



Thursday, October 12, 2023

Pakistan's Credible Daily Newspaper

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Zelensky rallies support on first visit to NATO HQ

Detailed News On Page-07

Chevening scholars playing leadership role

Detailed News On Page-08


Rohit guides India to win against Afghanistan

Detailed News On Page-06



No relief for Nawaz, Tareen Bill limiting CJP powers sustained

Section dealing with retrospective effect of law struck down; apex court gives right of appeal by 9-6 majority; 10 judges say CJP powers should be regulated; five write a dissenting note

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

ISLAMABAD: In a major development, the Supreme Court Wednesday "sustained" the Supreme Court (Practice and Procedure) Act 2023 – which deals with the chief justice's powers – as "constitutional" with a 10-5 majority. The full court, comprising all 15 judges of the apex court, had reserved the verdict earlier today on the pleas challenging the law after conducting five marathon hearings. While reading out the order, CJP Isa noted that five members of the bench – Justice Ijazul Ahsan, Justice Muneeb Akhtar, Justice Sayyed Mazahir Ali Akbar Naqvi, and Justice Ayesha A Malik, and Justice Shahid Waheed – had opposed the law. The CJP mentioned that by a majority of 8-7 – CJP Isa, Justice Sardar Tariq Masood, Justice Syed Mansoor Ali Shah, Justice Amin-ud-Din Khan, Justice Jamal Khan Mandokhail, Justice Athar Minallah and Justice Musarrat Hilali dissenting – sub-section (2) of section 5 of the Act (granting a right of appeal retrospectively) is declared to be ultra vires the Constitution. By a majority of 9-6 (Justice Ahsan, Justice Akhtar, Justice Yahya Afridi, Justice Naqvi, Justice Malik, and Justice Waheed dissenting) sub-section (1) of section 5 of the Act (granting a right of appeal prospectively) is declared to be in accordance with the Constitution. The verdict acknowledges the parliament's right to legislation under Article 191, which states that the SC rules are subject to the Constitution. The law will be effective from April 21, 2023, the day it was enacted, which means the SC verdicts under 184(3) which came after this date can be appealed for review. One of the major verdicts is in the NAB amendments case, in which Justice Mansoor Ali Shah wrote in the verdict that a full court should be constituted after the decision on the Practice and Procedure Act, or else doubts will be created regarding this court's verdict. The law gives the power of taking suo motu notice to a three-member committee comprising senior judges including the chief justice. It further aimed to have transparent proceedings in the apex court and includes the right to appeal. Regarding the constitution of benches, the Act stated that every cause, matter, or appeal before the apex court would be heard and disposed of by a bench constituted by a committee comprising the CJP and the two senior-most judges. It added that the decisions of the committee would be taken by a majority.

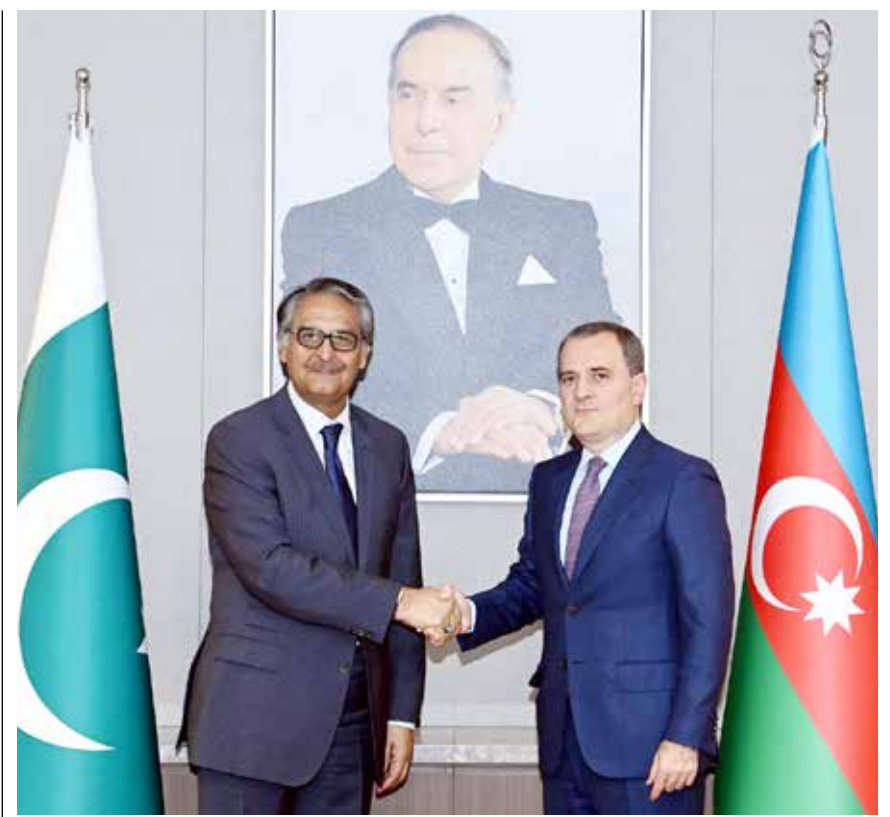
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ECP should hold free, on time polls: PTI

KHAYYAM ABBASI

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) spokesperson reminded the Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) its legal and constitutional role to hold free, fair and transparent elections within the constitutionally mandated timeframe instead of working on the malicious minus Imran Khan agenda. PTI spokesperson strongly reacted to the electoral watchdog's extraordinary eagerness and enthusiasm to speedily decide the politically-motivated, fabricated and false cases against PTI Chairman and said that the nation would not accept any unlawful and unconstitutional decision and action of the commission against Imran Khan come what may. He said that the PTI strongly rejected the electoral body's all unconstitutional and illegal attempts to make Imran Khan a target of retribution and to minus him from politics. PTI spokesperson went on to say that the ECP was playing a main stooge role in deviating from the constitution and murder of democracy in the country. He recalled that the electoral watchdog's prejudice against PTI and Chairman Imran Khan was evident from its unconstitutional and partisan actions during the last 17 months. PTI spokesperson underlined that the electoral body's sole constitutional responsibility was to conduct free, fair and transparent elections within the constitutionally defined deadline; however the commission miserably failed in fulfilling its constitutional role in this regard. He contended that the ECP was unfortunately playing the role of a political party rather than conducting elections in the stipulated

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BAKU: Foreign Minister of Azerbaijan Jeyhun Bayramov met with Foreign Minister of Pakistan Jilil Abbas Jilani in Baku. – DNA

COAS pledges support for government against resource theft

The prime minister emphasised that "socio-economic development of Balochistan is imperative for ensuring peace and development in the province"

MAHNOOR ANSAR

ISLAMABAD: Chief of the Army Staff (COAS) General Asim Munir affirmed the army's commitment towards offering its complete support to enforce actions against unlawful activities in collaboration with law enforcement agencies (LEAs) and other government institutions. The News reported on Wednesday. The army chief's statement came during a provincial apex committee meeting chaired by Caretaker Prime Minister Anwaar-ul-Haq Kakar, where he spoke about the military's objective to prevent the theft of national resources and economic losses endured by the country in the wake of illicit activities.

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PML-N eyes poverty alleviation through youth emancipation

ABBAS HASHMI

LAHORE: Former prime minister Shehbaz Sharif announced Wednesday if the Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) were to come into power, their primary focus over the next five years would be on stabilising the economy, combating inflation and empowering the nation's youth. In a statement

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Briefs

Nawaz to turn economy sustainable

DNA

LAHORE: Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz chief organizer said on Wednesday that the PML-N would make Pakistan economically sustainable in the next five years. PML-N's Senior Vice President Maryam Nawaz met with chairmen, councilors, and party workers of the NA-128 and NA-129 during which the preparations related to the October 21 were discussed. On the occasion, Ms Nawaz laid out the reasons behind Nawaz Sharif's return mentioning that he was coming to give solutions of the problems facing the country.

ME crisis nears 'tipping point'

NEWS DESK

NEW YORK: With Gaza bracing for an Israeli ground offensive, the top UN humanitarian official on Tuesday called for an end to the escalating violence in the Occupied Palestinian Territory and Israel, warning that "the whole region is at a tipping point." In a statement, UN Emergency Relief Coordinator Martin Griffiths described the scale and speed of the unfolding crisis as "bone-chilling".



Situation in Middle East tense Gaza faces unprecedented 'humanitarian catastrophe'

Israeli PM calls Biden; Saudi Arabia convenes meeting of the OIC foreign ministers

NEWS DESK

GAZA CITY: Gaza's power authority has said the blockaded enclave's sole power plant will run out of fuel within hours, leaving the Palestinian territory without electricity after Israel cut off supplies in retaliation to the recent attacks by Hamas, the armed group that runs Gaza. Palestinian Energy Authority Chairman Thamer Melhem told Voice of Palestine radio on Wednesday that the plant would shut down in the afternoon in Gaza, where about 2.3 million people live in one of the most densely populated areas in the world. "This threatens to plunge the Strip into complete darkness and make it impossible to continue providing all basic life services, all of which depend on electricity, and it will not be possible to operate them partially with generators in light of the prevention of fuel supplies from Rafah Gate," said a statement issued by Gaza's authorities on Wednesday. "This catastrophic situation creates a humanitarian crisis for all residents of the Gaza Strip," it said.

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Two-State solution is the only way forward

FAISAL SHEIKH

ISLAMABAD: Ambassador (r) Tariq Fatemi called on the Europeans and the Americans to exhibit the moral courage and convince the Israelis to agree to a two-state solution as agreed upon by both the parties as the only way forward. He was speaking at an event titled 'The Recent Events in Palestine and its Consequences' organized by the Institute of Regional Studies (IRS) Islamabad here on Wednesday. Ambassador Fatemi said that the recent events were unfolding in a manner that was worrying and of grave concern. He said that the Palestinians notwithstanding the destruction of their

Continued on Page 06

FM reiterates Pakistan commitment to ECO vision

The Foreign Minister reiterated Pak's commitment to ECO vision & its goals & objectives

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Caretaker Foreign Minister Jilil Abbas Jilani Wednesday met with Economic Cooperation Organization (ECO) Secretary General Khusrav Noziri in Shusha, Azerbaijan on the sidelines of the Ministerial meeting of ECO. The Foreign Minister reiterated Pakistan's commitment to ECO vision & its goals & objectives. The foreign minister reiterated Pakistan's commitment to the vision of ECO, its goals and objectives. On the occasion, the ECO secretary general appreciated Pakistan's role in promoting development and connectivity in region.

Federal Cabinet demands immediate cessation of bombardment in Gaza

Prime Minister also directed the federal ministers to only undertake necessary foreign trips

ANSAR M BHATTI

ISLAMABAD: The Caretaker Federal Cabinet has demanded immediate cessation of bombardment in Gaza and ending of illegal siege of the territory, allowing international assistance to reach victims. Minister for Information and Broadcasting Mur-



ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Anwaar-ul-Haq Kakar chairs Federal Cabinet meeting, on Wednesday. – DNA

taza Solangi, along with Minister for Privatization Fawad Hassan Fawad, was briefing media about Federal Cabinet's decisions in Islamabad this evening. The Federal Cabinet was met in the federal capital today with Prime Minister Anwaar-ul-Haq Kakar in the chair. Murtaza Solangi said the cabinet strongly condemned Israeli bombardment against the innocent and un-

armed Palestinians. It also expressed serious concerns about the shortage of food and water in Gaza. The Information Minister said the cabinet unanimously emphasized that recent tension is a result of Israel's illegal occupation of Palestinian territories for the last two decades, oppression against innocent Palestinians and open violation of UN Security Council Resolutions. The Cabinet reiterated Pakistan's principled stance that a viable, sovereign, and contiguous State of Palestine should be established on the basis of pre-1967 borders, with Al Quds Al-Sharif as its capital in light of the UN resolutions and will of the people of Palestine. Murtaza Solangi said the Prime Minister also directed the federal ministers to only undertake necessary foreign trips. He said the cabinet also approved appointment of Justice retired Sohail Nasir as Deputy Chairman and

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SCHENGEN PASSENGERS

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IN A 5 STAR HOTEL

WB delegation calls on Chairman WAPDA

ISLAMABAD : A four-member World Bank delegation, headed by South Asia Region Practice Manager for Energy Simon Stolp on Wednesday called on Chairman WAPDA Engr Lt Gen Sajjad Ghani (Retd). The delegation was briefed about progress on the World Bank-funded WAPDA projects, which included the Dasu Hydropower Project, the Tarbela 5th Extension Hydropower Project and Tarbela Floating Solar Panel Project, said a press release. The operation and performance of the World Bank-funded Tarbela 4th Extension Hydropower Project was also discussed during the meeting. It was noted with satisfaction that the Tarbela 4th Extension Hydropower Project, since its commissioning, has generated electricity equivalent to more than its initial capital cost. A portfolio of WAPDA's upcoming projects in the hydropower sector was also presented to the delegation with a view to seeking the World Bank's financial support. Chairman WAPDA acknowledged the contribution of the World Bank in harnessing low-cost, clean and green energy in Pakistan through WAPDA projects. He also expressed the hope that the World Bank would consider upsizing its contribution for the purpose. Member Finance (WAPDA) Naveed Asghar Chaudhary, Member Water (WAPDA) Javed Akhtar Latif and Member Power (WAPDA) Jamil Akhtar were also present on the occasion.—DNA

Dr. Ayaz stresses youth awareness against extremism

PESHAWAR : Chief Coordination Officer Center of Excellence on Countering Violent Extremism (CECVE) Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Dr. Ayaz Khan has said that an integrated strategy for the promotion of peace, tolerance and solidarity among the youth, especially students, had been formed to eradicate violent extremism. According to a press release issued here on Wednesday, he expressed these views while addressing a seminar organized at Kohat University of Science and Technology (KUST). Dean of the University Dr. Muhammad Naseer ud Din, Director CECVE Waqar Khan, faculty members, administration officials, and other participants were also among the participants. Dr. Ayaz Khan shed light in detail on the problem of violent extremism in the society, the contributing factors and the resulting threats to peace, security and stability. He informed about the efforts and plans of the Centre of Excellence in eradicating violent extremism. He said that due to the development of communication, distances had shrunk in today's world and the situation and conditions of one region had their impacts worldwide, which was why because the threat of violent extremism was a challenge for nations and societies at the global level. "There is an urgent need for understanding and mutual respect between different religious and cultural communities, as well as close cooperation.—APP

