



Islamabad POST

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US to 'increase force posture' in Middle East, says Austin

Detailed News On Page-08

Sanjrani to attend int'l symposium

Detailed News On Page-08



Pakistan will be different team in next match

Detailed News On Page-06



Israeli ground offensive thwarted: Hamas Move South or risk being seen as 'terrorists'

Israel orders villagers to evacuate Lebanon border as Hezbollah tensions rise; Israeli bombing martyrs over 4,741 Palestinians mostly civilians

NEWS DESK

GAZA CITY: Amid continued Israeli bombardment, Palestinians said they received renewed warnings from Israel's military to move from north Gaza to the south of the strip, with the added threat that they could be identified as sympathisers of a "terrorist organisation" if they stayed put. The message was delivered in leaflets marked with the Israel Defense Forces name and logo from Saturday and sent to people via mobile phone audio messages across the Gaza Strip, a narrow territory that is just 45 km (28 miles) long. "Urgent warning, to residents of Gaza. Your presence north of Wadi Gaza puts your life in danger. Whoever chooses not to leave north Gaza to the south of Wadi Gaza might be identified as an accomplice in a terrorist organisation," the leaflet said. Israeli airstrikes continued through the night, killing at least 55 Palestinians in Gaza, raising the total number of casualties since October 7 past 4,300. Israeli officials claim surprise offensive by Hamas on October 7 left 1,400 dead and 212 hostages were taken. The occupying state has pounded Gaza with airstrikes besides

Continued on Page 06

No US call for ceasefire in new UNSC resolution

AGENCIES

NEW YORK CITY: The US on Saturday submitted to the UN Security Council a draft resolution condemning Hamas and asserting Israel's "right to self-defense," two days after Washington vetoed a Brazilian resolution demanding a humanitarian ceasefire to allow aid into Gaza. This comes as the UN is issuing a plea for a humanitarian ceasefire in Gaza, describing the situation there as "catastrophic." UN agencies have said the 20 trucks that entered the Gaza Strip on Saturday through Rafah for the first time in two weeks were only a "drop in the ocean" for the 1.2 million Palestinians who already before the war relied on aid to survive in the enclave, which has been under Israeli siege for nearly 16 years. More than 4,300 Palestinians have died since Israel began bombing Gaza in retaliation for the Oct. 7

Hamas attack on Israeli towns that killed 1,400 Israelis. The resolution, seen by Arab News, "unequivocally rejects and condemns the (Oct. 7) heinous terrorist attacks by Hamas and other terrorist groups" on Israeli towns as well as the "taking and killing of hostages, murder, torture, rape, sexual violence, and indiscriminate firing of rockets." In it, the US accuses Hamas of intending to carry out further attacks. "Israel's inherent right of individual or collective self-defense (is) reflected in Article 51 of the Charter," the draft resolution states. Without naming Israel, it adds that in fighting terrorism, "member states must comply with all their obligations under international law, in particular international human rights, refugee and international humanitarian law." Amnesty International has described Israel's retaliatory strikes on the Gaza Strip as "cataclysmic."

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GAZA CONTINUES TO BLEED



GAZA: Palestinians inspect the debris of homes destroyed in a series of Israeli airstrikes on Deir el-Balah, in the central Gaza Strip. In the second picture, a bereaved mother in Gaza bids a sorrowful farewell to her son, four grandchildren and daughter-in-law, all of them were massacred in an Israeli airstrike last night. In the third picture a doctor extends fatherly love to a wounded minor. - DNA

Govt plans to hike gas price up to 200%

KHAYAMABASSI

ISLAMABAD: The caretaker finance minister has called the meeting of the Economic Coordination Committee (ECC) on Monday to deliberate on the proposal for an increase in the gas tariff. According to sources, the ECC meeting has been called at 4 pm tomorrow. A summary of the increase in gas prices is likely to be presented in the meeting. The summary forwarded by the petroleum division has suggested about 200% increase in the gas tariff. It has been proposed to increase the price of gas up to 172% for domestic consumers, for other categories, it has been suggested to hike the price of gas up to 200%. Sources said that a phenomenal increase in the fixed charges for the lowest gas users has been proposed. It has been proposed to raise the fixed monthly charges from Rs10 to Rs400 for the protected customers. Sources divulged that the increase in gas prices will be applicable from October 1.

Govt informs SC 'Trial of civilians in military courts has started'

The accused persons were taken into custody during the month of May this year and have been in custody since then

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

ISLAMABAD: The military trials of civilians, involved in the May 9 mayhem following the arrest of Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) Chairman Imran Khan in a corruption case, have already begun, the federal govt informed the Supreme Court. The government told the court about the development related to trials in the military court in a miscellaneous application following orders of the top court on August 3, highlighting that at least 102 people were taken into custody due to their involvement in the attacks on military installations and

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55 workers arrested from PTI convention

BUREAU REPORT

LAHORE: Police and law enforcement agencies arrested 55 workers of the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) from a party convention in the Kahna area of Lahore district on Sunday, despite prior permission granted by the district administration. Express News reported that the authorities entered the site forcefully and raided the office of

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UN calls for 'urgent' help for Afghans

UNFPA is working to address reproductive health needs

NEW YORK: The relief wing of the United Nations Saturday called for "urgent" assistance for Afghan families in Herat, who

Continued on Page 06

Briefs

PPP leader lambasts PML-N

DNA

ISLAMABAD: The PPP has censured P M L - N "changed" narrative on elections, as the party's supremo, Nawaz Sharif, avoids the mention of elections in his much-awaited address upon his return to the country after a four-year exile. PPP leader Faisal Karim Kundi said the PML-N has changed its narrative, even though they had earlier always spoken in favour of general elections ahead of the party supremo's arrival back home. The politician slammed the three-time former prime minister for shying away from speaking about polls in the country which, according to ECP.

Rashid to launch 'amnesty mission'

FAISAL SHEIKH

RAWALPINDI: Former interior minister Sheikh Rashid Ahmed announced that he would launch an amnesty mission tomorrow (Monday) for innocent people incarcerated in connection with the May 9 incidents. Taking to X (formerly known as Twitter), the head of Awami Muslim League said it is mission of his life.

Aviation crisis grips as PIA's flight operation 'completely suspended'

PSO rebuffed claims of fuel supply suspension to national carrier and said that it had provided fuel to almost 64 flights since Friday night

NAZIR SIYAL

KARACHI: Pakistan International Airlines' (PIA) flight operations were 'completely suspended', as 77 flights were cancelled due to a halt in the supply of fuel by Pakistan State Oil (PSO). The national carrier's financial crises have intensified as Pakistan State Oil (PSO), according to a PIA spokesperson, has stopped the supply of fuel despite securing the payments. A PIA spokesperson has confirmed that flight operations were 'completely suspended' due to suspension of the fuel supply to the airline as 77 flights were cancelled. The spokesperson noted that 52 international and 29 domestic flights were scheduled on Sunday, of which only 4 flights departed. It added that the PIA administration was in constant touch with the Pakistan State Oil (PSO) as payments could not

be made due to bank closure on Sunday. "The national carrier has paid over Rs220 million to the PSO for the weekend," the spokesperson said, noting that the scheduled evening flights will operate as soon as today's credit line is available while alternative connections are being provided to passengers on the affected flights. Meanwhile, Pakistan State Oil (PSO) - in a statement - rebuffed claims of fuel supply suspension to national carrier and said that it had provided fuel to almost 64 flights since Friday night. "On Friday evening, PIA paid Rs220 million for fuel for Saturday and Sunday," the corporation said, adding that a list of 39 flights for fuel supply was also provided by the airline. According to the corporation, fuel was being provided as per priority flights list provided by PIA. "PIA's payout limit for Saturday and Sunday is still

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Nawaz Sharif is back; will it make a difference?

ANALYSIS

ANSAR M BHATTI

THE return of Nawaz Sharif, the PML-N's leader and former Prime Minister, after nearly four years of self-imposed exile, stirred a wave of poignant moments. As he graced the stage with his presence, the audience witnessed heartfelt scenes, such as his warm embrace with his daughter, Maryam Nawaz, and his younger brother, Shehbaz Sharif. The sheer scale of the attendance at this homecoming event was undeniably massive, and this is hardly surprising, given the substantial support the PML-N received from the state machinery. It evoked memories of PTI public gatherings, where the turnout was nothing short of phenomenal. However, it's worth noting that during that era, PTI held a special status with the Establishment, which contributed to the massive crowds they attracted. Nawaz Sharif's return marks a significant moment in Pakistan's political landscape, underscoring his enduring influence in the country's politics. His return on one hand promises to breathe new life into the PML-N, which

“Corruption has been a persistent roadblock to Pakistan's progress, despite its abundance of resources. It is high time to address this issue head-on, as it is a major factor contributing to the country's ongoing struggles”

has faced significant challenges, particularly following the 16-month tenure in government after the PTI was voted out. On the other hand, it also raises the possibility that the upcoming elections could proceed according to the Election Commission's previously announced schedule or be delayed by a few weeks. Given the Senate elections scheduled for March 2024, there is a shared interest among the ECP and the participating political parties in ensuring that the electoral process concludes before that crucial deadline. Nawaz Sharif, during his speech, provided insights into his previous terms in office when, in his view, accessibility was widespread, even for those less fortunate. While avoiding specific reference to the PDM period, he attributed the entirety of the nation's troubles to the PTI government. Without explicitly mentioning Imran Khan, the former prime minister questioned the authenticity of his religious gestures. According to Sharif, the PTI chairman publicly counting beads attempted to project himself as a devout

figure, which, in Sharif's opinion, did not align with his actions. Nawaz Sharif exhibited a remarkable degree of discretion when discussing his removal from power. Though he refrained from directly naming the Establishment, his insinuations left little doubt about who he believed was responsible for his ouster. With a touch of literary finesse, he chose to invoke the words of Mirza Ghalib, hinting at the immense reservoir of untold secrets. In a poetic flourish, he implied that if he were to reveal the full extent of what transpired in the past, his tears alone could inundate the entire world. This combination of careful words and poetic allusions conveyed the depth of his experience while maintaining a sense of dignity and intrigue. However, the real question remains: can he maintain this level of self-control in the days ahead? Nawaz Sharif has a long history of strained relations with the establishment in Pakistan. Each time he clashed with the powerful stakeholders in our political system, it ultimately led to his removal from office.

In his three previous tenures as prime minister, he was unable to complete a full five-year term due to these confrontations. Considering his track record and his approach to dealing with establishment involvement in political matters, it's reasonable to predict that even if, by some stroke of luck, he manages to come into power for the fourth time, the outcome may not be different from what we've seen in the past. "Winning back the trust of the Establishment may indeed pose a formidable challenge for him. His closest allies have repeatedly counseled him that unless he reconciles with the Establishment, his political prospects could remain in the shadows. He presented a comprehensive 9-point agenda aimed at steering the country out of its current crises. However, it's worth noting that two vital aspects appear to be absent from this agenda. Firstly, there is a conspicuous absence of any clarification regarding the role of the Establishment in politics. Secondly, there is a noticeable lack of details about his vision for combating corruption in Pakistan.

The absence of a clear stance on the role of the Establishment in politics may be due to the significant challenges it poses to his survival despite the fact that he earnestly believes addressing this issue is crucial for the country's democratic stability and transparency. Furthermore, the urgent need to tackle corruption cannot be overstated. Corruption has been a persistent roadblock to Pakistan's progress, despite its abundance of resources. It is high time to address this issue head-on, as it is a major factor contributing to the country's ongoing struggles. In summary, while the 9-point agenda is a promising step, it should be supplemented with a clear strategy for dealing with the Establishment's role in politics and a robust plan for eradicating corruption in Pakistan to truly lead the nation out of its current crises. All said and done, there seems a long way ahead for him to be able to present himself as the future prime minister of Pakistan. Since the PML-N seems to have been 'chosen' as the next ruling party, there is a strong possibility that Nawaz Sharif will receive some legal relief from the courts. However, the complete exoneration of his sentence will require him to remain cautiously optimistic until he obtains an unequivocal clean chit, which is a prerequisite for his eligibility to participate in future elections.

REPARATION OF ILLEGAL IMMIGRANTS
08

Pakistani delegation to visit Kyrgyzstan, fostering bilateral trade

The delegation comprises exporters and investors who are eager to engage with Kyrgyz counterparts to identify synergies and establish fruitful partnerships, he added

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Chairman Kyrgyzstan Trade House Meher Kashif Younis on Sunday said a high-level Pak delegation of pharmaceutical and surgical instruments will visit Kyrgyzstan on November 6 for three days to explore the possibilities of investment avenues, joint ventures, promotion of bilateral trade and collaboration.

Talking to a delegation of exporters led by Ms Maheen he said this initiative signifies our commitment to

enhancing economic cooperation and fostering meaningful relationships, said a news release here. He said he firmly believed that by working together, we can tap into the immense potential that exists in the pharmaceutical and surgical instruments sectors.

Collaborative efforts in these areas can lead to the exchange of knowledge, technology, and resources, ultimately benefiting both our economies. He said an upcoming significant event holds the promise of strengthening the ties between the two Mus-

lim countries and fostering mutual prosperity. The delegation comprises exporters and investors who are eager to engage with Kyrgyz counterparts to identify synergies and establish fruitful partnerships, he added.

Meher Kashif Younis said he is fully confident that this visit will pave the way for enduring partnerships and contribute significantly to the growth of our respective industries. He said he would support and cooperate in facilitating the interactions between the visiting delegation and key stakeholders in Kyrgyzstan.

