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Alvi calls for equal opportunity for all political parties

Detailed News On Page-08

'KSA attempting to control ongoing clashes'

Detailed News On Page-08



Yamal becomes youngest LaLiga's goal scorer

Detailed News On Page-06



Revival of country's economy SIFC initiatives benefits must reach all provinces: PM

The meeting was also briefed about the repatriation of illegal foreigners, foreign currency regularization measures

BUREAU REPORT / DNA

QUETTA: Caretaker Prime Minister Anwaar-ul-Haq Kakar on Tuesday emphasised that the initiatives taken by Special Investment Facilitation Council (SIFC) at the federal level should have a trickle-down effect in each province for the benefit of the people. The prime minister said this while attending the meeting of the Provincial Apex Committee along with Chief of Army Staff (COAS) General Syed Asim Munir and Caretaker Chief Minister of Balochistan Ali Mardan Khan Domki. During the Apex Committee meeting, the forum was briefed about the revised National Action Plan, law enforcement operations, anti-smuggling and anti-narcotics operations in Balochistan, security of foreign nationals employed on CPEC or non-CPEC private projects. The meeting was also briefed about the repatriation of illegal foreigners, foreign currency regularization measures, and progress on SIFC initiatives in Balochistan. The prime minister expressed confidence in the progress made by the Balochistan government and assured full support of the federal government. During the session, Prime Minister Kakar emphasized that the socio-economic development of Balochistan was imperative for ensuring peace and development of the province. The COAS highlighted that the Pakistan Army would provide full support in concert with the law enforcement agencies and other government departments for enforcement actions against spectrum of illegal activities with full force to deny pilferage of resources and economic losses that the country suffers due to these activities. The prime minister said that Balochistan was rich with mines and minerals and that development in that sector would generate economic activity and

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ECP, political parties set to meet today

MAHNOOR ANSAR

ISLAMABAD: The Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) and various political parties are set to meet at the ECP secretariat on Wednesday (today) to discuss the draft code of conduct for the upcoming general elections. According to an ECP official, the Election Commission had previously held an initial consultative session with political parties to deliberate on various election-related issues. In preparation for the upcoming meeting, the ECP has provided political parties with an initial code of conduct. This draft is expected to be an essential component in the final preparations for the upcoming general elections. The ECP has already distributed a preliminary code of conduct to political parties, and this draft is anticipated to play a crucial role in the final arrangements for the upcoming general elections. The draft code of conduct highlights the significance of political parties,

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QUETTA: A meeting of caretaker Prime Minister Anwaar-ul-Haq Kakar and caretaker Chief Minister Balochistan Sardar Ali Mardan Khan Domki in Quetta. – DNA

France to hold education tour in Lahore, Karachi

DNA

ISLAMABAD: France is to organise the 2nd edition of "Choose France Pakistan - Education Tour" in Lahore on October 17 and Karachi on October 19. Following the success of the first edition in Lahore and Islamabad, the "Choose France Pakistan - Education Tour" is back in 2023 to explore Lahore and Karachi. The programme includes wide range of fields such as management, engineering, humanities, finance, business and sciences. Eleven top-notch French universities are part of the delegation, such as Sciences Po Paris, Centrale Nantes and EDHEC. "Choose France Pakistan - Education Tour" is a government initiative from France, organised by the French Embassy in

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Practice and Procedure Act SC law interfered in court's independence, observes Justice Ijaz

CJP Justice Isa says we should not doubt intention of the Parliament

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

ISLAMABAD: Justice Ijaz Ul Ahsan of the Supreme Court on Tuesday remarked that an attempt was made to interfere in the independence of the apex court by enacting the Supreme Court (Practice and Procedure) Act 2023. The observation from the top court judge came during the hearing of pleas challenging the SC law seeking to regulate the discretionary powers of the country's chief justice. Chief Justice of Pakistan (CJP) QaziFaez Isa-led full-court bench consisting of all 15 judges of the Supreme Court including Justice Sardar Tariq Masood, Justice IjazUl Ahsan, Justice Syed Mansoor Ali Shah, Justice Munib Akhtar, Justice Yahya Afridi, Justice Aminuddin Khan, Justice SayyedMazhar Ali Akbar Naqvi, Justice Jamal Khan Mandokhel, Justice Muhammad Ali Mazhar, Justice Ayesha A. Malik, Justice Athar Minallah,

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Fazl warns of street protests if rights violated

STAFF REPORT

MULTAN: Maulana Fazlur Rehman, the chief of the Jamiat Ulema Islam-Fazl group (JUI-F) asserted that the party would not hesitate to take to the streets if its rights were violated. He delivered this stern warning during a JUI-F Workers' Convention in Multan on Tuesday. He expressed deep pride in the party's ideology, its historical legacy, and the unwavering commitment of its workers, claiming that these attributes set JUI-F apart from other parties.

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WB asks to tax agri, real estate sector

WB is also expecting its EB to green light \$350 million for Pakistan

DNA

ISLAMABAD: The World Bank has asked Pakistan to tax the agricultural and real estate sectors and recommended the merging of salaried and non-salaried class thresholds for a progressive Personal Income Tax (PIT), reported a Pakistani newspaper. The lender has projected that if agriculture income and properties tax is enforced properly then it could fetch 3% of GDP in the tax collection on

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Briefs

Caretaker Govt to ensure free polls

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Information and Broadcasting Mur-taza Solangi on Tuesday said the caretaker government would ensure free, transparent and impartial elections in a peaceful and conducive environment. In a meeting with former Member of Provincial Assembly, former spokesperson of Balochistan Government and senior politician Farah Azim Shah, he said development and welfare of Balochistan was a priority of the caretaker government.

Bushra Bibi moves IHC

KHAYAM ABBASI

ISLAMABAD: Bushra Bibi, the former first lady, feared that PTI chief could be 'poisoned' in Adiala Jail as she approached the Islamabad High Court (IHC) again for immediate hearing of her plea seeking enhanced security for her husband in prison. The former premier is currently in Adiala Jail in cipher case. According to details, Bushra Bibi has again moved IHC through her lawyer, Latif Khosa for an immediate hearing of her plea.

Human crisis in Palestine UN terms complete Gaza siege against int'l law

The siege risk seriously compounding the already dire human rights and humanitarian situation in Gaza, including the capacity of medical facilities

NEWS DESK

NEW YORK: Amid unabated strikes on Palestinians, the United Nations human rights commissioner said Israel's total siege of the Gaza Strip, depriving civilians of goods essential for survival, is banned under international law. The statement comes a day after Israel imposed a complete blockade on the Gaza Strip including a ban on electricity, water, food, and fuel, and called up an unprecedented 300,000 reservists, raising fears it planned a ground assault. Volker Turk, the UN high commissioner for human rights, said people's dignity and lives had to be respected as he called for all sides to defuse the "explosive powder-keg situation". "International humanitarian law is clear: the obligation to take constant care to spare the civilian population and civilian objects remains applicable throughout the attacks," Turk said in a statement. The siege risk seriously

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Russia faces a tough fight for UNHRC

DNA

NEW YORK: Russia faces a tough fight to regain a seat in the U.N.'s premiere human rights body in Tuesday's election in the General Assembly, which voted last year to suspend Moscow after its invasion of Ukraine. The 193-member assembly will be electing 15 members to the Geneva-based Human Rights Council, with candidates put forward by the U.N.'s five regional groups. Russia is competing against Albania and Bulgaria for two seats allotted to

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Pakistan outclass Sri Lanka in crucial World Cup match

Rizwan's 100 knock does it for Pakistan; highest ever run chase in any world cup match

SPORTS DESK

HYDERABAD: Pakistan roared to a second successive win at the World Cup as they beat Sri Lanka by six wickets in Hyderabad on Tuesday, with Mohammad Rizwan and Abdullah Shafique starring impressing with the bat. The Green Shirts also created history by chasing down 345 against Sri Lanka, overtaking Ireland to claim the record of the highest-ever run chase in the history of ODI World Cups.

Sri Lanka: Pathum Nissanka, Kusal Perera, Kusal Mendis (wk), Sadeera Samarawickrama, Charith Asalanka, Dhananjaya de Silva, Dasun Shanaka (c), Dunith Wellalage, Maheesh Theekshana, Matheesha Pathirana, Dilshan Madushanka
Pakistan: Abdullah Shafique, Imam-ul-Haq, Babar Azam (c), Mohammad Rizwan (wk), Saud Shakeel,



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Indian embassy starts visa process for Pakistani journalists

DNA

ISLAMABAD: In a major development, the Indian embassy has finally started processing visas for Pakistani journalists to travel to the neighbouring country to attend the ongoing International Cricket Council's (ICC) Men's Cricket World Cup 2023. The embassy on Tuesday started contacting the journalists willing to cover the showpiece event underway in India, and directed them to submit their passports at the earliest. The much-awaited development came a day after the Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) once again expressed dismay over the delay in the issuance of Indian visas for Pakistani fans and journalists despite

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REPATRIATION OF ILLEGAL IMMIGRANTS

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Nippon foundation donates books to Gandhara University

The Read Japan Project was initiated by The Nippon Foundation in 2008 to promote the understanding of Japan through the donation of Japan related books in English to universities and libraries around the world

DNA

ISLAMABAD: The Embassy of Japan in Pakistan, in collaboration with The Nippon Foundation, has donated a collection of 55 books on Japan to Gandhara University Peshawar as part of the "Read Japan Project" aiming to promote further understanding of Japan and its culture through books. H.E. Mr. WADA Mitsuhiro, the Ambassador of Japan to Pakistan, presented the books to Mrs. Roeda Kabir, Chairperson of Gandhara University, at a ceremony held on Tuesday October 10. The 55 carefully

selected books in English language cover a range of topics related to Japan such as politics, economy, security, philosophy, art and culture.

Ambassador congratulated the students and teachers for receiving this valuable gift from the Nippon Foundation and expressed the hope that with these books, students will have more fascinating information on Japan. "I also hope that the students as well as the faculty members would continue to explore new ways of learning more about the Japanese culture. On our side, we would provide our cooperation to facilitate this endeavor especially at a time when we have celebrat-

ed 70 years of diplomatic relations last year and will celebrate the 70 years of Japanese ODA support for Pakistan next year. Young people are the future of the country. It is my desire that more and more future generations of Japan and Pakistan will get to know each other, and cooperate in order to make our countries better," said Ambassador Wada. The Read Japan Project was initiated by The Nippon Foundation in 2008 to promote the understanding of Japan through the donation of Japan related books in English to universities and libraries around the world.