Rawalpindi teachers, clerks strike over pension

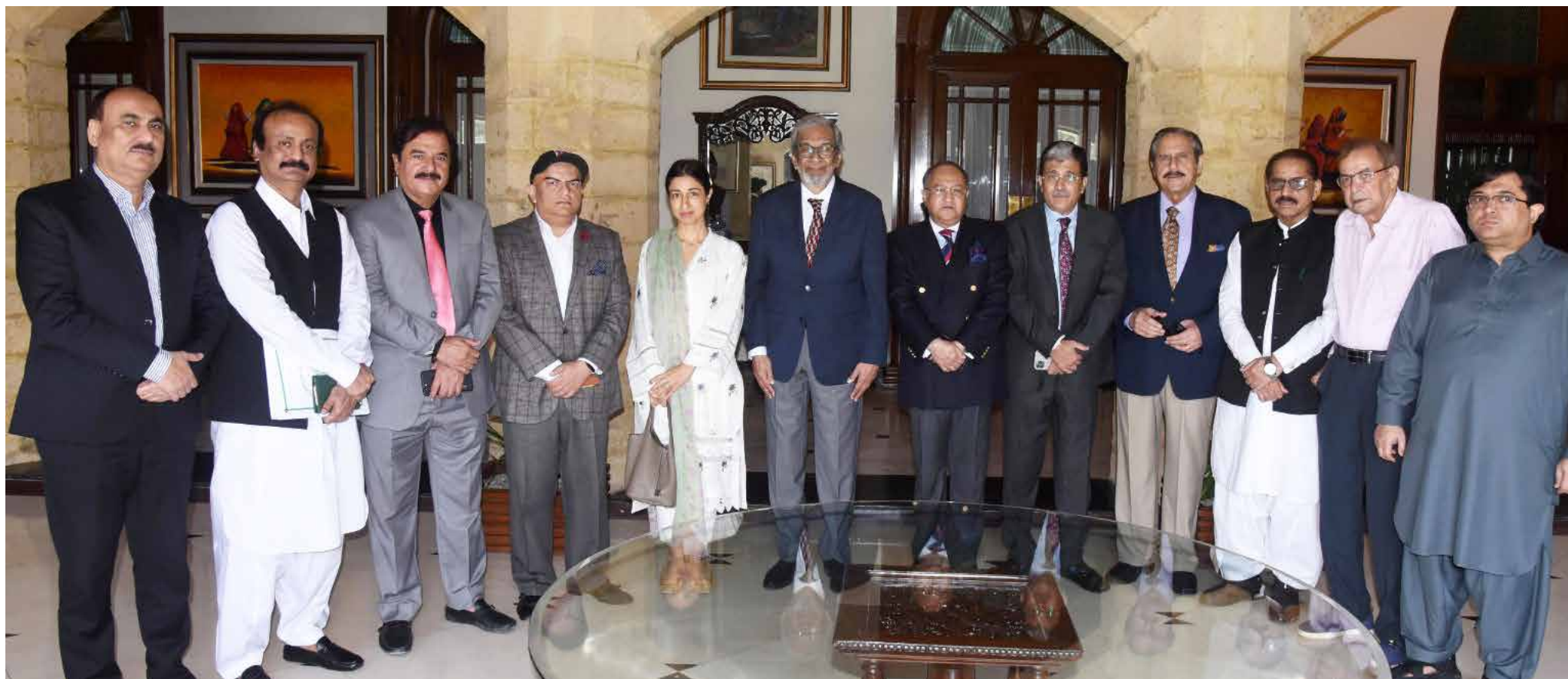
DNA

RAWALPINDI: A strike by teachers and clerks in government offices left educational institutions. The teachers and clerks have announced to continue their strike against changes to the pension and leave encashment rules till their demands were met. However, the District Education Authority said schools would remain open on Wednesday (today). On the call of Punjab Teachers Association and the All Pakistan Clerk Association, many government schools in the district were locked while a pen-down strike was observed in government offices, including the offices of the deputy commissioner and commissioner. The teachers locked schools which created problems for the students who were forced to go back home. The strike is being observed against changes made by the caretaker Punjab government to

pension and leave encashment rules. "The caretaker government decided to give pension to government employees on the basis of their basic pay of the first months of their service. Earlier, the pension was provided on the running basic pay while leave encashment has also been reduced significantly," Raja Shahid Mubarak, a senior leader of Punjab Teachers Association, told Dawn. He said the government employees and teachers were protesting against the unfair decision of the caretaker government which had no authority to make such policy decisions. He said it was an injustice to teachers and government employees who gave 25 years of their life to the government service.

He said the caretaker government also handed over 25 good performing schools to an NGO. The results of these schools were better than all the 1800 schools in the district but the government wanted to privatise the

schools. He said the non-teaching staff of schools was disturbed over the new rules as rising inflation had already made their lives miserable. Meanwhile, the teachers and government employees staged a protest demonstration outside the commissioner office. All office-bearers of the associations had gone to Lahore to participate in a protest demonstration there while teachers gathered outside the commissioner office and recorded their protest. When contacted, District Education Authority Chief Executive Officer Yaseen Khan Baloch said many schools were forcefully closed by the protesters but we would open the schools from Wednesday. "We would not allow anyone to disturb education of students," He said he had invited the office-bearers of Punjab Teachers Association and All-Pakistan Clerk Association to discuss the issue. Observing a strike is right of employees but it should not affect educational activities.



ISLAMABAD :Meeting of APNS delegation with Chief Minister Sindh, Justice (Rtd.) Maqbool Baqar. —DNA

Pakistan, UNICEF join hands to eradicate Polio

ADIL SHAHEEN

ISLAMABAD : In a monumental step towards the eradication of polio, the Government of Pakistan, in collaboration with UNICEF, marked a historic milestone on Wednesday as they signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) at a formal ceremony. The journey to this moment began with the Government of Pakistan declaring a state of emergency in 2011, launching an unwavering effort to combat polio. Substantial financial resources, including

grants and loans, were channelled into the Polio Emergency Program. During this crucial phase, the government committed \$155 million to the cause and, in a testament to global solidarity, secured an additional \$100 million in support from the Islamic Development Bank (IsDB) and the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation (BMGF). Secretary National Health Services Iftikhar Shallwani expressed profound gratitude for this vital financial support. The meticulous groundwork is evident as all necessary documentation was successfully completed, and

IsDB recently formalized its commitment by signing the Murabaha agreement just two days ago. Recognizing the urgency of the situation, Federal Secretary Iftikhar Shallwani made a priority call to UNICEF, leading to the signing of the MoU today. This document paves the way for the procurement of vaccines critical to the Polio Emergency Program, bringing hope to countless lives. The signing ceremony saw the Federal Secretary and the country representative of UNICEF exchange signed documents, cementing

their shared vision to eliminate polio. In a heartfelt expression of appreciation, the Federal Secretary extended gratitude to all individuals and organizations that have steadfastly supported this program during these critical times. Additionally, they revealed ongoing efforts to secure an additional \$55 million from the Agence Française de Développement (AFD) and the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, emphasizing the comprehensive financial commitment required to combat polio effectively. It's imperative to highlight that the

total cost of this ambitious five-year project (2022-2026) stands at \$798 million. The remainder of the necessary funds will be sourced through the Global Polio Eradication Initiative, with generous contributions from donors and partners. This partnership between the Government of Pakistan and UNICEF, WHO, Rotary, BMGF, and other partners stand as a beacon of hope and resilience in the global fight against polio. "Today's signing is a resounding declaration that together, we can create a polio-free world.


Blochistan govt to strengthen local bodies

QUETTA : Balochistan Caretaker Chief Minister Mir Ali Mardan Khan Domki on Wednesday said that the government was committed to further strengthening the local bodies which will transform the development landscape in Balochistan. Chairing the Local Council Grant Committee meeting here, Ali Mardan said the caretaker provincial government will provide all possible support to the local bodies within its jurisdiction. In the meeting, a detailed discussion on issues related to the Local Council Finance Commission was held.—APP

Governor drives education forward for progress

PESHAWAR: Governor Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Haji Ghulam Ali here on Wednesday stressed making advancement in new fields of education and said that a country cannot prosper and achieve a respectable position among the comity of nations without making progress in education. He was addressing a ceremony of the All Pakistan Private Schools Management Association (APPSMA). The ceremony was also attended by the provincial caretaker education minister, Dr. Qasim Jan President APPSMA, Dr. Zakir Shah, Secretary Education, Mutasim Billah and a large number of teachers and students. The governor highlighted the significance of education in the existing age of transformation and said that education guarantees the progress and development of a nation. He said that our religion has also given due importance to education while the constitution of the country also gives a right of education to every citizen. He said that private educational institutions have shared the responsibility of the government to educate its people and added we must recognize the efforts of private schools and prepare a strategy to support them. He also urged private school management to open schools in villages to educate children irrespective of their profitability. He admitted that priority has not been given to the education sector and said that still thousands of children are uneducated due to the absence of needed facilities. Thousands of children were forced to leave education owing to various difficulties and it is our collective responsibility to provide them with a chance of education and progress, he viewed.—DNA

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**Oil & Gas
Regulatory Authority**
Government of Pakistan

EXPRESSION OF INTEREST (EOI)

PRE-QUALIFICATION OF LNG CONSULTANT FIRMS

LNG consultants were shortlisted by OGRA earlier in the year 2021 for a term of three years which shall expire in January 2024. For short listing of the LNG consultants for another term of three years, the Oil and Gas Regulatory Authority (OGRA) is initiating the process for experienced and competent LNG consultants as per the provisions of LNG Rules, 2007 and LNG Policy, 2011 (as amended from time to time).

2. The key services required from the consultant are defined in the ToR's available on OGRA website, however some are as follows:

- i. To determine whether an application submitted by the LNG project developer fulfils the requirement of LNG Rules, 2007 and LNG Policy, 2011;
- ii. Review the technical, administrative, financial and commercial capabilities of the project developer in relation to the regulated activities;
- iii. To confirm that the project satisfies criteria for design, construction, installation and operation. This includes all LNG project structures including LNG storage, re-gasification, virtual pipeline projects etc;
- iv. Review technology to be used so that it is suitable, tested and proven internationally for design, construction and operation of LNG facilities;
- v. To determine whether the project has been constructed and successfully commissioned in accordance with the required standards and project implementation plan;
- vi. To verify that the LNG project complies with the internationally recognized and proven standards and guidelines and those stipulated in the Appendix-I of the LNG Policy, 2011;
- vii. To determine that the licensee is complying with the requirements of the OGRA Ordinance 2002, LNG Rules 2007, relevant regulations, standards prescribed by the Authority, terms and conditions of the licence;
- viii. To carry out full review and audit of the LNG Projects on behalf of OGRA;
- ix. To carry out periodic inspections of the LNG facilities;
- x. Review of various agreements such as Gas Sales and Purchase Agreement (GSPA) and access agreements with LNG Terminal Owner and/or Operator etc;
- xi. To advise the Authority on the issues related to the Third Party Access to natural gas pipeline network and Third Party Access to LNG terminals;
- xii. Any other LNG/RLNG related assignment given by the Authority.

3. OGRA invites reputable consultant firms in the field of LNG with at least 10 years experience of designing, supervision, construction, operation and/or inspection of LNG facilities including storage and re-gasification terminals and virtual pipeline projects. Interested firms must provide information indicating that they are qualified to perform the services (brochures including organizational structure, list of clients, annual reports, description of similar assignments, experience in similar conditions and with similar agencies, projects undertaken as lead firm, availability of appropriate skills among permanent/ full time staff in the firm, etc.). Consultant firm may form joint ventures to enhance their qualifications.

4. The EOI is for short listing only. Interested firms may obtain further information such as Terms of Reference and Evaluation Criteria etc. from the OGRA & PPRA websites. (www.ogra.org.pk) (www.ppra.org.pk)

5. OGRA reserves the right to accept any or reject all offers keeping in view the provisions of Public Procurement Rules, 2004.

6. Expression of interest must be delivered to the address below in sealed envelope by **15 November 2023 by 1100 hours** which shall be opened on the same date at **1130 hours**.

7. The interested parties including the companies/ consultant firms earlier shortlisted by OGRA may also apply as per the requisite criteria.

Executive Director (LNG)
Oil and Gas Regulatory Authority, 54-B, Fazal-e-Haq Road,
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National Days and Armed Forces Days

OCTOBER

Oct 01/China National Day

Oct 01/Cyprus National Day

Oct 01/Republic of Korea Armed Forces Day

Oct 01/Nigeria Armed Forces Day

Oct 02/Guinea National Day

Oct 03/Germany Unification Day

Oct 03/Republic of Korea National Foundation Day

Oct 05/Indonesia Armed Forces Day

Oct 06/Egypt Armed Forces Day

Oct 09/Uganda Independence Day

Oct 12/Spain National Day

Oct 23/Hungary National Day

October 24/United Nations United Nations Day

Oct/25/Romania Armed Forces Day

Oct 26/Austria National Day

Oct 27/Turkmenistan Independence Day

Oct 28/Czech Republic National Day

Oct 29/Turkey Republic Day

Hotels & Restaurants

Serena Hotel.....111 133 133

Marriott.....051- 2826121

Monal.....0334-5421812

Emergency

Rescue (Police).....15

Bomb Disposal.....15

Fire Services Rawalpindi/ Islamabad.....1122 & 16

Emergency Ambulance.1122 & Rescue Services.4451122

Motorway Police.....9266044

Motorway Police.9270601-20

Women Police Stations Islamabad.....9222596

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CAA.....9281092

Hospitals

CMH.....5611111

MH.....561116

Cantt Hospital...9270907-11

DHQ.....5556311-4

RGH.....9290301-7

Holy Family.....9290322-7

PIMS.....9261170-79

Polyclinic.....9218300-09

Shifa International 4603666

Departments

CDA.....9221334-43

CDA.....9208301-04

Met Office.....9250360-6

RDA.....5555864

TMA.....5770886

Cantonment Board 9270151-3

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Islamabad.....0321-5744480

People-centric governance is key to a peaceful society

Deputy Dean, Institute of Community with Shared Future, Communication, University of China, Prof Zhang Yanqiu, in her presentation, said it was not feasible for China to copy the political systems of other countries

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Speakers at a webinar on Wednesday said that people-centric governance should primarily focus on serving the interests of the people with an aim to uplift their social and economic situation. The webinar titled 'Dialogue For People Centric Governance' was organized by Asian Institute of Eco-Civilization Research and Development (AIERD), which was attended by a number of academics, diplomats, students, and senior government officials.