Call for infrastructure up gradation to boost tourism

ISLAMABAD: Infrastructure including roadways, airports and public transit systems should be upgraded to facilitate easier access to different tourist sites which promote tourism in the country at large. Talking to APP here on Sunday, a tourist Aleena Khan said that enhancing the country's infrastructure by upgrading transportation networks will facilitate national and international visitors. She said that she

visited different places in Azad Jammu and Kashmir along with her family and found roads in dilapidated condition and faced miseries and hardships by commuting from one site to another. Khan said Pakistan has rich tourism potential which attracts most domestic and foreign dignitaries to come to visit the country. She stressed the need to improve road infrastructure as a large number of international tourists are thronging to

the country to enjoy their trip or make the journey memorable. Another tourist Ahsan Ali said that developing a strong infrastructure would pave the way to encourage tourists to visit various recreational and religious sites, adding that tourism is contributing a lot in economic growth as well. He said that infrastructure including air, ground, port and tourism services like hotel rooms and car rental services

plays an important role in travel and tourism competitiveness, serving as the arteries of the industry. It may be mentioned here that the tourism ministry has started work on the launch of a "Tourism App" to provide one-click information about tourist destinations, this app includes all the information regarding restaurants, hotels, transport, travel facilities, culture, entertainment and historical places.—APP



KARACHI: Metro Pakistan representative receive award from Sindh Governor Kamran Tesori.—DNA

CDA starts installation of new led lights

ISLAMABAD: The Capital Development Authority (CDA) has started installation of new led lights, repair and maintenance of old street lights along the Streets, Service Roads and Main Avenues of the federal capital. "The civic body has already allocated funds in this regard which will help to ensure proper lighting arrangement on these roads and streets," a CDA official told APP. He said the shortage of street lights in different sectors of the federal capital caused a recent increase in street crimes, prompting residents to raise the issue with the relevant authorities. He said the CDA was also taking concrete steps for ensuring the provision of urban facilities to the city dwellers and maintenance of infrastructure including the installation of street lights, road carpeting and resolving water-related issues, neglected in the past. "Special attention is being given to the completion of the remaining development works in the sectors I, G, H and D series, provision of civic facilities, and facilitating the home builders in these sectors in pursuance of the directives of Chairman CDA Capt (R) Anwar ul Haq," he said. Now, he said the work of installation of streetlights in the main roads and within the sectors to ensure proper lighting management in Sectors, G-7, G-8, G-9, G-10 I-11, I-10, I-14 and Sector I-16, D-12 and other sectors was in full swing, he added.—DNA

CHR, IOM Pak sign MoU to protect human rights of migrants

ISLAMABAD: The National Commission for Human Rights (NCHR) and the International Organization for Migration (IOM) Pakistan have signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) here Sunday to strengthen the cooperation and collaboration on initiatives relating to the promotion and protection of the human rights of migrants, especially those in vulnerable situations. The MoU signifies the commitment of both organizations to prioritize the well-being and human rights of migrants, recognizing that while migration in the context of globalization brings significant opportunities, it is critical to facilitate the safe, orderly, and regular movement of people. Under the MoU, the NCHR and IOM Pakistan will engage in joint activities aimed at generating evidence and re-

search, improving awareness and outreach and providing policy advice in line with the priorities of the Government of Pakistan. Rabiya Javeria Agha, Chairperson NCHR, highlighted the lack of rights for migrants and the dangerous journeys they undertake stated, "The Greek migrant's boat disaster was a heart-wrenching reminder of the risks people take in their desire to seek a better future. She said with over 2,000 lives lost in the Mediterranean this year alone, irregular migration demands our immediate attention. Through collective efforts, we can work towards a safer and more compassionate approach to migration, one that upholds the well-being and dignity of those in search of a better future, she said and added, the recently signed MoU between NCHR and IOM Pakistan will play a crucial role in advancing this

goal. Expressing concerns about the situation of vulnerability and risks faced by migrants, in particular women and children, Mio Sato, Chief of Mission, IOM Pakistan shared that the signing of this MoU came extremely on time, noting the evolving migration trends and the dire need for evidence-based solutions. The NCHR and IOM have been collaborating on various advocacy activities, however, having a formal partnership will allow us to do more within our respective mandates and ensure that our support is targeted towards those most in need, she said. The cooperation framework and its objectives are overall aligned with the cross-cutting and interdependent guiding principles of the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration (GCM), which emphasizes ensuring the protection.—APP

Five book's launching ceremony held at PAC

RAWALPINDI: Punjab Arts Council (PAC) in collaboration with the International Writers Forum organized the book-launching ceremony of five different writers and poets. The well-known poet and writer of the country Dr. Farhat Abbas presided over the literary gathering. Poet and writer Nusrat Yab Khan Nusrat presented Naat while Shahzad Afaq was the host of the event. Dr. Khalid Asran's fictional collection "Fusun Zaar", Faiza Malik's poetry collection "Ek Shahr Wafa Tha", Dr. Sabir Afaqi's book "Aapka Kaalam", Asim Nawaz Khandi's books "Baba Ji Salim Khandi, Naqtnazar" was presented in the literary event. Naseem Sahar, Naveed Malik, Prof. Nauman Nazir, Ahmed Mazhoo Ashraf and Kamal Abbas, while discussing extensively, said that these books were a great addition to Urdu literature in many respects. The participants and observers paid tribute to Chairman Shehzad Afaq Al-Tamimi's books, literature, writings and services for literature. Director of Arts Council Waqar Ahmad said that the future of Urdu literature was bright in Pakistan, adding the young generation was stepping into the field of literature with creativity. A new generation was creating the best literature with research. Naveed Malik, patron of the forum, said that the forum was trying to promote and develop literature by supporting writers and poets outside the grouping. A large number of people from the twin cities attended the function.—APP

Applications sought for 37th Khwarizmi Int'l Award

ISLAMABAD: Researchers, innovators and inventors from across the world including Pakistan have been called to submit applications for the 37th Khwarizmi International Award (KIA) announced for acknowledging their outstanding scientific achievements. The awards have been announced by the Ministry of Science, Research and Technology, Iranian Research Organization for Science and Technology in partnership with the OIC Standing Committee on Scientific and Technological Cooperation (COMSTEC), Iranian National Commission for UNESCO, The World Intellectual Property Organization, Economic Cooperation Organization, National Elite Foundation and others. According to the COMSTEC, the awards have

been established in memory of Muhammad ibn Musa al-Khwarizmi, the Iranian Muslim mathematician and astronomer. The Khwarizmi International Award is aimed at recognizing the efforts made by researchers, innovators and inventors from all over the world and to appreciate their invaluable achievements and contributions to various fields of science and technology. The Khwarizmi International Award is named in memory of the achievements of Muhammad ibn Musa al-Khwarizmi, the Iranian mathematician and astronomer. The Khwarizmi International Award is annually held to award those who are contributing in the fields of Aerospace, Agriculture and Natural Resources, Animal Sciences and Veterinary Medicine, Basic Sciences, Biotechnology and Basic Medical Sciences, Basic Medical

Sciences, Chemical Technology, all fields of Engineering, Green Technology, Information Technology, Materials, Metallurgy, Mechatronics, Medical Sciences, Nanotechnology, Industry and Technology Management. The awards consist of an engraved trophy, a certificate bearing the inscription of the awardee's contributions and the signature of the President of Islamic Republic of Iran, a certificate signed by the Chairman of the KIA and a cash prize of 20,000 USD. The selection criteria of the candidates include innovation in research subject or research method, application of the research work results in technology development, the impact of the candidate's research on her/his field of science, publications must be of exceptional scientific quality, reliability of the journals.—APP

Railways earn over Rs 6 million from saloons

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan Railways has generated revenue worth Rs 6,340,156 million through utilizing its 23 saloons and inspection coaches for commercial purposes, during the last three and half years. "At present, Pakistan Railways has only 23 saloons and inspection coaches with different dignitaries of the country who are entitled to use these saloons when needed," an official in the Ministry of Railways told APP. Giving the details, he said, "Two highly luxurious coaches have been allocated for the Prime Minister's Secretariat while four coaches have been allocated for the Minister for Railways, Secretary/Chairman of Railways, and another senior official in the ministry." The official said, "Only one saloon has been allocated to the federal government while one each has been allocated to the Governors of Sindh, Balochistan, Punjab, and the provincial governments." In addition, eight saloons had been allocated for the Railway Headquarters Lahore, in which one each would be marked to Chief Executive Officer/General Manager (BS-22), Additional General Manager BS-21, Inspector General Railway Police, Federal Government Inspector, and four saloons were allocated for Principal Officers, he added. The official said six saloons had been allocated for Divisional Superintendents of Peshawar, Rawalpindi, Quetta, Sukkur, Lahore, and Karachi. He said that the Principal Officers of Pakistan Railways were entitled to travel at these saloons or inspection coaches only when they were on duty. Above all, they said luxury saloons were also available for private travel on a rental basis. The official said the saloons were very luxurious and had two rooms, a bath, a dining area, and a kitchen like a tiny house on wheels with the availability of every facility. He said some of these saloons were inspection coaches and their back wall was made of glass from where officers could view the track and surrounding area. "Pakistan Railways officers are not entitled to use this facility other than duty and all these saloons are mostly 40-50 years old," he added.—DNA

GRC's Taxila Chaupal denounces Israeli atrocities

The resounding denouncement of Israeli injustices and brutality, articulated with fervent words, resonated throughout the program. A poignant minute of silence was observed in solidarity with the Palestinian people

ISLAMABAD: The Gandhara Resource Centre Pakistan (GRC)P's flagship program Taxila Chaupal on Sunday denounced the worst atrocities and brutalities of Zionist Israeli defence forces against innocent Palestinians that left over a million displaced, thousands martyred and several injured. The "Taxila Chaupal" organised a special ceremony for the Book Launch of "RAWAL RAAJ" by Sajjad Azhar at the prestigious Al Aziz School and College in Taxila, Pakistan. The focal point of this remarkable gathering was the literary prowess of the distinguished author, Sajjad Azhar, as well as the official

unveiling of his latest work, "Rawal Raj." The program's flawless execution was attributed by Dr. Sanobar Altaf (NUML University Islamabad) Distinguished guests added grace to the event with their presence, including Senior Journalist Muhammad Nawaz Raza, President Hamid Shahid, and the esteemed Dr. Rawish Nadeem. The resounding denouncement of Israeli injustices and brutality, articulated with fervent words, resonated throughout the program. A poignant minute of silence was observed in solidarity with the Palestinian people. The program was further enriched by the presence

of Parvez Khan, a highly skilled artist and prominent member of the Gandhara Resource Center Pakistan. Hailing from Taxila himself, Parvez Khan a renowned visual artist, presented an intricately crafted portrait of Sajjad Azhar, which was received with great appreciation. In return, Sajjad Azhar generously presented Mr. Khan with a copy of his book, "Rawal Raj," complete with his autograph. The culmination of the event saw a heartfelt social prayer offered for the well-being of Muslim brothers and sisters in Palestine, followed by a convivial tea gathering for all attendees. At the end of the program, Sarah Mahmood, a mem-






ber of the core committee, thanked all honourable guests for their time and participation. She highlighted the global representation of the Gandhara Resource Center Pakistan through its members from various countries, including Pakistan, India, the UK, the USA, Thailand, the UAE, Canada, KSA, Germany, and Australia. This information was well-received and appreciated by the audience. The core committee members, including Maalik Ushtar Ali, Rizaz Ahmed, Malik Iftikhar Ahmed, Iftikhar Uddin Saddiqui and Iqbal Khatak expressed their sincere gratitude to the esteemed guests.

The event was graced by speakers Mehtab Haider, Abubakar Mushtaq, Tariq Masood, Talib Ansari, and Malik Ishtiaq Ali. Additionally, participants, such as Aleemuddin, Atiq Kashmiri, Elias Awan, Elias Khatak, Kazim Ali Shah, Master Mahboob, Mazhar Shah, Ali Abbas, Raja Noor Muhammad Nazami, Waqas Ahmed Sadiqi, Simson, Ishtiaq Ahmed, Mawakar Mehdi, Begum Mawakar Mehdi, Saniya Kazmi, Raush, Rauf Shakir, Rafaqat Ali, Hasan Ali, Adeel, Captain Omar Farooq, and Salman Tahir from the Taxila Baithak, lent their support and participation in the event.—DNA

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National Days and Armed Forces Days

OCTOBER

- Oct 01/China National Day
- Oct 01/Cyprus National Day
- Oct 01/Republic of Korea Armed Forces Day
- Oct 01/Nigeria Armed Forces Day
- Oct 02/Guinea National Day
- Oct 03/Germany Unification Day
- Oct 03/Republic of Korea National Foundation Day
- Oct 05/Indonesia Armed Forces Day
- Oct 06/Egypt Armed Forces Day
- Oct 09/Uganda Independence Day
- Oct 12/Spain National Day
- Oct 23/Hungary National Day
- October 24/United Nations United Nations Day
- Oct 25/Romania Armed Forces Day
- Oct 26/Austria National Day
- Oct 27/Turkmenistan Independence Day
- Oct 28/Czech Republic National Day
- Oct 29/Turkey Republic Day

Hotels & Restaurants



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



Turkish Airlines.....8494949



Emergency

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



Enquiry

Edhi Ambulance.....115
PIA Flight Info.....114
PIA Cargo.....9280979
Railway Inquiry.....117
Railway Exchange 9270831-5
WASA Rawalpindi.5555489
CAA.....9281092



Hospitals

CMH.....5611111
MH.....5611116
Cantt Hospital.....9270907-11
DHQ.....5556311-4
RGH.....9290301-7
Holy Family.....9290322-7
PIMS.....9261170-79
Polyclinic.....9218300-09
Shifa International 4603666



Departments

CDA.....9221334-43
CDA.....9208301-04
Met Office.....9250360-6
RDA.....5555864
TMA.....5770886
Cantonment Board 9270151-3

Water Tank

Islamabad.....0321-5744480

Palestine diplomat lauds Chinese role in easing tensions

The webinar was jointly hosted by the Center of South Asia & International Studies (CSAIS) Islamabad and the Institute of Legal Studies

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Deputy Head of Mission of Palestine Nader Al Turk has lauded China for showing its readiness to play a constructive role in easing tensions between Palestine and Israel and promoting peace talks. Addressing a webinar titled, "War Crimes Gaza: The impact, consequences, and international response & responsibility", the envoy called out the "double standards" of the so-called civilised world and international organisations responsible of ruthless killings of innocent children, women and elderly men living in Gaza. The webinar was jointly hosted by the Center of South Asia & International Studies (CSAIS) Islamabad and the Institute of Legal Studies Lahore. Nader shared the perpetual miseries of Palestinians and called for immediate justice in terms of two state solution, guarantor of durable peace and stability in the Middle East a rest of the world. He urged to regional countries and the Muslim world to come forward to stop Israel from state terrorism and indiscriminate bombardment on civilian society and installa-



tions in Gaza. Interestingly he maintained that his country did not have any religious or ethnic issue with Jews but facing lots of onslaughts from the fanatic Zionists, creating serious issues for humans and humanity. He rightly highlighted the biased stance of the USA, UK and some western countries strongly supporting Israelis and ironically honoring their false, fake and fabricated propaganda and tall claims like assignation of children and attack on hospital in Gaza by Palestinians themselves. Furthermore, he shared that in persuasions of naked aggression Israeli forces attacked on Orthodox Church showing no respect to other religions. Nader the DHM was confident that patience, determination, and plight of Palestinians will be awarded very soon and they will be free in their actions and

homes. Dr Mehmood Ul Hassan Khan in his well drafted and articulated speech elaborated the historic miseries of Palestinians people starting from 1947. Dr Khan was of the opinion that the land of unlimited prophesies, holy personalities and places was under fire again because of indiscriminate bombardment of Israel air force even on civilian population. Unfortunately Gaza has become the biggest modern day jail for the 2.6 million helpless Palestinians he added. While mentioning the sufferings of Palestinians he said that "Gaza is besieged and bleeding and more than 4500 people have so far been killed. Immense collateral damage has been done converting buildings and apartments into debris". "The Israel forces have been waging unstoppable human siege, brutality, drastic demographic composition, social and political marginalization, alienation, and ruthless killing" he further said. He labeled the so-called Century Deal or Abraham Peace Deal as total disasters. It has undermined the basis of a two-state solution and to cut off the continuity of the old state of Palestine he added. Dr Khan was of the view that ongoing war between Israel and Hamas would further start a new

end game in the region and power struggle through deadly proxies toppling states, societies and systems in the Middle East, MENA and even in South East Asia. "It fears that recently inked peace agreement between Iran and Saudi Arabia with the help of China may also confront with some serious irritants in the region" Dr Khan added. "The expected pace dividends of Saudi Arabia and Israel would also be delayed. Even eight other prospective Muslim countries could not dare the have friendly ties with Israel". Dr Khan summarized that the Chinese One Belt One Road Initiative (BRI) in the Middle East would also be in the line of fire because of deteriorating law & order situation in the region. The same would also be replicated on the recently announced India-US-Middle East and EU trans-regional economic corridor connecting India with Middle East including Israel and EU. He concluded that the Chinese diplomatic wisdom showed the right way of achieving the desired goal of conflict resolution through Two-State solution. He maintained that fundamental reason for the current situation is the failure to safeguard the legitimate national rights of the Palestinian people.

