



Islamabad POST

Wednesday, October 18, 2023

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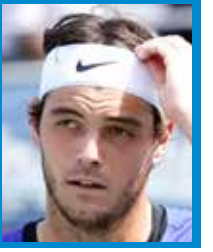
Detailed News On Page-08

Sweden warns country facing biggest threat

Detailed News On Page-08

Taylor Fritz feels 'motivated and ready'

Detailed News On Page-06



Corps Commanders moot Pakistan Army reiterates support for Palestinians

Forum also took holistic review of the ongoing actions being taken against illegal economic activities

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

RAWALPINDI: General Syed Asim Munir, NI (M), Chief of Army Staff (COAS) presided over the 260th Corps Commanders' Conference (CCC) held at GHQ, today. Participants offered Fateha for the Shuhadas of Mastung, Hangu and Zhob incidents during the Holy month of Rabi' al-Awwal. Forum also paid rich tribute to the supreme sacrifices being continuously offered by the Security Forces & LEAs in defence of the motherland while fighting the menace of terrorism. Participants resolved that all terrorists, their facilitators and abettors, working on the behest of hostile forces to destabilise Pakistan will be dealt with unflinching resolve of the state. Forum was briefed on prevalent geo-strategic environment, challenges to the national security and own strategy in response to evolving threat. Forum reiterated Pakistan Army's resolve to defend the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Pakistan against all kinds of direct and indirect threats. Forum viewed with concern the developments taking place in Gaza-Israel War and the enormous human cost being imposed on the innocent civilians due to the disproportionate use of force by Israel. COAS said "the Palestinian people have unequivocal diplomatic, moral and political support of the Pakistani nation and we will continue to support the principled stance of our brethren for enduring resolution of the Palestinian issue and end to the unlawful occupation of their territories and Muslims' Sacred places". The participants vowed to fully support the strategic initiatives planned by the Government of Pakistan for the revival of the economy by providing all possible support for the overall wellbeing of the people of Pakistan. Forum also took holistic review of the ongoing actions being taken against illegal economic activities. COAS emphasised "Pakistan Army will continue to provide all out support to the government and LEAs in taking strict lawful actions against illegal

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Food supplies in Gaza running 'really short'

NEWS DESK

GENEVA: "Inside the shops, the stocks are getting close to less than a few days, maybe four or five days of food stocks left," WFP's Middle East spokeswoman Abeer Etefa, told reporters in Geneva via video link from Cairo. She said that out of five flour mills in the Gaza Strip, only one was operating due to security concerns and the unavailability of fuel. "So the bread supply is running low and people are lining up for hours to get bread," she said. Only five bakeries out of 23 in Gaza contracted by WFP were still in operation, she added. "Our food supplies within Gaza are running really short," said Etefa. The spokeswoman said there has been no looting of WFP warehouses, and "anyway, whatever we have left in the warehouses is so little". Aid at Rafah Aid agencies have been flying supplies into El Arish airport in Egypt - around 20 kilometres away from the Rafah border crossing and the only one into the Gaza Strip not controlled by Israel. So far Egypt has kept the crossing closed to aid going in or foreign nationals trying to flee, as Israel has repeatedly struck the Palestinian side of the crossing. Ahmed Salem of the

Continued on Page 06



BEIJING: Chinese President Xi Jinping and First Lady, Madame Peng Liyuan welcomed Caretaker Prime Minister Anwaar-ul-Haq Kakar upon his arrival at Great Hall of the People to attend the banquet hosted by President Xi Jinping in honor of the leaders of the countries participating in the 3rd Belt and Road Forum. - DNA

Govt makes contact with PTI

PTI ready to extend possible support for free, transparent polls: Shafqat



ABBAS HASHMI

LAHORE: The interim government on Tuesday initiated communications with the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) in a bid to foster a conducive environment for the forthcoming general elections in the country. In pursuit of this objective, Caretaker Minister for Information Murtaza Solangi engaged in discussions with the senior central leader of PTI, Shafqat Mahmood, at his residence. During the meeting, the two leaders delved into strategies

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Solar Parks PM Kakar invites Chinese investment

The interim premier emphasised that there was no bilateral relation more important for Pakistan than its friendship with China

DNA

BEIJING: Caretaker Prime Minister Anwaarul Haq Kakar on Tuesday invited China to invest in solar parks to support Pakistan's fight against climate change and help reduce Pakistan's energy import bill. The interim premier reached Beijing on Monday to participate in the 3rd Belt and Road Forum (BRF) for Inter-national Cooperation. At the airport, he was received by Chinese Minister of Science & Technology Wang Zhigang, Chinese Ambassador to Pakistan Jiang Zaidong, and Ambassador of Pakistan to China Moinul Haq, the PM's Office said in a press release yesterday. Addressing a conference in China today, PM Kakar said investments in solar parks would benefit two-fold, explaining that "on one hand they will support Pakistan's endeavours to climate action and also help reduce energy import bill". The prime minister expressed Pakistan's desire to learn from China's models for building industrial parks and special economic zones. He highlighted that China and Pakistan en-

joyed a time-tested relationship based on mutual trust and shared interests. "Despite international politics, our friendship has remained steadfast." The interim premier emphasised that there was no bilateral relation more important for Pakistan than its friendship with China. "This special relation enjoys across-the-board national consensus in Pakistan," he said. "There should be no doubt that Pakistan would undermine our unique affection for China." Terming CPEC the manifestation of Pak-China strategic cooperation, Kakar said the project symbolises coordinated efforts of the two countries to bring their economic and trade ties at par with each other. The project also symbolises the two countries' excellent political relations, he added. "For Pakistan, CPEC is a transformative project central to advancing our national agenda to sustainable development," the prime minister continued, adding that the geoeconomic landscape of the country - from Gilgit-Baltistan to the deep sea ports of Karachi and Gwadar - was transformed in the last few years due to CPEC.

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Briefs

Jillani to attend OIC moot on Gaza

ANSAR M BHATTI

ISLAMABAD: Foreign Minister



Jilil Abbas Jilani is in Jeddah to attend the Extraordinary Session of the OIC Executive Committee to discuss the crisis in Gaza and the humanitarian situation of the besieged civilians there. The meeting has been co-convened by Pakistan and the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. The Foreign Minister has been engaged in consultations with his counterparts of OIC countries. In the leadup to this Extraordinary Session, he has held telephone conversations with the Foreign Ministers of Egypt, Iran, Türkiye and the UAE.

Justice delayed is justice denied: PTI

STAFF REPORT

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan



Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) spokesperson has expressed serious concerns over the unjust and unnecessary delay in deciding the fabricated and politically-motivated cases against PTI leaders incarcerated in various jails across the country, as 'justice delayed is justice denied'.

REPATRIATION OF ILLEGAL IMMIGRANTS

13 DAYS

Cypher case Imran, Qureshi's indictment delayed

The hearing in the jail should not be in-camera and the media should have access," lawyer said

KHAYAM ABBASI

RAWALPINDI: The indictment of Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) Chairman Imran Khan and his party's Vice Chairman Shah Mahmood Qureshi in the cypher case was deferred Tuesday, as a special court - established under the Official Secrets Act - adjourned the hearing till next week. The hearing of the case was held at the Adiala jail in Rawalpindi wherein the copies of challans submitted by the Federal Investigation Agency (FIA) against the PTI leaders were provided to the accused. Special court judge, Abul Hasnat Zulqarnain, who conducted the hearing, scheduled the indictment for the next week as the accused lawyers had refused to receive the copies of the challan during the last hearing. The FIA special prosecutor, Shah Khawar, Khan, Qureshi and their legal teams were all present in the courtroom during the hearing. During the last hearing on October 9, the court issued copies of

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Solangi vows level-playing field for all

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Federal caretaker Minister for Information and Broadcasting Murtaza Solangi on Monday said it was the caretaker government's responsibility to ensure level-playing for all the registered political parties during the electoral process. In a meeting with the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa information minister, Solangi said "it was a shared responsibility of the caretaker set-up to assist the Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) in carrying out the whole electoral exercise across the country".

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Rupee breaks winning streak against dollar

NAZIR SIYAL

KARACHI: The Pakistani rupee broke its 28-day winning streak against the US dollar, official data showed Tuesday, with analysts saying that a correction was warranted. The local currency fell Re0.2 or 0.07% against the dollar in the interbank market to close at 277.03, according to the State Bank of Pakistan (SBP), down from yesterday's rate of 276.83. Since September 5,

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UNSC rejects Russia's Gaza ceasefire resolution

NEWS DESK

NEW YORK: A resolution proposed by Russia calling for a "humanitarian ceasefire" in Gaza and the release of "all hostages" has failed to receive enough votes to be adopted by the 15-member UN Security Council, with members who voted against it or abstained citing its failure to mention Hamas and condemn the group's Oct. 7 attack on Israeli towns. On Monday, Russia, China, the UAE, Gabon and Mozambique voted in favor, while the US, UK, France and Japan voted against. Brazil, Malta, Albania, Switzerland, Ecuador and Ghana abstained. The resolution had been backed by the UN Arab Group of countries, whose ambassadors were all present at the council meeting. A vote on a rival, draft resolution from Brazil was delayed until Tuesday, Arab News has learned. Russia's resolution expresses "grave concern" at the escalation of violence and the deterioration of the situation, in particular the resulting heavy civilian casualties, underscoring the need for both populations to be protected. It also expressed grave concern at the deepening humanitarian crisis in Gaza and called for "an immediate, durable and fully respected humanitarian ceasefire." The draft also condemns "all violence and hostilities directed against civilians and all acts of terrorism," and calls for the "secure release of all hostages." Russia also called for the unimpeded provision and distribution of

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EU to establish humanitarian air corridor to Gaza

DNA

BRUSSELS: The European Union (EU) will launch a humanitarian air corridor to Gaza through Egypt, European Commission president Ursula von der Leyen announced on Monday, with the first flights expected to depart in the coming days. "Palestinians in Gaza are in need of humanitarian help and aid," von der Leyen said to reporters in Albania on Monday, where she was attending a summit of Balkan nations. "That is why we are launching an EU humanitarian air bridge to Gaza through Egypt." The EU chief added that the first two flights will happen "this week" and reiterated that the European bloc is tripling its humanitarian aid to Gaza to \$79 million, saying that innocent Palestinians "cannot pay the price of Hamas' barbarism." Von der Leyen's comments follow statements from

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CM Naqvi orders slashing transport fares by 10pc

CM Mohsin Naqvi gave a deadline of 48 hours to reduce the prices and tasked to reduce the transport fares by 10pc

ABID RAZA

LAHORE: On the special instructions of Caretaker Chief Minister Mohsin Naqvi, it has been decided to pass on the direct benefit of the record reduction in the prices of petroleum products to the people of Punjab. Under the chairmanship of the CM, a meeting was held in the Chief Minister's Office. Chief Minister Mohsin Naqvi gave a deadline of 48 hours to reduce the prices and tasked to reduce the transport fares by 10pc. Chief minister directed the provincial transport minister and the transport secretary to hold an urgent meeting with the transport owners while the provincial industry and agriculture minister SM Tanveer will hold talks with other associations. Likewise, the agriculture secretary, commissioners and deputy commissioners will also work on price reduction of daily essential items. Chief Secretary has been given the task of reducing the prices of daily commodities. The chief secretary will hold daily meetings with the Commissioners and Deputy Commissioners and review the measures regarding price reduction. Naqvi has ordered the administration to play an active role to provide relief and said indiscriminate crackdown on hoarders should continue. He said that the benefit of reduction in the prices of petro-

leum products will be directly transferred to the people of the province and relief will be given. It was important to give the benefit of the historical relief given by reducing the prices of other commodities to the people, he said, adding the entire team should work hard day and night to give relief to the people. Punjab Caretaker Chief Minister Mohsin Naqvi conducted an inspection of the ongoing Controlled Access Corridor project on Band Road here on early Monday. He meticulously assessed the progress of this significant endeavor, spanning from NiaziChowk to BabuSabu. The Chief Minister underscored the importance of ensuring smooth traffic flow on the closed road throughout the construction phase. He emphasised that the Chief Traffic Officer (CTO) should personally oversee operations and recommended deploying additional traffic wardens. CM received a comprehensive briefing, underscoring the round-the-clock efforts being made to complete the 7.3 km long controlled access corridor within four months. The project encompasses two packages, with Package One spanning 3.65 km from Niazi to Saggian Interchange, and Package Two covering an equivalent distance from Saggian to BabuSabu Interchange. Meanwhile, following the unfortunate incident of a rape case in Narowal, Deputy Commissioner Narowal failed to promptly

respond despite explicit instructions. It was noted that the Deputy Commissioner was found in another city without proper authorization, having left the station. In light of this negligence of duty, Punjab CM has taken decisive action, promptly reassigning Deputy Commissioner Narowal to the position of Officer on Special Duty (OSD). Meanwhile, Chief Minister Mohsin Naqvi held a productive meeting with British Parliament Member Khalid Mehmood, delving into matters of mutual interest and exploring avenues to address the concerns of overseas Pakistanis. During the discussion, Naqvi affirmed the strong partnership between Pakistan and Britain in advancing development and prosperity. Meanwhile, Sami Malik, Pakistan's appointed ambassador to Morocco, paid a courtesy visit to Punjab's Caretaker CMMohsin Naqvi. Extending warm congratulations to Sami Malik on his appointment as ambassador to Morocco, Naqvi conveyed his best wishes for the role. Moreover, Chief Minister Mohsin Naqvi has taken decisive action in response to the delayed registration of an FIR concerning the tragic demise of a child in a traffic accident at Manawala police station, Sheikhupura. Acting on the directives of CM, IG has swiftly suspended the SHO of Manawala police station. Additionally, a stern warning has been issued to the District Police Officer (DPO) Sheikhupura.