UoP observes World Mental Health Day

PESHAWAR: The Department of Sociology, University of Peshawar (UoP) observed World Mental Health Day by organizing a one-day awareness seminar here on Tuesday. The purpose of the event was to enlighten the students and other circles about mental diseases, their nature and importance. Besides, Dr. Johar Shah, Dean Social Sciences, Dr. Zohaib Khan of the Khyber Medical University, Dr. Abdul Jalil Khan Associate Professor Khyber Medical University and Dr. Noor Sanauddin University of Peshawar, a large number of students and people from other circles also attended the seminar.

Addressing the participants of the seminar, Dean of Social Sciences Dr. Johar Shah said that the trend of student suicide in Pakistan is increasing day by day, while according to the report of the World Health Organization, more than 15,000 people commit suicide every year and 25% of them are young people. He further said that despite the fact that the religion has declared this act as haram, but people suffering from mental illness still adopt this path. About the trend of suicide among students, he said that most of the students have to face pressure from their parents to get good grades, and choosing a career of their choice gets them mentally tired to take such extreme steps of taking their own life. He urged the students to always share the pressure exerted on them in the circles of their friends and avoid taking pressure.—APP

Cheques distribution ceremony held at SMBBMU

She also said that it is service and worship, the field of nursing is of great importance in the world, she added

LARKANA: The scholarship cheque distribution ceremony was organized on Tuesday by the Federal Education Department at Shaheed Mohtarma Benazir Bhutto Medical University, Arija Campus, Larkana. General Manager Hajira Sohail, Assistant Manager Abdul Majeed Shaikh, Mazhar Ali Malik, Sohail Ahmad Shaikh distributed cheques among the students of Benazir College of Nursing along with other colleges of nursing such as Dera Murad Jamali Balouchistan, Ghotki, Khairpur, Gumbat, Nawabshah. A total of 60 female and male students of the colleges received the scholarship

cheques on behalf of Federal Minister of Education Madad Ali Sindhi, cheques worth two hundred and sixty thousand were distributed among the nursing students of the said colleges. On this occasion, Vice-Chancellor SMBBMU Larkana Prof. Dr. Nusrat Shah thanked the Federal Education Department and especially the supervising Federal Minister for Education Madad Ali Sindhi and the officials. She said that the field of nursing is the most important and noble field in the medical field. She also said that it is service and worship, the field of nursing is of great

importance in the world, she added. Professor Shah said that without nursing, doctors are incomplete and hospitals are incomplete. The Vice-Chancellor congratulated Principal Nursing College Prof. Ghulam Abbas Phanwar for organizing the successful program. On the occasion, cultural gifts were presented to the guests. Dean Prof. Qararo Shah, Registrar Prof. Safdar Ali Shaikh, Director Jibran Sharif, Director Altmish Sheraz, Abdul Samad Bhatti, faculty, officers and students attended the ceremony in large numbers.



ISLAMABAD: Caretaker Federal Minister for Railways, Communications & Maritime Affairs, Shahid Ashraf Tarar chairing a meeting at Ministry of Railways in Islamabad.—APP

Minister reviews progress of CPEC projects in Gwadar

Sami Saeed asked the relevant ministry and provincial governments to further beef up the security to avoid any untoward incidents

ISLAMABAD: Caretaker Minister for Planning, Development and Special Initiatives Muhammad Sami Saeed on Tuesday reviewed progress on China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) projects being carried out in Gwadar, directing the ministries and divisions concerned to further accelerate the work-pace. The minister gave these directives while chairing a meeting to review the progress over CPEC projects in Gwadar, a news release

said. The meeting was attended by the Secretary Planning Ministry, Secretary Ministry of Maritime Affairs, Chief Economist, Chairman Gwadar Port Authority, Director General Gwadar Development Authority and other representatives from various ministries. The representatives of various ministries and divisions gave a detailed briefing over the implementation status of their respective projects in Gwadar. All major projects

under CPEC in Gwadar, including Gwadar Power Plant, Distribution of 2000 Boat engines to fishermen of Gwadar, Khuzdar-Panjgur Transmission line (via Nag-Basima) which connect Markran with National Grid, New Gwadar International Airport Project, the China-Pak Friendship Hospital, China-Pak Technical and Vocational Institute in Gwadar, the Gwadar East-bay Expressway Project, Gwadar Free Zone & Gwadar Port

would become a shining pearl in the region. The Planning minister said the interim government was committed to implement the CPEC projects. In the recent budget the allocation for Balochistan has been doubled which indicated the federal government is committed to uplift the province. Several projects had been completed in Balochistan related to the education, health, social sectors



ISLAMABAD: A large number of the passengers are waiting for Metro Bus Service at Faiz Ahmed Faiz station as due to the high rates of public transport, a large number of people attracts to government subsidized prices transportation.—ONLINE

Solangi lauds Pakistan Sweet Home's services for orphans & needy children

DNA

ISLAMABAD, Oct 10 (APP): Caretaker Minister for Information and Broadcasting Murtaza Solangi on Tuesday lauded the remarkable services rendered by Pakistan Sweet Home and its Patron in Chief Zamarud Khan for the welfare of orphans and needy children. The minister, in a meeting with Zamarud Khan, acknowledged Pakistan Sweet Home's role in providing protection, quality education, and effective grooming to marginalized segments of society. Solangi said the children who received education from the organization had excelled in every aspect of life. Zamarud Khan, while expressing his gratitude, said Pakistan Sweet Home had successfully achieved its objectives by imparting modern education to the children under its care.

No space in department for negligent officers, personnel

KARACHI: Inspector General of Police (IGP) Sindh Riffat Mukhtar Raja on Tuesday said there was no space for the negligent officers in the department. Chairing a high level meeting/video conference at the Central Police Office (CPO), he reviewed in detail the records of the fugitives and proclaimed offenders and issued necessary instructions. The IGP ordered to speed up the ongoing crackdown against the absconders and proclaimed offenders.—APP

Naqvi rejects summary for Rs15 hike in metro bus fare

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Taking people's friendly step, Punjab Chief Minister Mohsin Naqvi on Tuesday rejected the summary for Rs15 increase in the fare of metro and speedo buses. In this connection, a summary was presented at a meeting of the Punjab Mass Transit Authority. But the chief minister said there was a need to find innovative ways to generate revenue. The meeting also approved the start of electric bus service from Lahore Railway Station to Green Town. The meeting was told that under the pilot project, funded by the World

Bank, 27 electric buses would ply on the route. In their quest to meet the deadlines set by Punjab Chief Minister (CM) Mohsin Naqvi for the completion of different projects, the contractors have so far placed 24 gadders, out of total 66, at the Akbar Chowk flyover. A record was set by placing Punjab's heaviest gadder, weighing 300 tonnes, at the flyover. Under the project, construction of the flyover connecting Peco Road to canal will be completed soon. Special cranes were purchased from Japan to lift gadders for their placement. Furthermore, out of 10 U-turns, part of the project, eight have been

completed. Signboards have been installed while marking of lanes has also begun. The CM had ordered the completion of the project towards the end of this month. As part of the mission to improve the quality of medical labs in the province, Punjab Chief Minister (CM) Mohsin Naqvi, accompanied by his health team, visited Chughtai Lab early Tuesday morning. Chief Executive Officer (CEO) Dr. Umar Chughtai received the CM and members of his team on arrival. The chief minister went round different sections of the lab and viewed the facilities being provided there.

KP offers vast investment opportunities for economic growth

Dr. Amir Abdullah expressed his hope that the provincial government would make every possible effort to provide necessary facilities and cooperation to entrepreneurs

PESHAWAR: The Caretaker Minister for Industries, Commerce, Technical Education, Dr. Amir Abdullah on Monday said that Khyber Pakhtunkhwa has substantial investment potential in various sectors for economic growth. Addressing business individuals and investors in small and medium enterprises (SMEs) at an event organized by the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP) Board of Investment and Trade (BOIT) in collaboration with the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), he emphasized the importance of creating a conducive environment



and providing facilities to entrepreneurs and investors in the province. He said that private investment and business ventures play a pivotal role in the economic development of any country. He said that historically, countries that focused on facilitating private businesses and providing them with opportunities and ease of doing business have made significant progress and successfully lifted their populations out of poverty. He underlined the necessity of encouraging and supporting businesses in the province, especially those in the small and medium enterprise sector to stimulate economic growth.

The mission of the KP Board of Investment is to promote investment and open up opportunities for investment in various sectors of the province, a crucial step toward its economic development. Dr. Amir Abdullah expressed his hope that the provincial government would make every possible effort to provide necessary facilities and cooperation to entrepreneurs and business individuals. He urged the participants to take advantage of this platform to exchange valuable ideas and collaborate in exploring new avenues for investment and business growth within the province.—APP

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Briefs

Nations Expo 2023 set to showcase brilliance

ISLAMABAD: The upcoming Nations Expo, and Conference 2023, scheduled to take place at the illustrious Pak China Friendship Center in Islamabad from Friday to Sunday (October 13th to 15th), is poised to be a resounding success. The Expo is also expected to draw the attention of numerous embassies, with diplomats and dignitaries from various countries eager to witness Pakistan's multifaceted capabilities. The event is expected to feature an impressive lineup of speakers and participants, including renowned figures such as Ammar Jaffri (Former Additional Director General FIA), Shahid Raza (Strategic Communications Expert STZA), and Dr. Safdar Sohail (former Special Secretary to Cabinet Division), all of whom will contribute to a remarkable display of Pakistan's achievements across various domains. Organized by Eleven Productions and Option2 Solutions, the Expo is expected to exemplify Pakistan's progress and its commitment to global partnerships. It will highlight the nation's potential while promoting unity and collaboration. The event is expected to receive an auspicious start with an inaugural ceremony attended by distinguished ministers and esteemed speakers like Hisham Sarwar, Babar Zohoor, and Dr. Safdar Sohail. The event will also be visited by the President of Pakistan, further underscoring its significance on the national stage.—APP

IRSA releases 119,800 cusecs water

ISLAMABAD: Indus River System Authority (IRSA) on Tuesday released 119,800 cusecs water from various rim stations with inflow of 73,400 cusecs. According to the data released by IRSA, water level in River Indus at Tarbela Dam was 1529.85 feet and was 131.85 feet higher than its dead level of 1,398 feet. Water inflow and outflow in the dam was recorded as 40,200 cusecs and 55,000 cusecs respectively. The water level in River Jhelum at Mangla Dam was 1218.05 feet, which was 168.05 feet higher than its dead level of 1,050 feet. The inflow and outflow of water was recorded 8,400 cusecs and 40,000 cusecs respectively. The release of water at Kalabagh, Taunsa, Guddu and Sukkur was recorded as 79,300, 71,800, 60,400 and 20,400 cusecs respectively. Similarly, from River Kabul, a total of 9,300 cusecs of water released at Nowshera and 4,000 cusecs released from River Chenab at Marala.—APP