Governance is the art of satisfying the needs of the people and serving the interests of the people, said Shakeel Ahmad Ramay, CEO, of AIERD, while opening the webinar. Speaking at the event, Senate Defence Committee Chairman Syed Mushahid Hussain Syed said the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) was a very important element to understand people-centric governance. "China had advanced a Chinese solution to global development issues based on inclusivity, respect for diversity and equality and based on the concept of win-win cooperation and mutual benefit," he said. Mr Syed went on to say that the State Council of the Peoples Republic of China had recently issued a white paper on BRI, in which it had said that the initiative was one of the key pillars of the shared community for the future, adding that its living example was the China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC). He said the people centric governance in China was based on the ethos of the Communist Party of China and Chinese historical context. Under the Chinese leadership, the key bottom line has been that the party springs from the people as it has 95 million members, he said, adding that Chairman Mao Zedong had stressed on serving people in different capacities.th

people. Deputy Head of Mission and minister at the Chinese embassy in Islamabad Pang Chunxue said people-centric governance was important in Chinese philosophy. China had always adhered to this philosophy which was rooted in Chinese history, she said. Pang Chunxue said people were the foundation of a country, and that people-centered governance served as a guiding compass for China's overall development. he added that improvement in social security, health and education systems were vital for efficient public service. Speaking about CPEC, she said China had injected \$25.4 billion in direct investment in Pakistan. Deputy Dean, Institute of Community with Shared Future, Communication, University of China, Prof Zhang Yanqiu, in her presentation, said it was not feasible for China to copy the political systems of other countries. She referred to China's whole-process people's democracy, saying

that democracy was not an ornament to be used for decorations rather it was meant to solve the problems that people wanted to be solved. She said the whole-process people's democracy served the interests of the people, and quoted Chinese President Xi Jinping as saying, "China's people's democracy is a type of whole-process democracy". She said the whole-process people's democracy, including democratic election, consultation, decision-making, management and scrutiny, operated across all of China's governance mechanisms and that consultative democracy was a distinctive feature of China's socialist democracy. Prof Zhang Yanqiu said since 2016, more than one billion registered voters had elected close to 2.5 million deputies to county and township level people's congresses. he said China was the second largest economy in the world and had a clear view of the future by constantly thinking about the long-

BISP chairman visits one window center

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Chairperson Benazir Income Support Programme (BISP) Dr. Muhammad Amjad Saqib, made an unannounced visit to the Benazir One Window Center in Islamabad today. During this visit, he was accompanied by Mr. Naveed Akbar, Director General National Socio-Economic Registry (NSER). The purpose of the visit was to personally inspect the operations and interaction with the beneficiaries present at Benazir One Window Center. Dr. Amjad Saqib was given a comprehensive brief by staff of One Window Center about its functions and operations.

Chinese University organises workshop on textile management

ISLAMABAD: China's Wuhan Textile University inaugurated a two-week seminar on textile management in Pakistan. The seminar is sponsored by China's Ministry of Commerce and supported by the education and commerce departments of Hubei province. As many as 40 industry professionals from Pakistan are participating in the workshop, Gwadar Pro reported on Wednesday. The workshop aims to share with relevant textile enterprises in Pakistan the development and innovation experience of China's textile industry, the production management experience of modern textile enterprises in China, and the latest research results of textile applications in healthcare. The seminar will help improve the production management capacity of textile enterprises in Pakistan and promote the development of the country's textile industry. In particular, it will strengthen the construction of Pakistan's application and manufacturing capacity in medical and healthcare textile materials. It will also build a platform for connecting and exchanging professionals in the textile industry between China and Pakistan. The participants will get a chance to attend an offline seminar in China in the near future. Ji Chen, Director of the International Office and Dean of the College of International Education at Wuhan Textile University, presented an overview of China's cooperation with BRI countries in the field of textile. Prof Lin Li made a detailed presentation on China's reforms, opening up, and path to modernization.—DNA

ECP adjourns contempt case hearing until Oct 24

ISLAMABAD: The Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) adjourned the hearing of the contempt case against the Chief of Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI), former minister Fawad Chaudhry and Asad Umer until October 24. A four-member bench, led by member Sindh Nisar Durrani conducted the hearings on the case for making contemptuous remarks against the election commission as well as the chief election commissioner (CEC) by PTI chief and other accused. During the hearing, Chairman PTI was represented by his lawyer, Shoaib Shaheen. Asad Umer appeared in person in the absence of his lawyer. Fawad Chaudhry did not appear due to illness. Shoaib Shaheen pointed out that PTI Chairman is currently in custody, underscoring the need to issue a production order to guarantee his presence at the hearing. Shoaib Shaheen informed the commission that PTI chief is not being presented in any court hearings due to security concerns. Nisar Durrani remarked that there seemed to be a contradiction: "While you're expressing concerns about security, you're also requesting production orders for PTI chief. Member Durrani then asked the advocate in which jail the PTI chairman was. "We write to the IGP for the provision of security to the former prime minister on his way to the ECP," the member said.—APP

Gems And Jewelry show 2024 can boost exports. FPCCI TDAP

DNA

ISLAMABAD: The Core Committee meeting on Gems and Jewelry Show 2024 was held at FPCCI Capital Office Islamabad yesterday led by Mr. Umar Masood ur Rahman Vice President FPCCI. The meeting was attended by Mr. Saqib Rafiq President Rawalpindi Chamber, Petron Chief APCEA Haji Mamoor Khan, Chairman Syed Minhaj ud Din Bacha, Chairman Mining Association, Farukh Alvi, RCCI

"Elevating Education: The Pursuit of Quality in Schools"

SABAHAT ALI

Introduction

In an age characterized by rapid educational transformation, maintaining the highest standards of quality in schools becomes paramount. This article explores the critical aspects of ensuring quality education, drawing inspiration from the wisdom of great scholars and education experts.

The Holistic Approach to Quality

Scholars like Dr. Howard Gardner, renowned for his theory of multiple intelligences, have emphasized that true quality in education goes beyond mere academic achievements. Gardner asserts that schools should strive to foster a diverse range of intelligences and skills in students, such as creativity, empathy, and problem-solving abilities. This holistic approach ensures that students develop into well-rounded individuals equipped to thrive in an ever-changing world.

Teacher Well-Being and Professional Growth

Education luminaries such as Dr. Linda Darling-Hammond have long championed the cause of teacher well-being and professional development. They argue that teachers are the backbone of the education system and must be supported through continuous learning opportunities, adequate resources, and fair compensation. When educators are motivated and empowered, they can deliver the highest quality of education to their students.

Engaging Parents and Communities

Dr. James P. Comer, a prominent child psychiatrist and educator, has advocated for the involvement of parents and communities in the educational process. He believes that building strong partnerships between schools, parents, and local communities is essential for creating a nurturing and enriching learning environment. When parents and communities

PHA making efforts to provide more recreational facilities

RAWALPINDI: Parks and Horticulture Authority (PHA) Rawalpindi is making all-out efforts to provide more recreational facilities to the citizens, said a PHA spokesperson here on Wednesday. She informed that important initiatives were taken by the authorities to promote sports activities in Rawalpindi. She said that the authority had constructed a tennis ball cricket ground at Commercial Market Park which was inaugurated by Commissioner Rawalpindi Division Liaquat Ali Chhatta. The ground was constructed to provide more recreational facilities to the residents of the area. She said that the Commissioner had appreciated solid steps taken by the authority and efforts being made by the DG PHA to provide more recreational facilities to the citizens. The DG PHA, Ahmed Hasan Ranjha informed that the authority was making all-out efforts to promote sports activities and provide more recreational and tourism facilities to the public. The authority was taking all possible steps to implement its program "Sar Sabaz-o-Saaf Rawalpindi" and solid steps were being taken to make the city clean and green, he added. BISP chairman visits one window center.— APP

Nashonuma Program serves over 1,157,298 women

ISLAMABAD: In order prevent stunting growth in the children, the Benazir Income Support Program (BISP) has facilitated over 1,157,298 women and children under the Benazir Nashonuma initiative so far through the provision of health and nutrition services. Among the total beneficiaries, a total of 588,211 pregnant and lactating women (PLW) and 569,087 children have been served so far. According to an official source, these beneficiaries had been served through the network of over 488 Nashonuma Centers across the country. The Conditional Cash Transfer (CCT) intervention of Benazir Nashonuma was designed in August 2020 to increase the uptake of Health and Nutrition services of its beneficiaries. The primary objectives of the program were to prevent stunting in children under two years of age, improve weight gain of pregnant women during pregnancy, reduce anaemia and micro-nutrient deficiencies and prevent low birth weight. World Food Programme (WFP) is the lead implementing partner for Benazir Nashonuma which aims at addressing stunting among pregnant and lactating women (PLW) and their children less than two years of age through the provision of additional cash of Rs 2,000 per quarter per PLW and boy child and PKR 2,500/- per quarter per girl child of BISP beneficiary families. In return, mothers are required to attend regular antenatal health checks and awareness sessions during pregnancy, consume specialized nutritious food (SNF), and take their children for immunization and regular health checks. According to the statistics, Pakistan's high rates of malnutrition (40.2 per cent stunting, 28.9 per cent underweight, and 17.7 per cent wasting) are indicative of an ongoing child nutrition crisis. Such levels of malnutrition rank Pakistan as the second-highest burden country in the region. The first 1,000 days of a child's life are a window of opportunity to lay a strong foundation for later achievements. This time frame is a period of enormous change characterized by a high degree of plasticity in the child's neurological development. Investments in the early years of life are the foundation of human capital, and human capital is a key driver of economic development in the modern economy.—APP

Briefs

Consumers of 3G/4G service increased to 127 mln

ISLAMABAD: The number of 3G and 4G service users in Pakistan has significantly increased and reached 127 million by August 2023. As per the details available on the official site of the PTA, the number of active mobile SIMs reached 190 million during the same period. The number of broadband subscribers reached 130 million while the broadband penetration was recorded at 54.46 per cent.—APP

MEDA to organize one-day training session tomorrow

ISLAMABAD: The Small and Medium Enterprises Development Authority (SMEDA) will organize a one-day training programme on “Customer Relationship Management” for profitable business growth on October 12 (Thursday) tomorrow. The workshop will be held at the Islamabad Chamber of Small Traders and Small Industries (ICSTSI), according to a source in the authority. Customer relationship management (CRM) is the combination of practices, strategies, and technologies that companies use to manage and analyze customer interactions and data throughout the customer life cycle. The training programme will provide information about workflow automation, sales automation, human resource management, lead management, pipeline management, marketing, customer service, and business reporting.—DNA

SNGPL disconnects 171 meters

ISLAMABAD: The Sui Northern Gas Pipelines Limited (SNGPL), in its ongoing crackdown against gas theft, disconnected another 171 connections in Punjab, KP and Islamabad, imposing a fine of Rs 23 million and 244 under billing cases processed. According to a spokesman for the SNGPL, teams continued raids in Lahore and disconnected 16 connection on illegal use of gas and eight under billing cases processed. In Bahawalpur, the regional team disconnected eight connections, nine under billing cases processed and one FIR lodged against gas thieves. The company disconnected 11 connections on illegal use of gas while another two connections on the use of compressor, 74 under billing cases had been processed in Multan. In Peshawar and Karak, the company disconnected 65 connections on account of direct use of gas and illegal connections. The regional team also launched FIRs against gas thieves. In Rawalpindi, the regional team disconnected four gas connections on direct and illegal use of gas. The SNGPL's team in Mardan disconnected 10 connections on illegal use of gas. The team also booked an amount of Rs 0.68M against gas theft. In Gujranwala, five meters were disconnected on illegal use of gas while three on the use of compressor, 43 under billing cases had been processed.—APP

Progress on CPEC projects in Gwadar reviewed in detail

Planning Minister directs stakeholders to accelerate work

FAISAL SHEIKH

ISLAMABAD: The Caretaker Minister for Planning Development & Special Initiatives Muhammad Sami Saeed on Tuesday reviewed progress over China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) projects in Gwadar while directing the ministries and divisions to further accelerate the work. The Minister gave these directions while chairing a meeting

to review the progress over CPEC projects in Gwadar. 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 & Gwa-

dar Port would become a shining pearl in the region. While chairing the meeting, the Planning Minister said that the interim government is committed to implement the CPEC projects while directing the relevant ministries and divisions to further expedite the work on these projects in order to come timely. In the recent budget the allocation for Balochistan has been doubled which indicated the federal government is committed to uplifts the province. He said that several

projects have been completed in Balochistan related to the education, health, social sector to facilitate the people of Balochistan, said the Minister, while reiterating that the government will continue its efforts to uplift the province. During the meeting, officials from the interior ministry gave a detailed briefing over the security of Chinese working in Pakistan. The Minister asked the relevant ministry and provincial governments to further beef up the security in order to avoid any untoward incidents.



FAISALABAD Special advisor to Prime Minister, for Human rights and Women Empowerment, Mushaal Hussein Mullick, receiving the honorary shield from the vice chancellor of Government college university.

