas recently, Afghanistan, citing a lack of cooperation from the host government, has opted to close its embassy in New Delhi. These diplomatic moves underscores a notable shift in India's stance and priorities, signaling a reduced interest in maintaining its previous level of engagement with the Taliban-led government in Afghanistan. This recalibration in India's approach is influenced by several key factors. Foremost among them is the explicit declaration by the predominantly Pashtun Taliban that Islam will be the guiding framework for Afghanistan's political structures. India has closely aligned itself with the United States and is wary of the Taliban due to perceived close ties between the group and Pakistan. India views the Taliban as an extension of Pakistan's influence in the region, reinforcing its decision to reassess its engagement with the new Afghan government. India's decision not to extend patronage to the Taliban-led government, coupled with the Taliban interim government's move to close down its embassy, has cast a shadow of uncertainty over the future of thousands of Afghan students, professionals, the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UN-HCR), as of October 2023, there are approximately 18,500 Afghans living in India. Among this population, more than 10,000 Afghan students find themselves grappling with the challenge of renewing their visas. Around 5,000 professionals are facing obstacles in renewing their work permits, while over 2,000 patients are encountering difficulties in accessing essential medical care. Additionally, Afghan military personnel are struggling to receive their salaries and cover their expenses, and asylum seekers are confronting hurdles in obtaining refugee status. This complex situation highlights the multifaceted humanitarian and administrative challenges faced by Afghan residents in India amid the evolving political landscape in Afghanistan. Maintaining all weather friendly relations by Pakistan with

Interim Afghan Government have also not been the bed of roses though Pakistan played a pivotal role in facilitating the signing of the Doha agreement, which ultimately led to the withdrawal of U.S. forces from Afghanistan, the collapse of Mr. Ashraf Ghani's government, the alteration of India's relationship with Afghanistan, and the installation of the Taliban interim government in Kabul.

Subsequently, Pakistan took a series of steps to support the Taliban Interim government in consolidating its authority in Afghanistan following the U.S. evacuation in 2021. Pakistan extended substantial economic assistance to the Taliban government, including essential supplies like food, fuel, and medicine. This support played a crucial role in addressing the humanitarian crisis in Afghanistan and helped the Taliban maintain basic services for the Afghan population. Pakistan also actively advocated for the Taliban on the international stage, encouraging other countries to recognize the Taliban government and offer assistance. These

diplomatic efforts improved the Taliban's standing within the international community. Ironically, while Pakistan succeeded in minimizing Indian influence in Afghanistan through its support for the Taliban, its expectations from the Taliban in terms of addressing cross-border terrorism have not been fully met. Pakistan had hoped that the Taliban would take concrete measures to prevent cross-border terrorism, but this has led to disappointment. According to a United Nations report, there are more than 5,000 hardcore TTP (Tehrik-i-Taliban Pakistan) terrorists based within Afghanistan. These individuals have been granted the freedom to launch attacks inside Pakistan with impunity. This situation has given rise to a sudden increase in the number of militant groups operating from Afghanistan, some of which enjoy support, or at the very least, tolerance from the new government in Kabul. Regrettably, terrorism originating from Afghan soil and involving Afghan nationals who are residing illegally in Pakistan is not limited to aiding and abetting terrorists. These individuals are also engaged in smuggling essential commodities such as wheat, flour, sugar, oil, and foreign currency. This illegal activity has had a detrimental impact on Pakistan's law and order situation and has strained its financial and economic stability. In response to these challenges and in an effort to protect its own interests. Pakistan has implemented a series of measures. These actions include tightening border als involved in hawala and Hundi transactions. Additionally, Pakistan has taken steps to address the issue of Afghan nationals who were residing illegally within its borders, utilizing its public services, while simultaneously adopting an anti-state stance. Furthermore, Pakistan has observed a continued flow of support to Baluch ethnic separatist groups, which seek either greater autonomy or outright independence for their homeland. This ongoing support to separatist movements presents an additional security concern for Pakistan. Pakistan's approach toward Afghanistan remains pragmatic, aiming to engage with the Afghan Taliban in a constructive and mutually beneficial manner. Pakistan seeks to avoid direct confrontation and is committed to persuading the Interim Afghan Government to exercise its influence over the TTP (Tehrik-i-Taliban Pakistan) to prevent them from launching terrorist attacks from Afghan soil. Pakistan recognizes the potential counterpro ductive consequences of engaging in direct conflict with the Interim Afghan Government. Such a scenario could divert the energy of various jihadist groups in Afghanistan toward Pakistan, making it crucial for Pakistan to exercise strategic patience. A key element of this approach is Pakistan's insistence on not entering into direct negotiations with the TTP but instead continuing to pressure the Interim Afghan Government to disarm and treat them as terrorists and criminals.

This pragmatic stance reflects Pakistan's efforts to navigate the complex regional dynamics and security challenges posed by developments in Afghanistan while pursuing a diplomatic and strategic approach.

-The writer is Former Press Secretary to the President Former Press Minister to the Embassy of Pakistan to

Hunger at home haunts Syria's int'l outreach efforts

Zaid M. Belbagi

The recent dalliance with the Assad regime does not, however, illustrate the scale of developmental and humanitarian challenges that the country now faces — most significantly, hunger. In recent weeks, Syria has seen widescale protests reminiscent of those that shook the Arab world more than a decade ago. In the absence of a political solution, the country's conflicts are in stalemate. But the paralysis of Syria's political factions is not reflected

s Syria steps out of its diplomatic isolation, calls for reconstruction are mooted by former opponents seeking to justify their relations and by the Syrians themselves, eager to capitalize on their new friendships. The recent dalliance with the Assad regime does not, however, illustrate the scale of developmental and humanitarian challenges that the country now faces most significantly, hunger. In recent weeks, Syria has seen widescale protests reminiscent of those that shook the Arab world more than a decade ago. In the absence of a political solution, the country's conflicts are in stalemate. But the paralysis of Syria's political factions is not reflected in the humanitarian situation, which worsens continually. Demonstrations that began in the south of the country before enveloping Damascus and Aleppo followed the government's decision to cut fuel subsidies, doubling the cost of gasoline. Amid a general deterioration in living standards, the government's decision coincides with a wider economic crisis, which is at its worst point since the onset of the conflict. More than 90 percent of Syrians live below the poverty line, while spiraling inflation and food shortages now mean that 12.1 million Syrians – more than half the population – are hungry, according to the World Food Program. The acute economic circumstances are now causing a crisis of malnutrition, with a further 3 million Syrians at risk of becoming food insecure. A staggering 532 percent increase in food prices in the space of two years is indicative of the scale of the problem. A staggering 532 percent increase in food prices in the space of two years is indicative of the scale of the problem Circumstances caused by the country's long war, exacerbated by the conflict in Ukraine and economic crises in neighboring Lebanon and Turkive, have created huge challenges. Within this context, the Syrian government has im-