Intensive efforts underway to register house servants and tenant

ISLAMABAD: The campaign of Islamabad Capital Police - Knock the Door - is at full swing to facilitate the registration of domestic workers and tenants. During this initiative, police spokesperson said that dedicated teams from the Islamabad Capital Police are taking to the streets and conducting door-to-door visits to ensure the registration of tenants and domestic workers. Simultaneously, they are addressing citizens' concerns and inquiries. The Counter Terrorism Department (CTD) Islamabad has already compiled data on 108 house servants from 447 residences within the jurisdiction of Sumbal Police Station. During last 24 hours. This campaign's primary objective is to enhance public safety by maintaining law and order in the federal capital. Registering tenants and domestic workers not only helps keep a vigilant eye on potential wrongdoers but also acts as a deterrent to any suspicious activities. Citizens are urged to verify the identity of anyone in civilian clothing who arrives at their doorstep to collect data. Unregistered employees and tenants could potentially be involved in serious.—APP

President Arif Alvi calls for awareness about mental health

The figures about students under stress in colleges and universities is as high as 60%. Educational institutions and employers should provide an enabling environment to students and employees by ensuring a good work-life balance

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Today we observe World Mental Health Day, with an obvious theme that 'Mental health is a universal human right'. This is to raise awareness about the importance of mental health, the effects of mental illness on the lives of the people, and the need for support within the family, then recognition of the problem, getting over social taboos to get professional help. According to statistics from National Commission of Human Rights of Pakistan 24% of people in Pakistan are under stress

which compounded with economic difficulties becomes an alarming situation. Unfortunately, Pakistan has limited human and material resources to deal with this disease burden that affects an increasing number of adolescents, young people, and women. Newspapers every day carry a few extreme stories of suicides as well as domestic violence even killings that can be traced back to the national psychiatric burden. To overcome this challenge, we need an integrated approach to strengthen the existing infrastructure by using online mental health portals, virtual programs, Artificial Intelligence, Mental



Health Chatbots, helplines, mobilizing relevant government and other stakeholders, and forging public-private partnerships. We

should also create awareness about mental health and well-being as most mental illnesses, if diagnosed and managed at an early stage, could be cured in a cost-effective manner. Currently, Pakistan lacks trained and qualified human resources in this field, and it is highly imperative that telehealth centres are established to reach out to people in need. On this day, I would like to particularly urge the media, teachers, parents, religious scholars, celebrities, social media influencers and community leaders to understand this alarming situation, help remove social taboos that discourage discussion and getting

help. The figures about students under stress in colleges and universities is as high as 60%. Educational institutions and employers should provide an enabling environment to students and employees by ensuring a good work-life balance. I would also like to urge our people to adopt healthier lifestyles, spend quality time with friends and family, and take regular exercise to reduce anxiety and stress levels. I am hopeful that our collective efforts at the individual, institutional, and national levels would enable us to improve the overall mental health and well-being of the people

Jazz emerges as Pakistan's top innovation performer

ISLAMABAD: Jazz, Pakistan's leading digital operator, has been recognized as a top innovation performer in the Global Innovation Index 2023, released by the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO), a specialized agency of the United Nations. This recognition is a testament to Jazz's unwavering commitment to innovation and its exceptional ability to adapt to the evolving needs of its customers in the digital era, said a news release here on Tuesday. "Customer-centric innovation is not just about meeting needs; it's about anticipating them. This approach is the driving force behind every breakthrough we make. It's what sets us apart and leads us forward in this competitive market. Jazz's transformation from a telecom company to a leading digital operator offering experiences for every minute of the day, from fintech to chat, and entertainment to cloud services, also signifies this approach," said CEO of Jazz Amir Ibrahim.—APP

NPO to organize webinar on Anger Management

ISLAMABAD: The National Productivity Organization (NPO) will conduct a webinar on 'Anger Management' on October 20 (Friday). "The workshop was focused on to help the participants work together, in order to develop their strengths, and to address any weaknesses while managing their emotions for personal well-being, maintaining effective relationship, and managing their responsibilities at work, according to an NPO document shared here Tuesday. The objective of the training includes at personal level participants will learn to identify correct emotions, learn to respond for personal well-being and get personal coping Skills, for maintaining and building effective relationships participants will learn to deal with angry.—APP

Al-Shifa begins corneal transplantation

DNA

ISLAMABAD: The Al-Shifa Trust Eye Hospital has authorized the use of Bowman Layer Transplantation (BLT) for keratoconus patients after reviewing two years' postoperative outcomes. The hospital has begun treating keratoconus patients using cutting-edge Swiss femtosecond laser technology, which is expected to benefit many people in Pakistan who have keratoconus and are awaiting corneal transplantation. According to Major Gen. (Retd) Rehmat Khan, President of the Al Shifa Trust, the trust has become the first hospital in Asia to employ femtosecond laser technology in public for the

treatment of Keratoconus, an eye condition that damages the cornea. He went on to say that BLT strengthens the weak cornea, avoiding or delaying the need for a full corneal transplantation. He told reporters that the most recent technology was used experimentally for the first time in 2020 and is now being used in patient care as a result of successful testing. He went on to say that the decision would not only allow our ophthalmologists to deliver cutting-edge care to their patients, but it would also allow us to train medical experts from other hospitals. He added that with this latest technology, layers of one donor cornea can be used to treat two to three patients with different corneal problems. Presently, more than two

hundred and fifty thousand patients are waiting for corneal transplants while we operate on 800 patients every year, he said, adding that a big deficit exists between corneal supply and demand. Maj. Gen. Retired Rehmat Khan said that 53% of the eye patients have no access to donated corneas as local corneal donations are insignificant; therefore, we have to import corneas from the USA and Sri Lanka. Corneas are one of the easiest tissues to transplant, as no matching is required between the donor and the recipient. It is a bloodless tissue that takes oxygen directly from the air, he said, adding that a cornea can be taken from an elderly person and grafted onto the eyes of a much younger one.

Railways retrieve 1,028 acres land from illegal occupants

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan Railways has retrieved as many as 1,028 acres of its land worth millions of rupees from illegal occupants during various anti-encroachment operations across the country. "A many as 503 acres retrieved in Punjab, 151 acres in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, 341 acres in Sindh and only 33 acres in Balochistan," an official in the Ministry of Railways told APP. He said that about 3,287 acres in Punjab, 832 acres in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, 5,180 acres in Sindh, and 687 acres of land in Balochistan were being encroached. The official said that in light of the directives of the Supreme Court, the anti-encroachment operations for retrieval of encroached railway land all over the Railway network were initiated and a joint procedure order was issued to all divisional superintendents for retrieval of Railways land from encroachment. The anti-encroachment schedules, on a three months basis, are being prepared and sent to all concerned in line with the joint procedure order," the official added. He said Pakistan Railways had also decided to accelerate its ongoing anti-encroachment operation against land grabbers across the country to recoup its

land from different individuals, groups, and even business organizations who were using it for residential, commercial, and agriculture purposes for decades. "The encroachment operation will be launched with the assistance of Railway Police and district administrations of the relevant provincial governments," he added. He said the organization was taking several steps to retrieve encroached land from the land grabbers including a detailed survey being carried out to identify the encroached land, occupied by the individuals and under illegal occupation by various government departments. The official said that First Information Reports (FIRs) were being lodged and cases were registered and sent to PR Judicial Magistrates for expeditious trial. The issue regarding illegal occupation and possession of Pakistan Railways' land by government departments and institutions has also been taken up with the concerned departments, he added. The official said PR owned 167,690 acres of land across the country, of which 90,326 acres was in Punjab, 39,428 acres in Sindh, 28,228 acres in Balochistan, and 9,708 acres in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.

Pakistan-China glass manufacturing unit starts operations

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Deli-JW Glassware, a manufacturing unit established through collaboration between China's Anhui Deli Household Glass Co Ltd. and Pakistan's JW SEZ Group, has commenced operations in M-3 industrial city (FIED-MC) Faisalabad. According to Javed Afridi, CEO of Haier and Ruba Pakistan, the company has officially begun operations in Pakistan, generating manufacturing and construction jobs with an investment of USD 200 million. The factory is one

of the largest plants in Pakistan, covering a total area of 36 acres, according to a report published by Gwadar Pro on Tuesday. The company has trained a significant number of qualified workers and aided them in strengthening their managerial abilities. A team of around three hundred personnel is actively engaged in the company's operations, ensuring the manufacturing of a quality product and its smooth, trouble-free delivery to the customer. Javed Afridi stated, "The 'Made in Pakistan' initiative will not only boost the economy but will also establish Pakistan as one

of the leading producers in the international market." He added that the production of glassware units will replace imports of premium quality glassware from China and other regions into Pakistan, enabling Pakistan to export it worldwide. The objective of the project is to establish a modern, world-class Glass Manufacturing Complex for the production of premium, export-quality glass products in Pakistan. The project will utilize the natural resources in Pakistan and employ the latest technology to transform them into glassware, including floating glass and other types of glass products.