NCRC calls for awareness to protect girls' rights

ISLAMABAD: Member of the National Commission on the Rights of Children, Khalid Naem Wednesday called upon all departments concerned, including the media, government and private organizations to play their role in making institutional and non-institutional sectors free from child abuse and for protecting girls' rights in society. On the eve of International Day for girls' rights, Khalid Naem talking to a PTV news channel stressed raising grass-root level awareness of the issue of girls' rights. He emphasised the society for ensuring edu-

cation, healthcare, equal rights, safety and security for every girl. He explained the importance of the day that was marked every year on October 11, the International Day of the Girl, United Nations and partners work with girls to amplify their voices and stand up for their rights, adding, it was first celebrated in 2012 as a way to raise awareness about gender inequality and to advocate for girls' rights and empowerment. The Day focused attention on the need to address the challenges girls face and to promote girls' empowerment and the fulfillment

of their human rights, he highlighted. The theme of the Girl 2023 is “Invest in Girls’ Rights: Our Leadership, Our Well-being”, he further mentioned. Replying to a question, he said girls have the right to a safe, educated, and healthy life, not only during these critical formative years but also as they mature into women, adding, parents need to be aware to look for the better future of their daughters through education and skills. To prevent child labour, gl al organizations like the International Labor Organisation (ILO) and SPARC must

work jointly to save girl children from the curse of child abuse and child labour, he added. He also termed child marriage as a major violence and gross violation of human rights, adding, there is no alternative to prevent child marriages. “We as a nation cannot progress if our girl child is not safe and not provided equal opportunities in society”, he said. He also called upon human rights organizations to hold orientation sessions for students and impart them capacity-building training to ensure the safeguarding of the fundamental human rights of girls.

MoU signed to electrify New Gwadar Int’l Airport

DNA

ISLAMABAD: To provide electricity to the new Gwadar International Airport (NGIA) through the national grid, a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) has officially been signed between the Pakistan Civil Aviation Authority (PCAA) and Quetta Electric Supply Company (QESCO). Under the MoU, approximately 12 MW of electricity will be provided to the New Gwadar International Airport by October 17, fulfilling its 24-hour electricity needs

without interruption. The MoU states that commercial tariffs will be charged based on electricity usage. On special directives from the Ministry of Planning, Quetta Electric Supply Company, which handles power supply across Baluchistan, has approved 12 MW to electrify NGIA. A QESCO official told Gwadar Pro that testing and commissioning has been completed, with all required equipment like poles, transmission lines, and electrical circuits aligned to the installed power system. To ensure

uninterrupted electricity, 12 MW will be available to NGIA around the clock through three transmission lines. “This means if one line fails, the second will automatically connect, and if that goes down, the third will serve as a backup,” he added. “One supply is coming from the 286 km long, 132kV dual-circuit line through Naal-Basima-Naag-Panjgur. The second is from the Mund-Pishin-Turbat line to the Gwadar grid station. The third is from the Gabb-Remden line to the Jiwini-Gwadar grid station,” he explained.

IRSA releases 110,600 cusecs water

ISLAMABAD: Indus River System Authority (IRSA) on Wednesday released 110,600 cusecs water from various rim stations with inflow of 74,300 cusecs. According to the data released by IRSA, water level in River Indus at Tarbela Dam was 1529.65 feet and was 131.65 feet higher than its dead level of 1,398 feet. Water inflow and outflow in the dam was recorded as 40,300 cusecs and 45,000 cusecs respectively. The water level in River Jhelum at Mangla Dam was 1217.15 feet, which was 167.15 feet higher than its dead level of 1,050 feet.—APP

Security personnel briefed about duty in high security zone

ISLAMABAD: The security personnel assigned to the High Security Zone received comprehensive briefings to enhance their preparedness in handling unforeseen incidents promptly. During this initiative, SP Security conducted visits to the security pickets within the high-security zone, providing crucial guidance to the dedicated Islamabad Capital Police personnel responsible for security. The High Security Zone encompasses critical government and private facilities, diplomatic missions, and other invaluable assets, emphasizing the paramount importance of their protection. Security personnel were reminded of the importance of remaining vigilant and were advised to abstain from using mobile phones during their duties. Additionally, they were instructed to wear bulletproof jackets and helmets for their own safety. Officials are expected to maintain a keen watch on suspicious vehicles and individuals. Furthermore, SP Security underscored the significance of upholding the highest standards of diligence and professionalism, fostering positive relationships with the community. Citizens are strongly encouraged to report any perceived suspicious activities or individuals to the helpline “Pucar-15” without delay.—APP

ANF seizes 49 kg drugs in five operations

RAWALPINDI: Anti-Narcotics Force (ANF) while conducting five operations managed to recover 49 kg drugs and arrested four accused, said an ANF Headquarters spokesman here on Wednesday. He informed that in an operation, 38 grams weed was recovered from a parcel sent from UK at the courier office in Chaklala, Rwp. In a raid in Mianwali, over 2.7 grams of heroin was recovered from a motorcycle. A resident of Mianwali was arrested during the operation. 2 kg hashish concealed in a vehicle was recovered near M-2, Ravi Toll Plaza Lahore. Two accused residents of Khyber were arrested during the operation. 185 narcotic (ecstasy) tablets were recovered from the accused, a resident of Islamabad, near Passport Office Karachi. 45 kg charras concealed for smuggling was recovered from an uninhabited area near Coastal Highway Pasni.—APP

USC to hold ‘E- Khuli Kachehry’ on Oct 24

ISLAMABAD: Managing Director (MD), Utility Store Corporation (USC), Muhammad Ali Ammer will hold a “E- Khuli Kachehry” on October 24 (Tuesday). According to the USC statement, the Kachehry will be held from 13:30 hours to 15:30 hours, the USC has requested the public to contact on 051-111 123 570 to resolve their issues and complaints.—APP

Anti-smuggling efforts should be accelerated

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Chairman of National Business Group Pakistan, President Pakistan Businessmen and Intellectuals Forum, and All Karachi Industrial Alliance, and former provincial minister Mian Zahid Hussain said on Wednesday that anti-smuggling operations should be expedited and influential transit mafia should be arrested to end the crisis engulfing the country.

The transit agreement has been destroying the economy for decades; therefore, it should be revisited in the national interest, he said. Mian Zahid Hussain said that the government is discouraging unnecessary imports and taking action against the currency smugglers to save foreign exchange, but on the other hand, the transit mafia

continues to inflict heavy losses on the country.

Talking to the business community, the veteran business leader said that the latest data indicates that the Afghan transit trade cargo has increased by 39%, which is very alarming. The transit mafia is active on both sides of the border and includes influential people from both countries. The transit trade agreement that has been going on for years has ruined Pakistan's economy, he added. The business leader said that according to the customs data, 74316 containers went from Pakistan to Afghanistan in 2022, while in 2023 this number increased to 102886. According to the data, goods worth four billion dollars were transported in 2022, while in 2023 they reached 6.7 billion dollars. However, it is also an open

secret that many containers have other goods than those shown by importers and that many containers are emptied in Pakistani markets instead of going to Afghanistan. All the wrongdoings are done with the connivance of the black sheep of the concerned departments, and if anyone raises his voice against them, his life is made miserable, he informed. Mian Zahid Hussain further said that the conditions for industrialization in Pakistan are already unfavourable, and even if smuggling is reduced, industrialists will continue to become property dealers. Investment in the industrial sector in the country is considered a total loss, therefore the government has to suffer a huge loss in terms of revenue, while the number of unemployed is increasing due to a lack of investment in the industry.

Fuel woes perils

ZAHRA ALI




The entanglement in a complex array of economic difficulties, with the most prominent issue being the relentless increase in fuel costs is a predicament which permeates every facet of daily life, casting a shadow over the routines and livelihoods of millions. The repercussions of this fuel hike are far-reaching, impacting transportation, industries, and the overall cost of living. One of the most palpable effects of this surge in fuel prices is the strain it imposes on the trans-

portation sector. From bustling metropolises to remote villages, the costs of commuting skyrocket, prompting a ripple effect across the entire economy. Commuters face an arduous choice between bearing the escalating expenses and curtailing their journeys, which not only dampens individual mobility but also disrupts essential services such as healthcare and education. The burgeoning cost of fuel also reverberates within the industrial landscape of Pakistan. Industries, which are the lifeblood of the economy, find themselves grappling with mounting production costs. This impedes their competitiveness in the global market, rendering them less resilient in an already volatile economic climate. The resulting reduction in productivity not only hinders economic growth but also has detrimental consequences on employment rates, exacerbating the already precarious job market. Furthermore, the omnipresent fuel hikes exacerbate the already elevated cost of living for the average Pakistani citizen. Inflationary pres-


sures, spurred by increased transportation and production costs, permeate through the market, escalating the prices of essential commodities. This surge in prices has a domino effect, stretching the budgets of households already grappling with economic instability. The ensuing financial strain is palpable, with individuals and families forced to make sacrifices in their daily lives. It is imperative to recognize that the fuel hike issue is not merely an isolated incident, but a symptom of deeper systemic issues that demand urgent attention. Pakistan's over-reliance on imported petroleum, coupled with a fragile economic structure, leaves the nation susceptible to the fluctuations of the global oil market. Analyzing diversification of energy sources and investments in renewable alternatives present promising avenues to mitigate these vulnerabilities. In addition, proactive measures must be taken to enhance public transportation infrastructure and promote sustainable modes of

travel. Investment in efficient and accessible public transport systems can alleviate the burden on individual commuters while reducing the overall carbon footprint. Moreover, fostering an environment conducive to the growth of indigenous industries is paramount. Policies that incentivize local production, technological innovation, and the adoption of sustainable practices can bolster the resilience of the economy in the face of external shocks. In conclusion, the fuel hike predicament in Pakistan is a stark reminder of the intricate interplay between economic policies and daily life.

Its repercussions, felt across various sectors, demand a comprehensive and sustainable approach. By addressing the root causes, diversifying energy sources, and investing in essential infrastructure, it is possible for the country to chart a course towards a more stable and prosperous future, where the specter of fuel hikes no longer casts its long shadow over the nation's progress.



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Poland’s election: Democracy on the line

As the most consequential Polish election campaign since the fall of communism got into its stride this summer, one study found that almost 100% of the coverage accorded by state television to the main opposition candidate, Donald Tusk, was negative. The only surprise in this was that the occasional even-handed story somehow slipped through the net. Poland’s ruling radical right Law and Justice party (PiS) has systematically eroded liberal democratic norms over the past eight years. Public TV and radio channels have been straightforwardly commandeered and now, as PiS seeks a third term, they are being deployed as the government’s most potent propaganda arm. For months, Mr Tusk, who was Poland’s prime minister from 2007 to 2014 before becoming president of the European Council, has been subjected to scurrilous vilification. On Monday night, during the only scheduled TV debate of the campaign, presenters delivered lengthy critiques of Mr Tusk’s political record before asking any questions. Playing to government arguments that Mr Tusk is a stooge for German economic interests, Poland’s equivalent of the BBC has broadcast attacks on Mr Tusk’s Polish identity, referencing his German grandmother. His Civic Platform party (PO) is suing one national newspaper for a front page likening him to Hitler, complete with the headline “Gott mit uns” (God with us). Coverage in the regional press – which has largely been bought up by Orlen, the PiS-supporting state oil company – has relentlessly echoed anti-Tusk talking points. The state-owned postal service has distributed anti-Tusk leaflets to households. Orlen has been accused of artificially lowering gas prices in the lead-up to Sunday’s poll to assist the government’s cause, which it denies. Despite such grotesque abuse of democratic norms and the resort to vicious, post-truth politics, the election remains too close to call in a deeply divided nation. But the nature of the campaign illustrates the stakes. In neighbouring Hungary, Viktor Orbán has used four successive terms of office to build a network of civic influence that insulates his government from proper scrutiny and accountability. Jarosław Kaczyński, the chairman of PiS, has followed the same playbook. Autonomous institutions have been politicised, and checks on government power, such as an independent judiciary, undermined. Another victory would give Mr Kaczyński scope to complete the job of eliminating liberal counterweights to PiS hegemony, taking Poland closer towards embodying what one commentator has described as “totalitarian democracy.” At a time when the European Union is confronting daunting geopolitical challenges, requiring a spirit of unity if they are to be addressed, such an outcome would be both depressing and ominous. On the climate emergency, Ukraine and the migration crisis, it already seems clear that Europe’s populist, nationalist right will become an increasingly disruptive force in the months and years ahead. And from July next year to June 2025, by malign chance, the EU presidency will be held first by Hungary and then by Poland.



Concerns rise over non-regional players involvement

Overlapping, contradictory territorial claims over some islands, islets and reefs in the South China Sea, including those of China and the Philippines, is the result of complicated historical and geographical factors. Managing such maritime disputes well is critical to maintaining peace and stability in the region as well as the strategic international waterways. That is why China has engaged in marathon negotiations with other claimant countries. The aim, needless to say, is to negotiate a common code of conduct in the South China Sea. The most desirable way of managing such disputes is through diplomatic, rather than military, means, while pursuing common development. It is in such a spirit that they have achieved unprecedented economic growth over the past few decades. Accordingly, China has persistently called for shelving the differences and seeking common ground with countries in the region – an approach that has benefited all stakeholders, including the Philippines. For instance, during the presidency of Rodrigo Duterte in the Philippines, Manila and Beijing engaged in consultation to resolve their maritime disputes and prevent them from disrupting their trade relations. If they could do that then, there is no reason why they can’t do the same today. Both China and the Philippines know the best way to handle their maritime disputes is to put them on the back burner and pursue common development and maintain regional peace. Unfortunately, there seems to be an urge to do the opposite in Manila these days. There is no lack of actors in and outside the region who excel in provoking disputing parties toward confrontation. Obviously, some such elements in the Philippines want to involve non-regional actors to exploit the situation and isolate China from the international community. But it is unrealistic to believe China would budge on matters of sovereignty and territorial integrity. More important, as China has repeatedly asserted, its sovereignty over the South China Sea islands and reefs, which the Philippines lays claim to, is based on solid historical facts, and international law and conventions. The standoff over the Ren’ai Reef, for one, is a typical case of Manila taking advantage of Beijing’s goodwill in an attempt to twist facts. Manila, full aware of the illicit nature of the continued presence of its navy ship at the reef, had promised to tug away the grounded vessel. But now it refuses to do so, obviously at the goading of non-regional powers. But no matter how the issue is twisted, the fact remains the same: there is no legal basis for the Philippines’ sovereignty claim over the reef. What is China’s cannot become the Philippines’. Beijing has every right to handle the matter in accordance with domestic and international laws, as the Foreign Ministry said on Monday.