ISLAMABAD: Girls are taking interest in paintings during exhibition entitled "Community Outreach" at National Islamabad National College of Arts in Federal Capital. — Online

6 arrested, bikes, weapons recovered

SARGODHA :Police on Tuesday claimed to have arrested six accused, including three members of a bike-lifter gang, and recovered motorcycles, weapons, mobile phones and cash. According to a press release issued by DPO office, teams of various police stations conducted raids and caught six outlaws besides recovering seven motorcycles, a Kalashnikov, mobile phones and cash. Cases were registered against the accused while further investigation was under way.—APP

Mayor Karachi: No changing names of iconic places

DNA

KARACHI : Mayor Karachi Barrister Murtaza Wahab on Tuesday said that the buildings, roads and places named after prominent personalities will not be allowed to be changed under any circumstances. He expressed these views while inspecting the ongoing development works and carpeting in the Johar Underpass. Barrister Murtaza Wahab said that it was not appropriate to change the names of buildings and institutions named after important per-

sonalities. Naming requires legislation and this authority is vested in the respective local bodies. He said that the paving of the roads around the Johar underpass should be completed soon as timely completion of the work will help to control the traffic jam problems. He said that if there is a flyover or underpass in the name of Shaheed Benazir Bhutto, Begum Nusrat Bhutto or Zia Mohiuddin, then these personalities have services for the country and nation. If someone wants to change these names, it will be their misunderstanding.

The Mayor Karachi said, "The development works of the city are our first priority and we consider it our duty to carry out the development works equally in the city." He said that the construction work of Johar underpass should be completed as soon as possible so that it provides convenience to the people of the area. He said that mega projects are being started in the city and construction work is being accelerated. The Mayor Karachi inspected the ongoing construction work of the underpass and issued instructions on the spot.

Women University marks Int'l Rural Women Day

MULTAN : Women University Multan marked International Rural Women's Day with a pledge to create awareness about women's empowerment, here on Tuesday. A grand celebration was arranged under the auspices of the Sociology Department. The highlight of the event was a spirited walk led by Vice Chancellor Dr. Kalsoom Pracha, alongside Dr. Mamoon Khan (Registrar) and Dr. Sadaf Mehmood (Chairperson, Department of Sociology). During the walk, Vice-Chancellor Dr. Kalsoom Pracha emphasized the importance of the day, which aims to raise awareness of the needs and achievements of rural women. She stressed the significance of empowering and including rural women in all aspects of rural development, and how this mission holds great symbolic value for agricultural countries like Pakistan. Dr. Mamoon Khan highlighted the pivotal role women play in societal progress, emphasizing that the active participation of women was essential for national and social development. Dr. Sadaf Mehmood underscored the significance of recognizing rural women's contributions to enhancing agricultural and rural development, improving food security, and ending poverty. The walk witnessed enthusiastic participation from faculty members and students, who creatively portrayed the diverse roles of rural women through various avatars. The event also featured different stalls showcasing the rich and vibrant rural culture.—APP

National Palestine Conference condemns Israeli aggression on Gaza



KHAYAM ABBASI

ISLAMABAD: All political parties' National Palestine Conference has adopted a joint declaration in the context of the current situation in Gaza and Palestine. The conference was organized by Jamaat-e-Islami in Islamabad on Tuesday, in which leaders of national political and religious parties and human rights representatives participated. They unanimously approved 14 points of the declaration. The national leadership, intellectuals, scholars, civil society, and public representatives of Pakistan strongly protest against the recent Israeli aggression on Gaza and the West Bank and the criminal negligence of the international powers on the human tragedy in Palestine. According to the Gaza Health Department, 2,670 Palestinians, including more or less 900 children, have died and more than 9,600 have been injured by the barbaric bombardment and the interruption of supplies until October 16, 2023. More or less 90 people have died as a result of the Israeli attack on the West Bank. Israel's targeting of hospitals, educational institutions, places of worship, civilian populations, especially innocent

children, women, and vulnerable citizens, volunteers, human rights representatives, and journalists during the attack on Gaza is a clear violation of international humanitarian law. There is a violation. The United Nations Security Council, the International Court of War Crimes, and human rights organizations need to play an effective role in this regard and bring those responsible for war crimes to justice. Israel is trying to discredit the world by calling its barbaric actions a response to Hamas attacks. The reality is that Hamas' recent move is itself a response to the illegal occupation of Palestinian land and the atrocities that have been perpetrated by Israel from time to time. The participants of this meeting believe that the conflict did not start on October 7, 2023, but it started with the occupation of the Palestinian land. This process of evicting them from their land, and occupying their settlements has been going on for the last 75 years. Therefore, while there is an urgent need to stop the recent violence, it is also very important to find a real and lasting solution to the conflict. The real solution to the Palestinian issue and the ongoing unrest in the Middle East is the establishment of an independent, sovereign Palestinian state. The international

community should immediately recognize Palestine as an independent state and Jerusalem as its capital. The governments of the powerful countries, the United Nations and its subsidiary bodies must take effective and decisive measures to stop the Israeli aggression on Gaza. Also, provision of basic needs such as food, water, electricity, oil and treatment for the trapped citizens of Gaza should be ensured in all circumstances. The United Nations and its subsidiary bodies should act on human rights violations and ensure the protection of ordinary citizens regardless of their geographical and political affiliations. After all, Israel is a racist state, based on religion and race. Discrimination laws are in place. It is the duty of the civilized world to refrain from giving legitimacy to such a state. The international community should realize its responsibility without waiting for a new humanitarian tragedy to occur in the region and put pressure on Israel to prevent further bombings, ground operations and sieges, bring to the negotiating table, ensure the uninterrupted flow of humanitarian aid and resources to Gaza, and create an effective and concrete UN process for lasting peace and a final and just solution to the conflict.

Punjab Police arrests 125 POs from abroad

DNA

LAHORE : Under the direction of Inspector General Punjab, Dr. Usman Anwar, the crackdown of the Punjab Police is continuing against dangerous proclaimed offenders who are absconding abroad. Spokesperson of Punjab Police said that Muhammad Sarwar wanted by Sialkot Police in murder case for 03 years while Muhammad Majid wanted by Toba Tek Singh Police in robbery case was absconding for 05 years, Punjab Police issued red notices from Interpol, Continuous follow-up continued for the arrest. Both accused were finally arrested and reached Pakistan and were handed over to the police of the respective districts for further action. Spokesman Punjab Police said that with the

arrest of the two accused, the total number of proclaimed offenders arrested from abroad has increased to 125. IG Punjab Dr. Usman Anwar apprised the police teams for arresting 02 dangerous advertisers of A category from abroad and said that the criminals should be fully punished by completing the legal procedures as soon as possible. IG Punjab directed that the crackdown against dangerous proclaimed offenders involved in cases of murder, robbery and kidnapping should be intensified and RPOs, DPOs should personally lead the crackdown to arrest dangerous proclaimed offenders. Dr Usman Anwar directed that regular information sharing should be ensured with FIA, Interpol and other agencies and reports of arrests of proclaimed offenders should be sent to the

Central Police Office. On the directions of Inspector General Punjab Dr. Usman Anwar, priority measures are being taken for the health welfare of the police force. A meeting of the Compensation Award Committee was held at the Central Police Office under the chairmanship of Additional IG Finance and Welfare Muhammad Riaz Nazir Gara, in which funds were approved for the medical expenses of the police personnel of various districts including Lahore. According to the details, Ghazi Constable Adeel Nisar and Head Constable Arshad Ali of Rahim Yar Khan were given Rs. 05 lakh each. Muhammad Nasir from Lahore Police and Constable Shahzad Ahmad were given 03 lakhs each, Driver Constable Shahzad Ahmad from Sheikhupura were given Two and a half




lakh rupees, injured constable Saeed Ahmed and head constable Naseer Ahmed were given two lakh rupees each. IG Punjab Dr. Usman Anwar ordered to continue the measures for the best treatment of Ghazi personnel and said that the supervisory officers should provide all possible support for the rehabilitation of Ghazi officers and officials as soon as possible. IG Punjab said that Ghazi officers and officials are valuable assets of the department who will not only be given silver medals but their names will be engraved on the Ghazi wall in the Central Police Office. In the ongoing 67th National Hockey Championship at the Ayub Stadium in Rawalpindi, the excellent performance of the Pakistan Police Hockey Team continues and the Police Hockey Team has qualified for the quarter finals. Pa-


kistan Police Hockey Team successfully secured their place in the quarter finals after three consecutive victories, in the third match the Police Team defeated Islamabad by 04 goals to 01. IG Punjab Dr. Usman Anwar congratulated the police team for qualifying for the quarter finals after 12 years, Dr. Usman Anwar praised the excellent performance of all the players through a video call. Patron Hockey Team DIG Ahsan Younis also congratulated the police team for their excellent performance. IG Punjab Dr Usman Anwar directed the entire team including Head Coach Masood ur Rehman, Coach Shehbaz Ahmed and Captain Owais Khan to continue their excellent performance. IGP said that the best performance should be continued in the upcoming matches of the national tournament as well.

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National Days and Armed Forces Days

OCTOBER

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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
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Motorway Police...9266044
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RDA.....5555864
TMA.....5770886
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Water Tank

Islamabad.....0321-5744480

EU Ambassador says...

Eliminating child marriage requires a collective effort

The conference participants unanimously passed resolution to raise minimum age of marriage of girls to 18 years demanding to ensure the fundamental rights of the girls

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Applauding PODA for its struggle to protect girl-child's and rural women's rights, Dr. Riina Kionka, Ambassador of the European Union in Pakistan said, "Eliminating child marriage requires a collective effort to ensure that girls have access to education, health information, services and life-skills education". She was speaking at the concluding day of the 3-day 16th Annual Rural Women Leadership Conference held here in Islamabad. She further said that child-marriage is fundamentally an issue of gender inequality. It is also a multifaceted problem, with varying legal dimensions and immensely rooted socio-cultural norms, she added. During the 3-day of the conference around 3000 rural women leaders representing around 150 districts of the country including the four provinces and regions of AJK and Gilgit-Baltistan explored different dimensions of the issue of child-marriage from legal to human rights perspectives demanded to raise the minimum age of marriage of girls in Pakistan excluding Sindh to 18 years of age through legal amendment in the existing laws. The conference participants unanimously passed resolution to raise minimum age of marriage of girls to 18 years demanding to ensure the fundamental rights of the girls the country to harness the underutilized potential that women represent in the country, it is imperative to break free from the gender norms to ensure these



women and girls have essential services, economic resources and gainful employment and that they actively participate in their communities as voters, leaders, member of political parties as candidates. Emphasizing on the right to education Article 25-A enshrined through the Constitution of Pakistan, Executive Director who is president and founder of PODA, Sameena Nazir demanded to give women equal representation at all levels in all sectors. HE Mr. Per Albert Ilsaas, Ambassador of Norway in Pakistan, the Ambassador of Norway in Pakistan, found the conference a platform where women were everywhere in majority to talk on the issues which were on the top of their priorities. A wheelchair-user mother, Azra from Islamabad urged all to make no excuse to declare 18 years as minimum age of marriage of a girl because due to her disability she married off of daughter at an early age who was divorced very young. She urged all to protect young girls fundamental right to get education and access to opportunities

to lead a dignified life. Ayesha Raza Farooq, Chairperson National Commission on The Child Rights ensured their support to raise the minimum age of girls to 18 years by signing the resolution. During the last day of the conference two sessions were held. Earlier speaking during the session on "Enhance Electoral Participation of Rural Women through Voter Registration and Democracy Education", Ms. Nazir said negligence to record girls' birth officially and add girls in Family Form-B results in denial of Computerized National Identity Cards (CNIC) for girls when they turn 18. Without CNIC a woman cannot register as voter in Pakistan that has led to "missing women voters" problem in Pakistan. Low turnout of women voters is also caused by rejected votes when women do not know how to vote correctly. In many cases, women are not able to vote due to lack of transportation facilities and due to fear of violence and harassment. Women with disabilities and trans-



women face additional gender specific obstacles to cast their votes with dignity, she added. Rural women leaders who spoke were: Ms. Kausar Khatun, Social Activist Kalat Balochistan Shirin Gul, Ghanche Gilgit-Baltistan, Mariyam Iqbal, Social Activist Peshawar, KP, Fayyaz Kausar General Councilor, Mardan, Khyber Pakhtukhwa, Shazia Zaheer, Political Rights of Women with Disabilities, Rukhsana Arshad, Sangat Development Organization Sheikhupura, Ayesha Shafiqat (PWD) Janant Welfare organization, Lahore, Iffat Batool, Sohni Dharti Organization, Qamber Shahdad Kot, Sindh and Sonia, Transwomen rights activist, Islamabad. The conference ended on an award ceremony. The rural women leaders who excelled in their districts in protecting rights of women and girls were awarded shields. Jugni Theatre Group from Chakwal also presented an educational play on the importance of casting vote. The conference was supported by EU, Norwegian Embassy,

Islamabad, UN Women, Olive Culture, Italian Agency for Development Cooperation, ECP NED, NDI and Nutritional International. Session Chair the Senator Farhat Ullah Baber, PPP while addressing the ceremony shared that "I must complement PODA's Executive director Ms Samina Nazir, it requires a lot of motivation and courage to gather rural women and important institutions all together and physically challenged women in huge number, I am really impressed to see passion displayed by all. This event has become a university for women's empowerment for last 16 years. Women are politically and economically disempowered in Pakistan till date. Women's unwavering strength is challenged by the fact that their votes are not registered and this issue is led to 13 million missing women in the 2018 elections. Women's CNICs should be registered to enjoy their full rights to vote and combat child marriages and forced conversions."

