



# Islamabad POST

Monday, October 30, 2023

Pakistan's Credible Daily Newspaper

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### Romania, Pakistan coop in defence field exemplary

Detailed News On Page-08

### Mike Pence withdraws from presidential race

Detailed News On Page-08

### Arsalan "Ash" bags another record in esports

Detailed News On Page-06

## Death toll crosses 8,000

# Gaza hospitals on 'verge of collapse'

### Palestinian Red Crescent says Israel wants Al-Quds hospital evacuated with raids 50m away

DNA

GAZA CITY: The Palestinian Red Crescent (PRC) said on Sunday it has received warnings from Israeli authorities to immediately evacuate al-Quds hospital in the Gaza Strip. "Since this morning, there has been raids 50 meters away from the hospital," it added in a statement on Facebook. The statement comes amid continued bombardment by Israeli Defence Forces (IDF) killing at over 8,000 Palestinians, including at least 3,595 children, and injuring thousands in the narrow Gaza strip. Israel has launched indiscriminate and relentless airstrikes besides an invasion on ground while blacking out communications and internet services in the Palestinian territory in retaliation to Hamas surprise raid that claimed around 1,400 lives on October 7. Panic and fear have surged inside Gaza, where over one million people are displaced, and where communications went dark for days after Israel cut internet lines, although connectivity had reportedly gradually returned early Sunday. Gaza's 2.3 million residents are also grappling with shortages of food, water and medicine due to Israel's blockade of the enclave. Only a few aid trucks have crossed into Gaza since the opening of Rafah crossing point last weekend.

The International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) said Saturday that Gaza's "still functioning hospitals are on the verge of collapse" amid a lack of electricity and medical supplies. "The immediate imperative must be to save lives and preserve humanity, including by ensuring hospitals can operate in safety," ICRC said in a statement. It said its medical team that arrived Friday in Gaza is not enough to address the "tragedy unfolding." "It is unacceptable that civilians have no safe place to go in Gaza amid the massive bombardments, and with a military siege in place there is also no adequate humanitarian response currently possible," said ICRC president. "This is a catastrophic failing that the world must not tolerate." ICRC reiterated that it continues dialogue with relevant parties "to find solutions to the most

Continued on Page 06

### Siraj voices strong solidarity with Gaza



ISLAMABAD: Thousands of Pakistanis participating in Gaza Solidarity March in Islamabad. - DNA

KHAYAM ABBASI

ISLAMABAD: Thousands attended the Jamaat-e-Islami (JI) led Gaza Solidarity March in Islamabad as Israeli occupation forces intensified aggression against the Palestinians. JI Pakistan Ameer Sirajul Haq and several political and religious leaders addressed the Gaza Solidarity March which was scheduled to be staged before the US Embassy, however, the authorities blocked the routes citing security concerns. The administration has not allowed entry of the rally participants to the Srinagar Highway, a high-security zone. Later, the JI staged its protest at Aabpara Chowk. The participants of the public rally also heard the special message of the Hamas top leader Ismail Haniyeh. JI Ameer Sirajul Haq said that they stand side-by-side with the Muslims in Gaza.

Continued on Page 06

### England on brink of elimination after India loss

### The Blues recorded their sixth successive win in the mega-event

SPORTS DESK

LUCKNOW: India continued their flawless form and beat England by 100 runs in the 29th match of the ICC World Cup 2023 at the Ekana Sports City, Lucknow, on Sunday. The Blues recorded their sixth consecutive win in the mega event, having one foot in the tournament's semi-final. Jos Buttler's men are on the verge of elimination from the mega event as after six matches, the defending champions could only register one win, which came against Bangladesh in Dharamshala. England struggled in front of the deadly pace attack of India and were 39-4 with their top order batter - Jonny Bairstow, Dawid Malan, Joe Root and Ben Stokes - sent back to the pavilion with the latter two getting out for a duck. The remaining damage was done by the spin attack of Kuldeep Yadav and Ravindra Jadeja as they shared three wickets between them.