Repatriation of immigrants and Pakistan security concerns

Waheed Hussain



The estimated number of Afghan people in Pakistan is 4.4 million out of which 1.7 million are not registered. These Afghans are residing various parts of the country. Due to geographical and ethnic proximity the largest population of illegal Afghans are residing in the Baluchistan and Khyber Pakhtunkhawa provinces. These provinces share

The care-taker government has finally decided to get rid of illegal immigrants from Pakistan. The exact number of various nationalities residing in the country at the moment was not known, however, it was uncontested fact that the biggest unlawful immigrants are “Afghans.” The estimated number of Afghan people in Pakistan is 4.4 million out of which 1.7 million are not registered. These Afghans are residing various parts of the country. Due to geographical and ethnic proximity the largest population of illegal Afghans are residing in the Baluchistan and Khyber Pakhtunkhawa provinces. These provinces share about 2660-kilometer-long border with Afghanistan. Pakistan business hub and the port city Karachi has also accommodated hundreds of thousands of Afghan citizens out of which majority of them were illegal, who are involved both in unlawful trade (smuggling) as well as street crimes-cum-terrorism. According to the security agencies’ reports, the illegal immigrants are great threat to country’s peace and security. The bad law and order situation, violence, criminal activities and smuggling on the Afghan-Iran borders, are causing unrepairable losses to country’s security, economy and image. Hundreds of exclusive reports have been submitted to the various provincial and federals governments regarding the Afghan national’s involvement in the crimes, extortion, kidnapping for ransom and last but not the least terrorism. The tale of lawlessness begins in 1980s, activities increased after US attack on Afghanistan in 2001, while the Afghan Taliban takeover of Kabul in August 2021 further deepen the challenge of peace and security, as the TTP, Daish and other terrorist organizations escalated their attacks inside Pakistan. The state, government and people of Pakistan were expecting that the Afghan Taliban government will create an environment of peace and security. It will take substantial and serious policy and operational level actions to prevent any cross-border infiltration into Pakistani territory. However, against all expectations the security concerns of Pakistan have increased during two two years of Afghan Taliban regime. Unfortunately, Pakistan has witnessed increase in the bloodshed. Pakistan time and again has been communicating to the Taliban leadership at various levels

that Afghanistan should not allow its land to be used by the terrorist groups as a launching pad against Pakistan. However, the Taliban instead of addressing the issue in a serious manner, has always tried to shift the responsibility to Pakistan. It also makes excuses that it does not enjoy full control over the local warring groups both on Pakistan-Afghanistan border as well as in various provinces of the country. There is some sense in the opinion of the Kabul that as the Taliban has taken over the power couple of years back from the American backed Dr Ashrif Ghani, therefore, the interim set up may need more time to establish full-fledged administrative and operational system of governance throughout Afghan land. gain, Pakistan’s main concern is with the Tehreek-i-Taliban Pakistan (TTP) and Afghan Taliban do share many ideological objectives and political interest with this Pakistan specific terrorist organization. Afghan Taliban have great influence on the group and it can use its influence to prevent the TTP from conducting terrorism acts inside Pakistan. And of course, this is what Pakistan wants from the Afghan Taliban to deliver the promise it had made both with Pakistan and the international community in Doha, Qatar, during a signing ceremony with United States of America. The present security challenges of Pakistan should be analyzed and discussed with reference to the USSR and USA invasion in Afghanistan (1979 and 2001). Those were pre-and-post-cold war conflicts. In the Afghan Wars, Pakistan was the only neighboring nation, which has lost precious lives of over 80 thousand citizens including 7000 security personnel (from a soldier to a three-star general) in the so-called international war on terror. The Afghan War has also damaged our economy costing \$ 200 billion. Being neighbor and Muslim state Pakistan opened up its border both after the Soviet attack in 1979 and again welcomed the Afghan brothers and sisters when the US launched international war on terror in 2001. As Afghanistan went through constant instability for more than four decades, Pakistan allowed the Afghan nationals to deal in trade and commercial activities, get education and health facilities inside Pakistan. Taking advantage of the lenient governments policies in the past, thousands of Afghan nationals successfully registered themselves as citizens of Pakistan with National

Database and Registration Authority (NADRA). Many have purchased properties in various parts of Pakistan including country’s capital Islamabad. Along with the physical terrorism Pakistan was also being suffering from the economic terrorism as well. The illegal smuggling between Pakistan and Afghanistan has damaged our economy. Billions of dollars trade is unaccounted for. The Afghan Transit Trade (ATT) has been misused for decades. Afghanistan being a landlocked country was allowed to import numerous goods under the transit trade agreement. However, the importers misusing the facility regularly imported even those products, which have no demand in Afghan markets, resultantly the same were smuggled back to Pakistan, damaging local industry and hitting the government revenues in the shape of customs duties and other taxes. Pakistan is facing acute dollars shortage. The foreign reserves are all time low. The rupee depreciation is one of the biggest causes of inflation in the country. Actually, the dollars were being smuggled to Afghanistan by the currency dealers. Daily used items like wheat, flour and sugar were smuggled to Afghanistan creating shortage in the domestic market in Pakistan. Smuggling and illegal trade issue need persistent and strict policy from the government side. Otherwise, the economic terrorism will continue to bleed our industry and financial position. The care-taker Interior Minister Sarfraz Bugti along with the Information Minister has recently held a media conference announcing that at the end of current month all illegal immigrants would have to leave Pakistan. This is a positive and good decision and we hope the government without accepting any internal or external pressures will go ahead to implement it. It’s better that the government should hold a meaningful and result oriented dialogue with Kabul and repatriate Afghan citizens back to their country. The UN along with other international humanitarian organizations should also be involved in the process, so that, people particularly women and children should not suffer during repatriation process. The Afghan provinces of Badakhshan, Nurestan, Konar, Nangarhar, Pakiya, Khost, Paktika, Zabul, Kandahar, Helmand, and Nimruz are all adjacent to the Pakistani border.

Not War but heat an existential threat for billions...

Qamar Bashir



According to recent studies, the outgoing month of September was exceptionally hot, deviating from pre-industrial levels by about 1.7 to 1.8 degrees Celsius. Had such an anomaly occurred in July or August, it could have exposed most parts of Pakistan to potentially unsurvivable heat. This underscores the urgency of addressing climate change and its impacts. According to a recent World Bank study, Pakistan faces not only unbearable heat but also one of the highest

Global temperatures increasing by 2 degrees Celsius above pre-industrial levels will result in many regions experiencing prolonged periods of extreme heat, surpassing human tolerance. Specifically, the 2.2 billion residents of Pakistan and India’s Indus River Valley, the one billion people in eastern China, and the 800 million residents of sub-Saharan Africa will face annual challenges due to extreme heat. According to recent studies, the outgoing month of September was exceptionally hot, deviating from pre-industrial levels by about 1.7 to 1.8 degrees Celsius. Had such an anomaly occurred in July or August, it could have exposed most parts of Pakistan to potentially unsurvivable heat. This underscores the urgency of addressing climate change and its impacts. According to a recent World Bank study, Pakistan faces not only unbearable heat but also one of the highest disaster risk levels globally. It ranked 18th out of 191 countries in the 2019 Inform Risk Index. This risk is compounded by factors such as exposure to earthquakes, internal conflict, and various types of climatically induced flooding, including riverine, flash, and coastal floods, as well as some vulnerability to tropical cyclones and droughts. Pakistan’s vulnerability is further exacerbated by its social challenges, with a ranking of 37th out of 191 due to high rates of multidimensional poverty. However, it does score slightly better in terms of coping capacity. The study adds to the growing understanding that there is a limit to how much heat and humidity the human body can endure, likely lower than previously believed. Moreover, exposure to such conditions is expected to increase significantly in the coming decades. Some of the hottest regions on Earth have already experienced periods where these limits are exceeded, highlighting the urgency of addressing climate change and its associated risks. If nations across our precious but increasingly polluted planet fail to take decisive action to reverse climatic degradation, temperatures could eventually rise by 3 degrees Celsius above pre-industrial levels. At this point, even regions like the Eastern Seaboard and the central United States, stretching from Florida to New York and from Houston to Chicago, would experience unbearable levels of heat and humidity. This extreme heat would also affect South America and Australia. Researchers at Penn State have identified a critical threshold, around a wet bulb temperature of 31 degrees Celsius (88 Fahrenheit), which would be problematic for young and healthy individuals not accustomed to such muggy conditions. The combination of heat and humidity is indeed a lethal one. In such conditions, the air can’t effectively absorb excess moisture, which limits the evaporation of sweat from human bodies and moisture from infrastructure. As individuals become warmer, they sweat more, and blood is directed to the skin to help dissipate heat to the

environment. At certain levels of heat and humidity, even the natural adjustments become insufficient, and core body temperature starts to rise. This situation necessitates some form of relief. Without the means to cool down within hours, it can lead to heat-related illnesses such as heat exhaustion, heat stroke, and strain on the cardiovascular system, potentially resulting in heart attacks, especially in vulnerable individuals. If such extreme heat and humidity were to occur in regions like Europe, where air conditioning is uncommon and people have low heat acclimatization, it could lead to mass fatalities or casualties, as emphasized by Carter Powis, the lead author of the study from the University of Oxford. This scenario holds true despite these nations generating fewer greenhouse gas emissions compared to wealthier nations. Consequently, billions of people in economically disadvantaged areas would suffer, and many could lose their lives. However, even wealthy nations won’t be immune to the negative effects of this heat, as our interconnected world ensures that everyone will be affected in some way. The most severe heat stress will affect regions like Pakistan and India, along with other countries where affected people lack access to air conditioning or effective means to mitigate the negative impacts of extreme heat. This is especially concerning given the expected rapid population growth in these areas in the coming decades. Preliminary research indicates that older adults may experience heat stress and related health consequences at lower heat and humidity levels compared to younger individuals. Take Lahore, Pakistan, for example, which is already a hotspot for climate change-related health issues. It is projected that by the middle of the century, Lahore could experience conditions that surpass the survivability threshold for two to three weeks each year, according to the study published in the Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences. The study also noted that approximately 200 weather stations worldwide have already occasionally exceeded this bearable threshold. To halt the rise in temperatures, researchers emphasize the critical need to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, particularly carbon dioxide emissions resulting from the burning of fossil fuels. Failure to make these changes will disproportionately affect middle-income and low-income countries. As an example, consider Al Hudaydah, Yemen, a port city with a population of over 700,000 on the Red Sea. The study’s results indicate that if the planet warms by 4 degrees Celsius, this city could face over 300 days per year where temperatures exceed the limits of human tolerance, rendering it nearly uninhabitable. In the hottest regions of the world, high temperatures and humidity will surpass a threshold that even young and healthy individuals could struggle to survive in as global warming continues. In Al Hudaydah, Yemen, such oppressive conditions are projected to last

for a month or two, or, under the highest global warming scenarios, for most of the year. Taking Lahore as another example, it would exceed the heat and humidity threshold for approximately 69.5 hours per year under the most conservative warming scenario. This translates to nearly nine days if the heat persisted for eight hours daily, or more than two weeks if it lasted for four hours daily. This research underscores a stark reality – that the most severe impacts of climate change will disproportionately affect countries that have contributed the least to its creation. Fahad Saeed, a climate scientist with the German think tank Climate Analytics, highlights that much of the worst and most persistent heat will occur in densely populated and underdeveloped regions of southern and south-eastern Asia and Africa. It’s important to note that humid heat poses a greater threat than dry heat, and governments and policymakers need to reevaluate their heat-mitigation strategies to prioritize addressing these significant dangers that people will face. Furthermore, for resource-scarce countries like Pakistan, the challenge isn’t limited to the lethal combination of summer heat and humidity. Regions like Punjab face a complex issue of smog, which obscures sunlight and creates a cooler yet polluted environment. Cities like Lahore, Faisalabad, and Gujranwala, in addition to being the most populous and polluted in Punjab, grapple with worsening smog problems that intensify every winter. Major contributors to this issue include traffic pollution, crop burning, and industrialization, resulting in significant health problems, including respiratory, eye, skin, and heart-related issues.. While the government has taken some measures to address the dangerous effects of smog, these efforts have proven to be of limited significance. Substantial and coordinated efforts are still required, and public cooperation will play a pivotal role in combating this issue effectively. It’s important to note that Pakistan is not alone in facing the deadly combination of summer heat and humidity, as well as winter smog. Climate change is pushing temperatures higher across the globe, pushing billions of people beyond the bearable limits of heat and humidity. The resilient people of Pakistan, like many others worldwide, will need to confront climatically induced disasters year-round, from extreme heat and humidity in the summers to smog in the winters. They must prepare themselves for the challenges posed by both natural and manmade climatic issues before health problems related to heat, humidity, and smog, such as heat strokes, heart attacks, and lung, eye, and skin diseases, become more prevalent. This proactive approach is crucial to safeguarding their well-being in the face of these environmental challenges.

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

Briefs

Bill limiting
CJP powers
sustained

FROM PAGE 01
Regarding exercising the apex court's original jurisdiction, the Act said that any matter invoking the use of Article 184(3) would first be placed before the committee. On matters where the interpretation of the Constitution is required, the Act said the committee would compose a bench comprising no less than five apex court judges. About appeals for any verdict by an apex court bench that exercised Article 184(3)'s jurisdiction, the Act said that the appeal would lie within 30 days of the bench's order to a larger SC bench. It added that the appeal would be fixed for hearing within a period not exceeding 14 days. The Act additionally said that a party would have the right to appoint its counsel of choice for filing a review application under Article 188 of the Constitution. Furthermore, it states that an application pleading urgency or seeking interim relief, filed in a cause, appeal, or matter, shall be fixed for hearing within 14 days from the date of its filing.