posed tough austerity measures, with cuts to subsidies on flour and wheat joining those imposed on fuel. The knock-on effect has been that millions of ordinary Syrians lack the products, food and fuel they need to survive. Human factors are principally to blame in this crisis. In a vicious urban conflict often characterized by attacks on bakeries, the human cost of military activity has been crippling. In a state hugely reliant upon aid, Syria ranks among the world's five most-violent contexts for aid workers. The deliberate targeting of aid workers, compounded by the dangers of operating in the Syrian context, has put incredible pressure on their ability to deliver aid and provide humanitarian assistance. In 2021, only 15 percent of aid requested by the UN for humanitarian assistance was delivered. The government, alongside the factions it has opposed, is also responsible for the imposition of sieges on certain territories and settlements, which have had a drastic impact on their ability to receive supplies, generate income and, importantly, to farm. It was estimated in 2019 that 2.5 million Syrians had been victims of sieges imposed mainly by the government and Russian forces. Compounded by the imposition of border closures owing to security concerns, Syrian families have resorted to burning rubbish and toxic plastics to heat the little food that they have. The respiratory problems, explosions and skin diseases this causes have been documented by activists and international aid agencies alike An already-battered population has been left overly exposed to the shocks in global commodity prices In a country with semi-arid geography, where access to water is described as "tenuous," the deliberate targeting of water facilities has had a disastrous impact upon local populations. Most frequently recorded in the governorates of Raqqa, Deir Ezzor and Idlib, the targeting of water supplies has meant that Syria's drinking water supplies have almost halved and the country has seen cholera outbreaks for the first time in a century. However, a more lasting impact of these attacks has been on irrigation, forcing the country's once-lucrative cotton production into decline and halving the production of grapes and other fruits. The human action that has led to widespread hunger has been impacted by climate change. Syria, like other countries in the Arab world, has seen unprecedented warming. The droughts of 2006 to 2010 that encouraged the revolution have returned, with unprecedented levels of drought and rainfall scarcity. By some estimates, the level of arable land in Syria has halved, while the UN has even estimated that the country's wheat production could cease altogether. Last month, the neighboring Iraqi Ministry of Water Resources warned that the Euphrates river could be dry by 2040. Syrian farmers have already suffered due to the falling water levels of the river. Poor harvests are therefore one of the many lasting consequences of Syria's long conflict. An already-battered population has been left overly exposed to the shocks in global commodity prices. Unable to afford the trickle of fuel that enters the country, hunger and cold threaten to cause widescale distress and loss of life this winter. Climate complexities, food prices and the ongoing internal conflict have resulted in 90 percent of Syrians living below the poverty line. Within this context, it is critical that foreign efforts to support the Syrian people are conditional upon the government's ongoing compliance with the delivery of aid. The politicization of aid, alongside the deliberate targeting of critical infrastructure, has aggravated and intensified the lot of the Syrian people – their well-being must be at the forefront of attempts at political rapprochement.

World / Sports



Cipher trial

to be held...

From Page 01

the Official Secrets Act sum-

moned jailed PTI Chairman

Khan and Vice-Chairman Shah Mahmood Qureshi on October 4 in the cipher case. Judge Zulqarnain had

directed the superinten-

dent of Adiala jail to pres-

ent the PTI leaders before

the court on October 4

(tomorrow). In a letter to-

day, sources told Geo News

that the special court judge

sought the law ministry's

opinion on holding the PTI

chief's trial in court or at

Rawalpindi's prison in view

The judge said the special

court intended to hold trial

in the Adiala jail and asked

the law ministry to issue

appropriate notification

for the hearing of the case

scheduled to be held tomor-

row, the sources added.

of security concerns.

Briefs

Pakistan sets Nov 1 deadline...

From Page 01 top civil and military leadership in Islamabad. The decision came days after a deadly suicide blast in Balochistan's Mastung, in which over 60 people lost their lives. In most of the recent terror incidents in Pakistan, Afghan nationals or soil was reportedly used. According to a statistical report released by the independent think tank Pakistan Institute for Conflict and Security Studies (PICSS), at least 271 militant attacks took place during the first half of 2023, resulting in the loss of 389 lives and injuring 656 individuals. Terror activities in the country soared by 79% during the period.

Fiscal reforms...

From Page 01 broad-based reforms. Pakistan's economy will remain vulnerable to domestic and external shocks. Predicated on the robust implementation of the IMF stand-by arrangement (SBA), new external financing and continued fiscal restraint, real GDP growth is projected to recover to 1.7pc in fiscal year 2024 and 2.4 per cent in fiscal year 2025, the report added. It said economic growth was therefore expected to remain below potential over the medium term with some improvements in investment and exports.

Indian authorities..

From Page 01 government involvement in the raids, asserting that investigative agencies were simply doing their job. The individuals targeted in the raids include NewsClick editor Prabir Purkayastha, journalists Abhisar Sharma, Paranjoy Guha Thakurta, Aunindyo Chakravarty, Bhasha Sin gh, satirist Sanjay Rajoura, and historian Sohail Hashmi. Some of them have been taken to police stations for questioning, and searches were also conducted at NewsClick's office in Delhi. In Mumbai, activist Teesta Setalvad's house was searched; she has long advocated for victims of the 2002 Gujarat riots and has criticised the government in her ar ticles for Newsclick.

India, Canada...

From Page 01

Oct. 10. Canada has 62 diplomats in India and India had said that the total should be reduced by 41, the newspaper said. The Indian and Canadian foreign ministries did not immediately respond to requests for comment. Indian Foreign Minister Subrahman Lichenberg and popular

ately respond to requests for comment. Indian Foreign Minister Subrahmanyam Jaishankar said earlier there was a "climate of violence" and an "atmosphere of intimidation" against Indian diplomats in Canada, where the presence of Sikh separatist groups has frustrated New Delhi.

CJP Isa asks why cases...

From Page 01 personalities. Section 3 of the Act trespasses on the Supreme Court's authority, he added, and said Section 5 allows for the right to appeal in the previous verdicts. He maintained that parliament can only allow this through a constitutional amendment by a two-thirds majority. Justice Muneeb Akhtar asked if parliament can regulate the Supreme Court through legislation. Justice Muhammad Ali Mazhar asked for references of constitutional clauses under which the law was supposed to be unconstitutional. The CJP asked the counsel if his arguments were based on newspaper reports. He also asked if the independence of judiciary was something exclusive or is linked to the people. He also remarked that the counsel's argument that the Act would have been justified if done through a constitutional amendment may not be correct.