Wealthier countries called on to support developing economies

DNA

ISLAMABAD: "The world is in climate crisis. One part of the world is not separated from the other half. It's about shared responsibilities and developed economies need to play their role in decarbonizing much faster". Sanda Ojiambo, Assistant Secretary-General of the United Nations and CEO of United Nations Global Compact told China Economic Net in an interview. At the third Belt and Road Forum for International Cooperation held here in this week, green development was put high on priority with world leaders calling for augmented support to developing countries for this purpose.

At the High-level Forum on Green Development as part of the BRI Forum, United Nations Secretary-General António Guterres called on wealthier countries to deliver the \$100 billion for developing country climate action per year, to double adaptation finance by 2025, and to operationalize the loss and damage fund at COP28 next month. "Emerging economies must be supported with finance and technology to accelerate the decarbonization of their economies while meeting their development needs", he said.

Chemical engineers from KFUEIT to get training in China

ISLAMABAD: Khwaja Fareed University of Engineering and Information Technology (KFUEIT), Rahim Yar Khan, Punjab entered into an agreement for training of its students in China. The university commenced its training program for 150 chemical engineers via an online ceremony, Gwadar Pro reported quoting a press statement. Under this collaboration, KFUEIT has partnered with TANG Int'l Education Group, which will provide specialized language and methodology training to its graduates before they embark on their engineering projects in Nigeria. The ceremony was attended by representatives from KFUEIT, TANG Int'l, North West Normal University, and Nigerian industrial delegates. Previously, KFUEIT and TANG had signed a MoU to facilitate the training of 150 chemical engineers in China before deploying them to work on international projects in Africa. During his address on the occasion, Vice-Chancellor KFUEIT Prof. Dr. Muhammad Seuleman Tahir said that the university's chemical engineers are now taking their first steps in the practical field through cooperation with the Chinese partners.—DNA

Expanding higher education priorities HEC-World Bank project achieves tremendous targets

FAISAL SHEIKH

ISLAMABAD: : The Higher Education Development in Pakistan (HEDP), a five-year project (2019/20-2023/24) being implemented by the Higher Education Commission (HEC) with support from the World Bank to expand upon key higher education priorities in Pakistan, has achieved over 80 per cent of its physical and 70 per cent of financial targets. This was revealed in the seventh HEDP Steering Committee (SC) meeting held at HEC Secretariat. The Steering Committee is the highest forum of the project comprising senior officials from federal ministries, provincial higher education departments, vice-chancellors, and pri-

private sector representatives. The committee members reviewed the progress made so far on the project. Chairing the meeting, Executive Director HEC Mr. Awais Ahmed termed the project a key investment for higher education supported by the World Bank and said that, like every project, this project also has yearly financial and physical targets. "I am glad to share that the project has a good standing in achieving more than 80% of its physical targets and more than 70% of its financial targets," he underlined. He explained that all the six components are progressing well on their deliverables, called performance-based conditions – may it be research grants, quality assurance cells, IT initiatives, capacity building and financial autonomy. He

expressed his satisfaction that despite financial, procurement and procedural challenges, the project stands at good financial and physical progress.

Project Coordinator Prof. Dr Mehmood ul Hassan Butt gave an overview of the HEDP project, its history, progress, plans, and the recently held World Bank Mission that improved the project ranking as satisfactory. He along with his team briefed the committee on the key project initiatives, including the physical and financial progress of all the 11 performance-based conditions. In addition, it was apprised that the project is based on the HEC Vision 2025 and is just a launching pad for several futuristic initiatives that eventually will be taken over by the HEC staff to sustain

these initiatives. Technical heads of the project components updated members on the progress of each of the six components of the project including 28 Innovator Seed Funding grants awarded this year. In addition, a new grant called Rapid Technology Transfer Grants (RTTG) - focused on addressing Pakistan's current financial distress by encouraging industry-academia collaborations to enable import substitutions. RTTG was launched this year for which the evaluation process is in the final stages. To sustain the industry-academia collaboration a Research for Innovation portal is also launched. HEDP has recently completed the establishment of Quality Enhancement Cells in Affiliated Colleges (QECACs) in 29 universities across Pakistan.

Ice drug was recovered from a passenger, resident of Khyber at Allama Iqbal International Airport. The accused was leaving for Doha by flight number QR-621. In sixth operation, a Bahrain bound passenger going on flight number GF-791 was arrested at Faisalabad Airport. The accused, resident of Gujranwala was trying to smuggle 335 grams Ice which was concealed in his trolley bag. 800 intoxicated tablets were recovered from a passenger's bag at Jinnah International Airport.—APP

NF seizes 106 kg drugs in 11 operations

RAWALPINDI: Anti-Narcotics Force (ANF) while conducting 11 operations across the country managed to recover over 106 kg drugs and arrested 13 accused including a woman, said an ANF Headquarters spokesman here on Sunday. He informed that 504 grams heroin was recovered from the possession of a passenger, arrested at Islamabad International Airport. The accused, a resident of Wehari, was leaving for Bahrain by flight number GF-771. In another operation, a raid was conducted on a courier office in Rawalpindi and 18 grams weed sent from UK was re-

covered from a parcel. He informed that two operations were conducted in DHA Lahore and Askari-10. A total of 7 kg heroin and 940 grams cocaine were recovered from three vehicles. During the operation, three accused residents of Lahore and Sheikhupura were netted. In fifth operation, 500 grams

'Counter steps vital as debt escalates rapidly to Rs64tr'

ISLAMABAD: The Federation of Pakistan Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FPCCI) Presidential candidate for the upcoming polls of 2024 Muhammad Ali Sheikh has called for taking corrective measures as rapid escalation in debt is widely seen as unsustainable, yet serious steps are now vital to curb this alarming trajectory, by keeping check on government expenditure and high cost of debt servicing, as the federal government debt has surged to a staggering Rs64 trillion. Quoting the State Bank of Pakistan report, the FPCCI Presidential candidate nominated by the BMP, said that the federal government's debt has soared by Rs14.5 trillion, constituting a substantial 29.2% rise compared to the same period last year. He said that the debt burden is gradually increasing because of insufficient tax revenue collection that forced the government to borrow from the domestic and external resources to finance the soaring fiscal deficit. In its monthly report on Foreign Economic Assistance (FEA), the Economic Affairs Division (EAD) said against its annual target of \$17.6bn, total FEA in the July-September quarter amounted to \$3.527bn when compared to just \$2.234bn of the same period last year, an increase of 58pc. Total inflows recorded by the EAD in September came in at \$321 million against \$316m in August. Major FEA during the first quarter flowed in at \$2.89bn in July soon after Pakistan reached an agreement with the International Monetary Fund (IMF) for a fresh short-term program. This FEA is in addition to \$1.2bn released by the IMF on July 13 as the first tranche of the \$3bn Stand-By Arrangement (SBA) and \$1bn by the United Arab Emirates that are separately accounted for by the State Bank of Pakistan (SBP). The bulk of foreign loans reported by the EAD came from Saudi Arabia as a time deposit followed by a \$508m guaranteed loan to Pakistan Air Force (PAF) by China National Aero-Technology Import & Export Corporation (CATIC). Of the remaining inflows included \$490.48m from multilateral agencies and \$324m from bilateral lenders. Another \$204.5m flowed in from overseas Pakistanis in Naya Pakistan Certificates (NPCs). The government has estimated about \$17.62bn in foreign assistance in the budget for the current fiscal year, including \$17.385bn in loans and the remaining \$235m in grants. As such, total loan disbursements in the first three months stood at \$3.49bn and \$34m in grants. Mainly because of this, the country's total external public debt slightly declined to \$85.2bn as of March 31 from \$86.56bn as of Dec 31, 2022, according to the EAD's quarterly report for the third quarter of last fiscal year ending March 31.—DNA

Anjum Nisar says smuggling eats vitals of Pak economic fabrics

ISLAMABAD: The Federation of Pakistan Chambers of Commerce and Industry's Businessmen Panel (BMP) has suggested the government to reduce the tariff rates on smuggling prone items to the lowest level to curb smuggling, as Afghanistan's imports through Pakistan under the transit trade facility has gone up nearly two-thirds to \$7.3 billion in the last fiscal year. The FPCCI former president and Businessmen Panel (BMP) Chairman Mian Anjum Nisar observed that the total elimination of smuggling only through administrative measures at the borders was difficult and the remedy lies in reducing incentive for smuggling by reducing tariff rates. Smuggling is eating vitals of Pakistan economic fabrics and needs to be curbed through fiscal and administrative measures. It renders industrial products uncompetitive and discourages legal imports thus make colossal losses to the trade, industry and government exchequer. Despite efforts of Federal Board of Revenue (FBR) with limited resources cannot control smuggling form boarders of Iran and Afghanistan. This will result in higher government revenue, provide impetus to local trade/ industry and generate employment opportunities. He said that elimination of smuggling, which is causing loss of billions of dollars to the national exchequer, could help reduce dependence on debts. Mian Anjum Nisar said that the government could save billions of dollars annually by eradicating the menace of smuggling. Then there would be no need for dependence on loans to meet the budget deficit, he added. He said that smuggling had become a big threat to economic growth. The BMP Chairman urged the authorities concerned to stop harassing traders and establish an effective monitoring system at borders to stop the illegal trade.—DNA

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Briefs

New meteorological observing station under plan in Gwadar

ISLAMABAD: It is expected that by the end of October, a meteorological observing station built under the co-operation between China and Pakistan will be seen in Gwadar Port, China Economic Net (CEN) reported on Saturday quoting sources from China Meteorological Administration (CMA). Recently a batch of brand-new meteorological equipment was already shipped to Gwadar Port, through the Khunjerab Pass, a key land border crossing the two countries at Khunjerab, Xinjiang Uygur Autonomous Region, China. "This will not only help enhance the meteorological observation capacity of BRI partner countries and regions, but also help them improve the monitoring and early warning capacity of typhoons and other catastrophic weather, and provide decision-making support for disaster prevention and mitigation," the sources noted. China and Pakistan are important members of World Meteorological Organization (WMO) Regional Association II. Bilateral cooperation between the two countries is of vital significance for meteorological development in Asia. —APP

Pakistan attracted \$72.7 million in FDI from China

ISLAMABAD: In September, Pakistan received a net foreign direct investment (FDI) of US\$ 72.7 million from China, contributing to a total FDI inflow of \$126.3 million from the friendly neighboring country during the first quarter of the financial year 2023-24, Gwadar Pro reported on Saturday. According to the latest statistics from the State Bank of Pakistan (SBP), the inflow from China in September was recorded at \$84.4 million, while the outflow stood at \$11.7 million, resulting in a net inflow of \$72.7 million. China's contribution to Pakistan's total FDI in September stood at 46.66%, with the country receiving a total FDI of \$155.8 million. Likewise, out of the \$412 million FDI received by Pakistan in the first quarter of FY 2023-24 (July to September). —DNA

Islamabad fogging drive in full swing to control dengue

ISLAMABAD: On the directions of the Deputy Commissioner Islamabad Irfan Nawaz Memon, health teams under the supervision of the Director Health Services Metropolitan Corporation are continuing the anti-dengue fogging process in various areas of the city. In a recent drive, fogging was carried out in Government Schools G-7/3, G-7/4, G-7/1 and G-7/2 of Islamabad, which includes DHS, DHO Office, Additional Deputy Commissioners, Assistant Commissioners and Magistrates, Health Department teams, MCI, UAS teams and other departments. Speaking on the occasion, the Deputy Commissioner Islamabad said that all possible resources will be used to control the deadly virus in Islamabad. He added that the rural area of Islamabad is among their priorities and every possible step to protect the lives of the citizens is their priority. The Deputy Commissioner further said that due to the increasing dengue fever in Islamabad, it is also necessary to follow precautionary measures to prevent the dengue virus. He further directed that in order to prevent dengue, sanitation arrangements should be improved in different areas of the city and garbage should not be picked up and water should not be accumulated at any place including workshops, tire shops, as well as an awareness campaign should be launched among the people. He also said that the anti-dengue spray would be sprayed in all schools and colleges of Islamabad and number of dengue patients would be reduced due to dengue prevention drive in the federal capital. —DNA



ISLAMABAD: Diplomats witnessing sun set from the Monal Tree House, on the occasion of the sun set dinner hosted by the CEO Monal Group Luqman Ali Afzal. — DNA