China and Pakistan will sign a series of new MoUs

DNA

ISLAMABAD: China and Pakistan will sign 11 agreements on infrastructure, energy and other projects. In addition, the two countries decided to issue announcements to further promote comprehensive cooperation in various fields of the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor. In Pakistan, work is in full swing during the meeting between Chinese President Xi Jinping and Prime Minister Kakar. According to media reports, Pakistan and China have reached an agreement on the financing of the ML-1 project. Moreover, the Ministry of Planning, Development & Special Initiatives has reached consensus with other relevant ministries and the Chinese Embassy on working documents for multiple cooperation projects, which will also be officially signed at the Belt and Road Forum during Prime Minister Kakar's visit.

"Women on Wheel" project initiated in Rawalpindi

RAWALPINDI: On the special orders of Chief Traffic Officer (CTO) Rawalpindi Taimoor Khan, the "Women on Wheel" project was initiated here on Tuesday. According to a CTP spokesman, motorcycle training for women has been started since July 2023 and a driving school has also been established for them. Training courses are ongoing in Police Lines Rawalpindi under the supervision of female experts and professional driving instructors. On the occasion, Chief Traffic Officer (CTO) Taimoor Khan said that the aim of the "Women on Wheel" project was to empower women so that they can play a positive role in society whereas, 40 women have successfully completed their driving course since July, he added.—APP

3rd BRI Forum pivotal multilateral diplomatic affairs of China's calendar, 2023

ISLAMABAD: The on-going 3rd Belt and Road Forum, inaugurated by Chinese President Xi Jinping in Beijing, stands as one of the pivotal multilateral diplomatic affairs on China's calendar for the year, drawing attention on the global stage. Under the banner of "High-quality Belt and Road Cooperation: Together for Common Development and Prosperity," the BRI has attracted delegates from over 130 nations and 30 international organizations, Gwadar Pro reported on Tuesday quoting experts. The discussions at the BRI are focused on various cooperation domains, encompassing connectivity, sustainable development, and the digital economy. Trade, people-to-people interactions, anti-corruption efforts, local collaboration, and ocean cooperation will be focal points at this forum. The BRI, centered on worldwide collaboration, unfolds amidst a backdrop of multifaceted global challenges, including conflicts in Europe and the Middle East, as well as a sluggish

global economy. Entering its third iteration, the BRI has evolved into an essential multilateral platform for nations and regions engaged in the collaborative development of the BRI. It serves as a vital arena for assessing past achievements and devising strategies for future collaboration. The previous BRI, held in 2019, unfolded before the disruptive COVID-19 pandemic. This year's gathering takes on added importance, coinciding with the 10th anniversary of the BRI's proposal, marking a decade of its transformative vision. Amid a backdrop of pressing global challenges such as the Ukraine Conflict and the Israel-Palestine issue, the BRI emerges as a beacon of stability in a turbulent world. It is poised to reinvigorate global progress, with international and Chinese experts foreseeing substantial achievements in reinforcing international collaboration. This forum underscores the fervor and trust in the BRI, as well as China's steadfast dedication to open en-

agement and global cooperation, according to their observations. The BRI stands out as the most extensive force for enhancing global connectivity across various domains of infrastructure. It accomplishes this by constructing land routes, expanding maritime links, increasing air travel connections, and bolstering cyberspace capabilities. As it evolves, it transforms into a worldwide network that benefits all the inhabitants of the globe, fostering an environment conducive to enhanced cooperation. At its inception, the BRI was synonymous with grand-scale infrastructure undertakings. Nevertheless, in tandem, the BRI has witnessed the rise of small and medium-sized enterprises, championed environmental sustainability, embraced climate-conscious practices, fostered digital innovation, and championed green initiatives. While the COVID-19 pandemic momentarily slowed its pace, the BRI has now rebounded with renewed dynamism as the global order gradually re-

turns to its pre-pandemic state. This resurgence underscores the BRI's capacity to adapt to the ever-shifting dynamics of the global stage. The BRI remains an enduring and agile force, consistently mirroring the evolving contours of the world it engages with. Over the past decade, China has embarked on an audacious quest, joining hands with more than 150 nations and 30 international organizations in a grand partnership to co-create the BRI. This monumental endeavor has manifested in the realization of over 3,000 collaborative projects under the BRI umbrella, representing a substantial investment of nearly \$1 trillion. The repercussions have been nothing short of transformative, igniting robust economic expansion in the countries involved. These BRI initiatives span a diverse spectrum, encompassing poverty alleviation, strides in agricultural technology, and advances in vocational education.

CPEC crucial for Pakistan's economic recovery

ISLAMABAD: There is no doubt that the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor is crucial to Pakistan's economic recovery, says a report published by Gwadar Pro on Tuesday. The most crucial point is that the development and growth of the Belt and Road Initiative has enabled Pakistan to make extraordinary progress in infrastructure construction, import and export logistics, etc. Belt and Road Initiative is China's epoch-making plan for global economic development. For Pakistan, the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor is launched here as a flagship project of the Belt and Road Initiative. China can effectively connect the Indian Ocean and the Arabian Sea through roads, and it has also opened a new door for Pakistan's future diversified economic development. An economic corridor like the Belt and Road covering a vast territory connects all participating countries in Central Asia, Africa, and Europe into a huge common development network. Not long ago, on the occasion of the tenth anniversary of the construction of the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor, officials from the National Development and Reform Commission of China once again emphasized the importance of the project to Pakistan, China, and even the world. In August 2023, Chinese President Xi Jinping proposed in his keynote speech at the China-Africa Leaders' Dialogue that China will mobilize the enthusiasm of China's cooperation resources and enterprises in Africa to support Africa in developing manufacturing and achieving industrialization and economic diversification. Facts have proven that China does not seek to impose anything on other countries through the Belt and Road Initiative, but rather hopes to develop a diversified strategy that takes into account the actual problems and specific needs of other countries.—DNA



HEC holds prize distribution ceremony for int'l Science Olympiad participants

ISLAMABAD: The Higher Education Commission (HEC) under the STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics) Careers Programme hosted a prestigious Prize Ceremony to honour the outstanding achievements of participants in 2022 and 2023 at International Science Olympiads. Chairman HEC Dr. Mukhtar Ahmed was the chief guest. The ceremony was attended by Executive Director HEC Mr. Awais Ahmad, Rector Institute of Engineering and Applied Science (IEAS) Dr. Naseem Irfan, faculty members, students, and relevant HEC officials. The STEM Career Programme is a joint venture of HEC and IEAS. It has two objectives to pursue. First, it aims to inspire youth of the nation to opt for careers in Science, Technology.—APP

Credit for institutional economic reforms goes to Army Chief: Sakib

DNA



RAWALPINDI: The credit of Pakistan's economic recovery, institutional economic reforms, steer the country out of economic uncertainty, and the establishment of Special Investment Facilitation Council (SIFC) goes to the Army Chief. Meetings and consultations with the industrial community and elimination

of gray zones, especially the illegal trade and smuggling of dollars, are important steps towards the end of economic uncertainty, he said. Mobilizing all resources through Special Investment Facilitation Council (SIFC), ensuring transparency in dollar rates in open and inter-bank markets, besides bringing money exchanges under the purview of taxation, eliminating smuggling at the borders with Iran and Afghanistan and improving tax collection are the visible results of guidance and directions placed by COAS, he said. Within one month we have seen visible improvement in economic indicators, Pak Rupee

appreciated from Rs330 against the US dollar to Rs276, a significant drop in POL prices and Stock Market has crossed the 50,000 points. He said that by giving priority to geo-economics instead of geo-politics, Pakistan will emerge as an economic force. He said that the business community has always demanded to ensure continuous consultation with stakeholders, implement reforms in FBR to document the economy, make privatization process transparent and reduce government spending. Chamber President Saqib Rafiq further added that only by promoting the local industry, the way for foreign investment can be paved.

OCTOBER 2023

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Briefs

APCFA, Chinese embassy collaborate for Friendship Festival

DNA

ISLAMABAD: All Pakistan-China Friendship Association (APCFA), in collaboration with the Embassy of the People's Republic of China in Pakistan on Tuesday organized the Pakistan-China Friendship Festival to celebrate the 74th anniversary of the founding of the People's Republic of China and the 10th anniversary of the launch of the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) and "Belt and Road" (BRI) initiative. The event featured activities such as Chinese calligraphy classes, culinary training sessions, workshops on Chinese calligraphy, musical band performances, and various stalls showcasing traditional items from both countries to promote bilateral culture. The guest of honor for the event was Zhang Heqing, who serves as the Cultural Counselor and Director of the China Cultural Center in Pakistan. During his address at the event, he conveyed his sincere gratitude to APCFA for their diligent efforts in arranging this important gathering and for their active involvement in various cultural promotion activities that encourage youth in both Pakistan and China. He added that China and Pakistan, as neighboring nations connected by rivers and mountains, had been steadfast partners since the establishment of diplomatic relations.

FTO Coordinator emphasizes Africa's potential

ISLAMABAD: Coordinator to Federal Tax Ombudsman, Meher Kashif Younis on Tuesday highlighted the immense potential of Africa and the golden opportunity for Pakistan to expand its horizons and achieve unprecedented growth. Speaking at a seminar on "Pakistan and potential of Africa" held under the aegis of Gold Ring Economic Forum, a strategic think tank, he said immense possibilities lie in the African continent for our business community, according to a news release issued here. He said as we all know Africa is experiencing a significant economic transformation, with several countries showing remarkable progress in various sectors. The continent's burgeoning population, combined with increasing urbanization and technological advancements, has created a vibrant market hungry for goods and services that promise a perfect environment for Pakistani businesses to introduce their products, technologies, and expertise, he added.—APP

Investors show strong interest in diverse plot auction by CDA

DNA

ISLAMABAD: The investors are demonstrating a strong interest in the auction of residential and commercial plots of diverse-sized residential and commercial plots in Islamabad organized by Capital Development Authority (CDA). The four-day open auction of residential and commercial plots of various sizes and categories is set to run until October 20 here at the Jinnah Convention Centre. The primary objectives are to increase revenue for the department and encourage investor participation in the auction. During the auction's inaugural day, a plot identified as 53F, covering an area of 666.67 square yards in I-8 Markaz, was successfully auctioned for an impressive Rs 1.42 billion. Plot number 53D located in I-8 Markaz was sold at the auction for an amount totaling Rs 1.09 billion. During the auction, plots located in the Blue Area and Northern Strip of E-11 will also be up for bidding.



ISLAMABAD : Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf's Central Information Secretary, Rauf Hassan, and Barrister Umair called on President Dr Arif Alvi, at Aiwan-e-Sadr.—DNA

Ashrafi urges OIC to take strong stance on Israel's bombardment

Talking to media persons, he said due to inhuman policies of Israel, the Palestinian people were suffering from shortage of food, water, medicines and other necessities of life

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan Ulama Council Chairman Hafiz Muhammad Tahir Mahmood Ashrafi on Tuesday said it was almost 10th day that Israel was continuously doing bombardment on Palestine and particularly on Gaza causing casualties of innocent people of all ranks including women, children and civilians. Talking to media persons, he said due to inhuman policies of Israel, the Palestinian people were suffering from shortage of food, water, medicines and other necessities of life adding that trucks carrying relief goods were queuing at the

border of Egypt but, Israel was not giving permission to enter them in the territory. Ashrafi urged the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) to take a solid stance on the issue of Palestine in its meeting scheduled to be held on Wednesday. He said Pakistan's Foreign Affairs Minister Ambassador Jalil Abbas Jilani was leaving for OIC's meeting expressing hope that he would make significant development on this issue. He said the Muslim world should not be silent spectator anymore and devise an effective strategic plan to deal with

this long-standing issue with collective efforts in letter and spirit on permanent basis. He said the entire Muslim Ummah was united under the leadership of Kingdom of Saudi Arabia as it the centric point of all faithful around the world and moreover, it was at the helm of affairs of the OIC. Ashrafi lamented that in the United Nations Security Council, the resolution presented by Russia could not be passed as it aimed to stop the war between Palestine and Israel on the humanitarian grounds. He said it was a good omen that Russia and China were

standing by the stance of Muslim countries on the issue of Palestine. He further said the United States (US) President Joe Biden was making an extraordinary wartime visit to Israel this week as he sought to demonstrate staunch support for the country. Beside other Muslim leadership, he appreciated the Saudi Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman for demanding to stop the Israel's aggression on Palestine in his recent meeting with US Secretary of State Antony Blinken. Ashrafi proposed that besides reporting on our sins, we must seek

the help of Allah Almighty and extend all possible support to our war-stricken brothers in Palestine in accordance with available resources. He appreciated the Pakistan government for expressing its intention to dispatch relief goods to Palestine urging it to take up the Palestine issue in more effective manners at the international forums. He informed that Pakistan Ulama Council was organizing a conference to express unity with Palestine here in the federal capital on Wednesday and hoped that their voice would be heard in the corridors of power in the world.