ECP should
hold free, on
time polls...

FROM PAGE 01
time limit, adding that the commission was paving the way for pre-poll rigging, thereby damaging the integrity and credibility of the forthcoming general elections. PTI spokesperson continued that the President of the country in his letter sent to the Chief Election Commissioner on September 13 emphasized on the holding elections within the constitutional period of 90 days and fixed the date of November 6, which the commission threw into the dustbin. He stated that the ECP turned its back to its constitutional responsibilities to hold polls within the constitutional and was focusing all its attention on the minus Imran Khan agenda, which was evident from the ECP's unusual interest and eagerness to accelerate the proceedings on the politically-motivated and basely cases against PTI Chairman.

Federal
Cabinet
demands...

FROM PAGE 01
Syed Ehtisham Qadir Shah as Prosecutor General of the National Accountability Bureau. He said it was also decided to hire services of a Financial Advisory Consortium for the privatization of the Pakistan International Airlines. Earlier, Caretaker Prime Minister Anwaar-ul-Haq Kakar has directed to expedite the privatization process of Pakistan International Airlines (PIA) and other loss making state-owned enterprises. Addressing a high-level meeting in Islamabad today, he stressed transparency in the whole privatization process. He directed that the process of privatization of the national airline should be made transparent and fast tracked so that the national exchequer is protected from further losses. Anwaar-ul-Haq Kakar said it is no longer possible to meet the deficit of these institutions from public taxes.

Two-State
solution is
the only...

FROM PAGE 01
infrastructure, were not ready to yield but had become bolder in their resolve. He further added that the Palestinians of Gaza had demonstrated unprecedented endurance, perseverance, and ability to stand for what they believed in, which was their right to statehood. He further added that the flames of freedom could not be subdued by any power. The fact that this recent action had only strengthened the Palestinians' resolve was a clear testament to their commitment toward their struggle for freedom.

PCB leaves for India to
watch WC blockbuster

Chairman Zaka Ashraf announced that he will leave for India today after getting assurance regarding Pakistani journalists' visas. PCB chief will also watch watch Pakistan's fixture against India at the Narendra Modi Stadium in Ahmedabad

SPORTS DESK

LAHORE: Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) Management Committee Chairman Zaka Ashraf announced on Wednesday that he will leave for India tomorrow after getting assurance regarding Pakistani journalists' visas for the coverage of the ICC Men's Cricket World Cup 2023.

"I have delayed my travel to India, and I am traveling tomorrow after receiving confirmation that Pakistan's journalists have been asked to submit their passports to obtain visas to cover the mega event. I am happy that my conversation with the Foreign Office helped in achieving a positive development regarding the visa delay," Ashraf was quoted as saying in a statement issued by the PCB today. The PCB chief will also watch Pakistan's fixture against India at the Narendra Modi Stadium in Ahmedabad on Saturday. "I am traveling to India to motivate the team, and my message to them before the India contest will be to play fearlessly as they have been playing throughout the event," said Ashraf. The PCB chief also shared that he was "extremely pleased" with the team's performance "The PCB management committee and the entire nation stand firmly behind the players for a successful campaign in the ongoing World Cup," said Ashraf. India finally begins processing visas A day earlier, the Indian embassy



finally started processing visas for Pakistani journalists to travel to the neighbouring country for the ICC event. The embassy started contacting the journalists willing to cover the showpiece event underway in India, and directed them to submit their passports at the earliest.

Rizwan dedicates his match-winning ton to Palestinians



DNA

HYDERABAD: Wicketkeeper batter Mohammad Rizwan dedicated his match-winning century against Sri Lanka in the eighth match of the ICC World Cup 2023 to oppressed Palestinians. Pakistan, on Tuesday, rewrote history when they pulled off the highest run chase in a World Cup game to beat Sri Lanka by four wickets. Young opening batter Abdullah Shafique and Mohammad Rizwan played pivotal roles in Pakistan's historic victory, both scoring a century each.

Chasing a daunting total of 345 after Kusal Mendis and Sadeera Sa-

marawickrama smashed tons to put Sri Lanka in a commanding position, the green shirts got over the line in 48.2 overs thanks to Rizwan's unbeaten 131 and Abdullah's 113.

Ireland had held the previous record for the highest run chase in World Cups with 329 against England in the 2011 edition. Taking to X, formerly Twitter, the wicketkeeper batter dedicated his match-winning performance to oppressed Palestinians. "This was for our brothers and sisters in Gaza. Happy to contribute in the win. Credits to the whole team and especially Abdullah Shafique and Hassan Ali for making it easier," Mohammad Rizwan wrote on X.

Rohit guides India
to win against
Afghanistan

SPORTS DESK

DELHI: India beat Afghanistan by eight wickets in the ninth match of the ongoing ICC World Cup 2023 at the Arun Jaitley Stadium, Delhi, on Wednesday. Rohit Sharma's unstoppable knock of 131 runs off just 84 deliveries, which included 16 fours and five sixes, was the difference between the two teams as the Blues massively improved their net run rate by chasing down the 273-run target in just 35 overs. Sharma provided his side with a glittering start, completing his half-century in just 30 balls as the Blues were 94-0 in the first 10 overs. The dominating start gave the Indian openers much room to play as Sharma's partner, Ishan Kishan, scored 47 runs but couldn't complete his half-century as fell prey to Rashid Khan's googly. However, Sharma continued with his charge against the Afghani bowlers courtesy of support from Virat Kohli on the other hand but he lost his wicket to Rashid after posting 131 runs. Kohli was the second top-scorer for the Blues by contributing 55 runs in an important win. It must be noted that Rohit Sharma broke several records during his remarkable innings against Afghanistan.

Indonesia wants to co-host 2034 World Cup

JAKARTA: Indonesia is in discussions with Australia about a possible joint bid to host the 2034 World Cup along with Malaysia and Singapore, the president of the country's football federation (PSSI) said on Wednesday. World football's governing body FIFA invited member associations from Asia and Oceania to bid for the rights to the 2034 edition last week. "We are discussing (a bid) with Australia," PSSI President Erick Thohir was quoted as saying by the Sydney Morning Herald. "When I visited Malaysia and Singapore both countries expressed interest to join Indonesia and Australia." When asked for comment on a possible joint bid, Football Australia referred Reuters to a statement last week that said it was "exploring the possibility of bidding for the 2029 FIFA Club World Cup and/or the FIFA World Cup 2034". The Asian Football Confederation said it would not comment on the report. The PSSI, Football Association of Malaysia and Football Association of Singapore have not responded to a Reuters request for comment. After announcing Spain, Morocco and Portugal would host the 2030 World Cup, with Uruguay, Paraguay and Argentina staging the opening games, FIFA invited Asia and Oceania to bid for 2034. Saudi Arabia quickly announced its intention to bid for the hosting rights and FIFA have set a deadline of Oct. 31 for other interested parties to make their intentions known. The 2026 World Cup, which will feature 48 teams, will be hosted by the United States, Canada and Mexico. With Qatar having hosted the 2022 edition, Akmal Marhali of Indonesian football watchdog Save Our Soccer told the Herald it might be too soon for the World Cup to return to the Middle East. "We are quite strong," he said. "I think FIFA will see that the Middle East area has been the host with Qatar last year. Japan and Korea have been host too. I am sure FIFA will try other countries. "The potential to win if we join with Australia, Malaysia and Singapore is bigger too." Indonesian football has grappled with a range of issues over the last year. In March, the predominantly Muslim country was stripped of the right to host the Under-20 World Cup after the PSSI said it had cancelled the draw because the governor of Bali refused to host Israel's team. IFA froze development funds allocated for the country's football association as a sanction, but later appointed Indonesia as host of the Under-17 World Cup after Peru was unable to fulfil infrastructure commitments. - DNA

Rafa Nadal to make return at Australian Open

Rafa Nadal has been sidelined since hurting his hip flexor in a second-round loss to Mackenzie McDonald at the Melbourne Park major earlier this year

OUR CORRESPONDENTS

MELBOURNE: Rafa Nadal will return to Grand Slam tennis at the Australian Open in January, tournament director Craig Tiley said on Wednesday. The 37-year-old former world number one has been sidelined since hurting his hip flexor in a second-round loss to Mackenzie McDonald at the Melbourne Park major earlier this year. The Spaniard, who has won 22 Grand Slam titles, was initially expected to miss eight weeks but underwent surgery on a hip muscle in June. While Nadal's representative Benito Perez-Barbadillo told Reuters via text from

Shanghai that there was nothing to announce yet on the Spaniard's upcoming schedule, Tiley told Nine Network's 'The Today Show' that he had confirmed his participation. "We can reveal exclusively here that Rafa will be back," Tiley said. "He's been off for most of the year and in talking to him over the last few days he confirmed he will be back, which we're really excited about, the champion of 2022. That's awesome." Tiley also said Australian Nick Kyrgios could return in time to play at Melbourne Park after he underwent knee surgery in January and suffered wrist and foot issues in an injury-plagued 2023. "We know Nick's been



in training, wanting to return as well. So we expect to see him back," he added. Tiley said a trio of former women's champions - Naomi Osaka, Angelique Kerber and Caroline Wozniacki - were also planning to return to the year's first Grand Slam after maternity breaks. "We'll welcome them - and their families - back to Melbourne with open arms and can't wait to see what their next chapter brings," he added. Nadal has said he expects to retire after the 2024 season, with a series of injuries limiting his appearances on Tour. He dropped out of the top 100 for the first time in 20 years earlier in the season and has slipped to number 240 in the

world but is ranking for a protected raking having been injured and not competing in any event for at least six months. Nadal, who has been releasing videos of his training, has also expressed his desire to play in next year's Paris Olympics with the tennis tournament set to take place at Roland Garros, where he has won 14 of his 22 major titles. In Nadal's absence, Novak Djokovic has gone on to win a record 24 Grand Slams. Nadal has won the Australian Open twice, with his last victory coming in 2022 when he beat Russia's Daniil Medvedev and became the first man in the Open era to come back from two sets down in the final to win.

PML-N
eyes
poverty...

FROM PAGE 01
issued here, Shehbaz Sharif outlined his party's strategic goals for the years 2024 to 2029, emphasising that special attention would be directed towards key sectors, including agriculture, information technology, minerals and energy. Shehbaz stressed that the country's youth, constituting 68 percent of the population, could only receive education, training and skills through the visionary leadership of the PML-N. He recalled the party's past achievements, particularly under the leadership of Nawaz Sharif, which included providing employment opportunities, education, skill development, and instilling hope among the youth. Shehbaz mentioned that during their previous government, the PML-N had initiated a groundbreaking Rs20 billion youth empowerment programme. The PML-N president underlined that the youth represented Pakistan's future and claimed that their prospects had always been positively influenced by Nawaz Sharif. He asserted that the party's efforts would contribute to reducing poverty through the emancipation of the country's youth. Shehbaz Sharif revealed plans to expand the Danish School System nationwide, noting that their previous school initiatives had significantly improved the lives of underprivileged students. He also announced his party's intention to distribute more free laptops to catalyse an information technology revolution in Pakistan.

Gaza faces
unprecedented...

FROM PAGE 01
The statement referred to Israel's retaliation "as the dirtiest crime of collective punishment against defenceless civilians in modern history". It called on the international community to move quickly to stop "this crime against humanity and this multi-form mass murder". Meanwhile, Health Minister Mai al-Kaila said "the fuel stock to operate the generators in the Gaza Strip hospitals will end tomorrow, Thursday, which will exacerbate the disastrous conditions in the hospitals". All of Gaza's crossings are closed, making it impossible to bring in fuel for the power plant or the generators on which residents and hospitals have long relied. Israel cut off electricity supply to Gaza on Monday as part of what it called a "total siege" in response to a mass infiltration by Hamas fighters into southern Israel on Saturday. The Israeli blockade of the occupied Gaza Strip, in its current form, has been in place since June 2007. Israel controls Gaza's airspace and territorial waters, as well as two of the three border crossing points; the third is controlled by Egypt.

COAS
pledges
support...

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During this high-level meeting, the participants were apprised of several crucial matters including the updated National Action Plan (NAP); law enforcement operations; anti-smuggling/anti-narcotics operations in Balochistan; ensuring security of foreign nationals engaged in projects related to the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC), non-CPEC and other private ventures; repatriation of illegal migrants; foreign currency regularisation measures and progress on the Special Investment Facilitation Council (SIFC) initiatives in Balochistan, the Prime Minister's Office said on Tuesday. PM Kakar, while chairing the meeting, expressed confidence in the progress made by the Balochistan government and assured the province regarding the federal government's full support towards its plans. The prime minister emphasised that "socio-economic development of Balochistan is imperative for ensuring peace and development in the province". He also spoke about the initiatives taken by the SIFC at the federal level, adding that they should have a trickle-down effect in each province for the people of the area.

Briefs

Aussie state warns of thunderstorm

SYDNEY : Health authority in the Australian state of Victoria on Wednesday called on residents to stay alert to the increased risk of epidemic thunderstorm asthma, as the state has entered the grass pollen season.