Counter steps vital as debt escalates rapidly

DNA

ISLAMABAD: The Federation of Pakistan Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FPCCI) Presidential candidate for the upcoming polls of 2024 Muhammad Ali Sheikh has called for taking corrective measures as rapid escalation in debt is widely seen as unsustainable, yet serious steps are now vital to curb this alarming trajectory, by keeping check on government expenditure and high cost of debt servicing, as the federal government debt has surged to a staggering Rs64 trillion. Quoting the State Bank of Pakistan report, the FPCCI Presidential candidate nominated by the BMP, said that the federal government's debt has soared by Rs14.5 trillion, constituting a substantial 29.2% rise compared to the same period last year. He said that the debt burden is gradually increasing because of insufficient tax revenue collection that

forced the government to borrow from the domestic and external resources to finance the soaring fiscal deficit. In its monthly report on Foreign Economic Assistance (FEA), the Economic Affairs Division (EAD) said against its annual target of \$17.6bn, total FEA in the July-September quarter amounted to \$3.527bn when compared to just \$2.234bn of the same period last year, an increase of 58pc. Total inflows recorded by the EAD in September came in at \$321 million against \$316m in August. Major FEA during the first quarter flowed in at \$2.89bn in July soon after Pakistan reached an agreement with the International Monetary Fund (IMF) for a fresh short-term program. This FEA is in addition to \$1.2bn released by the IMF on July 13 as the first tranche of the \$3bn Stand-By Arrangement (SBA) and \$1bn by the United Arab Emirates that are separately accounted for by the State Bank of Pakistan (SBP). The bulk of foreign loans reported

by the EAD came from Saudi Arabia as a time deposit followed by a \$508m guaranteed loan to Pakistan Air Force (PAF) by China National Aero-Technology Import & Export Corporation (CATIC). Of the remaining inflows included \$490.48m from multilateral agencies and \$324m from bilateral lenders. Another \$204.5m flowed in from overseas Pakistanis in Naya Pakistan Certificates (NPCs). The government has estimated about \$17.62bn in foreign assistance in the budget for the current fiscal year, including \$17.385bn in loans and the remaining \$235m in grants. As such, total loan disbursements in the first three months stood at \$3.49bn and \$34m in grants. Mainly because of this, the country's total external public debt slightly declined to \$85.2bn as of March 31 from \$86.56bn as of Dec 31, 2022, according to the EAD's quarterly report for the third quarter of last fiscal year ending March 31. Out of the total external public

debt of \$85.18bn, the government owed \$64bn to multilateral and bilateral development partners including IMF which meant more than two-thirds (i.e. 75pc) of the total external public debt was on concessional terms with a longer maturity, 16pc (i.e. \$13.5bn) from international capital markets and foreign commercial banks, and 7pc (i.e. \$7bn) of the total external public debt constitutes deposits from friendly countries like China and Saudi Arabia. Muhammad Ali Sheikh said that this unsettling trend has raised concerns about fiscal sustainability and the adverse impacts of steep currency devaluation come at a time when the World Bank has cautioned Pakistan about the growing risks of its macroeconomic framework. For the past one and half year, the country is facing a serious financial crunch and continually relying on borrowing to meet its financial needs. The growing debt stock carries significant fiscal costs and exposes the country

to debt vulnerabilities, as highlighted in the Pakistan Development Update report by the World Bank. He also emphasised that persistent fiscal deficits and debt repayments have resulted in consistently high annual gross financing needs, averaging 27% of GDP over the past decade. This level is notably higher than the emerging market threshold of 15%. The leader of the BMP said that in the past two decades, Pakistan has witnessed two consecutive years of the highest budget deficits in 2022 and 2023. The World Bank pointed out that for the current fiscal year, a budget deficit of 7.7% of the GDP is anticipated, a staggering Rs1.3 trillion above the government's target. The World Bank expressed concerns over these persistent large budget shortfalls, which have led to the rapid accumulation of public debt. This, in turn, has crowded out private investment and contributed to macroeconomic volatility.

APBF for structural reforms as country facing daunting economic challenges

ISLAMABAD: The All Pakistan Business Forum (APBF) has called for implementing structural reforms for good governance, curbing unproductive state expenditures, expanding the tax base, fostering public-private partnerships, and reallocating resources to critical sectors to stimulate sustainable growth, as the country is facing with daunting economic challenges, posing a serious threat to the viability of the industry. The APBF President Syed Maaz Mahmood observed that it is imperative to understand that fiscal discipline cannot be achieved and sustained without initiating structural reforms. He said the focus of the caretaker government to date is not on implementing structural politically challenging reforms but on heavy reliance on realizing pledged. —APP

AIOU students urge VC to simplify online registration, enrolment procedure

DNA

ISLAMABAD: The current students of Allama Iqbal Open University (AIOU) have urged the Vice Chancellor Dr Nasir Mahmood to make the online registration and enrollment procedure of admissions in the new semester. Talking to APP, the students also demanded to revive the manual procedure of admissions and registration as they were facing immense problems in enrollment and uploading assignments. The students were of the view, that they could not register for next

semester due to the absence of manual procedure, lengthy enrollment process and poor internet facilities particularly in far-flung areas of the country. "They have to pay a handsome amount to the bookshops and photocopy shops for online registration and generating fee challan" they added. Meanwhile, a student Amreen Shahid told this news agency that in an era of such inflation, they have to pay Rs 100-200 to the bookshops for uploading their assignments on the AAGHI LMS Portal of the university. "Mostly, middle and poor people take admission in AIOU for the sake

of acquiring education but their wishes are continuously dashing down with such a laborious and difficult enrollment process," she said. Another student, Rifaf Iqbal said that earlier there was a manual system of admission and course registration which has totally been abandoned now. The university enhanced the hardship of continuous students of the varsity through the new system, she added. She said the new enrollment procedure has also caused a decrease in the enrollment of new students as they have to spend more time and money on uploading assignments and en-

rolling in the next semesters. Naveed Baloch who belongs to Balochistan while commenting on the issue, said that he is very disappointed in taking admission to the university due to poor internet connectivity in our area and the difficult university's online enrollment system, he is facing immense problems with generating fee vouchers and course enrollment. "We have to wait for generating a fee voucher and then able to deposit the fee," he regretted. Zahid Abbasi urged the VC to revive the old manual mechanism besides the online system which would not only reduce the agonies.

Shahzad urges to exploit Africa vast potential

ISLAMABAD: Chairman Pakistan Hitech Hybrid Seed Association (PHHSA) Shahzad Ali Malik on Sunday emphasized the urgent need for fully exploiting the vast potential of Africa, a continent that holds an estimated 30 percent of the planet's mineral reserves. Talking to a delegation of industrialists, he said Africa possesses an impressive range of minerals particularly those vital to the energy transaction such as nickel, cobalt, graphite, lithium and rare earth elements, said a news release here. He said nearly a fourth-fifth of the world's total supply of platinum, half of its manganese and two-thirds of its cobalt come from Africa. He said the continent also boasts 40 percent of the world's gold reserves and an astounding 90 percent of its chromium. He said it's blessed with abundant resources, a rapidly growing market and golden opportunity for Pakistani businesses to expand their horizons and achieve unprecedented growth. 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 according to their demand, technologies, and expertise. Shahzad Ali Malik Sitara-Imtiazi said Pakistan, with its entrepreneurial spirit and innovative solutions, has much to offer to African nations. From agriculture and healthcare to technology and renewable energy, our businesses can collaborate and contribute to the development of Africa while reaping substantial benefits, he added. He said Pak business community has the opportunity to make a significant impact on the continent's development while ensuring sustainable growth and profitability. —DNA

Dive into Safety: Nourishing Lives on World Food Day

ASIM ALI, ARSALAN ATEEL



The global water crisis is increasing, with alarming rates of water wastage worldwide. Despite water's vital role, inefficient consumption and pollution persist. Agriculture contributes significantly to the issue, often employing water-intensive practices. Industrial processes, coupled with growing urbanization, further strain water resources. The mismanagement of this limited resource creates alarming ecosystems and biodiversity. Urgent collective action is required to address this crisis, promoting sustainable water usage and conservation. Public awareness campaigns and policy interventions

are essential to curb wasteful practices and ensure a water-secure future for all. Adopting sustainable practices is crucial for ensuring water security for future generations, with increasing population and climate change, water resources are under threat. Sustainable practices, such as efficient water use, pollution reduction, safeguard the quality and availability of water. This proactive approach not only addresses current challenges but also preserves this essential resource for the well-being of generations to come. Actually it occurs when we use more water than our need or wasted due to the leakage or inappropriate water system. It can happen through activities like leaving the tap running when brushing your teeth, overwatering plants, or using more water than needed for tasks like washing dishes or taking a long shower. Conserving water is important to ensure its availability for future generations. Water is a valuable natural asset. Even if you live in a water-rich area it matters much whether you save every drop of water, keep in mind that water is not the only thing at stake when extra gallons are wasted. How we waste water in our circle? The reality is that although over 70% of the earth is covered in water, only 2% of this is fresh and 1.6% of that is locked in glaciers and

polar ice caps, leaving almost 8 billion people just 0.4% of the world's water to survive on. Globally, water consumption and wastage are significant concerns. It is estimated that approximately 30% of the world's population lacks access to clean water, while around 1.8 billion people consume contaminated water, risking health issues. The agriculture sector contributes heavily to water wastage, accounting for approximately 70% of global water consumption. Inefficient irrigation techniques and the cultivation of water-intensive crops are primary drivers. Additionally, industrial activities contribute to water wastage, particularly through the manufacturing process and inadequate wastewater treatment. Domestic use also plays a role, with leaky pipes, excessive household consumption, and improper water management contributing to water wastage. Addressing these sectors' practices is crucial to mitigating global water scarcity. Insufficient Landscaping: Choosing landscaping designs and plants that require excessive watering, or failing to mulch and use water-efficient landscaping techniques, can result in wastage. Over-irrigation of lawns and gardens, especially during the heat of the day, can result in water wastage. Watering systems that do not have a rain sensor or timer can lead to overwatering. Over-irrigation, or using more water than crops actually require, is a common source of water wastage in

agriculture. It can lead to waterlogging, which can damage plant roots and reduce crop yields. Monoculture farming practices, where a single crop is grown over large areas, can result in inefficient water use and increased susceptibility to pests and diseases, leading to greater water demand. If you have a water cooler or a water filter system, make sure to turn them off when not in use. Some models may continue to filter water or run the cooler even when not needed. Role of climate change that worsen water scarcity: Climate change plays a significant role in worsen water scarcity around the world. Rising global temperatures lead to increased evaporation rates, reducing the overall availability of freshwater resources. Changes in precipitation patterns result in uneven distribution, causing droughts in some regions and intense rainfall in others, leading to water scarcity and waterlogged areas simultaneously. Melting glaciers and polar ice caps contribute to sea-level rise, which contaminates freshwater supplies and reduces the amount of available drinking water. Additionally, climate change intensifies the occurrence and extreme weather events such as hurricanes and cyclones, further disrupting water systems and worsen water scarcity in affected areas. Overall, the impact of

climate change on water scarcity highlights the urgent need for sustainable water management practices and efforts to mitigate and adapt to a changing climate. 1. The Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region is one of the most prominent areas facing severe water stress and scarcity. With limited freshwater resources and a rapidly growing population, countries like Saudi Arabia, Yemen, and Jordan are in a constant struggle to meet the demand for clean water. 2. Sub-Saharan Africa, particularly arid and semi-arid regions, is also grappling with water scarcity. Countries like Somalia, Ethiopia, and South Africa struggle with droughts, inadequate infrastructure, and a lack of access to safe drinking water, exacerbating the water stress in these areas. 3. In Central Asia, the Aral Sea crisis has left countries such as Uzbekistan, Kazakhstan, and Turkmenistan battling severe water scarcity. The diversion of major rivers for irrigation purposes has caused the Aral Sea to shrink drastically, leading to substantial environmental and socio-economic consequences. 4. Certain regions in South Asia, including parts of India, Pakistan, and Bangladesh, are experiencing high levels of water stress. Rapid population growth, agricultural demands, and insufficient water management systems have contributed to a severe strain on water resources in these areas.

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US inability to solve Palestine issue

US media is currently attempting to redirect the current Israel-Palestine conflict toward the rise of China. The New York Times, in an article titled "New Global Divisions on View as Biden Goes to Israel and Putin to China," directly contrasts President Joe Biden's visit to Israel with President Vladimir Putin's visit to China. Several US media outlets and scholars have expressed that the Israel-Palestine conflict provides new opportunities for China and Russia to "reform the existing international order." From the Chinese perspective, what's more worthy of comparison is that, right when the Israel-Palestine conflict erupted, a report from a bipartisan committee appointed by the US Congress stated that the US must be ready to deter and defeat China and Russia simultaneously. Currently, the US is "ill-prepared" for the potentially existential challenges of 2027-2035 and beyond. The reasons behind the Israel-Palestine conflict are highly complex. However, it is currently widely acknowledged that the marginalization of the Palestinian issue by the US and European powers is a major contributing factor. This is because the US and Europe have significantly weakened their capacity to uphold the existing world order. The post-World War II world order was primarily constructed by the US and European powers, but this order inherently contains conflicts of geopolitical interests. It is essentially a distribution of power and interests led by the US, and, naturally, it is directly influenced by domestic political and economic changes within the US and European countries. From the Madrid Conference in October 1991 to the signing of the Oslo Accords in 1993, and even the efforts under the Trump administration to reconcile Israel-Palestine relations, the entire process highlighted not only the inherent contradictions that the existing order cannot resolve but also the potential for these contradictions to resurface. The rise of emerging powers challenges the existing structure of political and economic power dominated by the US. In the Middle East, the US finds it increasingly challenging to control various regional forces. Its attempts to use its hegemonic power to consolidate its dominance are essentially undermining the very structure it seeks to maintain, as exemplified by the failure of US Iraq policy and its "Greater Middle East Initiative". Changes in domestic politics and economic structures in the US and Europe, particularly political polarization, have resulted in a decrease in policy decisiveness in the current governments. The US and Europe no longer possess the same capacity for mediating the Israel-Palestine conflict as they once did, even if the current governments have the desire to do so. This is why President Joe Biden's visit to Israel did not bring about any kind of a meaningful peaceful outcome. Existing geopolitical conflicts within the current order have intensified due to changing great power dynamics, with the Russia-Ukraine conflict serving as a prominent example. As the US and Europe focus on dealing with Russia, Hamas' offensive serves as a reminder that the Middle East is also a hotbed of geopolitical conflict. Additionally, the interests of the US and Europe are deeply intertwined in this region.