Ruled out of Asian Games

Arshad Nadeem withdraws from the Asian Games 2023

Arshad Nadeem is already having a roller coaster of a year as he made history in August by clinching a silver medal, at the World Athletics Championship

SPORTS DESK

HANGZHOU: Star javelin thrower Arshad Nadeem on Tuesday withdrew from the javelin throw final event of the ongoing Asian Games 2023 in Hangzhou, China. Arshad Nadeem decided not to participate in the final due to the recurring pain in his previously injured leg. He suffered an injury during training, and the MRI reports identified the recurrence of the old injury consequently ruling him out of the Asian Games.

The final of the javelin throw event of the Asian Games 2023 is scheduled to be played tomorrow. Arshad Nadeem is already having a roller coaster of a year

as he made history in August by clinching a silver medal, at the World Athletics Championship. This was Pakistan's first-ever medal in the tournament's history. Arshad Nadeem secured the silver with his best throw in his third attempt which went at a distance of 87.82 meters. Arshad started things slowly with a 74.80m throw in his first attempt, however, he made a sounding comeback

with an 82.81m throw in his second attempt.



His aforementioned third throw, proved to be his best in the season, going as far as 87.82 meters, while his fourth attempt could only go at 87.12m.

His fifth and sixth attempts failed to breach Neeraj Chopra's 88.17-meter mark, hence settling for a silver.

Prior to that, Arshad Nadeem secured his place for the final of the World Athletics Championship in Budapest, as well as, the Paris Olympics in 2024 in the qualifying round of the World Athletics Championship. Arshad Nadeem started off the qualifying round of the javelin throw event with a 70.63m throw in his first attempt, while in his second attempt, he threw his javelin at a distance of 81.53 meters. However, the Automatic qualifying mark for the final of the World Athletics Championship was 83 meters, while the benchmark for the Paris Olympics was 85.50 meters. Arshad Nadeem breached both benchmarks in his third attempt with an amazing 86.79-meter throw, consequently qualifying for both events.

It is worth mentioning that Arshad Nadeem was declared fit for the World Athletics Championship earlier this month by the medical board, after being ruled out of the Asian Athletics Championship, due to an injury to his left knee.

ared demands...

From Page 01 The PTI leader has termed the issue of enforced disappearances as the "most serious of all the violations of the law and the Constitution" and "the most blatant and open form of pre-poll rigging" in the context of preparation for a 'free, fair and impartial election'. Omar stated that the enforced disappearance of these individuals was a blatant violation of the fundamental rights enshrined in Pakistan's Constitution. He underscored the urgent need for their release and for those responsible for these disappearances to be

NS not returning...

brought to justice.

From Page 01 PML-N, adding that the country needs an experienced leader to steer the country out of trouble. While addressing speculations pertaining to a deal, Sanaullah maintained that Nawaz "neither went under the deal nor is coming back under any deal". According to Sanaullah, Nawaz's legal team has completed preparations to seek protective bail from court ahead of his arrival. Earlier, the party announced that their public rally on Oct 21, will only be addressed by former prime minister Nawaz Sharif.

Nepal hit by two earthquakes

From Page 01 another landslip triggered by the quake, he said. One of the injured people was hit by a falling object, said Narayan Pandey, the top district official. Some homes in Chainpur, a town in the district, collapsed. The tremors of the quakes felt were as far away as the Indian capital of New Delhi, where people rushed out of houses and office blocks. There were no immediate reports of damage. Indian newspaper reported that the earthquake lasted for more than 40 seconds and triggered panic among residents who rushed out of their houses.

Civilian casualties doubled...

From Page 01 the organization also including the number of militants injured last month. There was a noticeable 34% decrease in the number of attacks compared to August, but there was a 21% increase in the number of deaths and a significant 66% rise in injuries, the data shows. "Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa (K-P) emerged as the most targeted region, with 23 attacks resulting in 34 deaths and 78 injuries. Balochistan, on the other hand, saw a substantial increase in fatalities, primarily due to a single attack in Mastung," it said. "Among those killed across the country, civilians accounted for 62%, while 19% each were security forces personnel and attacking militants. Among the injured, 53% were civilians, 29% were attacking militants, and 17% were security forces personnel," according to the report.

Aryna Sabalenka triumphs in thrilling China Open



Pakistan moves in Asian Games cricket semis SLAMABAD: Pakistan downed Hong Kong by 68 run the 19th Asian Games Men's Cricket guarterfinals

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan downed Hong Kong by 68 runs in the 19th Asian Games Men's Cricket quarterfinals at the Zhejiang University of Technology Cricket Field in Hangzhou, China on Tuesday. Pakistan would now feature in the second semi-final on Friday, against the winner of the third quarterfinal between Afghanistan and Sri Lanka. After being put into bat first, Pakistan scored 160 on the board, courtesy of Aamir Jamal's fiery batting display at death. In the second innings, the Qasim Akram-led spin attack proved too difficult a task for the Hong Kong batters who folded for 92 runs in 18.5 overs. Nizakat Khan won the toss for Hong Kong and elected to field first. After a bumpy start to the innings, Pakistan eventually ended with a solid total of 160, owing to Aamir's extraordinary hitting in the final overs of the innings. Coming to bat in the 17th over, Aamir took only 16 balls to score 41 runs, including four maximums and two boundaries. Earlier in the innings, veteran Asif Ali and debutant Arafat Minhas stitched a partnership of 36 runs from 26 balls for the seventh wicket. Asif (25, 21b, 1×4, 2x6s) and Arafat (25, 16b, 2x4s, 2x6s) were the second highest scorers after Aamir. Hong Kong had an impressive day with the ball; Ayush Shukla ended the innings with four wickets and Mohammad Ghazanfar grabbed three wickets. In turn, Pakistan spinners rose to the occasion, allowing the side to completely command the game. The Hong Kong batters fell victim to the web Arafat. Sufiyan Muqeem, Qasim Akram and Khushdil Shah spun around them. Khushdil got three wickets while the remaining three got two wickets each. - DNA

North Korean weightlifters set another world record

HANGZHOU: North Korea's weightlifters once again crushed the opposition at the Hangzhou Asian Games on Monday with another world record and two more golds, triggering admiration and astonishment from some of their competitors. The eye-catching world record on Monday came from Kim II Gyong, 20, who lifted 111kg in the snatch on her way to gold in the women's 59kg category. That beat the previous record of 110kg set in 2021 by Taiwan's Kuo Hsing-chun and came after two other women's world records were set by Kim's team mates on Saturday. "We have very good training facilities and we put in a lot of hard work," Kim said when asked how her team had done so well, after a medals ceremony in which she cried during the national anthem. But her rivals either declined to comment or expressed shock.