Victoria Health warned in a statement that during the grass pollen season which typically runs from the start of October until the end of December, there would be a seasonal increase in asthma and hay fever, as well as the chance of thunderstorm asthma. According to the statement, Melbourne experienced one of the world's largest epidemic thunderstorm asthma events on Nov. 21, 2016. In the 30 hours from 6:00 p.m. local time, there was a 672 percent increase in respiratory-related presentations to Melbourne and Geelong public hospitals. The event resulted in 10 deaths and thousands of people suffering breathing difficulties in a very short time. To enable those who are vulnerable to grass pollen to plan in advance, the state has already activated its forecasting system from Oct. 1 this year.—Agencies

Vietnam reports 13 cases of monkeypox

HANOI : Ho Chi Minh City in southern Vietnam reported four more cases of monkeypox, bringing the total number of infections in the city to 13. Of the 13 cases, two are from abroad while the rest 11 are domestic ones, the city's health department said, suggesting that the monkeypox virus may be circulating within the community. All the cases have been quarantined. Local authorities are strengthening supervision to early diagnose and provide timely treatment to the patients. According to the health department, many monkeypox cases in the city are found to be related to each other. Monkeypox is not easily transmitted to everyone in the community, Vietnam News reported Tuesday, citing Tran Dac Phu, a senior advisor for the Vietnam Centre for Emergency Response to Public Health Events. Vietnam detected its first monkeypox case last September.—Agencies

Over 16 million people need aid

DNA

WASHINGTON : A new report says over 16 million people in Burkina Faso, Mali and Niger need humanitarian aid as a result of climate change and conflict. In a new report published, the International Rescue Committee said the number represents a 172% rise since 2016. The central Sahel has witnessed instability since armed groups started an insurgency that has been fueled by intense climate change. The three countries are among the hardest hit and the violence has displaced over six million people. Dry seasons are becoming longer in parts of the Sahel, and rainfall more intense and erratic, meaning droughts and floods are set to intensify, the report said. Nearly three million people have been displaced, including two million just in Burkina Faso, the report said. It blamed French colonial-era authorities, who "neglected" developing peripheral areas and introduced disruptive border controls, as well as post-independence governments. "Political decisions dating from the French colonial rule through the early 2000s have marginalised peripheral areas of the Central Sahel states both economically and politically," it said. "As a result, the populations of these regions face widespread poverty, are particularly dependent on sectors vulnerable to climate change and are more likely to be exposed to armed conflict." The NGO called for immediate aid and investment in humanitarian access.

ICCI for re-activation of SME Bank to promote SME sector

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Ahsan Zafar Bakhtawari, President, Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry (ICCI) has said that the government should re-activate the SME Bank to provide easy financing options to the SME sector as its winding up would deprive SMEs of the affordable credit facility. He said that already SMEs are facing great problems in getting credit from banks as the SME sector in Pakistan receives only 6-7% of the private sector financing as compared to 25% in Bangladesh and 18% in India. He said that the closure of SME Bank would create more hurdles for SMEs in expansion and growth. He said this while talking to a delegation of employees' unions that called on him led by Zahoor Awan, Chairman, Pakistan Workers Federation's Steering Committee. Mian Akram Farid, Chairman (Central) Employers Federation of Pakistan, President SME Bank Employees Union, President Punjab Bank Employees Union, President Zarai Taraqiati Bank Employees Union, President State Life Insurance Corporation Employees Union were in the delegation. Zafar Bakhtawari former President



ICCI & Secretary General UJB Pakistan and Mehfooz Elahi former President ICCI were also present on the occasion.

Ahsan Bakhtawari lauded the efforts of Pakistan Workers Federation for protection of workers rights and legislative reforms in labor laws and assured that ICCI would try to raise their genuine concerns with the relevant quarters for redress. Speaking on the occasion, Zahoor Awan, Chairman, Pakistan Workers Federation's Steering Committee shared

the concerns of SME Bank employees due to its planned closure and stressed that the government should address their concerns. He said that the SME Bank was established to exclusively meet the financing needs of the SME sector and stimulate their growth, but its closure would be a setback for SMEs. He said that the Executive Committee of SIFC has reportedly directed the Ministry of Industries and Production for re-activation plan of SME Bank and hoped that the govern-

ment would work for its revival for the benefit of SMEs. Mian Akram Farid, Chairman (Central) Employers Federation of Pakistan said that the SMEs are the backbone of the economy and the government should take measures to strengthen the SME bank in order to facilitate the better growth of SMEs. Faad Waheed Senior Vice President ICCI said that Pakistan needs to boost industrialization to revive its economy and focus on the better development of SMEs

that can help achieve this goal. Engr. Azhar ul Islam Zafar, Vice President ICCI said that instead of considering privatizing SME Bank, the government should get the input of its employees for its revival. The Presidents of Employees Unions of SME Bank, Bank of Punjab, Zarai Taraqiati Bank and State Life Insurance of Pakistan also showed concerns on the winding down of SME Bank and called upon the government to ensure better protection of workers rights.

UN prioritizes ethnic Armenians' return to Nagorno-Karabakh

WEB DESK

NEW YORK CITY: The UN expressed deep concern about the escalating humanitarian crisis in the South Caucasus, where more than 100,600 ethnic-Armenian refugees, including 30,000 children, have poured into Armenia from the Nagorno-Karabakh region of Azerbaijan in the past few weeks. Alice Wairimu Nderitu, the UN's special adviser on the prevention of genocide, called for urgent measures to be put in place to protect their rights and safety, and to ensure they are able to eventually return to their homes, if they wish. "I call on all efforts to be made to ensure the protection and human rights of the ethnic-Armenian population who remain in the area, and of those who have left, including the right to

return, which should be prioritized," she said. Armenia and Azerbaijan have struggled for control of the Nagorno-Karabakh region for decades. It is internationally recognized as part of Azerbaijan but came under the control of ethnic Armenian separatists in the mid-1990s. The Armenian forces also took control of a substantial amount of surrounding territory but Azerbaijan regained control of most of it during a six-week war with Armenia in 2020. Azerbaijan launched what it described as an "anti-terrorist" campaign in Nagorno-Karabakh on Sept. 19, and during a two-day offensive regained full control of the part of the region that had remained outside its control. Soon after, many ethnic Armenians, fearing reprisals, began to flee across the border to Armenia. The

latest conflict led Armenians to accuse Azerbaijan of "ethnic cleansing," an allegation that was strongly denied. Nderitu echoed a call by the UN's high commissioner for human rights that the rights of all internally displaced people and those in refugee-like situations must be fully upheld, including ensuring that their right to return in safety and dignity. She acknowledged the assurances given by authorities in Azerbaijan that the ethnic-Armenian population and their rights should be protected, and welcomed initial access that has been granted to representatives of the UN to assess the humanitarian situation in the region. "These positive steps need to be continued, including by permitting full humanitarian access," Nderitu said. "I encourage the government of Azerbaijan to

take steps toward putting in place a comprehensive plan in this regard, including measures to ensure the right to return of those who have fled, as well as concrete steps for ensuring the rights and protections of minorities, which is a cornerstone of international human rights law." In addition, she stressed the importance of thoroughly investigating allegations of violations committed during the conflict, including reports of civilian casualties, and the need for full accountability in line with the standards of international human rights and humanitarian laws. Nderitu also called for increased dialogue to help prevent any further military escalation or violence in the South Caucasus. "The region has witnessed cyclical violence for far too long," she said.

Erdogan pledges intensified strikes on Kurd fighters

ISTANBUL: Türkiye's president on Wednesday vowed to intensify strikes against Kurdish fighters in Syria and Iraq. Türkiye has been bombing sites in northeast Syria since Thursday, hitting civilian and military targets and infrastructure and causing casualties, according to Kurdish authorities. "We have already intensified air operations and we will continue, and show the terrorists that we can destroy them anywhere and at any moment," Recep Tayyip Erdogan said, referring to fighters of the Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK) — listed as a terror group by Ankara and its Western allies. Ankara has said that it launched a new wave of air strikes in retaliation for an attack in Ankara earlier this month that wounded two security personnel. PKK has claimed responsibility for the attack, the first bombing to hit the Turkish capital since 2016. In the statement, he also said Israel is not conducting itself "like a state" in the Gaza Strip, as Israel pounded the territory after a Hamas onslaught. "Israel should not forget that if it acts more like an organization rather than a state, it'll finish by being treated as such," Erdogan said, attacking "shameful methods" of the Israeli army in the densely-populated Gaza Strip. "Bombing civilian sites, killing civilians, blocking humanitarian aid and trying to present these as achievements are the acts of an organization and not a state," he said. Erdogan usually uses the word "organization" when he refers to the PKK. "We think that a war should have an ethic and that both parties should respect it. Unfortunately, this principle is gravely violated in Israel and in Gaza," he said.—Agencies

King Charles III to make Kenya visit

LONDON :The UK's King Charles III and his wife Queen Camilla will make a four-day state visit to Kenya from the end of this month, Buckingham Palace announced Wednesday. Kenya President William Ruto invited the royal couple for the visit, which comes as the African nation prepares to celebrate 60 years of independence from Britain. "The King and Queen will undertake a State Visit to Kenya, from Tuesday 31st October to Friday 3rd November 2023, to celebrate the warm relationship between the two countries and the strong and dynamic partnership they continue to forge," said the palace. "The King and Queen will visit Nairobi City County, Mombasa County and surrounding areas," said the palace. Their programme would reflect how the two countries were working together on a range of issues, the statement added. They were working "to boost prosperity, tackle climate change, promote youth opportunity and employment, advance sustainable development and create a more stable and secure region", said the statement. This will be Charles III's first visit to a Commonwealth nation since becoming monarch last September.—APP

Luton Airport suspends flights due to 'significant fire'

LUTON : London's Luton Airport has suspended all flights until Wednesday afternoon and asked passengers not to travel there after a "significant fire" caused the partial collapse of a parking structure. Flames leapt out of the third floor of a car park at Terminal 2 of the airport, as firefighters battled to bring the blaze under control, according to an AFP photographer at the scene. "Our priority remains supporting the emergency services and the safety of our passengers and staff. Therefore, we have taken the decision to suspend all flights until 3 pm (1400 GMT) on Wednesday 11th October," the airport said in a statement issued early Wednesday morning. "Passengers are advised not to travel to the airport at this time, as access remains severely restricted," it added.

Five people, including four firefighters and an airport employee, were admitted to hospital, according to the local ambulance service. Another person was treated on site.—Agencies

European stock markets steady after rally

LONDON : European stock markets steadied Wednesday after big gains the previous session, while European gas prices hit six months highs on supply constraints. Asian stock markets advanced following European and Wall Street gains Tuesday, thanks to a growing belief the Federal Reserve was finished with hiking US interest rates. Optimism was boosted also by a report that China is considering a large burst of economic stimulus. Eyes will now turn to the release of US inflation figures due Wednesday and minutes from the Fed's September policy meeting. Amid uncertainty caused by the Israel-Hamas crisis, the mood on trading floors has improved after a healthy US jobs report last week and dovish comments from a number of top US monetary policymakers. European stocks were steadier "following the best session in nearly a year (Tuesday), driven by less hawkish tones from Fed policymakers", noted Victoria Scholar, head of investment at Interactive Investor. "Slowing sales from (luxury group) LVMH have dragged the (Paris) CAC 40 into the red while Burberry has followed suit, slumping to the bottom of the FTSE 100" in London. Oil prices retreated after Monday's surge fuelled by Hamas's deadly attack on Israel that sparked fears of a wider conflict in the crude-rich Middle East. But European gas prices struck 50 euros on geopolitical risks and colder weather Wednesday, the highest level since April.—APP

Economic concerns rise as Poles prepare to vote

WARSAW : Elections in Poland, petrol is being sold by the state energy giant Orlen at budget prices in what experts called "an election present". For analysts this is just one example of an economy managed for political gain by a government that is putting off difficult choices for later. "The peculiarity of this government is an economic policy that is totally dominated by the short-term effect without long-term considerations," said Witold Orlowski, head of experts at the consultancy PwC Poland. Since the populist Law and Justice (PiS) party came to power in 2015, Poles have enjoyed high social welfare benefits while the government has made enormous investments in infrastructure and defence. Many experts question whether these are the signs of a flourishing economy or of a government that is managing the accounts to make things seem better than they are. The opposition has made economic worries part of its election campaign, while the government has focused on national security, sovereignty and migration. Whether or not PiS win a third term or are defeated by the liberal Civic Coalition opposition on Sunday "it is clear that the economic situation will not be easy to handle" for any government, Orlowski said. The focus so far has been on consumption rather than dealing with debt and inflation or boosting investments — measures that would spur long-term growth. Inflation has remained high in Poland, with the EU forecasting a figure of 11.4 percent for 2023. Investments meanwhile have fallen to just 16.7 percent of gross domestic product (GDP) — the lowest level in 20 years, below the EU average of 22.5 percent. Growth is expected to remain sluggish with a forecast of 0.5 percent expansion in 2023, according to the EU. - Lack of transparency - Even if public debt in Poland remains relatively low at around 49 percent of GDP.—DNA



ISLAMABAD : Federal Minister for Finance, Revenue and Economic Affairs, Dr. Shamshad Akhtar, held a meeting with the Governor of the Central Bank of Morocco today, as part of her official visit to Morocco in conjunction with the annual meetings of the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and World Bank (WB). —DNA

Zelenskyy: NATO visit key to Ukraine's winter 'resilience'

Zelenskyy is making his first visit to NATO's headquarters in Brussels since the start of Russia's war in February 2022, the military alliance has said. Ukrainian President said his visit to NATO headquarters would be "critical" for ensuring Ukraine is protected

FOREIGN DESK

BRUSSELS:Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy is making his first visit to NATO's headquarters in Brussels since the start of Russia's war in February 2022, the military alliance has said. President Zelenskyy said his visit to NATO headquarters would be "critical" for ensuring Ukraine is protected this winter as the country prepares for an intensification of Russian strikes. He said on X, formerly Twitter, that the visit "will be critical to our resilience this winter". Volodymyr Zelenskyy has said

that the violence engulfing Israel and Gaza risked distracting international attention from the conflict in his own country. "There is a risk that international attention will turn away from Ukraine, and that will have consequences", he said in an interview with the France 2 broadcaster. The tragedies affecting his visit to NATO headquarters Ukraine and Israel "are different, but both are immense", he said. Vladimir Putin will visit Kyrgyzstan on Thursday, the presidential office of the Central Asian country said, in what would be the Russian leader's first known trip abroad since the International Criminal Court is-

sued a warrant for his arrest. "At the invitation of the President of the Kyrgyz Republic, Sadyr Japarov, on October 12 of this year, the President of the Russian Federation, Vladimir



Putin, will make an official visit to the country," the Kyrgyz presidential administration said in a statement on its website. Putin is to also take part in ceremonies dedicated to the 20th anniversary of the opening of an air base in Kant, which is home to the Russian Aerospace Forces' 999th Air Base, the Kyrgyz presidential office said. Russian mercenary group Wagner in 2022 signed a contract with a Chinese firm to acquire two satellites and use their images, aiding its intelligence work as the organisation sought to push Russia's invasion of Ukraine, according to a document seen by the AFP news agency. The company Beijing

Yunze Technology Co Ltd sold two high-resolution observation satellites belonging to the Chinese space giant Chang Guang Satellite Technology (CGST) to Nika-Frut, a company then part of Prigozhin's commercial empire. The over \$30 million (235 million yuan) price was for the satellites themselves and additional services. The contract also provides for the provision of images on demand, which allowed Wagner to obtain satellite pictures both of Ukraine and areas in Africa where its mercenaries were active including Libya, Sudan, the Central African Republic, and Mali, the European security source told the agency, asking not to be named.