PIA, PSO lock horns over fuel supply

The flight operations of Pakistan International Airlines (PIA) have been severely affected with multiple flights cancelled due to the unavailability of fuel amid the prevailing financial crunch faced by the national carrier. As many as 26 national flights have been cancelled from Karachi, Lahore, Islamabad, Quetta, Bahawalpur, Multan, Gwadar and other cities after the Pakistan State Oil (PSO) slashed its fuel supply to the PIA, sources said. The national carrier's administration is looking into the matter and expects the fuel supply to be restored today once credit lines are available, a PIA spokesperson said while adding that the affected passengers are being provided with alternate flights. As many as 18 flights were cancelled from Karachi, of which three were Islamabad-bound, whereas two Karachi-bound flights were also cancelled from Lahore and the federal capital, respectively. Meanwhile, only three flights will take off from Karachi today as per the fuel adjustment plan of the PIA. The national carrier has been facing dire financial circumstances as the Federal Bureau of Revenue (FBR) froze all of its bank accounts for non-payment of taxes back in July earlier this year following which the airline was unable to cater to clear its dues owed to the PSO. In September, the PIA had asked for an emergency bailout of Rs22.9 billion which was rejected by the Economic Coordination Committee (ECC). The ECC also rejected the request for deferment of the payments of Rs1.3 billion per month, which PIA pays to FBR against Federal excise duty (FED), and Rs0.7 billion per month which PIA pays to the Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) against embarking charges. Earlier this month, PIA flight PK 790 was stopped in Canada on ground handling and fuel company complaints. The plane however was released after dues worth \$200,000 were cleared by the airline. Established in 1955, PIA was once celebrated as one of the world's leading airlines. However, over the years, it has faced a series of setbacks, including financial crises, mismanagement, safety concerns, and political interference. This editorial aims to shed light on the problems and historical context that have plagued PIA, while also highlighting the need for reforms to steer the airline back to a path of success and sustainability. PIA began its journey as a symbol of national pride and ambition. It was established in a newly independent Pakistan, carrying hopes of connecting the country with the world and facilitating its economic development. In the early years, PIA earned a stellar reputation for its service and efficiency, winning several awards for excellence. Financial Troubles: PIA has grappled with financial problems for many years. Inefficient operations, high debt levels, and mismanagement have all contributed to its financial woes. The airline has been a consistent drain on the national exchequer, requiring bailouts to stay afloat. Safety Concerns: Safety concerns have cast a long shadow over PIA. The airline has faced several accidents and near-miss incidents, raising doubts about its maintenance and safety standards. In 2020, a scandal involving pilots holding dubious licenses brought further scrutiny to PIA's safety practices, leading to a temporary ban on international flights by several countries.

The ML-1 Railway: A fulcrum for global trade

Qamar Bashir



ML-1 will make Gwadar a more appealing and efficient trade gateway for Pakistan and its neighboring countries, poised to stimulate economic growth and generate employment opportunities, facilitate the transportation of energy resources from the Middle East and other nations to Pakistan, addressing critical energy shortages and facilitating the movement of Thar coal within the country. For China, this will open up a more direct and efficient trade route to the Arabian Sea, reducing both time and shipping costs for goods to and from western

The visit of the caretaker Prime Minister to China for the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) forum meeting has been highly successful. One of the major achievements is the signing of the Mainline-1 (ML-1) railway project, a crucial component of the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC). The ML-1 project aims to connect Peshawar to Karachi through a 2,600-kilometer track with an estimated cost of \$7 billion. Planned to be complete in 16 years, it will increase the line capacity from 34 to 134 trains each way per day, moving up to 165 kilometers per hour – twice as fast as they currently run, benefiting various industries in Pakistan, drive the next phase of CPEC projects and enhance economic cooperation between China and Pakistan. ML-1 will make Gwadar a more appealing and efficient trade gateway for Pakistan and its neighboring countries, poised to stimulate economic growth and generate employment opportunities, facilitate the transportation of energy resources from the Middle East and other nations to Pakistan, addressing critical energy shortages and facilitating the movement of Thar coal within the country. For China, this will open up a more direct and efficient trade route to the Arabian Sea, reducing both time and shipping costs for goods to and from western China, create opportunities for Chinese companies and enhance and provide China with an alternative and shorter route for importing energy resources from the Middle East. Afghanistan, after prolonged advocacy, has finally agreed to become a partner in the CPEC. This participation holds the potential to significantly bolster Afghanistan's economy by establishing it as a regional transit hub and promoting economic diversification. The railway project can serve as a vital transit route for Afghan goods to access international markets via Gwadar, potentially revitalizing Afghanistan's economy. For Central Asia, this railway offers new trade routes, granting access to the Arabian Sea and diversifying trade options. The increased trade has the potential to boost economic development and diversification in the region. While India is not directly connected to the project, it could potentially access Central Asian markets through Gwadar if tensions ease and trade relations improve between the nations. The railway could provide Iran with better access to markets in China and Central Asia, enhancing trade opportunities and trade links can contribute to economic growth and regional stability. There is a strong possibility of extending this railway link from China to Europe through Turkey, which could yield numerous benefits for the countries along the route. This extension would enhance both regional and global trade by providing a more efficient and cost-effective trade route, fostering increased trade between Asia, Europe, and Central Asia. The result would be reduced transportation times and costs, making this route more competitive compared to other trade corridors, creating job opportunities, boosting local industries, and encouraging infrastructure investment. Additionally, Turkish and European markets would benefit from improved access to Central Asian and Chinese markets. The railway's potential to serve as a transit for cultural exchange and tourism between regions with di-

verse cultures and histories stimulating local economies and encouraging people-to-people connections. Notably, rail transport is generally more environmentally friendly than other transportation modes, such as road or air transport, contributing to reduced carbon emissions. Moreover, the construction and maintenance of the railway would necessitate investments in transportation infrastructure, benefiting local communities. Successful implementation of such a project could strengthen diplomatic ties among countries involved and promote regional cooperation. The construction of a railway line will bring about profound impacts on the Pakistani cities along its route in terms of economic, social, and infrastructural transformations that can reshape urban and rural landscapes. Cities situated along the route are likely to experience notable economic growth, driven by increased trade and commerce, attracting businesses, investors, and logistics companies, creating new economic opportunities, driving job creation, raising income levels, and alleviating poverty in these areas. Moreover, the railway project would facilitate the establishment of industrial zones and logistics hubs along the route, drawing manufacturing and distribution companies. This would lead to a surge in industrial activities in nearby cities, bringing an influx of workers and encouraging urbanization in the surrounding areas. ML-1 is likely to bring a significant investment in transportation infrastructure, including the development and upgrade of rail stations, logistics centers, roads, and utilities leading to an improvement in the quality of life for residents, providing enhanced transportation options and increased access to essential services. The railway project will also prove highly beneficial for farmers and agricultural communities along the route. It will make it significantly easier for them to transport their produce to markets, both domestically and internationally, leading to increased agricultural production and higher incomes. Furthermore, improved access to urban centers will translate into greater access to education and healthcare services for rural populations. In addition, the railway project is poised to have a positive impact on the promotion of tourism in the country. The perspectives of countries and regions on the BRI can vary widely, depending on their specific interests and concerns. The perspective of the Middle East in relation to this railway link is notably positive. Many Middle Eastern countries view BRI as a source of significant economic opportunities. Given their strategic location as potential hubs for trade and investment, they see the initiative as a means to boost economic growth, infrastructure development, and job creation. The region, known for its substantial energy resources, often sees BRI projects focusing on energy infrastructure like pipelines and ports, which can help expand energy markets and diversify export routes. Additionally, the BRI is viewed as an opportunity to strengthen political and strategic ties with China, leveraging Chinese investments and cooperation for regional stability and development. For many European countries, the BRI represents a means to enhance economic integration and trade relations with China. The development of transport and logistics infrastructure can greatly

improve access to Chinese markets, making it an attractive prospect. European nations are keen on seeking investment opportunities in BRI projects, particularly in sectors such as transportation, energy, and telecommunications. Collaboration with China in research and innovation is also a priority for Europe. In the context of African countries, the BRI offers valuable investments in infrastructure. Many of these nations often lack the necessary resources for comprehensive development, and BRI projects, including the construction of roads, railways, ports, and energy facilities, are pivotal in driving progress. The improved transportation infrastructure and enhanced connectivity through BRI projects can significantly enhance Africa's trade capabilities and its access to global markets. The United States is notably the country expressing concerns regarding the potential geopolitical implications of the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) and its capacity to expand China's influence in various regions. The U.S. views the initiative as a challenge to its leadership and interests and has placed emphasis on the importance of transparency, fair competition, and adherence to international standards in BRI projects. It advocates for high environmental and social standards. In response to the BRI, the U.S. has sought to promote alternative investment initiatives, such as the "Free and Open Indo-Pacific" strategy, in an effort to counterbalance the influence exerted by the BRI. The CPEC, a flagship project under the BRI, is delivering substantial results in Pakistan. With over \$65 billion in Chinese investments, the initiative has seen the completion of more than 50 projects worth \$25 billion, including the operationalization of the deep seaport of Gwadar. Moreover, significant strides have been made in the energy sector, with at least 8,000 megawatts of electricity injected into Pakistan's national grid and plans for an additional 10,000 megawatts of clean energy projects within the next five years. CPEC is also creating industrial zones to attract both local and Chinese investors, particularly in mineral-rich Balochistan. These endeavors have already generated 200,000 jobs, built over 1,400 kilometers of highways and roads, and facilitated the handling of 600,000 tons of cargo at the port of Gwadar in the last 18 months, demonstrating the transformative impact of this vital economic corridor. The Chinese government's unwavering commitment to BRI, with CPEC as a shining example, is poised to make a resounding impact. The ML-1, bolstered by integrated world-class infrastructure in roads, highways, energy, and cyber projects, has the potential to extend its reach far beyond the boundaries of the BRI. By seamlessly connecting with regional and international transport systems, this initiative can serve as a catalyst for bringing much-needed financial and economic prosperity to Pakistan, effectively pulling the nation out of its current financial and economic challenges, and propelling it towards a brighter and more prosperous future.

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

China's economic expansion is shaping US-China rivalry

Dr. Muhammad Akram Zaheer



However, more recently, the United States has started to perceive China's commercial activities in the region as potentially detrimental, especially concerning U.S. access to rare earth elements, allied port security, and 5G technology. Simultaneously, China's economy has entered a period of secular decline, and the U.S.

China's rapid economic growth over the past two decades has enabled it to extend its economic influence in Latin America, largely due to the absence of a counterstrategy from the United States. Initially, Washington perceived Beijing's expanding presence as mere economic diversification and thus not a threat to hemispheric or U.S.-Latin American security and military relations. However, more recently, the United States has started to perceive China's commercial activities in the region as potentially detrimental, especially concerning U.S. access to rare earth elements, allied port security, and 5G technology. Simultaneously, China's economy has entered a period of secular decline, and the U.S. is actively pursuing strategies to shift its supply chain away from China. Consequently, Mexico is becoming an attractive destination for multinational corporations seeking cost-effective manufacturing near the U.S. market. Moreover, Colombia, which has benefited from Chinese trade and investment for years, has drawn closer to Beijing since the inauguration of President Gustavo Petro in 2022. However, it is now questioning the sustainability of this investment and foreign trade relationship, leading it to consider alternatives such as the United States. Nevertheless, Washington's aim is not to become an alternative sponsor but to reassert its influence by countering China. To achieve this, the U.S. faces challenges, with one of the major concerns being the rampant use of fentanyl. In the United States alone, overdose deaths linked to fentanyl are projected to reach nearly 110,000 in 2022 over the past eight years. The Joint Economic Committee of the United States Congress estimates that the opioid epidemic cost the U.S. economy \$1.5 trillion in 2020 and left more than 6 million people outside the labor market, according to the Council on Foreign Relations. Although fentanyl consumption in Mexico and Colombia is less alarming, it is beginning to gain attention. However, the most immediate concern in these countries revolves around fentanyl production, insecurity, and corruption associated with drug trafficking. Due to its low production cost and synthetic

nature, fentanyl production can quickly scale up. Two Mexican cartels, Sinaloa and Jalisco Nueva Generación, dominate the fentanyl trade between the United States and Mexico. The Sinaloa cartel is even contemplating expanding operations to Colombia, including establishing fentanyl "kitchens," sourcing supplies, and potentially infiltrating the healthcare sector for legitimate purposes. Notably, Chinese companies supply nearly all the precursors for fentanyl manufacturing in the Western Hemisphere. Moreover, at least four Chinese companies provide information on improving fentanyl production, including sourcing ingredients, alternative ingredient recommendations, mixing instructions, and access to chemists. Some Chinese companies also use fake labels on shipments or ship chemicals without maintaining customer records. A counterfeit fentanyl pill, costing as little as 10 cents to produce, can fetch \$10 on the street. Chinese criminal groups and Mexican cartels, Sinaloa and Jalisco, have combined their extensive experience in money laundering to facilitate foreign currency exchange, alongside the purchase of advanced chemicals. In response, the U.S. government and its allies are taking action. In February, the Biden administration pledged cooperation with Mexico, Colombia, and Ecuador to combat the growing availability and lethality of illegal drugs containing fentanyl. In March, Mexico's president reached out to Chinese President Xi Jinping to seek assistance in curbing fentanyl flows to North America, although Beijing denies any wrongdoing. In April, the United States indicted four high-ranking members of the Sinaloa cartel associated with the fentanyl trade. Additionally, Mexico's president reported that the country's navy had intercepted a container from Qingdao, China, containing 75-pound packages with traces of fentanyl and methamphetamine in May. The U.S. also imposed sanctions on seven Chinese companies and six individuals accused of exporting tablet presses to Mexico. Furthermore, the U.S. Department of Justice recently filed criminal charges against four Chinese chemical manufacturers and eight individuals for illegal trafficking of a pre-

cursor chemical used in fentanyl production. Despite these developments, the head of the U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) expressed the desire for greater cooperation from Mexico. In Colombia, cocaine has become a secondary concern compared to fentanyl due to its lower lethality and profitability. Notably, the U.S. Embassy in Bogotá announced the indefinite suspension of coca crop monitoring in Colombia and the non-presentation of its annual report on Colombia and cocaine earlier this month. The embassy cited redundancy with UN reports and the need for observation satellites for other purposes. Nonetheless, Colombia's Justice Minister does not anticipate this decision jeopardizing U.S. funding for counter narcotics and other programs. Moreover, U.S. agencies reportedly accused Colombian officials of cooperating in the arrest of Sinaloa cartel members attempting to establish the fentanyl industry in Colombia. Both the Colombian and Mexican governments agree on the necessity to revise their anti-drug strategies. In Bogotá, the Petro administration seeks to depart from punitive, prohibitionist, and military policies and instead target speculation, money laundering, major traffickers, and criminal organizations. Describing the war on drugs as a failure, Petro emphasizes the importance of not repeating the same mistakes with fentanyl. Similarly, the Mexican government aims to prioritize economic development and reduce youth involvement in criminal organizations. The two presidents plan to meet in early September to discuss new anti-drug strategies, focusing on youth prevention, socioeconomic development, synthetic drugs, and adapting measures to changing societal needs. Many of these efforts will necessitate collaboration and cooperation with the United States, which has, until recently, been hesitant to link drug trafficking with economic development. The central question is whether Mexico City and Bogotá will align with Washington's anti-China approach. The answer may hinge on whether the United States is willing to align its counter narcotics efforts with the evolving strategies taking shape in Mexico and Colombia.