Aneeq advises youth to learn Islam

ISLAMABAD: Caretaker Minister for Religious Affairs and Interfaith Harmony, Aneeq Ahmed on Tuesday advised the young individuals to invest their prime to learn Islamic knowledge. Addressing the Seerat Conference and Mehfil-e-Milad-un-Nabi Peace Be Upon Him, organized by National Accountability Bureau (NAB) in collaboration with Pakistan National Council of the Arts, Punjab College of Commerce, and Islamabad Model College for Boys F-7/3 as a chief guest, he encouraged the youth to read three verses of the Holy Quran daily, along with translation and interpretation, to strengthen their connection with the divine scripture and its Messenger Muhammad Peace Be Upon Him. Minister Aneeq said, "If you want to become beloved to Allah Almighty, then follow the footsteps of His Beloved Prophet Muhammad (SAW)." He highlighted that the character and ethics of Prophet Muhammad (SAW) were a living embodiment of the Quran stressing that we should strive to be warriors of character, not just in words but in actions. Minister Aneeq urged students to acquire knowledge for the betterment of Pakistan and to serve humanity. He said the sending of Prophet Muhammad Peace Be Upon Him was not only for the completion of noble character but also for the betterment of humanity. "Trials come in the life of nations, the believer does not despair." He maintained.—APP

ANF recovers over 31 kg drugs in three operations

RAWALPINDI: Anti-Narcotics Force (ANF) while conducting three operations managed to recover over 31 kg of drugs and arrested five accused including four women, said an ANF Headquarters spokesman here on Tuesday. He informed that in three operations conducted near Chungi number 26, Islamabad, ANF recovered 31.2 kg drugs from the possession of five accused including four women. Two attempts to smuggle drugs by women, residents of Lahore, Karachi, Quetta and Peshawar, travelling in passenger buses were foiled and a total of 30 kg hashish was recovered. In the third operation, 1.2 kg of hashish was recovered from the possession of an accused, resident of Charsadda. Separate cases under the Anti-Narcotics Act have been registered against all the accused while further investigations are under process.—APP

Graduation ceremony honors police department

ISLAMABAD: A graduation ceremony was conducted to honor the achievements of officers who successfully completed the first Upper Course, 11th Intermediate Course, and 20th Lower Course at Police Lines Headquarters Islamabad. The distinguished gathering included Islamabad Capital City Police Officer (ICCP) Dr. Akbar Nasir Khan, alongside high-ranking officials such as the SSP/Dy. Commandant of Capital Police College, AIG Operations, SP Headquarters, DSP Capital Police College, and various staff members. During this significant event, ICCPO Dr. Akbar Nasir Khan presented awards and certificates to the officers and cadets who exhibited exceptional performance throughout their training courses. Addressing the ceremony, ICCPO Dr. Akbar Nasir Khan lauded the dedication and hard work of the officers and cadets who successfully completed their training courses. He urged them to carry out their duties with diligence, unwavering commitment, and a sense of duty to the community. ICCPO expressed his joy in being part of the Islamabad Capital Police graduation ceremony and extended his congratulations to Capital Police College for delivering top-quality training to officers and cadets in record time. He emphasized the importance of public service and encouraged all attendees to uphold the highest values of law enforcement. ICCPO Dr. Akbar Nasir Khan remarked, "You are privileged to have the opportunity to serve the community. Remember, true honor comes from serving the people. Upholding the law, ensuring justice, and safeguarding the lives and properties of citizens are our primary responsibilities. Treat the public with respect, and you will receive respect in return." Furthermore, ICCPO Dr. Akbar Nasir Khan expressed his confidence that the skills acquired during training would be effectively applied.—DNA

MOST EXPERIENCED MANUFACTURERS & EXPORTERS OF MARTIAL ARTS UNIFORMS IN PAKISTAN

JUDO KARATE KUNG-FU JU-JITSU TAEKWONDO UNIFORMS AND COLOURED BELTS

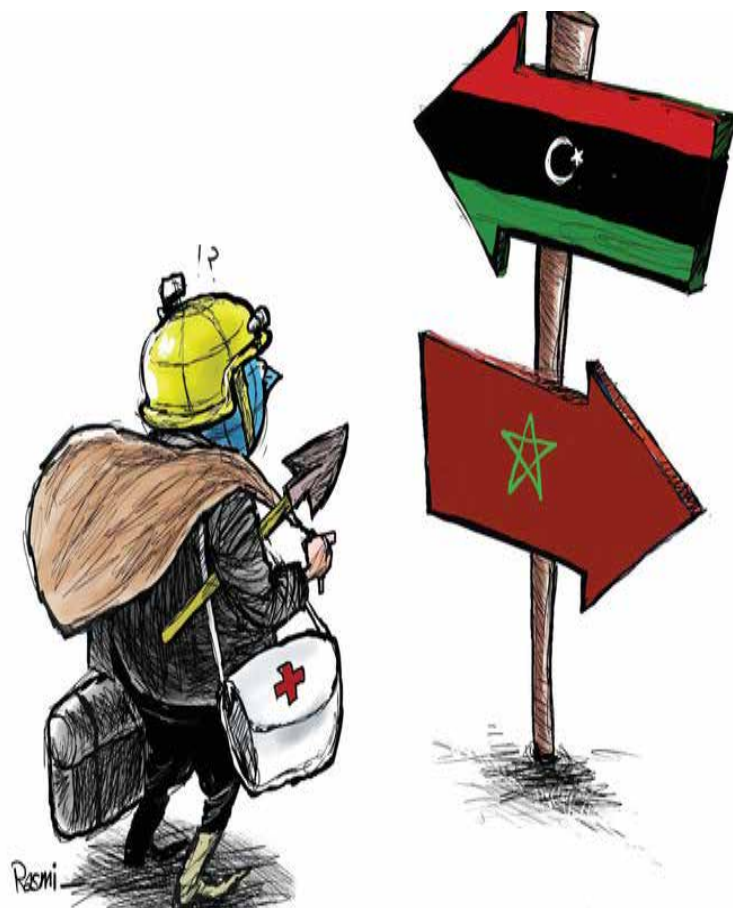
WHERE EACH STITCH IS WATCHED

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Australia's indigenous voice referendum: clear forward

The yes campaign in Australia's referendum on an Indigenous voice to parliament has focused on the immediate questions, the ones on the ballot on 14 October. That is understandable. Will voters recognise the original inhabitants of the land in the constitution? Does wider society think Indigenous Australians should provide advice on decisions affecting them? These simple asks were always intended as the first step on a long walk to make peace with the past. They were the precursor to a deeper and more difficult discussion about the ongoing impact of colonisation and dispossession and all the policies that followed; a conversation that will take years. This was not a sneaky, hidden agenda, as the no campaign has claimed. It was trumpeted in the slogan "voice, treaty, truth", and even more clearly in the Uluru statement from the heart, which says Indigenous sovereignty has never been ceded and coexists with the sovereignty of the crown. The crisis in Indigenous communities is rooted in powerlessness, it says, and the remedy is a "fair and truthful relationship" with modern Australia, based on justice and self-determination. But by focusing on the first step, the yes campaign left the way clear for others to run a campaign that was in large part neither truthful nor fair, to distort and fearmonger about the as-yet-unmapped parts of the journey; to falsely assert that it would come at enormous cost, or threaten ownership of land or somehow bestow unfair advantage on the most disadvantaged Australians. The no campaign contends that history has little relevance to the present, that the murders and the stolen generations can be compartmentalised to the past. They say governments should just get on with improving the lot of all Australians, with no additional advice or consideration for Indigeneity needed, an argument that raises questions about the future of any dedicated Indigenous funding. The leading no campaigner and Walpiri-Celtic woman Senator Jacinta Nampijinpa Price said she believed colonisation had actually been good for Indigenous people because now they had "running water and readily available food". Tony Abbott, citing another former Liberal prime minister, John Howard, insisted that "none of us can be responsible for what happened more than a century ago". It's an alluringly comfortable answer for many non-Indigenous Australians, much easier than considering that dispossession and deliberate policies might contribute to what we so benignly call "the gaps". But Guardian Australia sees this view as fundamentally wrong. The murders continued until the 1920s, the stolen generations until the late 1960s, the lie of terra nullius until 1992. We can't wish away the shadows of the past. They may not explain everything but facing them has to be part of moving on. Everyone in this debate claims to want to improve the material circumstances of Indigenous Australians but the yes case has not sufficiently explained why requiring policymakers to listen would help, and the no case cannot answer how maintaining the status quo will somehow achieve different outcomes. Australia believes a no vote will be a triumph for populist misinformation, a political victory devoid of practical answers and freighted with an unimaginable burden for First Nations people, who will know that the country has judged their call for inclusion and decided against it.



Labour conference: winning focus on economy

It's the economy, stupid. That was the message from Rachel Reeves, the shadow chancellor, to her Conservative opponents in her speech to Labour's party conference. Ms Reeves is not a showy politician. Her style is to be all substance, and her message was that she is capable and decent. This is smart politics. The Conservative party has proved to be incompetent in its stewardship of the economy just when the issue topped the political agenda. Ms Reeves set out her party's stall by promising to boost business investment, build homes and ease planning rules – especially around green industries – to spur growth. Often seen as a hard-headed pragmatist, the shadow chancellor played on her party's heartstrings with a call for a Labour government to rebuild public services and create jobs. She also hit home by creating dividing lines with the Tories by contrasting her plans for stable growth with the Conservatives' record of wasteful, corrupt and inept administration. The biggest cheer was for her proposed anti-corruption commissioner to recover money lost to fraud during the pandemic. Labour's restrictive fiscal rules are unlikely to survive contact with reality. It would be better if Ms Reeves could be bolder and less in thrall to economic orthodoxy. But she does see the government as having a key role in a green transition. Labour is right that Britain will need an activist state to reach net zero. Earlier this year the energy regulator said that it was "unacceptable" that there were decade-long waits to connect low-carbon projects to the electricity grid. Housing developers are also facing delays in getting power to new homes. Working with Ed Miliband, the shadow climate secretary, Ms Reeves appears determined to get a grip on the situation. This will be a key electoral battleground as the Conservatives under Rishi Sunak pivot to weaponise voters' fears that net zero will impose costs today, even if in the long term they reduce household bills. The rash of headlines in the Tory-supporting papers about "Labour's plans to rewire Britain with electricity pylons across countryside" aims to energise not-in-my-backyard sentiment in swathes of rural England. Labour has chosen to fight back by using what were once Tory arguments – that wind and solar are competitive sources of energy, they help to reduce electricity costs and will make Britain independent of petrocrats in Russia and the Middle East. This is a winnable argument for Labour. Mr Miliband says that by 2030, his party's plans will take up to £1,400 off the annual household bill. Internal party polling suggests Labour's idea of a publicly owned national champion in clean power generation, known as GB Energy, is a vote-winner. The Labour conference has felt giddy at times, with delegates openly discussing a big Labour win – even a landslide – at the next general election. This feels premature. There is a long way to go. Ms Reeves knows that, unlike in 1997, the nation is stuck in an economic rut. She has to break with a failed model of economic governance. She cannot fix the country's problems by sticking to Tory plans and cutting deeper into the budgets of "non-protected" departments. Taxes will have to go up, though it would be injudicious for Ms Reeves to admit that now.

How Hamas Stunted Israel ?