Railways accelerate up-gradation work to improve services

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan Railways has accelerated the up-gradation work involving the private sector to improve services in passenger trains as well as major railway stations to address the growing issues, especially sanitation issues. "The department was of the view that the cleanliness-related services in trains and at major stations, including Lahore, Faisalabad, Karachi, Rawalpindi, Quetta, Peshawar, Khanewal, Sukkur, Sahiwal, Multan and Bahawalpur were not satisfactory," an official in the Ministry told APP. He said that if services of the private sector were hired under a fast-track policy, the hygiene conditions at stations and in trains could be improved which would also restore the confidence of passengers in the department. The official said the department asked the officials to accelerate efforts to bring uniformity in the design and signboards of stalls at the major railway stations under a policy. It is pertinent to mention here that last year Pakistan Railways decided to engage the private sector to increase profit by improving services at major stations. "The services required to be improved included renovation and construction of washrooms and their maintenance and other janitorial services at platforms, waiting for areas and yards," he added. To a question, he said that Pakistan Railways has also started up-gradation work of its five major railway stations across the country on modern lines to facilitate the passengers and help the department to generate more revenues. He said the purpose to upgrade the railway stations is to make them commercial hubs for business activities and facilitate the passengers and the railway stations included Karachi, Lahore, Faisalabad, Peshawar and Quetta.—APP

ICCI expresses solidarity with Palestinians

FAISAL SHEIKH

ISLAMABAD: Islamabad Chamber of Commerce & Industry (ICCI) on Tuesday expressed solidarity with the Palestinian people whose lives are being destroyed by the Israeli forces. It called on the international community to intervene to bring an end to the ongoing conflict, protect civilians and work towards a lasting peace in the Middle East. Faad Waheed, Acting President, while addressing a meeting of the business community said that the Pakistani nation including the business community is deeply concerned over the escalating hostility in Gaza, which is causing great loss of innocent lives. He stressed that the world leaders should come together to work for the cessation of hostilities, protection of civilians and for a lasting peace in the Middle East.

Faad Waheed said that the business community fully stands in solidarity with the Palestinians in this tragic time and called for an immediate end to the violence and oppression by Israeli occupation forces. He said that Israeli forces have so far killed over 2800 Palestinians and stressed that there is an urgent need to stop the mad bombing of innocent people and alleviate the suffering of Palestinian civilians in Gaza. He said that the unfolding situation in the Middle East is creating lot of concerns in the Muslim community around the world as innocent civilians are being killed and the survivors are also facing great problems without shelter, water, food, medicines, electricity making their lives miserable. He stressed that all stakeholders should put their heads together to seek an end to the conflict in order to prevent further blood-

shed and loss of innocent human lives. Engineer Azhar ul Islam Zafar Vice President ICCI said that the United Nations should play an active role to prevent both sides from further escalating the conflict and work for a long overdue peaceful resolution of the dispute in accordance with the relevant UN resolutions and international law. He said that the enduring peace in the Middle East lies in a two-state solution with a viable, sovereign State of Palestine, founded on pre-1967 borders, with Al Quds Al-Sharif at its heart. Khalid Iqbal Malik Group Leader ICCI, Abdul Waheed, Khalid Javed, Zafar Bakhtawari, Tariq Sadiq, Muhammad Ejaz Abbasi, Muhammad Shabbir and others also spoke on the occasion and urged that the world community should come forward to stop Israeli aggression against the innocent Palestinian people.

Muhammad Said remembered

ISLAMABAD: World famous medical researcher Hakeem Muhammad Said was remembered on the occasion of his death anniversary on Tuesday. Born on January 9, 1920 in Delhi, Hakim Said was a renowned scholar and philanthropist of Pakistan and former Governor of Sindh. He established Hamdard Foundation in 1948. Within few years, the herbal medical products of Hamdard became household names. Hakeem Mohammed Said authored or compiled several books which include books on religion, Tibb (natural medicine), health and sciences, literature, social and scientific topics and travelogues. He was a multifaceted personality, a physician, author of books, and editor of journals, bibliophile, an innovator, an idealist, an innovator, educationist and above all a patriot of the highest order. Hakeem Said founded Hamdard University in 1991.—APP

7 more contract with dengue virus in 24 hours

RAWALPINDI: As many as 27 more dengue cases were reported in Rawalpindi during the last 24 hours, raising the tally of confirmed cases to 1,992 in the district. District Coordinator Epidemics Prevention and Control (DCEPC), Dr Sajjad Mehmood, Tuesday said that, among the new cases, ten of each case had arrived from Potohar town urban and Municipal Corporation Rawalpindi area, five from Chaklala Cantonment and one from Gujjar Khan area. He said 101 patients were admitted to district hospitals of which 72 were confirmed cases while 1,919 positive patients were discharged after treatment. Dr Sajjad informed that the district administration had registered 37 FIRs, issued tickets to 11, sealed one premise, and a fine of Rs 200,500 was imposed against the violations of dengue SOPs during the last 24 hours. During indoor surveillance, in the previous 24 hours, the teams checked 16,759 houses and found larvae in 547 homes. Similarly, he added that while checking 6,352 places, the teams found larvae at 93 sites during outdoor surveillance. He added that district health facilities had allocated 228 beds for dealing with the dengue patients while three admitted patients were in critical condition.



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Refugee Scientists can apply for COMSTech Fellowships by Nov 15

DNA

ISLAMABAD: COMSTech, the OIC Standing Committee on Scientific and Technical Cooperation, has invited submissions of applications for the first cycle of the "COMSTech Science in Exile Fellowships Program for Displaced and Refugee Scholars and Scientists" by November 15, 2023. The fellowships program aims to support displaced and refugee scientists to stay up-to-date in their field, maintain meaningful careers, and be in a position to help rebuild their countries, once conditions allow. Until then, these professionals can be valuable assets for the countries in which they arrive. The COMSTech Science in Exile Fellowship Program would provide scholarships to displaced and refugee scholars and scientists who have not yet found a safe and long-term host country an opportunity

to pursue their studies/research, at institutions/universities of the COMSTech Consortium of Excellence (CCoE). A total of 10 Research Fellowships and 10 Post-doctoral Research Fellowships are being offered for the year 2024 under the program which would be hosted by COMSTech Consortium of Excellence Member Universities/Research Institutions. About the eligible nationality, the official of COMSTech informed that the displaced/refugee from Afghanistan, Palestine, Somalia, Sudan, Syria, and Yemen are eligible to apply for the program. The maximum age limit for Research Fellowship is 35 years and for Post-Doc Research Fellowship is 45 years. The duration of the fellowship is six months. The minimum degree requirements are M.S/MSc for Research Fellowship and PhD for Post-Doc Research Fellowship in relevant field of study while 10 Research Fellow-

ships and 10 Post-doctoral Research Fellowships are being offered. The areas of research are Agricultural Sciences, Structural, Cell and Molecular Biology, Biological Systems and Organisms, Medical and Health Sciences Incl. Neuroscience, Chemical Sciences, Engineering Sciences, Astronomy, Space and Earth Sciences, Mathematical Sciences and Physics while the language of instruction is English. About the terms of the scholarships, the official informed that the applicants should be displaced or refugee scholars and scientists and currently living in any OIC Member State and holding the right to live and study in the respective country or able to travel to Pakistan. The program is not suitable for scholars at risk who need specific assistance to leave their home country. The scholarship winners are responsible for arranging the logistics and safety of their own relocation. Those

who travelling from outside Pakistan will be eligible for one time economy class return air ticket for the entire duration of the fellowship. The applicants who hold citizenship or permanent residency in Pakistan or have safe stay other countries are not eligible to apply. The fellowships are offered for six months. The host institutions may provide free accommodation for Research Fellows and Post-Doc Research Fellows, upon their requests. The applicants may apply for only one of the two types of fellowships offered under the COMSTech Science in Exile Fellowships Programme. The applicants must complete the application form and send it to events@comstech.org along with the required documents as mentioned at the web link: https://comstech.org/comstech-science-in-exile-fellowships-program/. Conflicts around the world have led to the displacement of millions of people.

Pakistan's First And Only Diplomatic Daily

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Member APNS / ABC Certified

Vol: 05 Issue: 04

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Belt and Road: paths to common prosperity

That dignitaries and representatives from more than 150 countries and 30 international organizations are attending the ongoing third Belt and Road Forum for International Cooperation in Beijing is a recognition of the initiative's role as a promoter of common development.

Since its launch a decade ago, the Belt and Road Initiative has made remarkable achievements, benefiting the countries involved. Thousands of landmark infrastructure projects have been completed across the globe, improving connectivity, making travel more convenient and creating more development opportunities for Belt and Road countries. To be sure, the Belt and Road Initiative has ushered in a new development paradigm by overcoming severe challenges, inspiring many other countries to choose the development path that best suits their national conditions. By joining the initiative, whose goal is to improve infrastructure connectivity and provide public goods, more and more countries have realized the initiative's role as a facilitator of global peace and common prosperity. China's external environment has not always been friendly enough to extend the pragmatic initiative across continents. Some narrow-minded, ideologically-driven Western countries' desperate efforts to spread lies and rumors about the initiative are a major factor obstructing the deepening of global cooperation under the Belt and Road framework. Judging by the West's limited contributions to world peace and development in recent years and the growing appeal of the Belt and Road Initiative to developing and emerging market economies, the root cause behind the West's opposition to the initiative seems to be its outdated worldview. While the Western powers pursue narrow, selfish goals by forming small cliques and fueling geopolitical tensions, the Belt and Road Initiative has garnered the support of the international community for its inclusive nature and spirit of multilateralism. Today's is a far less peaceful world, with the Russia-Ukraine conflict dragging on for 18 months, thanks to the policies of the US-led West, and the eruption of a new conflict in the Middle East, and formidable challenges such as climate change and foundering economic recovery not being addressed. In the Belt and Road Initiative, however, the world has a practical tool to address these challenges. As the Chinese leadership has said, no country should be left behind on the road to development. Over the past decade, the initiative has blazed new trails and found a path on which like-minded countries can cooperate to achieve common development. From 2013 to 2022, the cumulative value of trade between China and other Belt and Road countries was \$19.1 trillion, with an average annual growth of 6.4 percent, which reflects the significance of the initiative to the global economy.

Since the initiative's core principles are "extensive consultation, joint contribution, and shared benefits", which have won global recognition, it is hoped cooperation among Belt and Road countries will pave new paths to achieve common development.



Poland's record turnout election yields landmark result

Back in 2018, as Poland's ruling Law and Justice party (PiS) neared the end of its first term in office, its leader, Jaroslaw Kaczynski, told one newspaper that his radical right project had only just begun. "We are preparing a long march," said Mr Kaczynski, "one needs, not two, but three terms." On Sunday, Poles turned out in extraordinary numbers determined to thwart that ambition, and they appear to have succeeded in remarkable fashion. Provisional results indicate that the highest election turnout since the fall of communism delivered a famous and unexpectedly clear victory for the opposition coalition of parties. Though PiS emerged once more as the largest electoral force, it lost its majority and seemingly has no viable route to constructing a new one. For Poland, and for the rest of Europe, this constitutes a hugely consequential result. For progressives, it is one to celebrate. During eight years in power, PiS has become a European brand leader for illiberal politics. In government it has gradually taken a wrecking ball to the checks, balances and cultural assumptions that underpin mainstream democracies. The independence of the judiciary and media has been undermined, and state television turned into a mouthpiece for PiS propaganda. Non-European migrants and LGBTQ+ communities have been demonised and presented as threats to the integrity of the nation. Conservative Catholic influence has been mobilised in a draconian crackdown on abortion rights, prompting mass protests. Together with Viktor Orbán's Hungary, Mr Kaczynski's Poland has treated European Union values and norms with contempt, and resisted cooperation on issues such as the migration crisis. Assuming the result is confirmed, the main opposition leader, Donald Tusk, will have a chance to halt this oppressive, authoritarian and confrontational direction of travel. On the international stage, given Poland's status as one of the EU's most strategically significant member states, this will bring a vital boost to European unity in deeply challenging times. A former president of the European Council, Mr Tusk can be expected to resolve the rule-of-law issues that have dogged relations with Brussels since 2015. Just as significantly, Poland under his leadership would play a supportive role in maintaining western support for Ukraine, and in sensitive future negotiations over EU expansion to the east. Domestically, repairing the civic and constitutional damage done over the past eight years will not be straightforward. Andrzej Duda, the country's PiS-aligned president, remains in office, and managing a coalition government comprising Mr Tusk's centrist Civic Platform party, the centre-right and the left promises to be complicated. Exit poll voting data from Sunday confirms the depth of the support that PiS retains in provincial and rural areas, and among the less well educated. If Mr Tusk wishes to unify a polarised country after the bitterest of campaigns, he will need to offer more to such constituencies. These are potential problems and issues for the future though. The stunning 73% turnout on Sunday – 11% higher than in 2019 – testifies to a popular mobilisation against PiS that has stopped Mr Kaczynski's "long march" in its tracks. The young, in particular, seem to have heeded calls to make their votes count.

Insecurities of Security Council?