Briefs

Aitchison College Junior Tennis C' ship concludes

AFZAL JAVED

ISLAMABAD: Bilal Asim, Ahtesham Humayun and Amir Mazari won the titles in their respective categories in the 6th Aitchison College Junior National Tennis Championship 2023 that concluded here at the Aitchison College hard courts. In the boys' U-18 final, Bilal Asim from SNGPL emerged victorious against Ahtesham Humayun with a score of 6-3 (retired). The boys' U-18 doubles final saw Bilal Asim and Ahtesham, both representing SNGPL, defeating M Salaar and Kashan Tariq with a commanding score of 8-1. In the girls' U-18 final, Amna Ali Qayum secured her title by beating Lalurukh with a convincing score of 6-1, 6-2. Ahtesham Humayun, also from SNGPL, triumphed in the boys' U-16 final by defeating M Salaar with a score of 6-4, 6-4. In the boys' U-14 final, Amir Mazari from Aitchison College emerged as the victor by defeating Omer Jawad with a score of 6-2, 6-2. The boys' U-14 doubles final witnessed an exciting clash, with Omer Jawad and Hamza Ali Rizwan prevailing over Amir Mazari and Muzamil Bhand with the score being 5-3, 2-4, 10-6. The boys/girls U-12 final showcased a thrilling battle, with Shayan Afridi emerging as the winner by defeating Rashid Ali Bachani with a score of 7-5. In the boys/girls U-12 doubles final, Abdur Rehman and Hajra Suhail secured victory by defeating Ali Bachani and Zayd Zaman with a score of 6-3. In the boys/girls U-10 final, Rashid Ali Bachani claimed the title by beating Mustafa Uzair Rana with a score of 6-4.

Move South or risk being seen as...

FROM PAGE 01

RAWALPINDI: Former interior minister Sheikh Rashid Ahmed announced that he would launch an amnesty mission tomorrow (Monday) for the innocent people incarcerated in connection with the May 9 incidents. Taking to X (formerly known as Twitter), the head of Awami Muslim League said it is mission of his life to seek pardon for the people imprisoned on charges of their involvement in the May 9 incidents. He thanked the entire nation which prayed for his release. "I don't know where I was imprisoned, however, he was not hurt during the confinement." He said that he was grateful to the entire nation and the mothers, sisters, and daughters through whose prayers he had been released after 40 days. "I do not know at which place I spent the 'chilla', but I was not hurt during the time," he said. He said he would seek pardon for the people those are innocent, confined, hiding or involved in the May 9 incidents. "Now the mission of my life is to seek amnesty for all those who committed a mistake on May 9 and have been in hiding since then, and for all those innocent people who have been in jails since May 9," he added.

No US call for ceasefire...

FROM PAGE 01

saying it has documented "unlawful Israeli attacks, including indiscriminate attacks," which caused mass civilian casualties and must be investigated as war crimes. The US circulated the draft resolution on Saturday and requested council members to submit their comments on Sunday morning. Without naming the Palestinian civilians, the US text calls for the protection of the civilian population, including those "who are trying to get to safety," and condemns "barbaric acts of destruction carried out by Hamas, including its deplored use of civilians as human shields and its attempt to thwart the protection of civilians." It also calls on Hamas to release the hostages. The resolution also calls for the "continuous" flow of essential goods into Gaza while urging countries to support the humanitarian "efforts of the United Nations, Egypt, Jordan, and others to build on this important first step."



ISLAMABAD: Australian High Commissioner Neil Hawkins, Acting Ambassador of Romania Eduard Preda, his spouse and players of Nishtar and Rising Stars Hockey Club posing for a picture before the practice session. —DNA

Inter academy hockey tournament ends at Karachi

Girls' title won by Olympian Sameer Hussain XI and Boys' Olympian Akhtarul Islam XI

SPORTS CORRESPONDENT

KARACHI: Olympian Islahuddin and Dr. Muhammad Ali Shah girls' and boys' inter-academy hockey tournament concluded. The tournament was played on the Astro turf of Olympian Islahuddin and Dr Muhammad Ali Shah Hockey Academy.

In the girls final, Olympian Qamar Ibrahim XI was defeated by Sameer Hussain XI by two goals. Both goals of the winning team were scored by right-out Amna Khan. Boys' title went to Olym-

pin Akhtarul Islam XI In the final, Olympian Ayaz Mehmood XI lost by goals to one. Muhammad Usman and Ali Abbas scored the winning team's goals while Bilawal scored the defeated team's goal. The exhibition match played between the Green and Whites teams of Pakistan Veterans Hockey Club was tied 2-2, Arif Bhopali and Olympian Sameer Hussain scored goals for the Greens while Khalid Pracha and Sarfaraz Ahmed scored the goals for the Veterans Whites. The chief guest of the ceremony, caretaker Provincial Sports

minister Sindh Dr. Junaid Ali Shah said in his address that as the president of the academy, he was standing in his house when this ground was being constructed, during which there were many obstacles, but my father Dr. Muhammad Ali Shah and Olympian Islahuddin persevered and faced all the problems and prepared this state of the art ground for the players of Karachi, despite the passage of ten years, everything looks new here from the hostel to the dressing room. The term is over, it is necessary to change it, they want a new

turf to be installed here during their tenure. If this is not possible, they will at least start the work of laying new turf. Junaid Ali Shah said that the boys and girls of this academy are very talented and their future is bright. To increase the pool of players in Sindh, a talent hunt program will be started very soon. A team of Olympians from Karachi will visit Sindh very soon and look for talent. Apart from this, the Sindh Games, which have been postponed for four years, will be held in December this year,

while the Thar Jeep Rally will also be held. Later, the special guest distributed the prizes. Former Senator Haseeb Khan, Consul General of Mozambique Khalid Tawab, Olympian Islahuddin, Academy Head Coach Olympian Samir Hussain also addressed the ceremony. Olympian Akhtarul Islam, Farooq Khan, Former International Mubasshir Mukhtar, Olympian Iftikhar Syed, Former International Abu zar Umrao, Olympian Ayaz Mehmood, Aslam Khan, Sagheer Hussain, and others were also present.

Faisalabad, Islamabad wins matches in Basketball C' ship

OUR CORRESPONDENT

ISLAMABAD: Defending champion Faisalabad, Islamabad, Lahore and Peshawar wins their matches in the thrilling opening day of the Inter Division National Basketball Championship Grade A, fans were treated to a series of electrifying matchups at Pakistan Sports Complex Islamabad. The action-packed day featured four intense contests, showcasing the best basketball talent in Pakistan organised by Federal Basketball Association (FBB) under the supervision of Pakistan Basketball Federation (PBBF). The first match of the day one saw defending champion Faisalabad division facing off against Karachi division, and it was Faisalabad that emerged victorious with a final score of 50-39, demonstrating their prowess on the court. Muhammad Usman Abbas scored 13 points and Hassan Bhatti scored 10 points from winning team while Anas Asher scored 11 points for Karachi division. The excitement continued in the second match as Peshawar clashed with Gujranwala.

England's Topley ruled out of tournament

NEW DELHI: England fast bowler Reece Topley has been ruled out of the rest of the World Cup with a broken finger. Topley, 29, was injured when fielding off his own bowling in his fourth over during England's crushing defeat by South Africa in Mumbai on Saturday. He is their leading wicket-taker, with eight in three matches, despite being left out for the first game. The left-arm fast bowler will fly home in the next 24 hours, while a replacement will be named in due course. — Agencies

'England's greatest' Football pays tribute to Bobby Charlton

LONDON: The world of football has united in tribute to Manchester United and England legend Sir Bobby Charlton, who died on Saturday. Charlton, who "passed peacefully in the early hours of the morning" after being diagnosed with dementia in 2020, lifted three league titles, an FA Cup and a European Cup in a distinguished 17-year career at Old Trafford. He also scored 49 goals in 106 appearances for the Three Lions, famously helping them win the World Cup in 1966. "For me, [he is] England's greatest ever player," former England striker Gary Lineker told BBC Radio 5

Live. "You can only judge players that you have seen in your lifetime and I was lucky enough to see him play when I was a young boy. He was one of my heroes, one of many people's heroes. "I was always nervous and in awe of him, but he was so gentle as a man he always put you at ease. He was always so kind. "He was unique. Wherever you go in the world, even if they didn't speak the language, they knew two words - Bobby Charlton." Part of Manchester United's so-called 'Holy Trinity' alongside club legends Denis Law and George Best, Charlton scored twice in a famous 4-1

extra-time win against Benfica in the 1968 European Cup final as Sir Matt Busby's team became the continent's first English champions. He was England's record goalscorer until 2015, when Wayne Rooney surpassed the Ashington-born attacking midfielder's tally of 49. "When you read about everything he has done in the game, how many trophies he has won, appearances he has made and goals he has scored, he could have been excused for having a little bit of arrogance about him," said former Newcastle and England striker Alan Shearer. — Agencies

"Pakistan will be different team against Afghanistan"

CHENNAI: Pakistan opening batter, Imam-ul-Haq, addressed the media in a press conference ahead of their crucial ICC World Cup 2023 encounter against Afghanistan in Chennai on Monday. The left-handed batter acknowledged Pakistan's recent struggles in the tournament, particularly their inability to convert good innings into exceptional ones. "When you are chasing 367, you have to take risks. I agree we are not able to play big innings, I also agree that we haven't played well in the last two matches. We have analysed our situation, you'll see a different team tomorrow [against Afghanistan]," Imam said.

Imam emphasized that it's normal for morale to dip after consecutive losses but highlighted the unity and support within the team. "Yes, losing matches back-to-back does affect morale but we back each other and the management is backing the players as well. We are confident that we can get back on track after winning against Afghanistan. We aren't able to convert the 70s or 80s into a century, we have talked to our coach about it," he further added. Imam-ul-Haq also addressing the issue of bowlers conceding runs in the tour-

nament. "Bowlers of all the teams are conceding runs, it's not only happening with us. Shaheen bowled well against Australia," he said. Imam recalled Pakistan's success in a three-match ODI series against Afghanistan in Sri Lanka, just before the Asia Cup 2023, where Pakistan came out victorious and became the number-one ODI team for the first time. "We defeated Afghanistan in spinning conditions in Hambantota, and our record in Chennai gives us hope but we will need to play our best cricket. Captain will decide how many spinners will play. — DNA

Sevilla hold Madrid as Atletico climb 2nd

SPORTS DESK

MADRID: Real Madrid shared a pulsating 1-1 draw with Sergio Ramos' Sevilla on Saturday, ensuring they will face Barcelona in the Clasico next weekend as La Liga leaders. Meanwhile, Antoine Griezmann struck a hat-trick in a 3-0 win over 10-man Celta Vigo to help Atletico Madrid climb provisionally second in the La Liga points table, in hot pursuit of their city rivals. Carlo Ancelotti's Real Madrid dropped two points in the La Liga title race but extended their lead to four points over bitter rivals Barcelona, who are in fourth place and host Athletic Bilbao on Sunday. David Alaba's own goal sent the hosts ahead but Madrid quickly pulled level through Dani Carvajal. Madrid faced their former captain Sergio Ramos, back at Sevilla for the first time in 18 years, and the 37-year-old gave a typically all-action display to frustrate Los Blancos. Sevilla impressed, giving as good as they got in new coach Diego Alonso's first match in charge, ahead of their Champions League clash with Arsenal on Tuesday.

PIA's flight operation...

FROM PAGE 01 pending," it said, noting that the carrier was not providing flight schedules for the remaining amount. "Fuel worth Rs60 million is still available as the national carrier can still acquire it," the corporation clarified. Due to cancellation and delay of PIA flights, hundreds of passengers have been facing inconvenience for past several days. They were not only the travelers, but flight crew was also facing inconvenience due to delay in flights departures. It is pertinent to mention here that Caretaker Prime Minister Anwarul Haq Kakar had already directed authorities concerned to expedite the privatization process of Pakistan International Airlines (PIA).

'Trial of civilians...

FROM PAGE 01 establishments. The development comes a day before a five-member apex court bench — headed by Justice Ijaz Ahsan, and comprising Justice Munib Akhtar, Justice Yahya Afridi, Justice Sayyed Mazhar Ali Akbar Naqvi and Justice Ayesha Malik — is scheduled to hear pleas challenging the trial of civilians in military courts. "The accused persons were taken into custody during the month of May this year and have been in custody since then. The accused have been taken into custody under the Pakistan Army Act, 1952 read with the Official Secrets Act, 1923 for attacking military installations/establishments," the government stated, in its application. The application mentioned that since these trials have already begun, it is important that they are conducted and concluded to ensure fairness towards the "accused persons".

55 workers arrested...

FROM PAGE 01 the PTI leader responsible for organising the event. During this operation, the police reportedly damaged office property by breaking windows and tore down PTI banners and posters. The district administration had initially declined permission for PTI to hold the rally in constituency NA-123 Kahna, prompting the political party to seek legal recourse and approach the Lahore High Court. The court ruled that if PTI were not permitted to hold their gathering, then no one should be allowed to do so. PTI supporters and officials have decried the police's actions, claiming that they had followed the proper procedures and obtained the necessary permissions from the district administration. Separately, in Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa, police suddenly intensified its crackdown against PTI leaders across the province with the homes of former provincial ministers Kamran Bangash and Anwar Zaib Khan being raided in Peshawar and Bajaur on Friday and both politicians being arrested.

UN calls for 'urgent'...