By Qamar Bashir



The audacious and deadly maneuver executed by Hamas has also raised questions about the effectiveness of Mossad, Israel's renowned intelligence agency, which is traditionally considered one of the world's most formidable agencies, specializing in counterterrorism, covert operations, and intelligence collection. Often compared to counterparts like the CIA (United States), MI6 (United Kingdom), and FSB (Russia), Mossad's inability to anticipate and prevent the surprise attack by Hamas was a notable surprise not only for Israel but also for other global

In the early days of October 2023, an unprecedented escalation of conflict between Hamas and Israel occurred, marked by a large-scale invasion and offensive launched by Palestinian militant groups from the Gaza Strip against Israel's Southern Borders. This significant attack, named "Operation Al-Aqsa Storm," was a historic event as it marked the first direct conflict within Israel's boundaries since the 1948 Arab-Israeli War. What made this offensive particularly stunning was not only its surprise factor but also the fact that it caught not only Israelis, known for their world-class, well-equipped, and highly efficient surveillance and intelligence systems, off guard but also the entire world. The Israeli-Palestinian conflict is closely monitored due to its potential to disrupt peace in the Middle East, a region crucial for global oil supply. The fear of oil supply disruption and its potential to drive up oil prices, thus impacting economies worldwide, especially vulnerable ones like Pakistan, added an extra layer of concern to this already volatile situation. The audacious and deadly maneuver executed by Hamas has also raised questions about the effectiveness of Mossad, Israel's renowned intelligence agency, which is traditionally considered one of the world's most formidable agencies, specializing in counterterrorism, covert operations, and intelligence collection. Often compared to counterparts like the CIA (United States), MI6 (United Kingdom), and FSB (Russia), Mossad's inability to anticipate and prevent the surprise attack by Hamas was a notable surprise not only for Israel but also for other global intelligence agencies with a significant presence in the conflict-prone Middle East. This unprecedented military maneuver involved a clever transformation of civilian machinery such as bulldozers, hang gliders, and motorbikes, effectively challenging the Middle East's most potent army. It marked a significant breach in Israel's defenses, the most serious since the Arab-Israeli conflicts of 1973. Hamas achieved this through two years of strategic subterfuge, concealing its military plans and convincing Israel that it had no intention of engaging in a major confrontation. While Israel believed it was pacifying a war-weary Hamas through economic incentives for Gazan workers, the group was covertly and effectively preparing its fighters. This preparation took place in plain sight but under the guise of not being ready for a conflict. Hamas employed unconventional and untraceable intelligence tactics, leading Israel to underestimate its strength and resilience. The result was a shocking and sudden assault that caught Israel off guard, resulting in 700 Israeli casualties and dozens of abductions. Major Nir Dinar, spokesperson for the Israeli Defense Forces, described this surprise move as "Israeli 9/11," admitting that they had been caught completely unaware. In the lead-up to this audacious maneuver, Hamas constructed a mock Israeli settlement in Gaza for training purposes. Even many Hamas leaders were kept in the dark about the exact plans, and the 1,000 fighters involved had no clear understanding of the exercises' true purpose. The

operation was divided into four parts: an initial barrage of 3,000 rockets fired from Gaza, simultaneous incursions by fighters using hang gliders and motorized paragliders, the securing of terrain by ground troops, and the breach of fortified barriers using explosives and motorbikes. Bulldozers were employed to widen gaps, and commando units attacked key Israeli military installations, disrupting communications. The final phase involved moving hostages to Gaza, a task arguably achieved early in the attack. One such high-profile hostage-taking incident occurred during a raid on party-goers near Gaza, with social media footage capturing the chaos as people fled the scene amid gunshots. Hamas' remarkable ability to maintain the secrecy of its unconventional warfare capabilities until it unveiled them in a decisive manner and the biggest blow to the invincibility of Israel. The speed, precision, and serenity with which Hamas militants breached the Gaza-Israel barrier, penetrated the Gaza border crossings into Israeli settlements and military installations, and launched over 5,000 rockets into Israel within just 20 minutes were indeed remarkable. The Hamas' "Operation Al-Aqsa Storm," can be attributed to several factors. Firstly, it highlights Hamas' perception of Israeli actions as desecration of the holy Islamic site, the Al-Aqsa Mosque. Additionally, the increasing trend of Arab states normalizing relations with Israel, as exemplified by the 2020 Abraham Accords involving the UAE, Bahrain, Sudan, and Morocco. This trend is a cause for concern among Palestinians, as it reduces pressure on Israel to reach a settlement with them and signals a prioritization of peace with Arab states over peace with the Palestinians. Hamas, while not recognizing Israel, has indicated it would observe a truce if Israel withdrew to its 1967 borders, but skepticism remains about Israel's willingness to do so, especially if Saudi Arabia were to conclude its own deal with Israel. Furthermore, the timing of the attack is significant as it coincides with the 50th anniversary of the Yom Kippur or Ramadan War in 1973, potentially symbolizing the aspiration of surprising Israel, as Egypt and Syria did back then. The trajectory of the conflict remains uncertain. There are concerns about Hezbollah's involvement in Lebanon, depending on Iran's stance, and the potential for Palestinian militants in the West Bank to launch their own attacks, creating a third front against Israel. Moreover, there is the possibility of attacks on Jewish Israelis by Arab Israelis living in Israel, leading to a fourth front. The Israeli response to this unprecedented attack on Israeli Soil is surely going to be robust, devastating and exemplary. The Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu warned Israelis to brace themselves for a long and difficult war on Sunday (8th October). It responded with huge strikes on cities in the blockaded Gaza Strip, destroying dozens of buildings. The Israeli military said it had called up an unprecedented 300,000 reservists and was imposing a total blockade of the Gaza Strip, signs it could be planning a ground assault there to defeat Hamas after it launched a humiliating attack. In a further signal of Israel's rapid shift on to a war

footing, a cabinet member from Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's Likud Party said it could set up a national unity government joined by opposition leaders within hours. The recent assault has led to a significant and devastating impact on both sides, with no clear resolution in sight. President Joe Biden has pledged support for Israel, indicating that Israel is likely to face these challenges with strong backing. However, Israeli actions in Gaza may be constrained by the fact that some Israeli citizens have been kidnapped by Hamas militants and taken to Gaza. The conflict has the potential to impact global markets and economies in several ways. One significant concern is the potential for disruptions in oil prices and supply chains, which can have far-reaching consequences. The Middle East is a critical region for oil production, and any instability in the area can lead to increased oil prices, affecting not only energy costs but also the global economy. Moreover, the conflict's disruption of supply chains and movement of essential commodities can exacerbate global supply shortages and inflationary pressures. As transportation routes are affected and infrastructure damaged, the flow of goods can be impeded, leading to delays and increased costs for essential products. This, in turn, can lead to rising commodity prices, making basic necessities more expensive for consumers around the world. Weak economies, like Pakistan and others in the region, may face additional challenges as they grapple with the impact of higher oil prices and disruptions in the supply chain. These countries may experience increased costs for imports, which can strain their already fragile economic situations and potentially lead to balance of payments issues and inflation. This conflict once started is not going to go down any time soon. For Israel, going full scale against Hamas will be an uphill task as indiscriminate Israeli bombing would put the lives of the Palestinian mostly civilians at greater risk creating worldwide reaction against civilian killings. Balancing a robust response with concerns about international opinion remains a challenge for Israel, though Western governments have largely expressed support for Israel in the current conflict. Ultimately, this situation underscores the need for Israel to develop a comprehensive policy to manage the possible opening of war fronts with Hamas, Al-Fatah, Hezbollah and its own citizens of Arab origin. While Hamas justifies its attacks by citing the 16-year blockade of Gaza and Israeli crackdowns in the West Bank, Israel and Western countries have condemned the mass killing of civilians. The situation has jeopardized efforts to normalize relations between Israel and Saudi Arabia, which could have had implications for Palestinian aspirations and Iran's influence in the region. As the conflict continues, there are growing questions about Israel's intelligence failures and the fate of Israeli hostages, further complicating the path to a resolution. —The writer is Former Press Secretary to the President Former MD, SRBC, Former Minister Press, Embassy of Pakistan to France

Punjab Govt employees unite against pension policy modifications

Dr. Muhammad Akram Zaheer



Chairman PTU Pakpattan Muhammad Ayoob said that according to a notice in June, government employees in Punjab who were about to retire would lose a lot of money because of changes to their leave and pension benefits. Government workers, like clerks and teachers, also protested in Pakpattan against these new rules.

The members of the All Government Employees Grand Alliance (AGEGA) held a protest rallies because they were unhappy with the new rules about pension benefits from the Punjab government. They carried signs and banners with different messages to show their disagreement. They said the government caretakers didn't have the right to change the rules for government workers. Chairman PTU Pakpattan Muhammad Ayoob said that according to a notice in June, government employees in Punjab who were about to retire would lose a lot of money because of changes to their leave and pension benefits. Government workers, like clerks and teachers, also protested in Pakpattan against these new rules. President PTU Pakpattan Abid Mehmoog dogar and Ch. Eshaq Adil press secretary PTU Pakpattan demanded that the government increase their salaries to match those in other provinces and take back the notification that changed the leave encashment policy. General Secretary PTU Pakpattan Ch. Umar Hayat criticized the government for reducing the Leave Preparatory to Retirement (LPR) and gratuity benefits for employees. The government's decision to change pension rules has led to protests from government employees who worry about their retirement security. Punjab's government has financial problems, including a big pension debt. Pakistan's pension system has been criticized for being too expensive, and Punjab wanted to fix it. The changes worry employees because they fear their retirement income might not be safe anymore. Many employees and pensioners in Punjab have gone on strike and protested because they feel they're not being treated fairly. It's especially concerning because Punjab is the most populated province in Pakistan, and it should set a good example for others, but it's not doing that when it comes to employee welfare. Employees in Punjab haven't received salary increases and other benefits like employees in other provinces. The recent decisions by Punjab's government, like giving a lower pension based on initial pay and not giving leave encashment to retiring employees, have made things worse.