Kuo, 29, said of the world record set on Saturday by Ri Song Gum: "The 49kg, I actually came to watch that day and when I saw it, I said it was just too scary. "They (North Korea) have been strong in the past for many years so it is not too surprising that they would have such results, but it is still pretty scary." The 19th Asian Games is North Korea's first major weightlifting competition since December 2019 due in part to COVID-19 and they may be benefiting from skipping competitions, including last month's world championships in Riyadh. Their absence means they have not had to deal with post-competition recovery, several observers and athletes said.

"We have not competed internationally for four years," said Kim's team mate Rim Un Sim, who won North Korea's other gold on Monday in the women's 64kg and set an Asian Games record. "In that time we have shed tears and a lot of sweat." Kim had given an early indication that she was serious about winning gold by opting to make her first lift in the snatch at 103kg, a weight so high that only one of her rivals, China's Luo Shifang, was still in contention after passing that weight. World champion Luo, strongly supported by the several hundred in the crowd in the high school sports hall-type venue, matched Kim initially but then opted for 107kg with her third snatch, leaving the stage for Kim to set the world record. In the other half, the clean and jerk, athletes first lift the bar up to sit on their shoulders and then attempt to push it above their heads in two movements. – **Agencies**

ICC ODI WC winners of the past



Ronaldo strikes, Al-Nassr given Asian Champions League scare

Ronaldo scored his first goal in the Asian Champions League , inspiring Al-Nassr to a come-from-behind 3-1 win over Istiklol to make it two wins out of two in Group $\rm E$

Our Correspondents

RIYADH: Cristiano Ronaldo scored his first goal in the Asian Champions League , inspiring Al-Nassr to a comefrom-behind 3-1 win over Istiklol to make it two wins out of two in Group E. It was looking bleak for the Riyadh giants at the end of the first half when Senin Sebai put the Tajikistan side ahead. Then, midway through the second half, Ronaldo intervened to score for the seventh successive game, and soon after Anderson Talisca added two more to put Al-Nassr in control of the group.

The game ended comfortably but it was a rocky road beforehand. Despite having more than 80 percent possession and nine attempts on target to the visitors' one, Al-Nassr found themselves a goal down at the break. It was hard to comprehend as the hosts had overwhelmed their opposition from the start, but failed to register.

With the Central Asians sitting deep and happy to defend, it did not take long for the frustration to build. Ronaldo was in the thick of the action but he was just unable to get on the end of several crosses that came his way. The Yellows came close after half an hour as Abdulrahman Ghareeb cut inside from the left and let fly with a fierce shot from 30 meters that beat the goalkeeper but not the woodwork. It would have been a contender for the goal of the tournament. Ronaldo shot weakly at



the goalkeeper from close range six minutes later but there was a feeling that a goal was coming. It arrived, but at the other end, just before the break. Sebai's low shot from just inside the area should have been a comfortable save but it somehow slipped through the fingers of Nawaf Al-Aqidi to silence the home fans. Talisca's header then loke to be heading in until Rustam Yatimov

threw himself across goal to make a fine save. After the break Al-Nassr went close when Sultan Al-Ghannam's low cross from the right found Ghareeb at the far post but his left-footed shot went back across the face of goal and missed the target. Marcelo Brozovic headed straight at the goalkeeper from close range after 53 minutes, but Ronaldo grabbed the all-important strike 13 minutes later. Fed by Ghareeb on the left side of the area, Ronaldo's first shot was blocked but he delicately lifted the loose ball into the net from the edge of the six-yard box for the coolest of finishes. It opened the floodgates as the Saudi Arabians were soon two goals ahead. Ayman Yahya's shot bounced off the deck and there was Talisca at the far post to head his team into the lead. And with 13 minutes remaining, the Brazilian collected the ball on the right corner of the area and then curled the ball home. All the frustrations over, Al-Nassr could now look forward to the clash against Qatar's Al-Duhail. A third win in a row will give them a foot in the knockout stages.

Business / World



Briefs

3 dead in Bangkok mall shooting

BANGKOK: Three people were killed and four wounded in a shooting at a major Bangkok shopping mall on Tuesday, with the shooter ar rested by police.

Multiple videos circulating on social media showed people running from the Siam Paragon mall, one of the Thai capital's top shopping destinations, which is hugely popular with tourists and locals alike. Prime Minister Srettha Thavisin told reporters the attacker had been apprehended and the situation brought under control.

"Police are clearing the scene. The situation is eas ing," Srettha told reporters. Yuthana Srettanan, director of the Erawan Emergency Center, said three people were killed and four wounded in the incident, in a message sent to reporters. Dozens of police vehicles and a number of ambulances could be seen outside one of the shopping centre's main entrances in the wake of the incident.

People were still being escorted from the mall, while bystanders could be seen walking past along the gridlocked road outside. The shooting comes just days before the one-year anniversary of one of the bloodiest days in recent Thai history, when an ex-police officer armed with a knife and gun attacked a nursery, murdering 24 children and 12 adults. -APP

UN seeks \$526m to avert South Sudan hunger

GENEVA: The UN World

Food Program (WFP) said on Tuesday that it needs over \$526M for hunger response in South Sudan as the "urgency is looming." This year the WFP received "less than half" of the funding that it needed, and the next year is "equally concerning," the food agency's South Sudan director told a UN briefing in Geneva. "Basically, half the funding means half the food assistance, and in order to reach as many people as possible, we have reduced rations to 50%, meaning people are getting less than 300 grams of food per day, and this includes those people arriving from Sudan,' Mary-Ellen McGroarty said. "Continuing in this manner means that we are unable to break the cycle of entrenched hunger and provide a way out for families facing extreme hunger," McGroarty stressed. "We are barely pulling people back from the cliff edge of desperation." The humanitarian situation on the Sudan-South Sudan border is