Dr M Ail Hamza



It's ironic that the permanent members of the UNSC, who rejected the Russian resolution, have historical ties to colonialism. Since 1948 more than hundred thousand Palestinians have been killed, and more than triple been displaced or seriously injured. Ultimately, a peaceful resolution remains a critical goal, as the continuation of the Israeli occupation perpetuates a cycle of suffering and instability in the region. However, it seems that the UNSC is ineffective in achieving this goal, isn't it? The ongoing misery faced

The number of Palestinians killed by a massive Israeli air assault against the Gaza Strip has reached to 2,215. There is a high probability that death toll would have reached to 3,000 by the time you are reading this article. Though five permanent members of United Nation Security Council (UNSC); China, France, Russian Federation, United Kingdom, and United States agree on the necessity to ending the humanitarian crises in Gaza, but deep divisions remain on exactly how to do that. On October 17, Russian Federation drafted and tabled a resolution calling for humanitarian immediate ceasefire between Hamas and Israel in Gaza, was supported by China but received a clear rejection from three other members of UNSC; the western collision. The rejection is rightly stated by the Russian diplomat "a blow to humanitarian efforts".

In fact, we are currently witnessing a grave escalation of violence, and the international community anxiously anticipates the UNSC to intervene in order to halt this bloodletting. However, delegates from Western nations, who have opposed the resolution, have essentially dashed the hopes of the global community for curbing this Israeli brutality. The United States' rationale for rejecting the resolution was surprisingly illogical. They argued that because the resolution didn't condemn Hamas, it should be discarded. This perspective seems to imply that condemning Hamas and preserving lives should go hand in hand; otherwise, innocent people must perish. Is this the proposal put forth by the U.S. delegation at the UNSC? Does such a notion align with morality, international legal principles, or the UNSC's standards when responding to acts that harm innocent civilians? It appears to be an unwise and contradictory stance. Believe it or not, it is essential to revisit the roles and responsibilities of the UNSC. Its

primary obligations include preventing and resolving conflicts, promoting human rights, and maintaining peace. Foremost among these responsibilities is the duty to prevent and resolve conflicts by mediating between warring parties, facilitating negotiations, and promoting diplomatic solutions. However, when millions of innocent lives are at risk due to actions by Israeli forces, it becomes imperative to call for an end to such horrific and heinous acts. The UNSC's moral authority is questioned when its failure to condemn Hamas is used as a justification for allowing Israel to continue actions that result in the killing of innocent civilians. It appears that the UNSC may be unable to effectively fulfill this role. Undoubtedly, the UNSC carries the responsibility of establishing international order and stability, which encompasses arms control agreements, non-proliferation efforts, and counterterrorism initiatives. Certainly, maintaining global security requires fostering an environment conducive to peaceful cooperation among nations. However, this responsibility of the UNSC does not serve as a valid justification for rejecting the Russian resolution aimed at halting the ongoing violence and loss of life in Gaza. It suggests that when the U.S. criticizes Russia for not mentioning Hamas in the resolution, the U.S. may be seen as supporting the tragic loss of human lives in Gaza at the hands of Israeli forces.

The Israeli occupation of Gaza and Palestine has seen numerous phases, and it is essential to swiftly assess the longstanding consequences of this issue. This occupation has given rise to profound humanitarian and political ramifications for the Palestinian population. Notably, the blockade of Gaza has resulted in a humanitarian crisis, characterized by insufficient access to basic necessities like food, clean water, and healthcare. Many Palestinians, both residing

within their native territories and within the diaspora, have experienced displacement due to the conflict. An illustrative case in point is the Nakba of 1948, commonly referred to as the Palestinian Catastrophe, which marked the dismantling of Palestinian society and homeland, forcing hundreds of thousands of Palestinians from their homes. Those who remained have had to struggle with checkpoints, obstacles, and a rigorous permit system, severely constraining their access to essential services, education, and healthcare within their homeland. Furthermore, the Palestinian territories grapple with economic adversity stemming from restrictions on trade, investment, and the movement of people and goods. This all caused the birth of militant groups. The oppression and cruelty by the colonial rule, is a breeding ground for militant groups. Thus, groups like Hamas happen. Why UNSC could not nip the evil in the bud; the evil of colonialism.

It's ironic that the permanent members of the UNSC, who rejected the Russian resolution, have historical ties to colonialism. Since 1948 more than hundred thousand Palestinians have been killed, and more than triple been displaced or seriously injured. Ultimately, a peaceful resolution remains a critical goal, as the continuation of the Israeli occupation perpetuates a cycle of suffering and instability in the region. However, it seems that the UNSC is ineffective in achieving this goal, isn't it? The ongoing misery faced by Palestinians underscores the urgency of finding a peaceful and just resolution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. Addressing these long-standing issues will pave the way for a more stable and secure future for both Palestinians and Israelis. But first thing first, "ceasefire". What are the insecurities UN security council having in calling the shorts to ceasefire? This is a query that every rational thinker is likely to pose.

Modernizing political parties in South Asia

Adnan Rehmat

However, the case for greater democratization within political parties and modernizing them is not indigenous to Pakistan alone. The same is true for political parties, including the main governing and opposition groups across South Asia, including Bangladesh, India, Sri Lanka, the Maldives and Nepal. National elections are expected in Pakistan, Bangladesh, India and Sri Lanka within the next several months (the Maldives just had their last month). Over 100 million new voters have been enrolled in all these

In Pakistan, India, Bangladesh and Sri Lanka the people have signaled that they don't want ruling families in power in perpetuity. Pakistan's protracted and dull process of democratic transition between elected governments is being exacerbated by the poor quality of democracy within political parties. Both are inter-linked and need to change.

However, the case for greater democratization within political parties and modernizing them is not indigenous to Pakistan alone. The same is true for political parties, including the main governing and opposition groups across South Asia, including Bangladesh, India, Sri Lanka, the Maldives and Nepal.

National elections are expected in Pakistan, Bangladesh, India and Sri Lanka within the next several months (the Maldives just had their last month). Over 100 million new voters have been enrolled in all these countries since their last elections – over 10 million in Pakistan alone. And similarly in the preceding elections before that. And yet if you were a new voter, you would be forgiven for thinking little had changed within parties for ages in terms of leaders in charge, governance structures, policy and decision making and inclusivity towards members that can influence leaders.

And this would mean a psychological disassociation with parties – the relatively lower electoral turnouts in recent elections in most these countries would seem to confirm this tendency. And therein lies the challenge – growing voters are confronted by ageing leaders of political parties that neither speak the language of hundreds of millions of millennial voters or connect with them on their core interests such as upward mobility and demand for efficient urban futures. From the Begums of Bangladesh to the Bhuttos

and Sharifs of Pakistan – time stands still within their parties even though the societies within which the parties are based have moved on.

One key characteristics of most parties that have been in power in the South Asian states over the past several decades is their dynastic leaderships. From the Begums of Bangladesh to the Bandaranaiques and Rajapakas of Sri Lanka to the Bhuttos and Sharifs of Pakistan to the Gandhis of India – time stands still within their parties even though the societies within which the parties are based have moved on with their egalitarian and citizen-centric political aspirations. Even where there has been a break with tradition – Narendra Modi in India and Imran Khan in Pakistan – the non-dynastic leaders have been in power within their own parties for seemingly unending years. Khan has been chairman of his party for 27 years. That's longer than most monarchs in many countries in the vicinity of South Asia. Little wonder his promises of change ring hollow.

While over 100 political parties are registered in Pakistan, barely a dozen of these have been voted to power to govern national or provincial governments. The trust deficit in the ability of these parties to meet public expectations is at an all-time low in part due to dynastic leaderships – most top leaders are in their 70s now. Sharif is seeking to be prime minister a fourth time.

Pakistani parties have stubbornly resisted modernization or broadened political representation in sync with changing demographics or improving governance through inclusive approaches in a plural polity. This kind of politics is a process of diminishing returns. The quality of democracy within parties is the kind of democracy Pakistan is sick of. Other South Asian states practicing democracy are not much different.

The unfortunate jailings, exiles and assassinations of leaders in Pakistan, India, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka and Maldives are signs the system wants their parties but not their ruling families in power in perpetuity. And yet these families – many of whose members' services to democracy in the never-ending struggle against authoritarianism and military dictatorships are not under contention – are not ready to take the hint.

What can be done? If democracy is for the masses, then the majorities need to be engaged in democratic processes – from being voters to supporters to leaders of parties. South Asian societies are younger in median age of citizens than they have ever been in history. In Pakistan alone 65% of the population – 120 million – is under 25.

The parties need to reform and modernize with the primary goal being becoming fit for aspirations and interests of the younger majorities.

Admittedly this is easier said than done but then political leadership in democracies is all about keeping politics and their parties relevant and future-fit. Senior leaders of the party don't have to quit politics. They can stay in charge of their parties if they want but either retire from electoral politics or vacate their party leadership positions, making way for more dynamic and capable hands.

This process begins with open and plural elections within parties. This is the way to inclusive, plural and representative political solutions in changing societies. Having founded them, families may 'own' political parties in the old sense, but their ownership does not extend to democracy. The health and leadership of political parties should be in the hands of emerging leaders attuned to the times and voters.

—Sourced by Arab news

Briefs

Pak Army reiterates...

FROM PAGE 01 economic activities across the country. Actions against hoarding and smuggling mafias and cartels in different domains will be further strengthened in coming days to rid the country from negative impact of such ill practices". Forum resolved to fully support the Federal Government's decision to repatriate and deport all illegal foreigners from 1st November 2023 onwards. COAS directed all concerned to support and facilitate smooth, respectable and safe repatriation / deportation of all illegal foreigners. COAS stressed on maintaining high standards of professionalism and motivation during operations and achieving excellence during training of the formations.

Food supplies...

FROM PAGE 01 Sinai Foundation said that the trucks heading for the border contained Egyptian aid and that the international aid remained in warehouses. Salem and another security source said Egypt had repaired the roads within the crossing that had been damaged by Israeli strikes. Etefa said the WFP had mobilised over 300 metric tonnes of food that was either at or on its way to the Rafah border crossing from Egypt into the Gaza Strip — enough food to feed around 250,000 people for one week. "Everyone is still very hopeful that we will be able to get inside and this is why more supplies are on the way," she said. "We call for unimpeded access, safe passage for desperately-needed humanitarian supplies into Gaza." The UN's humanitarian chief Martin Griffiths is due to arrive in Cairo on Tuesday on a visit to the region, expected to last several days, to negotiate aid access to the Gaza Strip. He is set to go to Israel, and, if conditions permit, to the Palestinian territories, a spokesman said.

UNSC rejects...

FROM PAGE 01 humanitarian assistance, including food, fuel and medical treatment as well as creating conditions for the safe evacuation of civilians in need. Russia's permanent representative to the UN, Vasily Nebeniza, after the vote claimed the council had once again been held "hostage" to the "selfish intentions of the Western bloc of countries." He said: "Today, the entire world waited with bated breath for the Security Council to take steps in order to put an end to the bloodletting. But the delegations of the Western countries have basically stomped on those expectations. We believe that today's vote in the Security Council is very, very demonstrative. It clearly shows who are in favor of a truce to stop the indiscriminate bombing and provision of humanitarian assistance and who is still in favor of blocking a single common message from the Security Council for purely selfish interests and political interests."

EU to establish...

FROM PAGE 01 the foreign ministers of Egypt and France earlier on Monday in which they called for the uninhibited supply of humanitarian aid to Gaza, as well as the safe passage of foreign nationals from the under-siege enclave. Several prominent European lawmakers had been critical of Von der Leyen's response to the crisis, after she had expressed the EU's unconditional support for Israel. European foreign policy chief Josep Borrell said last week that EU policy on such matters is determined by its member states, rather than the European Commission president. "We certainly defend the right of Israel to defend itself against the attack that [it] has been suffering, but as any right, it has a limit — and this limit is international law and international humanitarian law," Borrell said to reporters in Beijing last week. He also warned that Israel's retaliatory actions could provoke a severe humanitarian crisis in Gaza.



ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Information and Broadcasting Murtaza Solangi clapping during the happiness gestures after scoring goal Pakistani player Harun Hamid in the 67th minute of the match to edge Cambodia, at Jinnah Stadium in Federal Capital. — Online

Historic FIFA Victory

Pakistan beat Cambodia in FIFA World Cup Qualifiers

Pakistan defeated Cambodia 1-0 to register their first-ever victory in the FIFA World Cup Qualifiers at Jinnah Stadium. Harun Hamid scored the only goal of the match in the 67th minute to edge Cambodia

AFZAL JAVED

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan on Tuesday makes history by defeated strong Cambodia 1-0, making it their first ever victory in FIFA World Cup Qualifiers here at Jinnah Stadium of Pakistan Sports Complex Islamabad. More than six thousands football fans along with Caretaker Federal Minister for Information and Broadcasting Murtaza Solangi, Balochistan Minister for Sports Jamal Khan Raisani, Federal Secretary Inter-Provincial Coordination (IPC) Ahmad Hanif Orakzai, Pakistan Sports Board (PSB) Director General Shoaib Khoso, Pakistan Football Federation (PFF) Normalisation Committee head Haroon Malik and number of diplomats were witnessed the match. Pakistan had long been considered an underdog in the world of football but the second leg of FIFA World Cup Qualifiers provided an opportunity to the green shirts to prove their mettle. The match was intense, with both teams giving their all on the field. It seemed as though goals were elusive, and the crowd's anticipation grew with each passing minute. Then, in the 67th minute of the match, Harun Arshad stepped up and delivered a



moment of pure magic. With a swift and powerful strike, he found the back of the net, scoring the only goal of the game. The stadium erupted with joy as Pakistan took the lead, securing a 1-0 victory over

Cambodia. Haroon became the hero of the day, his name etched in the annals of Pakistan's football history. The victory marked a significant turning point for the Pakistani team, as they ad-

vanced in the FIFA World Cup Qualifiers. Pakistan's long-awaited of football homecoming in World Cup qualifier faces Cambodia challenge But the road to success was not without its challenges as in the second half of the Qualifiers some of Pakistan team player suffered from serious injuries. After witness the wonderful victory talk to media, Caretaker Information Minister Murtaza Solangi said that Pakistan had not only won a football match that day but had also won the hearts of their nation, adding that their remarkable journey from underdogs to qualifiers was a testament to the power of belief and teamwork. He said the victory against Cambodia and the resilience in the face of adversity served as an inspiration to aspiring footballers all over Pakistan, proving that with determination, dreams could indeed come true. "It was not just a win for the team but a win for the spirit of the game itself," Solangi said. He also extended his heartfelt congratulation to the national team. "Today, we celebrate the triumph of sports and football. Football is the people's game, a beautiful spectacle that unites us all. It is played in magnificent stadium, which has been constructed with the assistance of our friends in China," he said.