People don't understand how the Punjab government can deny these benefits when employees are dealing with high prices. The Prime Minister was told about these issues, but nothing has changed. The changes to the pension rules have caused widespread protests among government employees in Punjab. Punjab, as the most populous province in the country, should ideally serve as a benchmark and role model for other provinces in Pakistan. However, it is disheartening to note that it falls short of even matching the commendable examples set by smaller provinces when it comes to the welfare of its employees. This disparity in treatment and benefits for government employees has been a persistent issue, causing significant discontent and disillusionment among the workforce. For several years now, employees of the Punjab Government have been deprived of ad-hoc increases and other perks and privileges that have been readily granted to their counterparts in the three other provinces, as well as Gilgit-Baltistan and Azad Kashmir. This disparity has resulted in a substantial difference in salaries and overall compensation between Punjab employees and those in other federating units. The prevailing situation is not only a source of heartburn for the employees but also raises questions about the fairness and equity of the provincial government's policies. What exacerbate this situation further are the recent decisions made by the Punjab Government, which have only added to the employees' woes. Apart from failing to provide competitive pay and pension raises, the government has made controversial decisions, such as granting pension based on initial basic salaries and denying the benefit of leave encashment to retiring employees. These decisions have been met with widespread criticism and have further strained the relationship between the government and its workforce. One cannot help but wonder how the Punjab Government justifies denying these essential benefits to its employees, especially in the context of a federal structure where provinces should ideally strive for equitable treatment of their citizens and workforce. The rising cost of living, coupled with the unprecedented price hikes, has made it even more imperative for the

government to ensure that its employees are adequately compensated and provided with the necessary benefits to sustain a decent standard of living. This situation reflects a disheartening disconnect between the lofty slogans and promises made by the government and its actual actions. While politicians and policymakers frequently advocate for social justice and the well-being of citizens, the failure to provide fair salaries and pensions to government employees contradicts these aspirations. It is worth noting that concerns regarding these discriminatory policies of the Punjab Government were brought to the attention of the Prime Minister before Eid. In response, the Prime Minister promised to address the matter with the caretaker Chief Minister, who was abroad at the time. However, since then, there has been little to no progress or positive developments on this front. This delay in addressing the issue only prolongs the suffering and frustration of Punjab's government employees. To rectify this situation and restore a sense of fairness and justice, it is imperative that the Punjab Government takes swift and decisive action. The wrong decisions, such as denying employees their due benefits and failing to keep up with salary and pension increases in line with other provinces, must be promptly reversed. Further delay in addressing these grievances only deepens the divide and erodes trust in the government's commitment to the welfare of its citizens. Punjab, as Pakistan's most populous province, should set a shining example for the rest of the country in terms of employee welfare and equitable treatment. However, the current disparities in pay and benefits, exacerbated by recent controversial decisions, paint a grim picture. It is high time for the Punjab Government to uphold the principles of justice, fairness, and equity by addressing the concerns of its employees and ensuring that they receive the salaries and benefits they rightfully deserve. Only through prompt and meaningful action can the government restore trust and harmony among its workforce and fulfill its duty to serve the best interests of its citizens.

Briefs

Russia sends dozens of drones into Ukraine

MOSCOW : Russia launched 36 Iranian-made attack drones against southern Ukraine overnight, damaging infrastructure in the Odesa region, authorities said. The strikes targeted the Odesa, Mykolaiv and Kherson regions, the Ukrainian military reported, adding that air defense systems destroyed 27 drones. Odesa Governor Oleh Kiper said unspecified "logistics infrastructure" had been struck but that no injuries were reported. Reuters could not independently verify the information. There was no immediate comment from Russia. Russian forces have carried out regular missile and drone strikes on infrastructure in southern Ukraine in recent weeks and months, targeting port facilities in particular. Separately, the Kherson regional administration said Russia had struck the region 79 times with mortars, artillery and drones over the past day, wounding four people and damaging several buildings. —APP

Myanmar army suspected in drone strike, 32 killed

ANKARA : At least 32 people, including 13 children, were killed in a suspected drone strike by Myanmar's military on a refugee camp in Laiza, a remote mountainous town in Kachin State, local media reported Tuesday. According to Burmese Khit Thit News, the military council troops fired at the Laiza camp where the headquarters of the armed militia Kachin Independence Army (KIA) is located. During the last night's firing with heavy weapons, at least 32 people were killed and several others wounded, the agency reported. The Kachin Independence Organisation (KIO), a political group of ethnic Kachins in northern Myanmar, is the military wing of the KIA. The Kachins are a group of six tribes whose territory includes the Yunnan State of China, Northeast India, and the Kachin State of Myanmar. Myanmar's military ousted President Win Myint and State Counselor Aung San Suu Kyi in 2021. The takeover led to protests and a mass civil disobedience movement, which were responded with brutal force, killing and wounding hundreds of people. —Agencies

World court to hear 'watershed' Syria torture case

THE HAGUE : Syria faces allegations at the UN top court Tuesday that it maintains a "pervasive" system of torture that has killed tens of thousands of people. The case at the International Court of Justice (ICJ) marks the first time Damascus has faced international judges over the brutal civil war that started in 2011. Victims have endured "unimaginable physical and mental pain and suffering" from "abhorrent treatment in detention, inhumane conditions of detention, and sexual and gender-based violence," the case brought by the Netherlands and Canada alleges. Prisoners currently languishing in Syrian prisons are at "imminent risk of death or severe physical or mental harm," Canada and the Netherlands wrote in their submission to the court. They also allege the widespread rape of women and children, mutilation, beheadings, plus the "particularly abhorrent" use of chemical weapons to intimidate and punish civilians. Damascus has dismissed the case as "disinformation and lies," with a government source telling the SANA newswire in July the allegations "lack the slightest degree of credibility." Canada and the Netherlands asked the ICJ to "urgently" demand Syria stop all torture and arbitrary detention, open prisons to outside inspectors and provide information to families about the fate of their loved ones. —Agencies

Pak Ambassador presents credentials to EU President

Ambassador Baloch extended cordial greetings and well-wishes on behalf of the President and the Prime Minister of Pakistan

DNA

BRUSSELS: Pakistan's Ambassador to Belgium, Luxembourg, and the European Union, Amna Baloch, officially presented her credentials to the President of the European Council, Mr. Charles Michel, at a ceremony held in Brussels. Ambassador Amna extended cordial greetings and well-wishes on behalf of the President and the Prime



Minister of Pakistan. In response, President Michel reciprocated with similar sentiments, signaling warmth between the two leaderships. During the meeting, both sides jointly recognized the profound importance of Pakistan's ties with the European Union, framing the bond as a strategic and multifaceted partnership. They underscored the essential role of ongoing dialogue in fostering a mutually beneficial relationship. In her discussion with President Michel, Ambassador Baloch provided an update on the humanitarian situation in Indian Illegally Occupied Jammu and Kashmir (IIOJ&K). She expressed her perspective on the vital balancing role the EU has the capacity to play in the evolving geopolitical landscape. Concluding the discussions, there was a shared aspiration to enhance and fortify the relationship between the EU and Pakistan during her upcoming diplomatic tenure in Brussels.

Taiwan leader vows island will be democratic 'for generations'

TAIPEI: Taiwan President Tsai Ing-wen said on Tuesday that democracy had thrived on the island despite increased Chinese pressure, and vowed that its people would remain "free for generations." China claims self-ruled Taiwan as its territory, and has in recent years stepped up military and political pressure against Tsai's administration. Taiwan sees near-daily Chinese warplanes incursions around the island, while on the international stage, Beijing has poached its diplomatic allies in a bid to isolate it. Tsai, speaking Tuesday in a National Day speech, said it was her duty to "safeguard our national sovereignty and the democratic and free way of life" of Taiwan's 23 million people. "In the midst of tremendous internal and external pressures, Taiwan's democracy has grown and thrived... and we have emerged with even greater resilience," she said. "To protect Taiwan's democracy is to protect the universal value of democracy." "The Taiwanese people," she added, "will be a democratic and free people for generations to come." In the past year, Beijing has run massive war games around the island, carrying out simulations of a blockade that have raised the worries of Tsai's administration — as well as key allies such as the United States. The leader — who is hated by Beijing due to her refusal to recognize China's claim on Taiwan — is in her final year of office, unable to run for president again due to the island's two-term limit. Taiwan will hold national elections in January, with Tsai's deputy Lai Ching-te the current front runner for the poll. —DNA

Mexico bus crash leaves 18

A bus carrying refugees and migrants has overturned in southern Mexico, leaving at least 18 passengers dead and 27 injured, authorities said — the latest fatal road crash involving US-bound refugees. The dead, three of them minors, were from Venezuela and Haiti, according to a statement from the prosecutor's office in Oaxaca state on Friday. The accident happened at around dawn on a highway linking Oaxaca and the neighbouring state of Puebla, it said. The injured were taken to hospital for treatment, it added. Images released by state authorities showed the wreckage of the bus lying on its side on a highway winding through hills. Thousands of refugees from different countries have been travelling across Mexico in buses, overcrowded trailers and atop freight trains in an attempt to reach the US-Mexican border. They run the risk of fatal accidents, kidnapping by criminal groups and extortion by corrupt officials. More than 8,200 refugees have died or disappeared in the Americas since 2014, most of them while trying to reach the United States via Mexico, according to the International Organization for Migration (IOM). The US-Mexican border is the "world's deadliest migration land route," with 686 deaths. —DNA

Saudi tourism launches hub for sustainable travel

RIYADH: As part of its endeavor to combat the climate crisis, Saudi Arabia's Tourism Ministry launched a Global Solutions Hub on the sidelines of the Middle East and North Africa Climate Week on Tuesday. Spearheaded by the Kingdom's Sustainable Tourism Global Center, the development is a knowledge center that will keep track of sustainable travel worldwide through research projects, the creation of industry toolkits, and academic discussions. Speaking to Arab News, STGC Head Gloria Guevara Manzo said the knowledge center is a significant development and could revamp the overall landscape of sustainable travel. Manzo, also the chief special adviser to the Saudi tourism minister, explained that the hub will act as a catalyst for identifying challenges and producing sustainability solutions. "We are partnering with more than 20 schools and hope to reach 100 schools before 2030. These are top

institutions such as MIT, Stanford, NYU and Harvard, to produce toolkits and solutions," Manzo told Arab News. The adviser further gave the example of a solution currently being developed in collaboration with Stanford University which helps reduce food waste among restaurants and cafes that need help identifying their emission levels. With food waste contributing from 8 to 10 percent of greenhouse emissions globally, Manzo explained that the initiative would help identify challenges among restaurants and find an affordable and applicable tool to quantify their footprint.

"We not only tell them this is the problem, but also this is the solution, and this is how you do it," she said. "We're also releasing some solutions this week, and in the next 12 months, you will see 20 solutions coming out of Riyadh that will help small and medium enterprises, destinations and travelers," Manzo added.