Pak calls for peaceful settlement of Kashmir dispute

at a "critical juncture.-APP

NEW YORK: Pakistan has called on the United Nations to push for a peaceful settlement of lingering Kashmir dispute in accordance with the Security Council resolutions and Kashmiri people's wishes. Pakistan's Permanent Representative to the world body in New York, Munir Akram told the General Assembly's Special Political and Decolonization (Fourth) Committee that since 1946, 80 former colonies have gained independence but there are still peoples who are denied the right to self-determination, most prominently the people of occupied Jammu & Kashmir and Palestine. The right of self-determination of the Kashmiri people, the Pakistani envoy said, was explicitly recognized in UNSC resolution 47 and several subsequent resolutions, which prescribed that the final disposition of the State of Jammu & Kashmir should be decided by its people through a free and fair plebiscite held under UN auspices. These resolutions were accepted by both India and Pakistan, he said, adding that under Article 25 of the UN Charter, both parties are obliged to implement these resolutions. In his remarks, Ambassador Akram also said that durable peace in the Middle East can only be achieved through the two-state solution and the establishment of a viable.-APP

Pakistan new Ambassador calls on Russian Deputy FM

Ambassador Jamali resolved to build on the positive momentum in the bilateral relations in order to expand cooperation in all areas of mutual interest

DNA

MOSCOW: Pakistan's new Ambassador to Russian Federation HE Mr. Muhammad Khalid Jamali called on Deputy Foreign Minister



Mr. Andrey Rudenko to present a copy of his credentials at the Russian Ministry of Foreign Affairs. During the meeting Ambassador Jamali stated that he was honored and delighted to lead the embassy of Pakistan in Russia at a time when the relations between the two countries were on a steady positive trajectory. Ambassador Jamali conveyed that developing excellent relations with the Russian Federation was one of the priorities of Pakistan's foreign policy and shared that during his farewell meeting with President of Pakistan Dr. Arif Alvi the latter had instructed him to strengthen bilateral relations with Russia. Ambassador Jamali resolved to build on the positive momentum in the bilateral relations in order to expand cooperation in all areas of mutual interest.

Australian Indigenous rights vote fuels racism

Foreign Desk

SYDNEY: A referendum aimed at elevating the rights of Indigenous Australians has instead triggered a torrent of racist slurs and abuse, with toxic debate spreading online and in the media. The October 14 vote will decide whether to finally recognise First Nations peoples in the constitution. Their ancestors were in Australia for 60,000 years before British colonial rule began in the late 1700s. The reform would give Indigenous communities the right to advise parliament - a so-called "Voice" - to help address entrenched inequalities including poorer health, weaker education, and higher rates of incarceration. But recent surveys indicate support for the referendum has plummeted over the past year and will likely fail.

uncertainty about the reform's scope and impact. It has also stoked racial tensions. "It has involved personal attacks, labelling of people as 'un-Australian' and perpetuating racially based stereotypes," Australia's Race Discrimination Commissioner Chin Tan told AFP. "I am disappointed that the way some people have engaged in the debate has stoked racial tensions and caused harm to First Nations peoples." Racist conduct had gone largely unchallenged in the public domain, he said, "Racism should never be accepted as part of the exchange of ideas in public debate." Voters have to choose one way or the other, and re-

cent surveys indicate the "yes" camp is at just over 40 percent and the "no" side at nearly 60 percent. It is a near reversal of the situation a year ago. Opponents have criticised

Turkey's inflation hovers

near 60%

ISTANBUL: Turkey's annual inflation rate held steady near 60 percent last month, official data showed Tuesday,

offering the first evidence that President Recep Tayyip

Erdogan's economic policy U-turn was working. The

TUIK state statistics agency said consumer prices rose

61.5 percent over the 12-month period ending in Sep-

tember. The annual rate stood at 58.9 percent in August

and 47.8 percent in July. The month-on-month increase in

prices also slowed to 4.8 percent in September from 9.1

percent in August and 9.5 percent in July. Inflation was

spearheaded by a 30.3 percent monthly jump in the cost

of education in the new school year. But the price of items

such as clothing only rose by 2.6 percent on the month. The data suggest that Turkey's inflation rate is starting

to peak after Erdogan signed off on a series of interest

rate hikes that have taken the policy rate to 30 percent

from 8.5 percent in four months. "The small (by Turkey's recent standards) rise in inflation to 61.5 percent last

month, from 58.9 percent in August, provides the first signs that the inflation spike is close to levelling off," Cap-

ital Economics analyst William Jackson said. Erdogan had been a lifelong supporter of the unorthodox economic

theory that high interest rates cause - rather than cure

- inflation. But he reversed his approach after surviving

a difficult May election that coincided with the worst eco-

nomic crisis of his two-decade rule. He handed Turkey's

economic reins to a group of technocrats with experience

on Wall Street and broad support among foreign inves-

tors. Finance Minister Mehmet Simsek is credited with

convincing Erdogan that Turkey would enter a systemic

crisis unless he radically changed course. The annual in-

flation rate touched 85 percent last October, the highest

level since Turkey began its transformation to full-fledged

market economics in the 1990s. The rate began to slow

once the so-called "base effect" kicked in - high levels

of inflation began to look small compared to even higher

ones recorded 12 months earlier.-DNA

of detail and for creating unnecessary bureaucracy. But opposition leader Peter Dutton, one of the leading campaigners against the Voice, also warned it would "re-racialise" Australia. Referendum supporters accused Dutton of disinformation and scare-mongering. Indigenous-related racism reports have spiked since July, according to University of Technology Sydney criminology professor Chris Cunneen, who leads a project that documents

such incidents. The share of racism complaints in the "Call It Out" register related to the referendum had climbed to about 30 percent since July, he said. In previous months, the

rate was eight percent. "We have also seen an increase in reports of racism online on social media and in the media during the same period," Cun-

"Combined these make roughly more than half of all reports.

A national mental health helpline for First Nations peoples, 13YARN, painted a similar picture.

It recorded a 108-percent increase in callers reporting abuse, racism and trauma from March-June compared to a year earlier, a spokesperson said.

University of Queensland communications fessor Timothy Graham examined thousands of Voice-related posts on X, formerly Twitter.

He found a "catastrophic breakdown of public communication about the referendum across the entire Australian media ecology". "X/Twitter is overrun with confusion. misinformation, and incivility - this occurs in what can only be described as a vicious feedback loop between politicians, partisan media, and social media."