Continued on Page 06

### Rupee recovery hinges on IMF review

### Analysts said the rupee weakened against the US dollar during outgoing week ahead of IMF review

NAZIR SIYAL

KARACHI: The Pakistani rupee is likely to make a recovery of some of its losses against the US dollar next week if the country gets a green light from the International Monetary Fund (IMF) for the next tranche of its loan programme. The local currency marked its second consecutive weekly reduction this week as it fell 1.78 rupees, or 0.6%, to 280.57 per dollar this week. As the dollar gained strength globally owing to signs of the US' economic recovery, the rupee tapped an intraday low of 280.5 on Friday, which remains the weakest level since early September.

Continued on Page 06



ISLAMABAD: Indian players celebrate convincing victory against England. - DNA

## Turkey's centenary PM pays tribute on 100th Republic Day

### "During the last one hundred years, Turkiye has made impressive strides across all walks of life," Kakar posted on X

### 'Safer than ever before'

NEWS DESK



ANSAR BHATTI

ISLAMABAD: Felicitating Turkey on the occasion of completing its centenary, Caretaker Prime Minister Anwaar-ul-Haq Kakar lauded the resolute grit and determination of the country's people on Sunday. PM Kakar, extending his wishes to the Turkish nation on its 100th Republic Day, praised them for completing this major milestone, preserving their independence and inspiring freedom-loving people around the globe. The interim premier commended

Continued on Page 06

ANKARA: Turkish leaders and ministers, including President Recep Tayyip Erdogan, have celebrated the centenary of the Republic of Türkiye. "We are experiencing the excitement and pride of reaching the 100th anniversary of our Republic today. I wholeheartedly congratulate our citizens living in our country and worldwide on the October 29 Republic Day," Erdogan said on X. Erdogan, along with several state dignitaries, later visited Anitkabir, the mausoleum of Mustafa Kemal Atatürk, the founder of modern Türkiye, for a ceremony. "We have tried to protect your legacy properly during our 21-year period of administration, every moment of which was spent serving our country and nation," he wrote in the Anitkabir guestbook. "As an administration that has brought Türkiye together

Continued on Page 06

## Briefs

### PPP will emerge stronger in Karachi

BUREAU REPORT

KARACHI: Sindh former minister Saeed Ghani said on Sunday that PPP will emerge as the largest party in Karachi. Speaking to media in Karachi, Ghani stated, "The PPP candidates will achieve success in both the Central and Korangi districts." PPP senior leader Saeed Ghani on Sunday asserted that the political landscape was favouring PML-N supremo Nawaz Sharif. Expressing his thoughts in Karachi, Ghani said: "The PML-N had believed in empowering the nation to choose its own leaders. But country, the perception is making rounds that the situation is being made favourable for Nawaz Sharif, particularly."

### PTI's Wajihah joins PML-N

DNA

LAHORE: With the elections drawing near, the exodus of leaders from the Imran Khan-led PTI has gained momentum as one more lawmaker - Wajihah Qamar - of the former ruling party on Sunday announced jumping ship and joined Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N).

REPATRIATION OF ILLEGAL IMMIGRANTS 01

## Govt, army chief working on getting investment in Pakistan: president

### Dr Alvi also congratulated REAP on its journey from the exports of \$300 million to \$3 billion

BUREAU REPORT

KARACHI: President Dr Arif Alvi has expressed his confidence in the incumbent caretaker government as well as the military leadership to lead the country towards economic progress. The president said that the interim government and Chief of the Army Staff (COAS) General Asim Munir, with the help of joint ventures, were trying to bring foreign investment into Pakistan to boost its economy, highlighting how decision-making has played a crucial role in positioning the country on the path to economic stability. President Alvi's remarks came during an address at the 15th Rice Exporters Association of Pakistan's (REAP) recognition ceremony, where Sindh Governor Kamran Tessori was also in attendance. During his address, the president also expressed hope for the business community to strengthen Pakistan economically. Alvi added that Pakistan had tremendous potential,

Continued on Page 06

### President condoles with martyrs' families

ADIL SHAHEEN

ISLAMABAD: President Dr. Arif Alvi on Sunday expressed condolences to the families of the martyrs of the Pakistan Army over telephone. The president spoke to the families of the soldiers over phone who were martyred in North and South Waziristan on October 16 and 18. He paid tribute to Sepoy Abdul Hameed, Lance Naik Tabassum-ul-Haq, and Sepoy Naeem Akhtar. President Alvi also paid tribute to Lance Naik Waris Khan and Sepoy Sajid Azim in a telephonic conversation with their families. He saluted on behalf of the the nation to the martyred for