These solutions go beyond food waste, she explained, adding that projects around water management, plastic reduction and other areas will also be part of the initiative. On Tuesday, the hub introduced three toolkits focused primarily on the use of solar thermal heaters, emissions reduction through food choices, and cost savings of solar panels. Commenting on the hub's launch, Saudi Tourism Minister Ahmed Al-Khateeb said the knowledge center will provide valuable resources to support stakeholders in making well-informed decisions. "Our goal is to function as the premier knowledge hub, offering indispensable tools and solutions for key stakeholders, enabled by the Sustainable Tourism Global Center and the Ministry of Tourism in Saudi Arabia. Through these efforts, we aim to empower and support the travel and tourism sector to champion environmental solutions and foster prosperity," Al-Khateeb said in a statement. Manzo added that the hub

will be a directory for global solutions in the tourism sector and will document all the best practices for stakeholders across the world to benefit. "We need to document the good cases, and we need to provide solutions for destinations that want to learn from others to have a place to go," Manzo said. Additionally, the hub has identified approximately 27 categories of SMEs that stand to gain from its offerings. "We're going to have solutions for travelers," Manzo added, noting that the hub will also provide travelers with instructions on reducing their carbon footprint when vacationing. The Tourism Ministry also announced a youth forum during the MENA Climate Week, an initiative that is part of its ongoing effort to engage with future generations. Manzo explained that the goal is to actively collaborate with the global youth, not just Saudi nationals, to integrate them into sustainability initiatives within the tourism sector. —APP

US carrier Ronald Reagan to visit South Korea

SEOUL: The US nuclear-powered aircraft carrier Ronald Reagan is due to dock at the South Korean port of Busan on Thursday, as Seoul warned of a greater threat from North Korea and held joint maritime drills with the United States and Japan. The carrier, which is expected to remain in Busan until Oct. 16, will strengthen the defense posture of South Korea and the United States in case of any North Korean provocations, South Korea's defense ministry said. The Ronald Reagan last visited South Korea in 2022 for the first time in about four years, joining other military vessels in a show of might intended to send a message to North Korea. North Korean state media KCNA on Tuesday criticized the deployment of US strategic assets, including submarines and bombers, in the Asia-Pacific region while defending its plans for a spy satellite program as "indispensable." Pyongyang has failed twice to place a spy satellite in orbit, in May and August, and has vowed to try again as early as October. South Korea's defense minister Shin Won-sik told reporters on Tuesday that South Korea faces a more severe threat from North Korea, according to news agency Yonhap. The visit of the carrier comes after the United States pledged to enhance the "regular visibility" of its strategic military assets in the Washington Declaration, which President Yoon Suk Yeol and US leader Joe Biden issued during a summit in April. The South Korean and US navies held joint maritime drills with Japan's defense force in waters near South Korea's Jeju Island on Monday and Tuesday, the South Korean navy said. The drills, which are the first of their kind since 2016, are aimed at deterring and responding to North Korea's "advancing nuclear and missile threats," the navy said in a statement. —DNA

China forces Philippines navy from Scarborough

BEIJING: China's coast guard took measures to drive away a Philippine navy gunboat on Tuesday after it intruded into waters around the Scarborough Shoal in the South China Sea, according to an official statement. The coast guard said it took "necessary measures" such as forcing the gunboat out and controlling its route after repeated dissuasion and warnings from the Chinese side were ignored. The Philippines' military chief has denied its navy vessel was driven away by the Chinese coast guard in Scarborough shoal, saying it was part of China's propaganda. "We are having it verified, but nothing like that happened. In our view, it is Chinese propaganda," Philippine armed forces chief Romeo Brawner said in an interview. China claims it has "indisputable sovereignty" over the shoal, which it calls Huangyan Island, and the adjacent waters. Last month, the Philippine coast guard week said it had cut a 300 meter (980 feet) floating barrier installed by China that blocked access to the hotly disputed area which Beijing has controlled for over a decade. "We urge the Philippines to immediately stop its infringement," coast guard spokesman Gan Yu said, saying the action was also a serious violation of international law. The occurrence comes a day after China warned the Philippines against further "provocations" at an atoll in the South China Sea, saying such acts had violated Chinese territorial sovereignty, contravened international law and disrupted regional peace and stability. Ties between the Philippines and China have deteriorated of late, in large part due to overtures from its president to deepen defense ties with Washington, including offering expanded access to its troops, ostensibly for training and humanitarian purposes. —APP



Baku : Foreign Minister Jalil Abbas Jilani held a bilateral Meeting with the Foreign Minister of Uzbekistan on the sidelines of 27th ECOCOM held in Shusha, Azerbaijan. —DNA

Turkiye to respond 'necessarily' after US drone downing

FOREIGN DESK

ANKARA : Turkiye has been relatively restrained in response to the downing of an armed Turkish drone in northern Syria by the U.S. forces. President Recep Tayyip Erdogan on Monday revealed why it acted so in remarks after a Cabinet meeting. "There is no doubt that the incident has been engraved in our national memory and necessary action will certainly be taken when the time comes," Erdogan said at a news conference in the capital Ankara. He did not elaborate on a possible response but renewed his criticism of the United States and other countries for their support of the PKK terrorist group and its Syrian wing YPG. The downing of the drone last week came at a time when Turkiye was carrying out airstrikes against the terrorist group in northeastern Syria. The U.S. troops are present in the area, under

the pretext of support to the PKK/YPG, which claims to fight against Daesh. The Pentagon has termed the incident "regrettable," while the Turkish Foreign Ministry said in a brief statement last Friday that it lost the drone "due to different technical assessments of de-confliction mechanism run by third parties." Erdogan said Turkish security forces have been completely meticulous to ensure nobody except terrorists would be targeted during the operation. "Yet, we could not prevent this unpleasant or 'regrettable' incident (as the United States described)," he said. The president highlighted that Turkiye's counterterrorism fight, which began 40 years ago, was being carried out on "principles," and it was largely taken beyond Turkish borders as part of a strategy to eradicate the terrorism at its source. "Inspired by our state traditions of the past, we adhere to international laws in our fight against terrorism



beyond our borders. Turkiye did not shed the blood of any innocent people deliberately or did not harm the dignity of people in its counterterrorism fight. We adhered to the same sensitivity in our latest operations in Iraq and Syria's north. The first stage of our operation targeting only terrorists, their facilities and places they used as sources of revenue concluded successfully. We have destroyed 194 targets

and neutralized 162 terrorists since Oct. 1 in our army's operations. Yet, like in every operation, our ally supporting the terrorist group under the pretext of the fight against Daesh emerged as the biggest problem," Erdogan lamented. The U.S. left its bases in northern Syria after Turkiye launched its Peace Spring operation in October 2019 against the PKK/YPG, concentrating its military near oil fields. Washington, however, maintained its support for the terrorist group. U.S. forces are active in Hassakeh and Deir el-Zour, in areas occupied by the terrorist group and continuously send supplies to these areas. The PKK is designated a terrorist organization in the U.S., Turkiye and the European Union. Washington's support for the terrorist group in Syria has significantly strained bilateral relations with Ankara. The terrorist group has used bases across Turkiye's border in northern Iraq and

northern Syria to plot and carry out attacks on the country, working to create a terrorist corridor along the borderline, threatening both Syrian locals and nearby Turkish residents. Since 2016, Ankara has been leading counteroffensives against the terrorist groups and striving to establish a 30-kilometer-deep (19-mile-deep) security line, for which Russia and the U.S. committed to providing support in October 2019. The same month, Turkiye launched its Operation Peace Spring against the PKK/YPG and Daesh in northern Syria, with Washington promising that the YPG would withdraw from the region. The U.S. military then evacuated all its bases in the area, prioritizing stationing near oil fields. The continued U.S. support, namely military training and truckloads of equipment, for the terrorist group, has drawn the ire of its NATO ally Turkiye on numerous occasions. Thanks to U.S. help worth

millions of dollars, the YPG has grown stronger in northeastern Syria, despite Washington's promises to Turkiye that it would "consult and work closely" with Ankara against Daesh and the PKK. Erdogan said they have called on the "powers" maintaining relations with terrorist groups in the region "for years" to keep their military and intelligence elements away from terrorists "so as they would not be harmed in our operations." Foreign Minister Hakan Fidan said earlier that Turkish security forces were authorized to target everything owned or controlled by the PKK in Syria and Iraq. "Everything belonging to the PKK/YPG, from infrastructure to energy facilities, in Syria and Iraq are now legitimate targets of our security forces," he said during a news conference on Oct. 4. Fidan's remarks came after the Oct. 1 terrorist attack by the PKK that targeted the headquarters of Turkish police in the capital.

Briefs

French troops begin withdrawal from Niger

PARIS: France has begun withdrawing its troops from Niger after being ordered out of the West African nation by the leaders of the July coup that ousted the pro-Paris president, the military said Tuesday. "The first troops have left," the spokesman of the French chief of staff said, confirming an announcement Monday by Niger's army, which said that the 1,400-strong French contingent would begin leaving Tuesday, under escort from Niger forces. A French defense source said a first group of soldiers that were considered priority for evacuation for health or humanitarian reasons had already flown out of Niger on Monday. The pullout comes hot on the heels of the departure of France's ambassador to Niamey who was also forced out by the leaders of the July coup that toppled President Mohamed Bazoum. It is the fourth time in under two years that French troops have suffered the humiliation of being forced out of a former African colony, coming after Mali, the Central African Republic and Burkina Faso.

French President Emmanuel Macron had initially resisted demands by Niger's coup leaders to withdraw his troops and ambassador to Niamey, arguing that only the ousted Bazoum had the authority to make such a request. In late September however, he announced both the ambassador and the troops were coming home after months of anti-French protests. Ambassador Sylvain Itte returned to Paris on September 27. - Agencies

Khamenei denies involvement in Hamas attack

TEHRAN: Supreme leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei on Tuesday denied any Iranian involvement in Hamas's shock weekend attack on Israel despite its strong support for the Palestinian militant group. "The supporters of the Zionist regime (Israel) and some people in the usurping regime have been spreading rumours over the past two or three days, including that Islamic Iran was behind this action. They are wrong," Khamenei said in a speech at a military academy. "Of course, we defend Palestine, we defend the struggles," he added, urging "the whole Islamic world" to "support the Palestinians." Khamenei said Israel has suffered an "irreparable failure" on both "military and intelligence" fronts. "Every one has spoken of the failure, I put the emphasis on its irreparability," he said. Iran took the lead on Saturday in celebrating the Hamas assault in which at least 1,500 gunmen stormed the border before carrying out a bloody rampage through Israeli communities that left more than 900 dead.