Japan sees hottest September since records began

The UK, too, has matched its record for the warmest September since records began in 1884

TOKYO: Japan has seen its hottest September since records began 125 years ago, the weather agency said, in a year expected to be the warmest in human history. The scorching September's average temperature was 2.66 degrees Celsius higher than usual, the Japan Meteorological Agency said on Monday. This was "the highest figure since the start of statistics in 1898", the agency said in a statement. This year is expected to be the hottest in human history as climate change accelerates, with countries including Austria, France, Germany, Poland and Switzerland each announcing their warmest September on record. French weather authority Meteo-France said the September temperature average in the country will be around 21.5 degrees Celsius, between 3.5C and 3.6C above the 1991-2020 reference period. The UK, too, has matched its record for the warmest September since records began in 1884. The average global temperature in June, July and August was 16.77 degrees Celsius, surpassing the previous 2019 record, the European Union's Copernicus Climate Change Service (C3S) said in a report. In September, UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres told world leaders the climate crisis had "opened the gates to hell". In his opening address at the Climate Ambition Summit, Guterres evoked this year's "horrendous heat" but stressed: "We can still limit the rise in global temperature to 1.5 degrees," referring to the target seen as needed to avoid long-term climate catastrophe.—Agencies

Beirut: Ambassador Salman Athar called on H.E. Hassan Diab, former Prime Minister of Republic of Lebanon. The Ambassador talks on bilateral relations as well as of various initiatives of the Embassy to promote ties. DNA

Tunisian president rejects EU financial aid

Kais Saied says offer contradicts European Union's previous agreement signed in July with Tunisia to secure border

Foreign Desk

TUNIS: Unisian President Kais Saied has rejected financial support announced by the European Union in September, saying the amount is small and goes against a deal signed three months ago. Saied's move could undermine the "strategic partnership" from July that includes measures on combating human traffickers and tightening borders, and which came during a sharp increase in boats heading to Europe from the North Afri-

The European Commission last month said it would disburse 127 million euros (\$133 million) in aid to Tunisia as part of the deal to fight illegal immigration from Africa to Europe.

"Tunisia rejects what the EU announced, not because of the small amount ... but because the proposal conflicts with the memorandum of understanding signed in July," Saied said.

The July deal included a pledge of 1 billion euros in aid to Tunisia to help its battered economy, rescue state finances and deal with the migra-



tion crisis. The smaller amount announced by Europe 10 days ago, however, has frustrated Tunisian authorities struggling to improve public finances and raised fears among credit rating agencies that the government could default on foreign debts in coming months. The dispute between the two parties has coincided with the arrival of record numbers of migrants from Tunisia and North Africa to Italy's island of Lampedusa. Tunisia last week postponed a visit by a delegation from the European Commission to

discuss the details of the

migration agreement. Last month it also denied the entry of five members of the European Parliament's foreign affairs committee for meetings over the political situation in Tunisia, saying it would not allow interference in its affairs.

Some European countries, including Germany, oppose the immigration deal, saying it does not address human rights issues and the political situation after Saied seized power, shut down the Tunisian parliament and began ruling by decree in what the opposition says

Armenia ratifies ICC founding treaty, angering Russia

YEREVAN: Armenian lawmakers approved a key step towards joining the International Criminal Court (ICC) on Tuesday, a move that is expected to escalate tensions with the ex-Soviet country's historic ally Mos-

Russia had warned Armenia against voting to ratify the founding treaty of the ICC, after the international court in March issued an arrest warrant for President Vladimir Putin over the war in Ukraine and the illegal deportation of children to Russia. The vote illustrated a growing chasm between Moscow and Yerevan, which has grown angry with the Kremlin over its perceived inaction over Armenia's long-standing confrontation with Azerbaijan.

Azerbaijani forces last month swept through the breakaway region of Nagorno-Karabakh - where Russian peacekeepers are deployed - and secured the surrender of Armenian separatist forces that had controlled the mountainous region for decades. Agencies

China's Evergrande resumes HK trading

DNA

HONG KONG: Shares in Chinese property giant Evergrande soared as trading resumed on Tuesday. following a suspension last week when the heavily indebted company announced its boss was under criminal investigation. In early trading on the Hong Kong Stock Exchange, prices jumped more than 60 percent before dropping to ten percent and then rising again. The resumption follows an application notice filed late Monday, though there was no such request for the firm's electric vehicle unit. A separate statement said trading for Evergrande Property Services would also re-start at 9 am (0100 has become a symbol of China's ballooning property-sector crisis, which has seen several high-profile firms engulfed in a sea of debt, fuelling fears about the country's wider economy and a possible global spillover. Media reported last Wednesday that Evergrande boss Xu Jiayin was being held by police, in the latest twist for the property behemoth. The firm then confirmed Thursday that Xu was suspected of "illegal crimes" following the suspension of its shares from trading. No specific reason was given for the decision to suspend trading, which also affected the company's property services and electric vehicle units. Evergrande estimated it had debts of \$328 billion at the end of June.- Agencies

Nigeria unions call off strike over living costs

ABUJA: Nigeria's labour unions on agreed to call off a planned strike in protest over rising living costs after the government offered a package of measures to cushion the impact of its economic reforms. Since he came to office in May, President Bola Ahmed Tinubu has ended a fuel subsidy and liberalised the naira currency in reforms officials say are painful but necessary to help revive Africa's largest economy. The measures have tripled fuel costs and inflation is now at 25 percent, prompting the Nigeria Labour Congress (NLC) and the Trade Union Congress (TUC) to call for an indefinite strike from Tuesday. But after talks on Sunday and Monday, unions and the government agreed to a suspension of labour action. "The NLC and TUC accept to suspend for 30 days the planned indefinite nationwide strike," the unions and government said in a joint statement. On Sunday, Tinubu had appealed to Nigerians to be patient for his reforms meant to create benefits. Investors have generally applauded his reforms. As part of its package with unions, the government offered a 35,000 naira (\$45) a month pay increase for six months for federal employees, a temporary suspension of VAT on diesel and social security cash transfers to the poorest Nigerians.-DNA



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Briefs

Malala to deliver Nelson Mandela **Annual** Lecture

LONDON: Pakistani Nobel laureate and human rights activist Malala Yousafzai will become the voungest speaker to deliver the 21st Nelson Mandela Annual Lecture in Johannesburg, South Africa. Verne Harris, Chief Executive of the Nelson Mandela Foundation (NMF), made the announcement on X, formerly Twitter. "Scheduled for 5 December 2023, this lecture holds special significance as it coincides with the tenth anniversary of Madiba's passing," he said. The Nelson Mandela Annual Lecture is one of the foundation's flagship programmes to pay homage to its founder – Mandela.

Mandela became South Africa's first black president in 1994. He won the Nobel Peace Prize in 1993 for his efforts to promote racial reconciliation in his racially scarred nation. "Malala embodies the type of leadership we believe the world needs across all levels of society. In the face of current global challenges, which can seem daunting, she stands as an inspiring symbol of hope for a just and equitable future," said Harris.