Catherine Dalton becomes first female coach in PSL

KARACHI: Former Irish cricketer Catherine Dalton became the first female coach in the Pakistan Super League (PSL) history as she joined Multan Sultans as fast-bowling coach. Dalton also became the first female fast-bowling coach of any top-level men's side. The official announcement of her appointment will be announced later today. Catherine Dalton, 30, born in England, acquired Irish nationality in 2015 and later went on to represent them in four WODIs and as many WT20Is. She has visited Pakistan twice and also worked with a number of local pacers, including Mohammad Ilyas, Sameen Gul, and Arshad Iqbal, as well as a number of Under-19 athletes. Notably, Catherine Dalton is an England Cricket Board (ECB)-certified Level 3 Advanced Coach, having previously held coaching positions in the national fast-bowling academy in the UK and the Ultimate Pace Foundation in India. "Having worked in Pakistan with some of the Multan Sultans players on two previous visits, I am really thrilled to be officially joining up with the franchise at the PSL," Dalton told ESPNcricinfo. "It's not lost on me the ground-breaking moment for a female fast-bowling coach to be working in a major men's T20 franchise. I am very humbled by the opportunity and cannot wait to hopefully help make a difference on multiple levels. Multan Sultans' owner Ali Tareen expressed her pleasure in acquiring the services of Catherine Dalton as his team's fast-bowling coach. "Catherine has been part of our player-development programme for almost five years now. I have seen how she has improved players first hand. I always knew she would become a fast-bowling coach at a high level," Ali Tareen said. "And I am so glad that her first opportunity came at the Sultans," he added. It is worth mentioning here that the Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB), confirmed last month that the ninth edition of the PSL will run from February 8 to March 24. — DNA

Ekiru hit with 10-year doping ban

NAIROBI: Kenyan marathon runner Titus Ekiru has been slapped with a 10-year ban for doping and trying to obstruct the investigation. AUI said Monday. The 31-year-old tested positive for prohibited substances after winning the Milan marathon in May 2021 and the Abu Dhabi event in November that year, it said in a statement. Kenya has seen a surge in doping cases which have stained the reputation of the athletics powerhouse. Almost 70 athletes — mainly distance runners — have been banned in the last five years. In addition to the ban, AUI said Ekiru's results including and since the Milan race have been disqualified and all prizes forfeited. His victory in Milan, in the exceptionally fast time of 2hr 2min 57sec, had made him the sixth fastest marathon runner of all-time but he has now been stripped of that accolade. The ban follows a "comprehensive investigation" which revealed tampering by Ekiru to obstruct the AUI probe, and collusion by a senior doctor at a Kenyan hospital, the agency said. — Agencies

PCB confirms players' good health, no infections

DNA
BENGALURU: The Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) on Tuesday rejected media reports that claimed several players have contracted infection. "Thankfully, there is no viral infection or disease," a PCB spokesperson said after reports triggered speculations. The team also changed their training sessions multiple times lending credence to these reports. The PCB spokesperson said some players got fever in the past few days and most of them have fully recovered from it. "Those who are in the stage of recovery remain under the team medical panel's observation," the spokesperson added. Meanwhile, the team also rescheduled a training session after cancelling it earlier today. Pakistan team will have a two-hour training session at the M Chinnaswamy Stadium today (Tuesday) from 6 to 8 pm in Bengaluru. Earlier, the team's sources told Geo News that Pakistan's opening batsman Abdullah Shafique contracted fever ahead of the national's team match against Australia on October 20. They said fast bowler Shaheen Afridi and leg-spinner Usama Mir were also suffering from fever but they have recovered now. The sources said players underwent medical examination as per protocol and were tested for COVID-19 and dengue fever. "There is no concern about the health of players," the sources were quoted as saying. The day matches which will start at 10:00am Pakistan Standard Time (PST) while all other matches will be day-night fixtures starting at 01:30pm (PST). If Pakistan qualify for the semi-finals, they will play in Kolkata. If India qualify for the semi-finals, they will play in Mumbai unless playing against Pakistan, in which case they will play in Kolkata. **Pakistan squad for ICC World Cup 2023**
Babar Azam (c), Abdullah Shafique, Fakhar Zaman, Imam-ul-Haq, Iftikhar Ahmed, Mohammad Rizwan (wk), Shadab Khan, Mohammad Nawaz, Usama Mir, Haris Rauf, M Wasim Jnr, Hasan Ali, Shaheen Shah Afridi, Saud Shakeel, Salman Ali Agha. Travelling reserves: Mohammad Haris, Abrar Ahmed, Zaman Khan.

Schedule of Pakistan's remaining matches
October 20 - vs Australia in Bengaluru
October 23 - vs Afghanistan in Chennai
October 27 - vs South Africa in Chennai
October 31 - vs Bangladesh in Kolkata
November 4 - vs New Zealand Bengaluru
November 11 - vs England in Kolkata

Imran, Qureshi's indictment delayed

FROM PAGE 01 challans (charge sheet) submitted by the FIA against the PTI leaders and shared them with the accused, while their date of indictment was fixed to take place on October 17. "The accused had refused to receive a copy of the challan at the previous hearing," the FIA special prosecutor said. After the charges are framed, the evidence of the prosecution is recorded and the case trial begins. Subsequently, the testimonies and statements of the accused are recorded by the court. Speaking with journalists outside the Adila jail before the hearing, PTI chief's focal person on legal affairs, Umair Niazi, said that the copies of the challans were not provided in the previous hearing. He also said that the prosecution's Section 14 plea was not allowed by the court.

Solangi vows level-playing...

FROM PAGE 01 Both the ministers discussed matters related to mutual interests including the upcoming general election, media cooperation between federal and provincial information departments and pathways for capacity building of journalists. They also discussed a plan to train Khyber Pakhtunkhwa's information officers in the Information Services Academy (ISA) here at Islamabad. During the meeting, the federal minister said it was the need of hour to tackle current era challenges by imparting trainings to the officers and officials of the information departments on modern lines.

Govt makes contact with PTI

FROM PAGE 01 aimed at ensuring a level playing field for all parties, minimising political tensions prior to the general elections, and securing transparent and unbiased elections. Emphasising the significance of an impartial electoral process, Mahmood conveyed to the interim government that PTI is committed to a broader national reconciliation. However, he underlined that the collaborative efforts of all stakeholders are imperative to cultivate an environment conducive to fair elections in the country.

Rupee breaks winning...

FROM PAGE 01 the rupee gained 10.9% or Rs30.3 against the greenback for consecutive 28 sessions. The local currency got a boost from strong inflows caused by exporters' continuous dollar sales as they anticipated more rupee appreciation in the coming days. Exporters also sold dollars in the forward market as a result. "I think a correction was bound to happen since there was a continuous appreciation in the rupee," Arif Habib Limited (AHL) Head of Research Tahir Abbas told Geo.tv.

PM Kakar invites Chinese...

FROM PAGE 01 Kakar said the infrastructure of the country was upgraded and the potential of the large youth population was unleashed due to CPEC. "It is already proving to be a catalyst for job creation, poverty alleviation, and rural revitalisation giving strength to the vulnerable and underprivileged apart from reaching the remote sections of society," he added. "I myself come from Balochistan, an underdeveloped province of Pakistan, and generally believe that CPEC is a beacon of development, progress, and prosperity for the people of my province." Explaining that CPEC was a symbol of Pak-China strategic trust, interim PM Kakar said Pakistan was seeking to create new drives of growth that would benefit the wider region and beyond.

Taylor Fritz feels 'motivated and ready'

He beat Britain's Cameron Norrie 6-4, 6-3 to kick off the defence of his Tokyo title and said it was "probably an advantage that I might be less burnt-out"

OUR CORRESPONDENTS

TOKYO: Defending champion Taylor Fritz won his Japan Open first round match on Tuesday and said he felt "motivated and ready to play" after lightening his load ahead of the tournament. The American has been one of the busiest players on the ATP Tour this season but he has taken his foot off the gas since the US Open, appearing in only the Laver Cup and Shanghai Masters. He beat Britain's Cameron Norrie 6-4, 6-3 to kick off the defence of his Tokyo title and said it was "probably an advantage that I might be less burnt-out". "After the US Open, I think I had played the most matches of anyone on tour," said Fritz, the number one seed in Tokyo. "I thought it made sense to start the Asia swing in Shanghai. I feel



motivated and ready to play." World number 10 Fritz beat fellow American Frances Tiafoe in last year's Japan Open final and has won six career titles. He is the highest-ranked American in the world and overcame an early setback to dispatch Norrie in his Tokyo opener. "I was holding easily and then out of nowhere he broke me, so it was a tough spot to be in," said Fritz. "I feel like I played a couple of really good points to break and I played the bigger, more important points better in the return games. "I definitely upped my level." Fritz was joined in the next round by American Ben Shelton, who beat Japan's Taro Daniel 3-6, 6-4, 7-6 (7/2). Australia's number four seed Alex de Minaur also progressed with a 4-6, 7-6 (7/4), 7-6 (7/1) win over Britain's Jack Draper. Australia's Alexei Popyrin eliminated Russian number seven seed Karen Khachanov 6-4, 6-2.

Briefs

Span denounces 'genocide' in Gaza

DNA

MADRID: Both Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and Hamas need to be tried by the International Criminal Court (ICC), Spanish Minister for Social Rights Ione Belarra said on Monday. "Israel is carrying out a planned genocide" in Gaza by leaving hundreds of thousands of Palestinians without water, food, and electricity, Belarra, who is the leader of Podemos, a junior partner in the ruling coalition, claimed. She further described the move as a serious breach of international law and a possible war crime. Belarra also accused Israel of "unspeakable hypocrisy" for what she described as using the horrific murders of civilians by Hamas to justify its own atrocities, both in general and against Gaza in particular. In a five-minute video message broadcast on social media, Belarra accused Netanyahu's government of "apartheid and occupation" of the Palestinians, encouraged and enabled by the US and the EU. Speaking on behalf of her party, Belarra demanded the immediate opening of a humanitarian corridor, by which civilians could leave Gaza to safety.

2 Swedes killed in Brussels shooting

DNA

BRUSSELS: Two Swedish nationals were shot dead in Brussels late Monday by a suspect who remains at large, in an attack the Belgian prime minister described as "terrorism". The gunman, wearing a fluorescent orange jacket, fled on a scooter and Belgium subsequently raised its terror alert to four - the highest - for the Brussels region, and level three nationally. Belgian premier Alexander De Croo said the shooting had targeted Swedish citizens. "I have just offered my sincere condolences to the Swedish PM following tonight's harrowing attack on Swedish citizens in Brussels," De Croo said on X, formerly known as Twitter. "Our thoughts are with the families and friends who lost their loved ones. As close partners the fight against terrorism is a joint one." Several Belgian media outlets said the two individuals killed were wearing football shirts belonging to the Swedish national team ahead of a game between Sweden and Belgium. The Group F European qualifier match between the two countries was suspended at half-time "due to incidents," the Belgian side posted on social media accounts. Journalists in the Roi Baudouin stadium in Brussels said fans were being kept in the ground, and the UEFA website said the match had been halted at one goal apiece. Belgian media reported that Swedish players did not want to continue the game after the attack. A video of a man speaking Arabic and claiming responsibility for the shooting was circulating on social media, a source close to the case said.

DR Congo shipwreck toll rises to 47

KINSHASA: The initial report by authorities from the northwest Equateur province said 28 bodies had been pulled from the river and dozens more were missing. Speaking to a press briefing on Monday, Transport Minister Marc Ekila confirmed the new toll, but said "we were unable to get the records to determine the exact number of passengers on board" due to an "irregular situation". The accident was due to "overloading", the minister said, while adding that "wooden boats" were not authorised to operate at night. The large riverboat left the city of Mbandaka for the Bolomba Territory in DRC's Equateur province late Friday night. The vast Central African nation has few practicable roads, so travel often occurs on lakes, the Congo River and its tributaries, where shipwrecks are frequent and the toll often heavy. —Agencies

Russia moves to revoke nuclear test ban treaty

Russia says the aim is to restore parity with the United States, which has signed but never ratified the 1996 treaty, and that it will not resume testing unless Washington does

NEWS DESK

MOSCOW: Russia's parliament took the first step on Tuesday towards revoking ratification of the Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty and its top lawmaker warned the United States that Moscow might even abandon the pact altogether. Russia says the aim is to restore parity with the United States, which has signed but never ratified the 1996 treaty, and that it will not resume testing unless Washington does. But arms control experts are concerned that Russia may be inching towards a test which could usher in a new era of big power nuclear - and which the West would perceive as a Russian nuclear escalation amid the Ukraine war. Parliament's lower house, the Duma,

voted by 412 to zero, with no abstentions, to approve the withdrawal of the ratification in the first of three readings.