The Israeli army said it was the single deadliest event in the nation's history, and has responded with a ferocious bombardment of Gaza where officials say at least 687 people have been killed. - APP

Alvi calls for equal opportunity for all political parties

President Alvi also stressed the importance of political, institutional, and stakeholder unity to address the nation's challenges, including economic ones, advocating for coop and forgiveness over bitterness



DNA

ISLAMABAD: President Dr Arif Alvi, on Tuesday, underscored the importance of

providing every political party with the opportunity to participate in the upcoming general elections, stating that "democracy becomes meaningless if people are not able to elect leaders of their choice."

These remarks were made during a meeting with former federal minister and Senator Muhammad Ali Durrani, who called upon the president here at the Aiwan-e-Sadr. President Alvi insisted that the upcoming

general elections must adhere to the principles of being free, fair, transparent, and inclusive. He emphasised the need for all political parties and their leadership to have equal opportunities in the electoral process, a move aimed at strengthening democracy in the country.

President Alvi also stressed the importance of political, institutional, and stakeholder unity to address the nation's challenges, including economic ones, advocating for cooperation and forgiveness over bitterness. He stated that difficult decisions should have the support of the people and their participative ownership. President Alvi viewed the forthcoming general elections as an opportunity to infuse vibrancy into the nation's rebuilding efforts.

Furthermore, he praised the unified stance of political leaders on the issue of inclusivity, recognising it as the essence of democracy. Earlier, Imran Khan's sister Aleema Khan had claimed that incarcerated former prime minister was deeply disappointed and unhappy with President Alvi. Aleema, while talking to the media after appearing before an Anti-Terrorism Court in the May 9 riots case earlier this month, said during a meeting with her brother languishing in Adiala jail, the PTI chairman expressed profound regret and disappointment in President Alvi's "failure to fulfil his constitutional duty of announcing the election date during this crucial time for the nation".

Lahore schools, markets to remain closed due to smog

DNA

LAHORE: All private and government schools along with markets would remain closed on Wednesday until further notice, said officials. In an effort to combat the alarming levels of smog and air pollution that have blanketed the provincial capital in recent days, Commissioner Lahore Muhammad Ali Randhawa held a crucial meeting with a delegation of traders. During the meeting, it was collectively decided to close schools, markets, government, and private institutions every Wednesday "until further notice". Effective immediately, Lahore will witness a full shutdown every Wednesday. School administrations have been directed to ensure that staff members work from home on Wednesdays, allowing for a smoother transition to the new schedule. Banks, private institutions, clubs, and hotels are also expected to adhere to the Wednesday shutdown. This means schools, markets, government offices, and private institutions will remain closed. The decision is primarily aimed at reducing vehicular emissions and industrial activities on a designated day of the week to alleviate air pollution.

ECP reserves ruling on Imran's chairmanship

DNA

ISLAMABAD: The Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) has reserved its ruling on plea seeking removal of PTI chief from party's chairmanship and withdrawing him from the party as an election symbol for contesting polls. A five-member commission of the top election body of the country heard the plea seeking removal of PTI chief from party chairmanship. Petitioner Khalid Mahmood Khan's counsel appeared before the commission. During the proceedings, petitioner's counsel said PTI chairman had been convicted in Toshakhana case. He said in case of Nawaz Sharif an order was issued by the Supreme Court. Member Election Commission from Sindh asked what clauses Election Act had in this regard.

Poland's top army generals quit ahead of key

WARSAW: Poland's two highest-ranking military officers have resigned days before a key election and amid the war in neighbouring Ukraine. The army's Chief of General Staff, Gen Rajmund Andrzejczak, and Operational Commander Gen Tomasz Piotrowski gave no reason for their decision. Media reports say they are worried about attempts by the right-wing government to politicise the military ahead of Sunday's general elections. The government denies the claim. It also rejects accusations by Poland's opposition and the European Union that it is politicising the country's judiciary and curbing media freedoms. "General Rajmund Andrzejczak submitted his resignation... on Monday," his spokeswoman Col Joanna Klejszmit told the AFP news agency. "Like any soldier, he's entitled to resign without giving a reason," she added. Gen Piotrowski also tendered his resignation. The daily Rzeczpospolita - one of Poland's leading newspapers - reported that the two generals were in conflict with Defence Minister Mariusz Blaszczak about the politicisation of the military and a row over a Russian cruise missile over Poland late last year. In May, Mr Blaszczak, said Gen Piotrowski failed to inform him last December that the unarmed missile had entered Polish airspace from Belarus and flown hundreds of kilometres before crashing in a forest. - Agencies

Shusha hosts 27th meeting of COM-ECO

Caretaker Foreign Minister Jalil Abbas Jilani along with foreign ministers of other member states attend the meeting



DNA

SHUSHA: The 27th meeting of the Council of Ministers of Foreign Affairs of the Economic Cooperation Organization (ECO) has today kicked off in Shusha under the chairmanship of the Republic of Azerbaijan. The foreign ministers of Azerbaijan, Türkiye, Kazakhstan, Pakistan, Tajikistan, Uzbekistan and other

officials participate in the event. Azerbaijan's Foreign Minister Jeyhun Bayramov read out President of the Republic of Azerbaijan Ilham Aliyev's address to the participants. During the meeting, the opening speech and statement of Azerbaijan's Foreign Minister Jeyhun Bayramov, statements of representatives of member and observer countries, international partners and specialized organizations of the ECO will be heard as well as other

issues on the agenda of the meeting will be discussed. The Economic Cooperation Organization, as an intergovernmental organization, was founded in 1985 by Türkiye, Iran and Pakistan. On November 28, 1992, 7 countries joined the ECO, and now the organization unites 10 member countries: Azerbaijan, Afghanistan, Iran, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Uzbekistan, Pakistan, Tajikistan, Türkiye and Turkmenistan.

Afghanistan quakes "killed or injured" over 4,000

The violent earthquakes struck Afghanistan's Herat Province and neighbouring areas on Saturday afternoon, with the first tremor occurring at around 11:10 local time (0640 GMT)

KABUL: The casualties from the deadly earthquakes that hit western Afghanistan on Saturday have killed or injured more than 4,000 people, according to officials. Additionally, about 2,000 houses have been completely destroyed in the two 6.2-mag-

nitude earthquakes, said the Afghanistan National Disaster Management Authority (ANDMA) on Monday. During a press conference in Kabul on Monday, Mullah Saïq, spokesman for ANDMA, said: "So far, the statistics we have received regarding casualties are unfortunately exceeding 4,000 people." "According to our data, in about 20 villages, approximately 1,980 to 2,000 houses have completely collapsed." The violent earthquakes struck Afghanistan's Herat Province and neighbouring areas on Saturday afternoon, with the first tremor occurring at around 11:10 local time (0640 GMT), Reuters reported. Following the disaster, a total of more than 1,000 rescuers in 35 rescue teams from

different institutions are carrying out relief efforts in the affected areas, said the spokesman. The quakes claimed at least 2,400 lives and injured many more, according to the Taliban government, proving to be among the deadliest in the world this year after tremors in Turkey and Syria, where an estimated 50,000 people died. Mohammad Hasan Akhund, Afghanistan's acting prime minister, led a group of officials to visit the affected region in Herat Province on Monday. Moreover, China on Sunday provided the Afghan Red Crescent with 200,000 US dollars in cash as emergency humanitarian assistance to aid its rescue and disaster relief efforts. - Agencies

Myanmar: 29 killed in artillery strike on camp

YANGON: At least 29 people, including children, have been killed in an artillery strike on a displaced persons camp in north-east Myanmar, near the Chinese border. The camp is in an area controlled by the Kachin Independence Organisation (KIO), one of several ethnic insurgent groups which have been fighting for self-rule for many decades. All the victims were civilians, a KIO spokesman told the media. It is one of the deadliest attacks in the 63-year-long conflict in Kachin State. Kachin officials say the armed forces have scaled up attacks on KIO-run areas over the past year because of growing Kachin support for other insurgent groups fighting the military government. Much of Myanmar has been embroiled in a wider civil war since a 2021 military coup displaced the country's elected government. The military has increasingly used air strikes against opposition-controlled towns and villages since seizing power. The exiled National Unity Government (NUG) has blamed the junta for the attack on the camp, describing it as a "war crime and crime against humanity". Junta spokesman Major General Zaw Min Tun denied that the military was behind the attack. He claimed the army does not have any operations in the area and said the destruction was "probably" caused by stockpiled explosives. Images shared by local media showed bodies being pulled from the rubble and dozens of body bags lying side by side. - Agencies

KSA attempting to control ongoing clashes: MBS

RIYADH: Saudi Arabia is taking steps to manage the conflict between Israel and Hamas, according to Crown Prince Muhammad Bin Salman (MBS), who spoke with Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas on Tuesday, days after Hamas launched a surprise attack on Tel Aviv. Saudi media reports that, during their conversation, MBS expressed his solidarity with the Palestinian people and assured Abbas that his country continues "to stand by the Palestinian people to achieve their legitimate rights to a decent life, achieve their hopes and aspirations, and achieve just and lasting peace." Over 1,000 people were killed in the occupied land as a result of the surprise attack, which Hamas conducted early on Saturday. Israel announced an unprecedented embargo of the Gaza Strip in an effort to stop the delivery of food and gasoline to the war-torn Palestinians. Israel's foreign ministry said that at least 1,000 Israelis have been killed, while Palestine's health ministry said that the number of martyrs rose to 687, according to AFP. The spiralling violence kicked off amid speculation that Saudi Arabia, which has never recognised Israel, would agree to normalise ties as part of a deal in which it would obtain security guarantees from the United States as well as assistance in developing a civilian nuclear programme. However, MBS told Fox News last month that the Palestinian issue was "very important" for Saudi Arabia, home to the holiest sites in Islam in Mecca and Medina. - Agencies

Israel-Gaza conflict shows US 'failure' in ME: Putin

MOSCOW: Russian President Vladimir Putin said Tuesday the Israel-Gaza conflict showed the "failure" of Washington's Middle East policy and called the creation of "an independent sovereign Palestinian state" a "necessity." The Russian leader made the comments while meeting Iraq's Prime Minister Mohammed Shia Al-Sudani in Moscow, days after Hamas launched a massive attack on Israel. "I think many people would agree with me that it's a clear example of the failure of US politics in the Middle East," Putin said. He spoke of the "necessity to implement the decisions of the UN Security Council on the creation of an independent sovereign Palestinian state." Putin said the US had "tried to monopolize regulating (the conflict) but, unfortunately, were not preoccupied with looking for compromises that would be acceptable for both sides." The West had "not taken into account the fundamental interests of the Palestinian people," he said. - Agencies

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