Briefs

India arrests
Chinese
employee of
smartphone
maker Vivo

DNA

NEW DELHI: India's financial crimes agency has arrested a Chinese employee of smartphone maker Vivo, the firm said. Indian officials have not commented yet but Vivo said it "will exercise all available legal options" on behalf of its employee, Andrew Kuang. Authorities raided Vivo's office last year, accusing it of illegal remittances from India to China. It is the second-biggest smartphone brand in India, after Samsung, according to industry data. Vivo has denied any wrongdoing and said it complies with Indian law. The arrest comes on the back of a widening rift between India and China. Last week, Reuters reported that Indian police had formally accused Vivo of helping transfer funds illegally to NewsClick, a news portal that is under investigation on charges of spreading Chinese propaganda. Tuesday's arrest happened under the Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA). It is "a very stringent law and allows for criminal cases to be filed, unlike regular foreign exchange violations which are majorly considered civil offenses," according to Atul Pandey, Senior Partner at legal firm Khaitan. Vivo has also been accused of customs evasion by the tax enforcement agency. The firm is owned by China's BBK Electronics, which also operates brands such as Oppo and Realme in India.

At least
169 Israel
soldiers
killed in war

JERUSALEM: At least 169 Israeli soldiers have been killed in fighting with Palestinian Islamist group Hamas after its militants launched a shock cross-border attack, the army said on Wednesday. "As of this morning, we've informed the families of 169 fallen IDF (army) soldiers," military spokesman Daniel Hagari told reporters, adding that the families of 60 people abducted and taken to Gaza have also been contacted. He said no new infiltrations by Gaza militants had been reported over the past two days, but added that "hundreds of bodies" of slain gunmen had still not been cleared from the border. "This shows the scope of fighting in the area," Hagari said. "They intended on conquering the territory, they weren't planning on raiding and returning to Gaza," he said. "There are individuals who have remained in the field... Over the past day, we've killed 18 terrorists." Israel is reeling under a brutal assault launched by Hamas militants on Saturday in which at least 1,200 people have now been confirmed dead in the worst attack in the country's 75-year history. In Gaza, 1,055 people have been killed as Israel has pounded the densely populated territory with retaliatory air strikes and shelling. - Agencies

Alvi calls for stronger economic and defence ties with Qatar



ISLAMABAD: President Dr Arif Alvi conferring the award of Nishan-i-Imtiaz (Military) upon the Chief of Staff of Qatar Armed Forces, Lt General (Pilot) Salem Hamad Eqail Al-Nabet, at a special investiture ceremony, held at Aiwan-e-Sadr. - DNA

The President said that this year would mark the 50th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between Pakistan and Qatar and expressed the hope that cooperation between the two countries would be further enhanced in the years to come

DNA

ISLAMABAD: President Dr Arif Alvi has called for further strengthening ties with Qatar in the fields of economy and defence for the mutual benefit of the two brotherly countries. He said that Pakistan and Qatar enjoyed excellent relations, which needed to be translated into mutually rewarding business and economic ties. The President expressed these views while talking to the visiting Chief of Staff of Qatar Armed Forces, Lt Gen (Pilot) Salem Hamad Eqail Al-Nabet, who along with the members of his delegation called on him, at Aiwan-e-Sadr, today. Pakistan's Chief of Air Staff, Air Chief Marshal Zaheer Ahmed Baber Sidhu, and senior officials of the government also attended the meeting. Welcoming the delegation, the President said that this year would mark the 50th

anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between Pakistan and Qatar and expressed the hope that cooperation between the two countries would be further enhanced in the years to come. He expressed his gratitude to Qatar for providing humanitarian assistance during last year's floods as well as financial support to Pakistan during difficult times. The President congratulated Qatar for successfully holding the FIFA 2022 Football World Cup. He also congratulated the Chief of Staff of Qatar Armed Forces on the conferment of the award of Nishan-e-Imtiaz (Military) upon him in recognition of his role in promoting cooperation between the Armed Forces of the two brotherly countries. Earlier, President Dr Arif Alvi conferred the award of Nishan-e-Imtiaz (Military) upon Lt Gen (Pilot) Salem Hamad Eqail Al-Nabet at a special investiture ceremony held at Aiwan-e-Sadr, today.

Another
earthquake
shakes
Afghanistan

DNA

KABUL: Northwestern Afghanistan Wednesday was struck by a 6.3 magnitude earthquake, according to the German Research Center for Geosciences (GFZ). The centre stated that the quake, which came in a series of jolts that shook similar parts of Afghanistan over the weekend, occurred at a depth of 10 kilometres, Reuters reported. The epicentre of the quake was located approximately 29 kilometres towards the north of the country's Herat province, the United States Geological Survey mentioned. There were no early details on casualties caused by the latest quake, disaster management spokesman Janan Sayegh told Reuters. Rescue teams and volunteers have been working on the ground since Saturday to locate the quake's survivors, which shook the province earlier, demolishing entire villages and affecting 12,000 people, the United Nations (UN) estimated. Local and national officials have given conflicting counts of the number of dead and injured from the previous earthquakes, but the disaster ministry has said 2,053 people died. "We can't give exact numbers for dead and wounded as it is in flux," said disaster management ministry spokesman Mullah Janan Sayegh. There were no immediate reports of new casualties after Wednesday's quake, which hit near Herat city, home to more than half a million people.

LHC turns
down
immediate
de-sealing
of Lal Haveli

DNA

RAWALPINDI: The Lahore High Court on Wednesday turned down the request for an immediate de-sealing of the Lal Haveli whose ownership has been claimed by Shaikh Rasheed Ahmad. LHC Rawalpindi bench Justice Mirza Waqas Rauf heard the case. The ownership dispute case was heard in the high court. Advocate Sardar Abdul Raziq represented Sheikh Rasheed and his brother Sheikh Siddique, ETPB Deputy Administrator, and Additional Advocate General Siddique Awan attended the hearing. Sheikh Rasheed's lawyer contested the decision of the ETPB Chairman, asserting that all positions including Secretary and DG were concentrated in the Chairman's office. They claimed their appeal went unheard. The court granted an additional half-hour to the Additional Advocate General to provide information about the Chairman's authority over the board and adjourned the hearing. After the break, the court rejected the immediate de-sealing request for Lal Haveli but agreed to a regular hearing of the Lal Haveli case. It was decided that the status of Lal Haveli would remain unchanged until the petition's decision, which is scheduled for a detailed hearing on October 19, with no further adjournments allowed.

Australian Cheng
Lei freed from
China detention

DNA

BEIJING: Journalist Cheng Lei has returned home to Australia after more than three years of detention in China. "She was met at the airport by the Foreign Minister Penny Wong," Australia's Prime Minister Anthony Albanese said, announcing her release. Cheng Lei, 48, was working as a business reporter for China's state-run English language TV station CGTN when she was arrested on 13 August 2020. She was later accused of "illegally supplying state secrets overseas". Her charges were never made public. Ms Cheng was freed as frosty relations between Canberra and Beijing appear to be thawing. Tensions between the two countries deepened during the pandemic, which led to a Chinese ban on Australian exports like barley, coal, and timber. Those blocks were lifted earlier this year, the first signs of a gradual easing of the diplomatic impasse. Following Ms Cheng's release, Mr Albanese said it would facilitate his trip to China at a "mutually agreed time" this year. He added that Ms Cheng has been reunited with her two children in Melbourne. "Her return brings an end to a very difficult few years for her family. The government has been seeking this for a long period of time and her return will be warmly welcomed not just by her family and friends but by all Australians," Mr Albanese said.

British HC celebrates
40th anniversary of
Chevening scholarships

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Some of the 2,000 Chevening alumni from across Pakistan have been brought together to commemorate the 40th anniversary of the UK's flagship higher education scholarship. At a special reception hosted by British High Commissioner Jane Marriott CMG OBE, scholars and fellows who have benefitted from the scheme paid tribute to the 'life-changing' programme. British High Commissioner, Jane Marriott CMG OBE, said: "It has been a privilege to host so many brilliant minds working in different sectors, united by their shared Chevening story. Days like today showcase the true value of Chevening - the journey does not stop on the completion of studies. Over 40 years, we have developed a global network of over 50,000 alumni, many of whom play key leadership roles in their countries." Chief data and strategy officer Jazz, Ali Naseer said: "It's been 25 years since my Chevening year, but it remains a pivotal moment for me. It showed me various ways to aid Pa-



kistan's growth. Even outside the public sector, I believe my efforts still make a significant impact." Health management expert, Dr Huma Qureshi said: "Chevening helped me combine management and clinical expertise, enhancing performance in the health field. Thank you, Chevening!" Appli-

cations for Chevening scholarships to study in the UK are open between 12 September and 7 November 2023 - applications can be made on the Chevening website www.chevening.org. The scholarships are fully funded, including fees, flights, visas, accommodation and some spending money.

Erdogan vows to intensify
strikes on Kurd fighters

"Bombing civilian sites, killing civilians, blocking humanitarian aid and trying to present these as achievements are the acts of an organization and not a state"

ISTANBUL: Türkiye's president on Wednesday vowed to intensify strikes against Kurdish fighters in Syria and Iraq. Türkiye has been bombing sites in northeast Syria since Thursday, hitting civilian and military targets and infrastructure and causing casualties, according to Kurdish authorities. "We have already intensified air operations and we will continue, and show the terrorists that we can destroy them anywhere and at any moment," Recep Tayyip Erdogan said, referring to fighters of the Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK) - listed as a terror group by Ankara and its Western allies. Ankara has said that it launched a new wave

of air strikes in retaliation for an attack in Ankara earlier this month that wounded two security personnel. PKK has claimed responsibility for the attack, the first bombing to hit the Turkish capital since 2016. In the statement, he also said Israel is not conducting itself "like a state" in the Gaza Strip, as Israel pounded the territory after a Hamas onslaught. "Israel should not forget that if it acts more like an organization rather than a state, it'll finish by being treated as such," Erdogan said, attacking "shameful methods" of the Israeli army in the densely-populated Gaza Strip. "Bombing civilian sites, killing civilians, blocking humanitarian aid and trying to present these as achievements are the acts of an organization and not a state," he said. Erdogan usually uses the word "organization" when he refers to the PKK. "We think that a war should have an ethic and that both parties should respect it. Unfortunately, this principle is gravely violated in Israel and in Gaza," he said, denouncing the "murders of civilians on Israeli territory" and "the blind massacre of innocents in a Gaza subjected to constant bombardment." - Agencies

Palestine accuses
Israel of 'genocidal'
campaign against Gaza

NEWS DESK

New York: The Palestinian envoy to the United Nations on Tuesday described Israel's bombardment of the Gaza Strip and vow to impose a complete siege on the Hamas-controlled Palestinian enclave as "nothing less than genocidal." Hamas militants carried out their deadliest attack in Israel's history on Saturday, when gunmen rampaged through Israeli towns, killing more than 1,000 people and taking scores of hostages to Gaza. Israel has retaliated with air strikes on Gaza that have razed entire districts as it prepares for a possible ground offensive. Israel's Defense Minister Yoav Gallant drew international condemnation by announcing on Monday a "total blockade" to stop food and fuel reaching Gaza, home to 2.3 million people. Gallant said Israel was battling "beastly

people." "Such blatant dehumanization and attempts to bomb a people into submission, to use starvation as a method of warfare, and to eradicate their national existence are nothing less than genocidal," Palestinian UN envoy Riyad Mansour wrote in a letter to the UN Security Council on Tuesday, seen by Reuters. "These acts constitute war crimes," he wrote. US national security adviser Jake Sullivan said on Tuesday that his understanding was that "the concept of siege is not something that in fact is going to be pursued by the Israeli government," adding that Washington was speaking with the Israeli government "about their actions in this regard." Sullivan also said US President Joe Biden and Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu on Tuesday discussed "the difference between going full bore against Hamas terrorists and how we distinguish between terrorists and innocent civilians."

Ambassador of China calls on the PM

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister said that Pakistan and China enjoyed a unique relationship as All-weather Strategic Cooperative Partners, Iron Brothers and trusted friends. He lauded the vision and leadership

of President Xi Jinping, particularly the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI). The Prime Minister also noted the centrality of CPEC in enhancing economic, trade and technological ties between the two countries. H.E. Mr. Jiang Zaidong, Ambassador of the People's Republic of China called on Prime Minister Anwaar-ul-

Haq Kakar in Islamabad today. The Prime Minister said that Pakistan and China enjoyed a unique relationship as All-weather Strategic Cooperative Partners, Iron Brothers and trusted friends. He lauded the vision and leadership of President Xi Jinping, particularly the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI). The Prime Minister also noted the centrality of CPEC in enhancing economic, trade and technological ties between the two countries and highlighted its role as the flagship project of BRI. He said Pakistan and China were fully committed to ensuring the success of CPEC and the government would continue to work closely with Chinese authorities to ensure timely implementation and completion of various projects envisaged under CPEC. This was Ambassador Jiang's first meeting with the Prime Minister since presenting his credentials as China's Ambassador to Pakistan. The Prime Minister congratulated Ambassador Jiang on assuming ambassadorial responsibilities in Islamabad and hoped that he would play a key role in further strengthening relations between the two countries.



ISLAMABAD: Jiang Zaidong, Ambassador of the People's Republic of China calls on the Caretaker PM Anwaar-ul-Haq Kakar. - DNA

OCTOBER 2023

Pakistan's Premier News &
Diplomatic Affairs Magazine

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