Malala was shot in the head by the Taliban gunmen in October 2012 as she was returning from her school in Swat valley. She became the youngest recipient of the Nobel Peace Prize at the age of 17 in recognition of her efforts for children's rights and girls' education. - Agencies

Trump turns up at NY fraud trial to blast 'scam'

NEW YORK: Former President Donald Trump has cutor in a day of courtroom drama as he attended the opening of a fraud trial that could threaten his business empire. As the trial got under way, the former president occasionally glanced in the direction of Judge Arthur Engoron as he addressed the court.

Moments beforehand, in a tirade outside court that echoed across the chamber, Mr Trump had called the judge a "rogue adjudicator". Ms James was not spared either in his remarks to reporters at the top of the courtroom steps.

"It's a scam, it's a sham. Just so you know, my financial statements are phenomenal," Mr Trump added. "There was no crime - the crime was against me.' Given the former president's personal attacks, observers expected a tense atmosphere in the cramped confines of the court. But the three key figures in legal drama had minimal direct interactions. - Agencies

Pak to launch 5G services by Aug 2024

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan is gearing up for the introduction of 5G mobile phone connectivity in the country, with plans for a rollout slated for August 2024, said the Ministry of Information Technology and Telecommunication on Tuesday. This marks a pivotal moment in technological advancement as Pakistan moves closer to joining the ranks of countries with 5G capabilities.

This announcement comes as a response to the growing demand for faster and more advanced telecommunications services. Officials, in this regard, have unveiled a comprehensive business plan for the launch of 5G services in the country.

Moreover, the demand of telecom operators for free 5G spectrum allocation has been rejected. Instead, the government has opted to facilitate operators in reducing costs associated with infrastructure development. To ensure the successful deployment of 5G services, the Ministry of Information Technology has decided to hire an in ternational consultant.

Borrell dismisses concern about EU's support for Ukraine

"The EU remains united in its support to Ukraine ... I don't see any member state folding on their engagement," Borrell told a news conference in Ukrainian capital

News Desk

KYIV: The European Union's foreign policy chief on Monday led a delegation of top diplomats on an unannounced visit to Kviv and dismissed concerns about political tension in the bloc over its long-term support for Ukraine's fight against Russia. Though largely symbolic, the informal meeting between EU and Ukrainian diplomats demonstrated the EU's "clear commitment" to Ukraine in its 19-month-long war, Josep Borrell said. "The EU remains united in its support to Ukraine ... I don't see any member state folding on their engagement," Borrell told a news conference in the Ukrainian capital. The gathering was the first time EU foreign ministers have met outside the bloc – and in a war zone, according to Borrell. The talks took place after the weekend election victory in EU member Slovakia of former Prime Minister Robert Fico, whose pro-Russian agenda has increased the question marks about the EU's continued support for Kyiv. The small eastern European country could bring more tension to the EU's discussions on Ukraine, as has happened with Hungary's at-times cool attitude toward Kyiv. Budapest has maintained close relations with Moscow and argued against supplying arms to Ukraine or providing it with economic assistance. Slovakia operates a key rail line used to transport western military hardware to Ukraine.

The EU, the United States and the United Kingdom have provided massive military and financial support to Ukraine, enabling it to stand up to the Kremlin's attack. The assistance is crucial for Ukraine's weakened economy and has so far been open-ended. But uncertainty has set in over how long Kyiv's allies will keep sending aid worth billions of dollars (euros). U.S. President Joe Biden on Sunday reassured allies of continued U.S. financial support for the war effort, after Congress averted a government shutdown by adopting a short-term funding package that dropped assistance for Ukraine in its battle against Russia.

White House press secretary Karine Jean-Pierre said Monday that Biden had rallied more than 140 countries to



condemn Russia's invasion and built a coalition of more than 50 countries to provide aid to Ukraine. Meanwhile, Russia's finances are deteriorating in part over sanctions. "There is a strong, very strong international coalition behind Ukraine," Jean-Pierre said. And if Russian President Vladimir Putin "thinks he can outlast us, he's wrong." Many U.S. lawmakers acknowledge that winning approval for Ukraine assistance in Congress is growing more difficult as the war grinds on. Borrell, at his news conference, insisted the EU is devoted to "sustained engagement" with Ukraine. "Our resolve ... is firm and will continue," he said.

He ticked off a list of ongoing commitments the 27-nation EU has made and hopes to make, including proposed military aid of 5 billion euros (\$5.3 billion) next year, a target to train some 40,000 Ukrainian troops and possible joint arms industry ventures between EU and Ukrainian defense companies. Other signs of the EU's commitment include help with cyber defense, a demining program to enable Ukraine's postwar recovery and the reform of Ukrainian

law enforcement to crack down on corruption, Borrell said. But the EU's "strongest security commitment" for Ukraine is to grant it membership of the bloc, he said.

Ukraine is bent on becoming a member of the EU, and EU officials have encouraged that course, even though it could take years amid a war of attrition with no end in sight. "With every village, with every meter that Ukraine liberates, with every meter in which it rescues its people, it is

also paving its way to the European Union," German Foreign Minister Annalena Baerbock told reporters in Kyiv. "Both Ukraine and the European side are determined to move forward at maximum speed, taking into account all the reforms that Ukraine has carried out, is currently carrying out and will continue to implement," Ukrainian Foreign Minister Dmytro Kuleba said. Kuleba also offered reassurances about the country's allies after the U.S. Con-

gress left Ukraine aid out of its funding package.

Kuleba told reporters that Ukraine held discussions with representatives of both parties in Congress to ensure more help will arrive. "The decision was taken as it was, but we are now working with both sides of the Congress to make sure that it does not repeat again under any circumstances," Kuleba said. "The question is whether what happens in the U.S. Congress last weekend is an incident or a system. I think it was an incident," he added.

Kuleba said he also urged the foreign minsters "to provide maximum support to their defense companies in building cooperation with Ukrainian defense companies.

Such cooperation recently became a frequent topic in the talks between Ukraine and its partners. Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov said Monday that he did not doubt that Washington "will continue to be directly involved in the conflict." At the same time, Putin is wagering that international support for Kyiv will sooner or later begin to flag. Peskov said the fatigue will eventually bring "fragmentation" of Ukraine's foreign assistance. U.K. Defense Secretary Grant Shapps insisted Monday that the U.S. was "a long way" from withdrawing its support from Ukraine, and he reaffirmed the British commitment.

PTI'S MLA Chaudhry Maqbool Gujjar de-seated

DNA

MUZAFFARABAD:After rigging in the election to LA-35 Jammu-II was proved, the election tribunal de-seated Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf MLA Chaudhry Maqbool Gujjar and ordered a re-election. The election tribunal cancelled the notification of the success of Chaudhry Maqbool Gujjar. Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) candidate Chaudhry Ismail had challenged the results in the election tribunal, alleging that the returning officer changed the results.