FROM PAGE 01 Fund (UNFPA) said The agency has deployed psychosocial counsellors to help them cope with overwhelming loss. They need someone to listen to them and help them cope with their trauma, said counsellor Faiza Zaria, adding that the availability of psychosocial support is critical. Women also face other challenges heightened risks of preventable maternal death, gender-based violence and hunger. UNFPA is working to address reproductive health needs. It issued a funding appeal for \$11.6 million to continue delivering life-saving sexual and reproductive health supplies and services. Access to medical care has also been severely affected, with at least 40 facilities reported damaged, a region that was already largely deprived of essential health services before the disaster. WHO warns that services for about 580,000 people have been severely disrupted. Health workers are also affected by the disaster either from loss of family members or from fear of collapsing health facilities, which makes it even harder for them to provide the health care their communities need. Alaa Abou Zeid, WHO team leader emergencies in Afghanistan, told reporters in Geneva, from Kabul. — Agencies



ISLAMABAD Defence Attaches of various countries posing for a picture on the occasion of COSA Golf Tournament. — DNA

Briefs

Belgian minister quits over Brussels shooting

BRUSSELS: The shooter was denied asylum in October 2020 and ordered to be extradited in 2021, but the authorities did not do so because they could not find an address for him. After Monday night's shooting, the place where he was living was found within hours. Belgian justice minister resigned on Friday over what he described as a "monumental error" after it was discovered that Tunisia was seeking the extradition last year of an Islamic extremist who shot dead two Swedes and wounded a third this week. Justice Minister Vincent Van Quickenborne said that he and his services had been searching for details to understand how Abdeslem Lassoued had disappeared off the map two years ago after being denied asylum and ordered by Belgian authorities to be deported to Tunisia. On Monday night, Lassoued gunned down two Swedish men and wounded a third with a semiautomatic rifle. The attack forced the lockdown of more than 35,000 people in a soccer stadium where they had gathered to watch Belgium play Sweden. In a video posted online, he claimed to be inspired by the Islamic State group. Police shot him dead on Tuesday morning in a Brussels cafe. "This morning at nine o'clock, I remarked the following elements: On the 15th of August 2022, there was an extradition demand by Tunisia for this man," Van Quickenborne told reporters on Friday evening.—APP

China inspects iPhone supplier Foxconn

BEIJING: Foxconn Technology Group, Apple Inc's largest supplier of iPhones, has been subjected to tax audits at some of its key subsidiaries, suspected of violating laws and regulations, Chinese state media has reported. China's natural resources department also conducted on-site investigations on the land use of enterprises of Foxconn in Henan, Hubei provinces and other places, according to the exclusive report published on Sunday in the nationalist tabloid, the Global Times. It did not elaborate on the investigations or the timing of them. Foxconn did not immediately respond for comment outside of regular business hours. Zhang Wensheng, deputy dean of the Taiwan Research Institute of Xiamen University, told the Global Times in an interview that the tax audit and land use investigations conducted by the relevant departments stemmed from any enterprise suspected of violating laws and regulations and was a normal procedure.—Agencies

AI's involvement in workforce sparks debates

LONDON: Millions of workers around the world are concerned about their jobs because of rapid developments in artificial intelligence-based technologies. Various AI-based products pose a risk, especially for white-collar jobs, such as design graphics, video creation, writing stories or coding programs. Some experts deny the dystopia by asserting that new technologies will create new jobs, such as operating printing machines instead of hand writing. Hassan Sawaf, the CEO of an US-based AI firm aiXplain, said the number of translation websites is increasing but workload of interpreters is not decreasing, ever higher than ever. Thanks to technological developments, people can work at any major company in the world from anywhere today, he noted Monday during a session as part of the world's largest tech fair, GITEX GLOBAL, in the United Arab Emirates capital of Dubai.—APP

Health minister leads advocacy walk to end polio

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Children are our future, and the Government of Pakistan will leave no stone unturned to ensure that the disability-causing poliovirus does not remain a threat to their wellbeing, Minister for Health Dr Nadeem Jan has said. The minister led an awareness walk in Islamabad to end polio on Sunday as part of a series of events marking World Polio Day, which is observed on October 24 every year. The walk brought together hundreds of participants from the Ministry of Health, students, civil society, the leadership of the Pakistan Polio Programme and polio eradication partners such as Rotary, WHO, UNICEF and BMGF and featured a speech from Senator Qurat-ulain Marri, a polio survivor. Senator Marri spoke about the

everyday challenges of living with polio and polio regressive syndrome. "Ten years ago, I didn't need a crutch, 10 years after maybe I'll be on a wheelchair. This is a debilitating disease." "A child less than five years does not have the ability to share the pain they feel, but let me tell you, it's a very very painful disease." Dr Nadeem Jan said: "This walk is a testament to our commitment and the tireless efforts and resilience of our healthcare heroes who continue to immunize children, even in the most challenging circumstances. It's a powerful statement that together, we can achieve a polio-free Pakistan." Representatives from Rotary International and WHO, on behalf of UN partners, in Pakistan also spoke on the occasion. WHO Country Representative said: "It's wonderful to be here together with frontline health workers who reach



every home in Pakistan. This work is crucial. We are working to eradicate

the second disease in human history." Dr Shahzad Baig, Coordinator of the

National Emergency Operations Centre for Polio Eradication, thanked the

participants and highlighted Pakistan's progress in polio eradication.

Anti-EU, anti-immigration party set to sweep Swiss polls

BERN: Polling stations are only open for a few hours on Sunday morning as the vast majority of Swiss voters post their ballots in the four weeks leading up to election day. "Flyers, fake videos, provocative subjects on election posters: the parties are leaving no stone unturned to attract as many sympathisers as possible to the ballot box in the final spurt of the election campaign," the SonntagsZeitung newspaper said. A first results projection, giving percentages only, is expected at around 4:00pm (1400 GMT). The wealthy European country of 8.8 million people is voting for all 200 seats in the National Council lower house of parliament and all 46 in the Council of States upper chamber. The Council of States, which represents the cantons that makeup Switzerland, is dominated by the centre-right The

Centre and the right-wing party called FDP. The Liberals. Elections, by majority vote, rarely change the balance. In the lower house, where proportional representation is used, the right-wing populist Swiss People's Party (SVP) is on course to consolidate its position as the biggest political force. Meanwhile the Greens are expected to cede ground back to the Social Democrats, according to the opinion polls. The SVP — which is strongly anti-EU — fiercely defends Switzerland's long-standing military neutrality but feels this principle has been tested too far in recent months. Switzerland is not in the European Union but has matched the EU's economic sanctions on Russia following Moscow's full-scale offensive in Ukraine. That said, the SVP's election campaign has focused on its favourite theme: the

fight against "mass immigration" and saying no to a Switzerland of 10 million people. The Federal Commission Against Racism accused the SVP of running a "xenophobic" campaign on social media by spotlighting criminal cases perpetrated by foreigners. It's "New normal?" social media adverts plunged into a world of bloodied knives, hooded criminals, fists, bruised faces and frightened women. It has also launched war on "woke madness." "Drag queens, antifas and climate activists are all going to vote! At the polls, they could ruin Switzerland and our society. We won't let them!" the SVP youth wing said in a final push for votes. Even though Switzerland remains one of the world's richest countries, with unemployment running at around two percent and a very high GDP per capita, the SVP's message continues to strike a chord. The

party has topped every National Council election since 1999, though its support has gone up and down. "It's true that four years ago, our vote went down," SVP leader Marco Chiesa told AFP news agency. Although "we are still the first party, we want to get 100,000 voters back, to get closer to 30 percent" — something no Swiss party has ever achieved under the proportional representation system. On the other side of the National Council's hemicycle in the Federal Palace in Bern, the Greens and the Green Liberals are thought unlikely to hold their 2019 gains. Though climate crisis remains a major issue in Switzerland — where Alpine glaciers are retreating at an exceptional rate — the environmentalist movement seems to have lost momentum during the Covid-19 pandemic.—APP

US, Japan, S. Korea hold joint air drill

TOKYO: The US, Japan and South Korea on Sunday conducted a joint air exercise near the Korean Peninsula, Seoul's Air Force said. The event marked the first time for the three countries to hold joint air drills in the area. The three-way exercise took place south of the peninsula, where South Korean and Japanese air defense identification zones overlap, involving a US B-52H strategic bomber, as well as South Korean, US and Japanese fighter jets, Seoul-based Yonhap news agency reported, citing a statement from the armed service. It came after Seoul, Washington and Tokyo, earlier this month, staged a trilateral maritime interdiction exercise in waters south of the Korean Peninsula for the first time in seven years. "This exercise was designed to follow through on the defense agreements discussed in the Camp David summit in August and expand the three countries' response capabilities against North Korea's advancing nuclear and missile threats," Seoul's Air Force said in a statement, referring to a meeting between the leaders of the three countries at Camp David. The exercise, it stated, demonstrated the solidarity between the three countries, adding that it plans to further enhance trilateral cooperation based on the "solid" South Korea-US alliance. Reacting angrily against the ongoing three-way cooperation, North Korean leader Kim Jong-un, last month, labeled it as the "worst actual threat." A US B-52H nuclear-capable bomber made its first known landing at a South Korean airbase last week after staging joint air drills with South Korean fighters and flying over a biennial arms exhibition just south of Seoul.—DNA

18 Palestinian journalists killed in Gaza

DNA

GAZA CITY: At least 18 Palestinian journalists have been killed in Gaza since Oct. 7, according to a local syndicate on Sunday. The latest victim was Palestinian journalist Rushdi Sarraj, who lost his life in Israeli attacks, the Palestinian Journalists Syndicate (PJS) said on Sunday in a written statement. Speaking to Anadolu, Sarraj's wife, Shuruk al-Ayle, said her husband lost his life in an Israeli attack on the Tel al-Hawa neighborhood in Gaza. The conflict in Gaza, under Israeli bombardment and blockade since Oct. 7, began when Hamas 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 growing violence by Israeli settlers. The Israeli military then launched Operation Swords of Iron against Hamas targets in the Gaza Strip. At least 4,651 Palestinians, including 1,873 children, have been killed in Israeli attacks on Gaza, while the figure stands at more than 1,400 people in Israel.

Pakistan partners with China on Moon program

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan has taken a significant step by signing an initial cooperation agreement with China to become part of its lunar base program, which aims to establish a research station on the Moon's South Pole. Caretaker Prime Minister Anwaarul Haq Kakar and Chinese Premier Li Qiang were present to witness the signing of this agreement, said an official statement released here, according to Gwadar Pro. The China National Space Administration (CNSA) has stated that the collaboration between Pakistan and China in this lunar project will encompass various aspects, including engineering and operational elements of the Chinese lunar base program.

Iran sends relief aid to Afghanistan

DNA

TEHRAN: Iran has dispatched the fourth shipment of humanitarian aid to neighboring Afghanistan as the country is reeling from a series of devastating earthquakes that hit its western areas, particularly Herat Province, earlier this month. Speaking to the IRNA news agency on Sunday, Hadi Ramezani, head of the Iranian Red Crescent Society in the city of Taybad, said the consignment, weighing 40 tons, was sent from Dowqaran border. Collected by Taybad residents, the aid batch, including food items, blankets and carpets, will be distributed among the Afghan people in Herat's Zinda Jan district, he added. Ramezani also said that three consignments, containing more than 690 tons of donated goods, have already been dispatched to earthquake-stricken Afghanistan. More truckloads of assistance, he noted, are ready to be sent to Zinda Jan. Four powerful quakes in just over a week have killed more than 2,400 people in Afghanistan, according to the ruling Taliban administration. They were among the world's deadliest earthquakes this year, after February's tremors in Turkey and Syria. The initial quake measuring 6.3 magnitudes and numerous aftershocks flattened whole villages and destroyed hundreds of mud-brick homes in Herat on October 7. UN officials said more than 90 percent of the victims were women and children.

Slovenia to introduce border checks with Hungary, Croatia

FOREIGN DESK

BUDAPEST: The Slovenian government has said the checks should last for at least 10 days. Ljubljana officially introduced border checks with neighbouring Hungary and Croatia on Saturday following a similar move made by Italy due to an upsurge of violence in the Middle East. Italy's far-right government also suspended an open-border agreement with Slovenia effective from Saturday for 10 days. The announcement reflects increasing security concerns in Europe due to the war between Israel and the Hamas militant group. On Thursday, European Union interior ministers debated how to manage the impact of the war on the 27-nation bloc after a firebomb assault on a Berlin synagogue and separate killings in Belgium and France by suspected Islamic extremists. EU Home Affairs Commissioner Ylva Johansson said in Luxembourg that the commission is looking into the issue of internal border checks, which she described as one of the challenges of the Schengen area. "Even if it is justified by severe things, internal security or illegal border crossing, internal border controls also hamper free movement," said Johansson. "We need to avoid it." The shooter in the Belgian attack, a Tunisian national, had been denied residency in four European countries and was issued a deportation order from Belgium in 2021, but disappeared from sight. It was only after he killed two Swedish men on Tuesday, that officials were able to track him down. He was shot dead by police as they tried to arrest him. Slovenia's Interior Minister Boštjan Poklukar presented the details at the EU meeting in Luxembourg. He said authorities are expected to set up special checkpoints for EU citizens and local residents living in the border area. Slovenia, Italy, Croatia and Hungary are all among the 27 countries that belong to the Schengen area, the world's largest free travel zone.

RCCI hails establishment of business facilitation center in Punjab



STAFF REPORT

RAWALPINDI: The Rawalpindi Chamber of Commerce and Industry (RCCI) President Saqib Rafiq while addressing a Zoom meeting on Business Facilitation Center (One-Roof) with Minister Industries, S.M. Tanveer lauded the Punjab

towards ease of doing business which will provide seamless inter-action between the business community and 36 different departments. RCCI President Saqib Rafiq while addressing a Zoom meeting on Business Facilitation Center (One-Roof) with Minister Industries, S.M. Tanveer lauded the Punjab

Government initiative towards providing facilitation to the business community and a vital step towards facilitating investment and industrialization. The meeting discussed the progress on one-window operation facility in alignment with the recommendations of the six major cham-

bers of commerce and industries in Punjab. Presidents from the Chamber of Commerce including Lahore, Gujranwala, Sialkot, Faisalabad and Multan, Secretary Industries, DG IPWM, CEO PIEDMC, CEO FIDEMC, CEO PBIT, MD PSIC, among others, were also present in the meeting.