"Our vote is an answer to the USA - to their crass approach to their duties to maintain global security," Speaker Vyacheslav Volodin, a member of President Vladimir Putin's Security Council, told parliament. Report this ad "And what we will do next - whether we remain a party to the treaty or not, we will not tell them. We must think about global security, the safety of our citizens and act in their interests," Volodin said. Volodin said that the United States had asked Russia via the United Nations not to revoke ratification. He said Moscow's move was a wake-up call for Washington after its failure to ratify the CTBT for the past 23 years.

Russia ratified it in 2000. Advertisement • Scroll to continue Putin said on Oct. 5 that he was not ready to say whether or not Russia should resume nuclear testing after calls from some Russian security experts and lawmakers to test a nuclear bomb as a warning to the West. No country except North Korea has conducted a test involving a nuclear explosion this century. "SLIPPERY SLOPE" Swift passage of the denuclearisation bill was guaranteed after 440 of the Duma's 450 members attached their signatures to it as sponsors last week. Advertisement • Scroll to continue While Russia is revoking ratification, it has said it will remain a signatory to the CTBT and continue to supply data to the global monitoring system which alerts the world to any nuclear

test. Post-Soviet Russia has never carried out a nuclear test. The Soviet Union last tested in 1990 and the United States in 1992. A resumption of nuclear tests by Russia, the United States or China could mark the start of a new nuclear arms race between the big powers who stopped nuclear testing in the years following the 1991 collapse of the USSR. Andrei Baklitskiy, senior researcher at the United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research, said Russia's denuclearisation of the CTBT was part of a "slippery slope" towards resuming testing. He noted that Putin had said in February that Russia must "make everything ready" to conduct a test in case Washington did so, and that Defence Minister Sergei Shoigu had visited

Russia's testing ground in the remote northern archipelago of Novaya Zemlya in August. CNN published satellite images last month showing Russia, the United States and China have all built new facilities at their nuclear test sites in recent years. NUCLEAR TEST? Baklitskiy said in a telephone interview he did not see a Russian test as imminent, but "the more you go in this direction, the less of a big decision you would have to make" to proceed with one. For many scientists and campaigners, the extent of nuclear bomb testing during the Cold War indicated the folly of nuclear brinkmanship, which could ultimately destroy humanity and contaminate the planet for hundreds of thousands of years. But the

Ukraine war has raised tensions between Moscow and Washington to the highest level since the 1962 Cuban Missile Crisis just as China seeks to bolster its nuclear arsenal to accord with its status as an emerging superpower. Putin has said he sees no need to change Russia's nuclear doctrine - a doctrine that outlines that Russia would only order a strike with nuclear weapons if it was attacked, or if the existence of the state was endangered by an attack with conventional weapons. Since the CTBT, 10 nuclear tests have taken place. India conducted two in 1998, Pakistan also two in 1998, and North Korea conducted tests in 2006, 2009, 2013, twice in 2016, and 2017, according to the United Nations.

Lukashenko urges Belarus, Iran to resist western attacks
Belarusian president holds bilateral talks with Iran's first vice-president in capital Minsk

MINSK: Belarusian ruler Alexander Lukashenko said Tuesday that Belarus and Iran should work "closely" together to counter attacks from the West. The Belarusian president also accused "unfriendly countries" - such as the U.S. and other Western nations - of using never-ending Middle East tensions to poke Iran. "The situation in the world is heating up," Lukashenko told Iran's Vice President Mohammad Mokhber in Minsk on Tuesday, according to



Belarusian news agency Belta. "Our answer is: We should work more closely with each other, cooperate to counter these attacks," he added. Iran and Belarus have a

longstanding diplomatic relationship. Earlier this year, Lukashenko visited Iranian President Ebrahim Raisi in Tehran and the leaders signed a "co-operation roadmap" between the two countries. "The pressure exerted on our states is unprecedented," Lukashenko told Mokhber. "But you have already learned to resist it to some extent, and your experience is valuable for us." Iran has been sanctioned and condemned by Ukraine and the West over its continued support of

Russia amid its ongoing war in Ukraine, including supplying the Kremlin with Shahed kamikaze drones that are used to attack Ukrainian civilian targets and advising Moscow on how to circumvent the international sanctions it faces. During Mokhber's visit to Belarus, the Iranian official is set to meet several Belarusians for "high-level bilateral talks," according to Iran's state news agency IRNA. The one-day visit is expected to result in a new cooperation document to strengthen "ties between the two nations."

Venezuelan govt and opposition agree to resume talks

CARACAS: Venezuela's government and opposition said that they will restart talks seeking to end the country's political and economic crisis, after a nearly year-long suspension. In a joint statement, the two sides said that the Norway-facilitated negotiations will resume Tuesday in Bridgetown, Barbados, with participation of the United States - the destination for millions of Venezuelans who have fled economic hardship at home. In his weekly television appearance, President Nicolas Maduro said his government was "on the verge of starting a new round of signing agreements" with the opposition. "We are on the threshold of beneficial agreements for the country... I can say that these agreements will be very beneficial for peace, because peace must be taken care of, they will be very beneficial for the upcoming elections," he said. The opposition, backed by several countries including the United States, did not recognize Maduro's 2018 re-election in a vote widely dismissed as fraudulent. The following year, Washington ramped up sanctions against Caracas first imposed in 2015 over the brutal repression of anti-government protests. On Monday, the United States welcomed the announcement of fresh talks. —Agencies

UN refugee chief rallies support for Rohingya

WASHINGTON: Dwindling humanitarian aid for Rohingya refugees threatens to exacerbate one of the world's largest humanitarian crises, the UN's refugee chief said on Tuesday. Bangladesh is home to around a million members of the mostly stateless minority, many of whom fled a Myanmar military crackdown in 2017 that is now subject to a genocide probe at the International Criminal Court. Frustration is widespread over the lack of progress in a repatriation deal, rampant lawlessness in the refugee settlements and cuts to international humanitarian aid. Humanitarian assistance "is declining" amid crises in Ethiopia, Sudan, Afghanistan, Ukraine and Israel, Filippo Grandi told reporters on the sidelines of a regional meeting. "This is a crisis that should not be forgotten... If contributions decline, we are in trouble." The Rohingya crisis had only 42 percent of the \$875.9 million funding needed this year, he said. Budget cuts have forced the UN World Food Programme to steeply reduce humanitarian aid to the Rohingya camps this year, with funding for rations now at \$8 per refugee per month. Malnutrition in the sprawling camps is already rampant, rights groups say. The United Kingdom's Minister for the Indo-Pacific Anne-Marie Trevelyan announced a 4.5 million pound (\$5.4 million) funding contribution on Tuesday. Grandi said repatriation to Myanmar was still "Plan A," even as he acknowledged many Rohingya were still afraid to return to the country where they are widely viewed as interlopers from Bangladesh. Bangladesh and Myanmar are working on a pilot program to begin repatriating a limited number of Rohingya, despite concerns from rights groups who say conditions are not safe for their return. Rohingya in Myanmar are denied citizenship and access to health care and require permission to travel outside of their townships. —Agencies

Pakistan ex CNS receives Malaysian gallantry award

The award was conferred by the Malaysian King Abdullah of Pahang at an impressive investiture ceremony held at Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan Navy's former Chief of the Naval Staff, Admiral Muhammad Amjad Khan Niazi has been conferred with "Honorary Award of Malaysian Armed Forces Order for Valour (First Degree)" - Gallant Commander of Malaysian Armed Forces (Panglima Gagah Angkatan Tentera)". The award was conferred by the Malaysian King Abdullah of Pahang at an impressive investiture ceremony held at Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia. The Award



has been bestowed in recognition of untiring efforts and dedication of Admiral Muhammad Amjad Khan Niazi to strengthen bilateral relationship and mutual cooperation between the Armed Forces of Pakistan and Malaysia.

Turkiye 2024 budget emphasizes on sustainable growth

FOREIGN DESK

Ankara: Vice President Cevdet Yilmaz on Tuesday presented details of the government budget proposal for the upcoming year, highlighting it was prepared in accordance with the earlier presented medium-term plan, and said it would prioritize construction, revitalization and Türkiye's growth in all sectors. "Our priority is to rebuild our cities destroyed by the earthquakes," Yilmaz said vowing to overcome the cost of living issue with "realistic and grounded policies." Türkiye has allocated TL 1.03 trillion (\$37 billion) in its 2024 draft budget to meet the cost of earthquake-related damage and the needs of people in the region, Yilmaz said at a news conference in capital Ankara. Citing that despite the slowdown in global economic activities and ef-

fects of the early February earthquakes, they expect economic growth at 4.4% for 2023, Yilmaz said they foresee the economy expanding at 4% next year. "For 2024, we expect our economy to grow by 4% with a more balanced demand composition," he noted. The vice president recalled the positive streak in growth that continued for 12 consecutive quarters, noting Türkiye, which grew by 3.9% in the first half of 2023, has differentiated itself positively among the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) member countries. Yilmaz recalled that the medium-term program was put forward at the beginning of September, and the legal process for public institutions and organizations to prepare their budgets has started accordingly. He also stated that the 12th Development Plan was presented to Parliament

on Monday having received the endorsement of President Recep Tayyip Erdogan. "The 12th Development Plan" We have completed our 12th Development Plan, which we are working on with the 2053 vision and (which) sets out the roadmap for Türkiye's next five years," Erdogan wrote on X, formerly Twitter. Highlighting that the plan is set to be presented to Parliament, the president said it consists of five main axes



including: "Qualified people, strong family, healthy society," "stable growth, strong economy," "competitive production with green and digital transformation;" "disaster-resistant living spaces, sustainable environment;" and "democratic governance based on justice." Furthermore, the president said they aim for a stable and balanced growth of 5% on average. "We aim to reach a national income of \$159 trillion and income of \$17,554 per capita in 2028," he added. He also noted the aim of boosting employment at an annual average of 3% and reducing inflation to single digits. "We aim to permanently reduce inflation to single digits and reduce it to 4.7% by the end of 2028," the president noted. Next year's budget in the 2024 Central Government Budget, it is estimated that budget spending will be TL 11.08 trillion while the budget revenues will stand at TL

8.44 trillion," the vice president said. Describing the budget as being prepared considering "resilient cities, resilient economy and resilient society" as priorities, Yilmaz said another key priority includes a focus on strengthening coordination between fiscal and monetary policies. "Another key priority is contributing to the goal of ensuring macro-financial and price stability within an approach that focuses on fiscal discipline and strengthens coordination between fiscal and monetary policies," he said. According to Yilmaz, the government aims to achieve its export targets and further boost the figure in 2024. "We aim to achieve a performance above the previous year with exports of over \$255 billion in 2023 and reach the figure of \$267 billion for 2024," he said. "Our budget has a comprehensive and inclusive development approach that supports investment, employment.

Russian shelling wounds 6 in Ukraine

KYIV: Russian strikes on the southern Ukrainian city of Kherson wounded at least six people on Tuesday, after Moscow said it had shot down drones headed for annexed Crimea as Russia's offensive drags on for almost 20 months and with Kyiv waging a counter-offensive launched during the summer. The head of Kherson, Roman Mrochko, said the southern city saw "massive" Russian shelling that wounded five people. Another strike on a nearby transport company wounded two more people, the region's governor, Oleksandr Prokudin said. Kyiv also said it had shot down six Iranian-made Shahed drones that were launched from Moscow-controlled Crimea for the port city of Odesa. Several hours earlier, Russia said it had shot down eight drones over Crimea, which regularly comes under Ukrainian attacks. —DNA

Man dead in bushfire in Australia's NSW

SYDNEY: Police confirmed on Tuesday that a man died in the Australian state of New South Wales (NSW) after a bushfire ripped through a rural property in the state's north. Emergency services were called to Stony Creek Lane at Temagoc at about 10:15 p.m. local time on Monday. A 56-year-old man was reported missing after a bushfire passed through the area. On arrival, police officers located the body of a man, and his bulldozer nearby was destroyed. The man is believed to be a local property owner, whose identity still requires formal confirmation. The Temagoc area is currently remaining under the threat of an out-of-control blaze that has already burnt 21,010 hectares. The NSW Rural Fire Service (RFS) called on residents to stay alert and monitor their surroundings, as the active fire continues to burn close to properties. According to the fire authority, as of 8:00 a.m. local time on Tuesday, there are 69 fires burning around the state, with 32 not yet contained. "While there are no total fire bans today, several areas in the north of the state will experience high fire danger," the NSW RFS warned. —DNA

S. Korea's import price rises in Sept

SEOUL: Price for imported goods to South Korea rose for the third consecutive month owing to expensive crude oil and the local currency's depreciation versus the U.S. dollar, central bank data showed Tuesday. The import price index advanced 2.9 percent in September from a month earlier after picking up 0.2 percent in July and 4.2 percent in August, according to the Bank of Korea (BOK). Price for imported raw materials gained 5.7 percent last month on higher crude oil price and the domestic currency's descent to the greenback. Dubai crude, South Korea's benchmark, averaged 93.25 U.S. dollars per barrel in September, up 7.9 percent from a month ago. The average won/dollar exchange rate increased to 1,329.47 won per dollar in September from 1,318.47 won in the prior month. —APP

Tokyo stocks open higher

TOKYO: Tokyo stocks opened higher Tuesday on the back of gains on Wall Street ahead of a flurry of corporate earnings reports. The benchmark Nikkei 225 index was up 1.36 percent, or 430.91 points, at 32,089.94 in early trade, while the broader Topix index was up 1.17 percent, or 26.63 points, at 2,300.17. Overnight, US stocks rose with the Dow Jones Industrial Average rising 0.9 percent to 33,984.54, the broad-based S&P 500 advancing 1.1 percent, and the tech-savvy Nasdaq jumping 1.2 percent. "The Japanese market is expected to start with gains following rallies in US stocks," senior market analyst Toshiyuki Kanayama said. The dollar fetched 149.57 yen in early Asian trade, against 149.63 yen in New York on Monday. —APP

Briefs

ATC cancels Dr Yasmin Rashid's bail application

DNA

LAHORE: The anti-terrorism court (ATC) of Lahore on Tuesday dismissed the bail application of former Punjab health minister Yasmin Rashid. ATC Judge Arshad Javed rejected the bail plea of the PTI leader. The case was registered by the Shadman police for her alleged involvement in ransacking case. During the proceedings, the prosecutor said new sections had been incorporated in the case and that the former minister was on physical remand for two days. The bail application of Ms Rashid was not admissible, the prosecutor argued. Declaring the application ineffective, the court rejected her bail request.