The judgment said that the counter files of eight polling stations were found to be empty, which is a violation of Section 60 of the Election Act. "All this process makes the results questionable. The election in LA-35 Jammu-II should be annulled and there should be a re-election," it added. 'The election commission should take action against the officials involved in rigging," it recommended. Chaudhry Jameel Jagal Advocate pursued the case on behalf of Chaudhry Muhammad Ismail.



ISLAMABAD: Ambassador of Uzbekistan Aybek Osmanov met with the Director General of the PNCA Ayub Jamali. Both sides discussed matters of mutual interest and to enhance cultural cooperation between the two countries. - DNA

Vice Admiral Naveed Ashraf appointed Chief of Naval Staff



STAFF REPORT

ISLAMABAD: The President of Pakistan has been pleased to appoint Vice Admiral Naveed Ashraf Hi (M) T Bt as Chief of the Naval Staff and promoted him to the rank of Admiral. His promotion to the rank of Admiral will be effective from the date of assuming

Command of Pakistan Navy scheduled on 7 Oct 23. Vice Admiral Naveed Ashraf will succeed Admiral Muhammad Amjad Khan Niazi who will relinquish the Command of Pakistan Navy. The Change of Command ceremony will be held at Islamabad. Vice Admiral Naveed Ashraf was commissioned in Operations Branch of Pakistan Navy in 1989 and he was awarded Quaid-e-Azam Gold Medal on successful completion of initial naval training at Germany and Pakistan. During his illustrious naval career, the Flag Officer has served on various Command and Staff appointments. His rich Command experience of over 10 years include; Commanding Officer of a Gun Boat, a Mine Hunter, three Destroyers and Command of 25th & 18th Destroyer Squadrons. Besides, Vice Admiral Naveed Ashraf remained Commandant of Pakistan Naval Academy and had the honour to Command Pakistan Navy Fleet.

Ashan spills the beans on Gen Faiz's role in

ior leader and former interior minister Ahsan Iqbal has revealed that Lt Gen (retired) Faiz Hameed had insisted on becoming a signatory to the Faizabad sit-in agreement signed with the Tehreek-e-Labbaik Pakistan (TLP) in 2017. Speaking on Geo News programme 'Capital Talk' hosted by Hamid Mir on Monday, Iqbal said both he and the then prime minister Shahid Khaqan Abbasi were not in favour of a senior army officer becoming a signatory to that agreement. However, he said, Gen Faiz insisted that the protesting TLP wouldn't accept the accord if he didn't become part of it as guarantor. The former interior minister said he had been in contact with the then PM Abbasi when the accord was being finalised. "When I read out the contents of the agreement to the prime minister, he also suggested that it would be better that General Sahib didn't sign it," said Iqbal. "I also conveyed to General Sahib that it wouldn't be good for him and his institution to sign the agreement given its political nature." Iqbal said that Gen Faiz had told him that other party (TLP) would not honour the agreement unless he became a guarantor of the accord.

Faizabad sit-in deal NAZIR SIYAL KARACHI: Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) sen-

Political stability following elections to boost business confidence ISLAMABAD: The Asian Development Bank (ADB) said

in its recent report that political stability after upcoming elections in Pakistan could boost business confidence and pave way for new standby arrangement with International Monetary Fund (IMF). "Political stability following general elections later this year, if achieved, will boost business confidence, as will a new standby arrangement agreed with the International Monetary Fund to support economic stabilization and rebuild fiscal buffers," says Asian Development Outlook (ADO) for September 2023. The outlook has slightly revised Pakistan's growth target to

1.9 percent for the fiscal year 2023-24 against its projections of 2 percent made in April 2023. "In Pakistan, growth is forecast at 1.9% in FY2024, slightly below the April projection, assuming continued implementation of reforms and supportive macroeconomic policies, recovery from flood-induced supply shocks, and improving external conditions," it added. The report revised down the country's growth estimate for FY2023 to 0.3% (0.6% forecast in April). According to report, the revised projection assumes a modest rebound in demand, with private consumption and private investment growing by about 3% and 5%, respectively.

Fiscal and monetary tightening will crimp demand, as will inflation staying in double digits. On the other hand, implementation of the economic adjustment program and a likely smooth general election should boost confidence, while the easing of import controls should support investment as fiscal tightening restrains public consumption. On the output side, better weather conditions will enable an increase in the area under cultivation and in yields, supporting recovery in agriculture. The government's relief package of free seeds, subsidized credit, and fertilizer will also help. In turn, the recovery of farm output will feed through to industry, which will also benefit from the increased availability of critical imported inputs. The recovery of output will enable exports to pick up, although imports will grow much faster, due to pentup demand. However, the downside risks are significant, including from global price shocks and slower global growth.

Committed to removing the Indian military from Maldives: president-elect

to remove Indian military personnel stationed in the archipelago state, promising he would initiate the process. Mohamed Muiz told his supporters gathered Monday night at a celebration of his election victory that he wouldn't stand for a foreign military staying in the Maldives against the will of its citizens. "The people have told us that they don't want foreign military here," he said. It's a serious blow to India in its geopolitical rivalry with China in the India Ocean region, where the Maldives' presidential runoff election Saturday was seen as a virtual referendum on which of the regional powers would have the biggest influence on the archipelago. Outgoing President Ibrahim Mohamed Solih, who was elected president in 2018, was battling allegations by Muiz that he had allowed India an unchecked presence in the country. Muiz's party, the People's National Congress, is viewed as heavily pro-China. Muiz's main campaign theme was about an alleged threat to the Maldives' sovereignty by some Indian military personnel on an island, part of the party's yearslong "India out" strategy. Solih insisted that the Indian military's presence in the Maldives was only to build a dockyard under an agreement between the two governments and that his country's sov-

ing the placement of military personnel and their role has led to suspicion and rumor. Known activities of the Indian military include operating two helicopters donated by India and assisting in the rescue of people stranded or faced with calamities at sea. Former President Abdulla Yameen, leader of the People's National Congress, made the Maldives a part of China's Belt and Road initiative during his presidency from 2013 to 2018. The initiative is meant to build railroads, ports and highways to expand trade - and China's influence - across Asia, Africa and Europe. Yameen was transferred Sunday from prison to house arrest, already fulfilling one of Muiz's campaign promises before he officially takes office on Nov. 17. The Maldives is made up of 1,200 coral islands in the Indian

Ocean, located by the main shipping route between the East and the West. - Agencies

ereignty won't be violated. The number of Indian troops in the Maldives is unknown.

Critics say the secrecy behind the agreement between the two governments regard-