Curtain Raiser

'ASEAN Corner' at ISSI being inaugurated today

DNA

The Institute of Strategic Studies Islamabad (ISSI) has established an 'ASEAN Corner' which will be inaugurated in a formal ceremony by the Foreign Minister and ASEAN Envoys on 23 October (today). The inauguration would be followed by a Roundtable Discussion, titled: "Forging Partnerships: Exploring the Future Prospects of Pakistan-ASEAN Relations. The event is being organized by ISSI's China Pakistan Study Centre (CPSC). The establishment of 'ASEAN Corner' at ISSI is based on the conviction that a deeper understanding of ASEAN and its role, place and relevance in the region and the world is of crucial importance. The initiative, agreed between ISSI and ASEAN Committee in Islamabad (ACI) during their

structured interaction in January 2023, is part of the efforts to forge a closer partnership between Pakistan and ASEAN. ASEAN and Pakistan share a long-standing and growing relationship, built on the pillars of economic cooperation and regional stability. Pakistan's strategic location as a bridge between South Asia and the

Middle East complements ASEAN's focus on trade and connectivity across diverse regions. Moreover, mutual collaboration extends to various sectors - including industry, investment, agriculture, education, science and technology, tourism, and counterterrorism efforts, reinforcing their commitment to economic development and regional secu-

ity. As the world faces evolving geopolitical dynamics, the partnership between ASEAN and Pakistan remains vital for fostering peace and prosperity in the Asian region. Despite geographical distance, ASEAN and Pakistan have nurtured a strong and mutually beneficial relationship over the years. Pakistan's 'Vision East Asia' policy reflects its resolve to deepen cooperation with ASEAN across myriad fields. ASEAN, on the other hand, values Pakistan as a significant partner in its external relations. The two sides continue to strengthen mutual bonds through enhanced diplomatic engagement, joint ventures, and people-to-people exchanges. In the face of global challenges, the ASEAN-Pakistan relationship serves as a testament to the regional cooperation and

shared aspirations for a stable and prosperous Asia. Within this backdrop, the inauguration of the 'ASEAN Corner' at ISSI is an important step. It is envisaged that the print and electronic resources accumulated at the 'ASEAN Corner' would enable researchers, academics, scholars and practitioners to deepen their understanding of Southeast Asia's political, economic, and security dynamics and propose ideas for broader and more substantive engagement. Furthermore, the Roundtable Discussion following the inauguration ceremony involves high-level diplomats from ASEAN, senior officials from Pakistan, and business representatives. The event aims to bring together academics and practitioners to analyze Pakistan's evolving ties with ASEAN and offering insights into regional challenges and opportunities.



Briefs

India end NZ unbeaten run in World Cup

DNA

DHARAMSHALA: India continued their dominant form and beat New Zealand by four wickets in an important match at the HPCA Stadium, Dharamshala, on Sunday. The crucial win means that India is now the only team in the World Cup 2023 that has not lost a single match. Chasing the target of 274 runs, Rohit Sharma did what he does best and provided the Blues with a rapid start as they were 63-0 in the first 10 overs. Although "The Hitman" could not complete his well-deserved half-century once again, losing his wicket to Lockie Ferguson for 46 runs, the 36-year-old had done his job by taking India ahead of the required run rate. Sharma's quick start gave the remaining Indian batters much-needed room to build partnerships and play according to the situation and that is what Virat Kohli did with KL Rahul and Ravindra Jadeja. Kohli scored well-executed 95 runs and ensured India's fifth win in the World Cup, which was needed as their next match is against the struggling English side in Lucknow. He was supported by Jadeja, who built a 78-run with the 34-year-old. Fair to say, all of the Indian batters performed well, except Suryakumar Yadav who got run out unluckily for just two runs. Batting first, New Zealand lost two early wickets for 19 runs but a 159-run partnership between Rachin Ravindra and Daryl Mitchell saved the day for the Black Caps, who looked helpless in front of the Indian bowling attack at the start.

Pakistan to host all flags together event

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan is set to host the second edition of the All Flags Together (AFT) event on Thursday, November 2, at the Pakistan National Council of the Arts (PNCA) premises. The event would be organized by Devcom-Pakistan in collaboration with the Ministry of National Heritage and Culture and the PNCA. The AFT event is a daylong celebration of cultural diplomacy and UN unity. It will feature a range of activities, including a youth conference, an interactive panel discussion with experts, international food stalls, an art and craft exhibition, and a showcase of organizations' work, as per a news release on Sunday. The event is expected to draw over ten thousand participants, including diplomats, UN officials, youth, and citizens. It is a free-entry event, but registration is required. Executive Director of Devcom-Pakistan, Munir Ahmed emphasized that the AFT event is intended to support UN organizations and member states in their efforts to protect human rights, preserve cultural heritage, and promote peace through interfaith harmony, democracy, and development. - APP

IPP clarifies Aun Chaudhry's meeting with Nawaz Sharif

DNA

LAHORE: The Isteekam-e-Pakistan Party (IPP) has sought a written explanation from Aun Chaudhry to clarify the circumstances surrounding the meeting with Mian Nawaz Sharif at Lahore airport. According to the party's spokesperson, the IPP has issued a show cause notice to its Additional Secretary General Aun Chaudhry in response to meeting Nawaz Sharif. The spokesperson categorically stated that Aun Chaudhry's interaction with Nawaz Sharif held no affiliation with the party's official stance or activities. Chaudhry's actions in this matter were undertaken in a personal capacity, an immediate explanation is expected from him to rectify any misperceptions.

SUN SET DINNER AT MONAL

DNA



ISLAMABAD: The Ambassadors and High Commissioner from various countries and their spouses posing for a group picture on the occasion of sun set dinner hosted by CEO of the Monal Group Luqman Ali Afzal, at the Monal Tree House. - DNA

'Only clean people allowed political activities'

DNA

LAHORE: Punjab Caretaker Chief Minister Mohsin Naqvi on Sunday said that any person having a criminal record will not be allowed to hold a convention. This was said in response to arrest of 55 Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) workers from Lahore earlier in the day. The police arrested 55 PTI workers from Lahore's Kahna area despite prior permission granted by the district administration for holding a workers' convention. The police raided the office of the PTI leader responsible for organizing the convention. During this operation, the police reportedly caused collateral damage by breaking windows and tearing down party banners and posters. The district administration's initial decision to deny permission for PTI to hold the rally in constituency NA-123 Kahna had prompted the political party to approach LHC. The court's verdict was unambiguous that if PTI was not allowed to hold their gathering, then nobody should have the privilege of doing so. But today, the party's workers' convention was thwarted. In this regard, CM Naqvi said that "anyone with a criminal record will not be allowed to attend the convention."

US announces 'increasing force posture' in Middle East

US redirects Navy carrier strike group, deploys high altitude defense missile system, patriot battalions to Middle East

NEWS DESK

WASHINGTON: US Defense Secretary Lloyd Austin has announced a plan to bolster the presence of US forces in the Middle East amid recent escalations in the region. "Following detailed discussions with President (Joe) Biden on recent escalations by Iran and its proxy forces across the Middle East Region, today I directed a series of additional steps to further strengthen the Department of Defense posture in the region," Austin said in a statement on Saturday. "These steps will bolster regional deterrence efforts, increase force protection for US forces in the region, and assist in the defense of Israel," he said. "First, I redirected the movement of the USS Dwight D. Eisenhower Carrier Strike Group to the Central Command area of responsibility. This carrier strike group is in addition to the USS Gerald R. Ford Carrier Strike Group, which is currently operating in the Eastern Mediterranean Sea. It will further increase our force posture and strengthen our capabilities and ability to respond to a range of contingencies," he said. Additionally, the deployment of a Terminal High Altitude Area Defense (THAAD) battery and the dispatch of additional Patriot battalions to various locations within the region are set to increase force protection for US forces, he added. "Finally, I have placed an additional number of forces on prepare to deploy orders as part of prudent contingency planning, to increase their readiness and ability to quickly respond as required," the secretary said. On Thursday, the Pentagon said that a US Navy warship intercepted cruise missiles and drones launched by Yemen's Houthi rebels that were "potentially" targeting Israel. A barrage of rockets has reportedly targeted Ain al-Asad air



base in Iraq's western province of Anbar, where American military forces and trainers are stationed on alleged training and advisory missions. Russia's RT Arabic television news network, citing local sources speaking on condition of anonymity, reported that three 122mm BM-21 Grad rockets had targeted the military facility, located about 160 kilometers (100 miles) west of the capital Baghdad, on Sunday. The report added that the rockets had been fired from a village in the al-Baghdati district. One of the projectiles landed inside the air base, while the second one was intercepted and shot down by missile systems. The third rocket fell on the outskirts of the base. There were no immediate reports of casualties as a result of the rocket attack. Sabereen News, a Telegram news channel associated with Iraqi Popular Mobilization Units (PMU), also reported that the Ain al-Asad air base had come under a rocket attack.

The development comes a day after an explosive-laden drone hit the same US-run military base. "The drone came down inside the (Ain al-Asad) base" in the western province of Anbar, without causing any casualties or damage, an Iraqi military source told AFP news agency on condition of anonymity. A statement issued on Sabereen News said the attack was carried out by a group calling itself the Islamic Resistance in Iraq. A second Iraqi security source told AFP the attack had involved two unmanned aerial vehicles. "The first was intercepted and the second crashed because of a technical problem," the source said. Since Wednesday, three Iraqi bases used by the US-led coalition troops purportedly fighting the Takfiri Daesh terrorist group have been targeted in five separate attacks - Ain al-Asad, the al-Harir base in Erbil, capital of Iraq's semi-autonomous region of Kurdistan, and a military camp near Baghdad airport. They came after Iraqi resistance factions warned the United States against funding and supporting Israeli war crimes against Palestinians in the besieged Gaza Strip. Iraq's anti-terror group Kata'ib Hezbollah has threatened to target American bases in Iraq and the entire region if Washington intervenes in the ongoing Gaza war. Health officials in Gaza say the Israeli bombardment has killed at least 4,385 people since October 7, when fighters from the Hamas resistance movement launched an unprecedented large-scale attack against the occupying Israeli regime. More than 14,000 individuals have also been injured. The officials stressed that 70 percent of the fatalities include children, women, and the elderly, warning that the number is expected to soar as more people are being killed and wounded in the relentless Israeli air raids, and more bodies are being extracted from under the rubble of destroyed buildings.

Malaysian PM praises MWL's role

RIYADH: Dr. Mohammed bin Abdulkarim Al-Hssa, secretary-general of the Muslim World League and chairman of the Organization of Muslim Scholars, received Malaysian Prime Minister Anwar Ibrahim at the league's office in Riyadh. During the meeting, Ibrahim and Al-Hssa discussed several topics of common interest, the Saudi Press Agency reported on Sunday. The Malaysian prime minister praised the MWL's global presence and influence, describing the league, headquartered in Makkah, as Saudi Arabia's good deed toward the Islamic world. He also expressed his appreciation for its efforts in support of Palestine in light of the current crisis. During the meeting, the two officials set the dates for the first session of the Council of Southeast Asian Scholars and the World Summit of Religious Leaders in Kuala Lumpur.

Violence against women NCSW writes letter to CJP seeking 'urgent attention'

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

ISLAMABAD: National Commission on the Status of Women (NCSW) Chairperson Nilofar Bakhtiar has written a letter to Chief Justice of Pakistan Qazi Faez Isa seeking "urgent attention" to cases pertaining to violence against women, it emerged on Sunday. The letter, a copy of which is available with Dawn.com, described the commission as a "statutory body to combat discrimination against women in Pakistan". "It is mandated to promote and protect social, economic, political and legal rights of women as guaranteed in the constitution and in accordance with Pakistan's international commitments," it said. In the letter, Bakhtiar highlighted the alarming issue of violence against women in the country. "Unfortunately, cases such as the deeply disturbing Noor Mukaddam murder case highlight the urgent need for a comprehensive and effective response to address the crisis," she said, recalling that the brutality of the Noor Mukaddam case had shocked the nation. Noor, 27, was found murdered in Islamabad's upscale Sector F-7/4 on July 20, 2021. A first information report (FIR) was registered the same day against Zahir Jaffer - who was arrested from the site of the murder - under Section 302 (premeditated murder) of the Pakistan Penal Code (PPC) on the complaint of the victim's father, Shaukat Mukadam, who is a retired diplomat.

Sanjranito attend int'l symposium in Beijing

ISLAMABAD: Muhammad Sadiq Sanjran, Chairman Senate of Pakistan, has been specially invited by Minister of Foreign Affairs of the People's Republic of China to attend the International Symposium to Commemorate the 10th anniversary of China's Principle of Amity, Sincerity, Mutual Benefit, and Inclusiveness in Neighborhood Diplomacy proposed by President Xi Jinping. The event, to be held on October 24, 2023, at the Diaoyutai State Guesthouse in Beijing, will feature Chairman Senate as a distinguished Chief Guest. Chairman Senate will grace the opening ceremony and address the gathering, contributing to the discourse on strengthening diplomatic ties among neighboring nations. The Senate Chairman's presence at this Symposium is expected to strengthen the bonds of friendship, mutual trust, and mutually beneficial cooperation between Pakistan and China. In addition to his participation in the Symposium, Chairman Senate will meet his counterpart in China, the Chairman of the Standing Committee of the National People's Congress. Furthermore, during this visit, Chairman Senate will engage in meetings with the heads of various Chinese state-owned companies, including those in the mining sector. Additionally, he will hold discussions with officials from China Aid, fostering closer ties and exploring avenues for collaboration and cooperation. This Symposium promises to be a momentous occasion for advancing diplomatic relations, and Chairman Senate's involvement is a testament to the commitment of Pakistan to further strengthen its ties with China. - DNA

Federal ministries cautioned about fake emails

ADIL SHAHEEN

ISLAMABAD: The Cabinet Division has issued a letter to all federal ministries and departments, warning them about fake emails and WhatsApp messages attributed to government departments after a series of reported cyber attacks. According to the letter issued to all federal ministries on Sunday, there had been reports of fake emails and messages sent to various ministries from fake email ID of "JS (COORD)". The letter also stated various ministries also received emails from fake IDs of the Prime Minister's Office (PMO) and PM Secretariat. The division said that these fake emails featured malicious attachments that insisted the users download those files on their computers. In the letter, the Cabinet Division advised all federal ministries to beware of such emails and departments while the matter is being investigated at "the highest level". Additionally, emails and phone calls purporting to be from

the Special Investment Facility Council (SIFC) may also be fake, according to the letter. The letter warned the ministries not to receive calls or download files from Javed, who posed as the fake "deputy director of SIFC and PM secretariat" and Shehzad Ahmed who posed as the fake "assistant director of PMO and SIFC Cell". "Any WhatsApp messages or emails from above-mentioned credentials or email ID: shahzadahmad@outlook.com, may be ignored and blocked," the letter read. The letter also advised that emails, with reference to the SIFC Apex Committee, should be opened after verification from the sender. According to the Cabinet Division, an anti-virus should be installed in all systems. The letter read: "Antivirus must be installed on all systems being used for opening of emails. As an alternative, Apple MAC may be used or a PC may be installed with an appropriate user-friendly version of GUI-based linux." All the ministries that opened the email attributed to the press secretary of the PMO, dated 3 August 2022, must block the IP address, it added.

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