14 PIA flights cancelled due to lack of fuel

ADIL SHAHEEN

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan State Oil (PSO) has stopped the fuel supply to Pakistan International Airlines (PIA) at Multan, Sukkur, and Gilgit airports due to unpaid dues, exacerbating the precarious situation of the national flag carrier. This suspension of fuel supply on Monday led to the cancellation of 14 flights between Multan, Karachi, Sukkur, Islamabad, and Gilgit. According to sources, PIA owes PSO an amount of Rs650 million according to the agreed schedule. As reported by The Express Tribune on Sunday, PIA has sought additional borrowing of over Rs7 billion from banks due to concerns about the potential partial or complete suspension of its flight operations resulting from a severe financial crisis. According to the report, PIA wrote to the Aviation Division, requesting an immediate loan of over Rs7 billion from banks. The letter also noted that the government of Pakistan's guarantee includes the option for the airline to secure a loan of Rs7.5 billion. Interestingly, no bank has shown interest in providing a loan to the airline. The letter also pointed out that due to financial difficulties, fuel supply in Jeddah and Dubai had been halted, and the state-owned oil marketing company PSO had refused to supply fuel to the airline. It also mentioned the possibility of the International Air Transport Association (IATA) suspending its membership at any time, and the Federal Board of Revenue (FBR) had issued notices to the airline.

Apple boss makes surprise China visit

BEIJING: Apple chief executive Tim Cook has made a surprise visit to China. Though in an upbeat mood as he met gamers in the city of Chengdu, the company faces flagging iPhone demand in the country, analysts suggest. It is his second trip to China this year - in March he said Apple had a "symbiotic" relationship with China, a key manufacturing base. But the firm's operations in the country have been complicated by Covid and US-China tensions. Mr Cook's visit included a trip to Apple's Taikoo Li store to meet young players of Tencent's Honour of Kings online battle game. "The energy tonight was off the charts!" he wrote on the Chinese social media platform Weibo. Honour of Kings started in Chengdu but was now "a global phenomenon on the App Store", he told the state-run China Daily newspaper. He hoped that Chinese developers could repeat this success with software for Apple's new Vision Pro augmented reality headset, which would also use a Chinese manufacturer, the report said. This year marks Apple's third decade in the country. Mr Cook, who has been CEO since 2011, is regarded as the architect of Apple's embrace of Chinese manufacturing, but the relationship has had its ups and downs in recent years. - Agencies

Italian Embassy's digital art exhibition draws huge interest

Stefano Fake underlined that every era had its unique artistic tools, and digital art represented the current period's creative expression



DNA

ISLAMABAD: The Italian well-known artist Stefano Fake has brought to Pakistan the famous digital art zone. The Italian Embassy in Pakistan, in order to make his work

known to Pakistanis, organized an immersive digital art exhibition, bringing an innovative art form to the Pakistani audience. Speaking on the occasion, Italian Ambassador Andreas Ferrarese expressed his pride in presenting the unique showcase of digital art to the public, highlighting its versa-

tility and wide range of possibilities. The ambassador acknowledged the artwork of Stefano Fake, one of Italy's celebrated digital artists. He praised Italy's capacity to blend historical heritage with new and creative arts, dispelling the notion that the country was solely associated with its past.

Stefano Fake, in his address, delved into the journey of digital art, which he began nearly 30 years ago. He described his transition from traditional art to digital tools in 1997, culminating in the establishment of his studio in 2001, dedicated to creating immersive art experiences. Fake underlined that every era had its unique artistic tools, and digital art represented the current period's creative expression. He said, "The purpose of art is, after all, to create original and imaginative forms of aesthetic expression shared with a community through experiences and events." Stefano Fake's early work in this field was initially met with skepticism, often being associated with music or youth-centric events. However, over time, digital art gained recognition and acceptance. His exhibitions now span the globe, from Germany to Colombia, and even recent showcases in Berlin and Shanghai. This transformation reflects the growing appreciation for new media art worldwide. One of Fake's groundbreaking approaches was to immerse audiences in a digital environment, using video projection to transform spaces and even people. He dispelled early concerns about safety and emphasized the combination of physical reality with digital art, creating immersive experiences that evolve and transcend traditional static forms of art. The term "immersive art experiences" emerged, capturing the essence of their work, as it blends physical spaces, bodies, and digital artworks, making it a unique and ephemeral experience. These art experiences offer a fresh perspective, bridging the gap between contemporary culture and art.

Biden to visit Israel today

AGENCIES

WASHINGTON: US Secretary of State Antony Blinken has announced that President Joe Biden is set to pay a solidarity visit to Israel, soon after revealing that Tel Aviv agreed to devise a plan for providing humanitarian aid to Gaza's civilians. During the visit, the top US diplomat said Biden will discuss plans to reduce the number of civilian deaths during wartime, amid a rising humanitarian crisis, while preventing Hamas from benefiting. Blinken announced his decision for the aid plan after 9 hours of negotiations with Netanyahu, which lasted until early Tuesday, after their meeting was disrupted by air raid sirens warning of incoming Palestinian rocket fire, forcing them to temporarily shelter in a bunker. Blinken, on his fifth day of round-the-clock diplomacy in the region, returned to Israel after visiting six Arab countries in four days to address the humanitarian crisis in Gaza, where Israeli bombardment has martyred over 2,800 Palestinians and forced hundreds of thousands to flee their homes.

Sweden warns country facing biggest threat

FOREIGN DESK

STOCKHOLM: Sweden's prime minister has warned that his country is facing the biggest threat in its modern history after a gunman in Brussels killed two Swedes in an attack that authorities are investigating as terrorism. "Sweden has in modern times never been under as big a threat as now," Ulf Kristersson told reporters on Tuesday. Kristersson said Sweden and the European Union needed to bolster their borders and internal security to prevent dangerous individuals from staying in the bloc. "Every indication is that this is a terror attack, targeting Sweden and Swedish citizens, just because they are Swedes," he said, adding that the region "can't be naive." Two Swedes were shot dead in Brussels and another was wounded on Monday night as Belgium hosted Sweden in a Euro 2024 qualifying football match. Accused gunman, a 45-year-old Tunisian national, was shot dead by Belgian police on Tuesday.

No one can stop resistance forces

NEWS DESK

TEHRAN: Leader of the Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Seyyed Ali Khamenei says if Israeli crimes against Palestinians in Gaza continue, no one can stop Muslims and resistance forces. Speaking in a meeting with a group of Iranian elites and top scientific talents on Tuesday, Ayatollah Khamenei said that Muslim nations are angry at the Israeli bombardment of the Gaza Strip. "If these crimes continue, the Muslims and the resistance forces will become impatient, [and] no one would be able to stop them," he said. "This is a fact that exists. Of course, whatever the Zionist regime does, it will not be able to make up for the scandalous failure it suffered." The leader also said that what is in front of the eyes of the whole world in Palestine is the Israeli regime's crime of genocide. Claims by some countries that Palestinians have killed civilians are false as all those living in settlements across occupied territories are armed, he asserted.

Saudi Arabia demands immediate ceasefire

RIYADH: Saudi Arabia denounced on Tuesday the forced displacement of the Palestinian population, calling for an immediate ceasefire in Gaza and the lifting of the blockade. The statement, made during the council of ministers cabinet meeting in Riyadh chaired by King Salman, called for the return to the peace process under the Arab Peace Initiative which seeks to establish an independent Palestinian state along the 1967 borders with East Jerusalem as its capital. The cabinet reviewed discussion on Gaza held between the Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman and leaders of the Türkiye, Iran, and France, as well as with the US Secretary of State. The cabinet also apprised the outcomes of the eighth session of the Saudi-Russian Joint Committee, focused on advancing coop across crucial sectors to fulfill future objectives. - DNA

Palestinian lawmakers arrested in occupied WB

OCCUPIED WEST BANK: The Israeli army has detained 55 Palestinians, including several parliamentarians, most notably Parliament Speaker Aziz Dweik, during raids across the occupied West Bank, a known rights group confirmed. Amani Sarahneh, a spokesperson for the Palestinian Prisoners Society, told Anadolu news agency that the Israeli arrests included senior figures from the Hamas group and former Palestinian parliamentarians, including Speaker Aziz Dweik. The Israeli army has yet to comment on the arrests. According to the Palestinian Prisoners Society, approximately 6,000 Palestinians are currently being held in Israeli jails. Eleven days into the conflict with Palestinian group Hamas, Israel's bombardment and blockade of Gaza has continued, with over one million people displaced - almost half of Gaza's total population, according to the UN Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA). The fighting began when Hamas on Oct. 7 initiated Operation Al Aqsa Flood, a multi-pronged surprise attack that included a barrage of rocket launches and infiltrations into Israel by land, sea, and air. It said the incursion was in retaliation for the storming of the Al Aqsa Mosque and increased violence by Israeli settlers. The Israeli military then launched Operation Swords of Iron against Hamas targets in Gaza. At least 2,808 Palestinians, including 750 children, have been killed in Israeli airstrikes on Gaza, while the death toll from such Israeli attacks in the occupied West Bank has reached 60. More than 1,400 Israelis have been killed in the armed conflict. - Agencies

Govt gets more time to appeal against SC's verdict

COURT REPORTER

ISLAMABAD: The Supreme Court (SC) on Tuesday granted 15 days time to the federal government to file an appeal against the apex court's decision abolishing the amendments made to the National Accountability Bureau (NAB) laws. The additional time has been given in the light of the SC (Practice and Procedure) Act 2023, which came into force granting a right to appeal the apex court's verdicts. Attorney-General for Pakistan Mansoor Awan said the extension was sought to add additional grounds in the appeal against the judgment issued by SC on September 15 about the case. "There is now a right of appeal under the Practice and Procedure Act," the AGP said. The SC, on September 15, ruled to strike down some amendments made to the National Accountability Ordinance (NAO), 1999. The NAB amendments case was related to public importance; thus, it fell under the

original jurisdiction of the superior court i.e. Article 184(3) of the Constitution. The time limit for filing a revision against the SC decision expired on October 15, with the government seeking 15 more days for filing an appeal. The government was, however, supposed to file the appeal against the NAB amendments verdict today. With the application of the SC law following the top court's decision to uphold it, additional time has now been granted to the government. Through the appeal, the government is likely to ask the SC to annul the decision against the NAB amendments and order its restoration. Meanwhile, petitioner Zubair Ahmed Siddiqui has filed an appeal against the same verdict of the apex court. Last week, Pakistan People's Party (PPP) Senator Farooq H Naek filed a review petition against the aforementioned decision on October 14. The lawyer filed the review petition on behalf of a citizen named Abdul Jabbar, who was neither party in the litigation nor did he belong to any political party.

Pak-Hungary vow to enhance collaboration in military tech



STAFF REPORT

ISLAMABAD: Brigadier General József Koller, Commander Hungarian Air Force, along with his delegation called on Air Chief Marshal Zaheer Ahmed Baber Sidhu, Chief of the Air Staff, Pakistan Air Force, during his visit to Air Headquarters Islamabad today. The first-ever visit by the Hungarian Air Chief to Pakistan marks a significant milestone in the bilateral relations between the two countries and a new opening in Air Force to Air Force relations. The historic event highlights the growing cooperation and friendship between Pakistan and Hungary, particularly in the realm of defence industry and military partnership. The meeting emphasized the exchange of insight and sharing of ideas to explore potential areas of joint collaboration particularly in the domains of military technology and training programs. Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between Pakistan Air Force and Hungarian Air Force is expected to be finalized in the near future, outlining a framework for Pakistan

Air Force to provide basic and tactical level training to Hungarian Air Force pilots. Upon his arrival, the visiting dignitary was warmly received by Air Chief Marshal Zaheer Ahmed Baber Sidhu, Chief of the Air Staff, Pakistan Air Force. A smartly turned-out contingent of Pakistan Air Force presented Guard of Honour to Brigadier General József Koller. He was also introduced to the Principal Staff Officers of Pakistan Air Force. During the meeting, Chief of the Air Staff provided a comprehensive insight into Pakistan Air Force's operational construct, force goals and its endeavors for the force structure with a keen focus on future warfare. He emphasized on the significance of the robust diplomatic and defence ties between Pakistan and Hungary which are built upon shared perspectives on critical matters related to regional peace, security and stability. Appreciating the participation of Hungarian Air Force in Exercise Indus Shield at an operational air base of PAF, the Air Chief reiterated his resolve to further deepen the strong bond of friendship that unites the two nations in the face of shared challenges.

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