Continued on Page 06

## Pakistani journalists unprotected despite legislations: report

### According to the report, Pak was failing to use the important legal instruments to combat rising impunity for crimes against journalists

DNA

PAKISTAN has failed to combat rising impunity for crimes against journalists despite legislation for their safety, according to Freedom Network's Annual Impunity 2023 report released on Sunday. The report titled "One step forward, two steps back - Pakistan legislates on the safety of journalists, but still fails to protect them" was launched ahead of the International Day to End Impunity for Crimes against Journalists, which falls on November 2. "Since the promulgation of safety laws for journalists first by the Sindh government and then the federal government in late 2021, Pakistan continues to record an alarming increase in persecution of journalists, especially by government authorities and state agencies, including kidnapping, physical assaults and serious legal cases against them including on

unproven charges of sedition, treason and electronic crimes, in the two-year post-legislation period," it said. "The Sindh Assembly passed the 'Sindh Protection of Journalists and Other Media Practitioners Act-2021' while the National Assembly passed 'Protection of Journalists and Media Professionals Act-2021' in the span of few months," it recalled. According to the report, Pakistan was failing to use the important legal instruments to combat rising impunity for crimes against journalists despite passing laws in this regard for two years. It highlighted that at least 37.5pc violations - 93 out of total 248 cases in period between August 2021-August 2023 - were recorded in Islamabad alone. Sindh was the second worst region in Pakistan with 22.5pc of the violations (56 cases), the report said, adding that it was ironic that most attacks against journalists were reported from regions

that legislated for their safety. The report further highlighted that 11 journalists were also killed or lost lives in line of duty during the same period. "Pakistan was ranked 157 out of 180 countries in Reporters Without Border's World Press Freedom Index in 2021 before the laws were passed," it said, adding that the country had improved its media freedom rank to 150 due to the two laws in 2023. "It is very disturbing to see the good work of the two legislatures diluted by not making the laws fully operational to provide protection to journalists," Iqbal Khattak, Executive Director of Freedom Network, reacted to the report's findings. "Both the federal and Sindh governments are responsible for effectively dysfunctionalising their own laws and therefore delaying and effectively denying justice to journalists," he said.

Continued on Page 06

TURKISH AIRLINES BEST PART OF THE JOURNEY Stopover IN ISTANBUL EASY VISA FREE ACCOMMODATION

## MDCAT test date announced for Sindh medical

KARACHI : The Sindh Health Department has officially revealed the date for the Medical and Dental Colleges Admission Test (MDCAT). According to an official statement by the Sindh Health Department, the MD CAT is scheduled to take place on November 19, 2023. This highly anticipated examination will be administered by the esteemed Dow University of Health Sciences and will be conducted at the Expo Center in Karachi, commencing at 10:30 AM and concluding at 2:00 PM. In an effort to maintain the integrity and fairness of the examination, stringent security measures will be implemented. All candidates will undergo a thorough search before entering the examination center. Notably, the health department has issued a stern warning that any candidate found in possession of mobile phones, calculators, or electronic devices will have their test tickets canceled. Furthermore, it has been emphasized that the presence of parents and relatives of test-takers in and around the examination center premises will not be permitted. This decision aims to create an environment of utmost concentration for the candidates, free from any external influences or distractions.—DNA

## Anti-dengue drive in Sargodha

SARGODHA : Chief Executive Officer Health Authority Sargodha Dr. Asad Aslam has said the Health Department is making all-out efforts to eliminate dengue larvae in the district. Talking to APP here on Sunday, he said that anti-dengue campaigns were also being arranged to raise awareness among masses. He said the outdoor and indoor teams of the Health Department were conducting surveillance of dengue larvae at all public places on a daily basis. Larvicide was being carried out at the places where water was accumulated and anti-dengue spray was also being done so that the threat of dengue mosquito breeding could be completely eliminated, he added.—APP

## 3 persons died in Torghar

TORGHAR : At least three people, including two minors and an elderly woman, tragically lost their lives on Sunday after being buried under the debris of a mud house in the remote village of Gigan Peetao, located in the Torghar district. According to police sources, a poorly constructed mud house in Gigan Peetao, Tehsil Jadba, collapsed, resulting in the deaths of three individuals, including a grandmother and her two young grandsons. The deceased have been identified as the elderly lady, Manzafza, and the two minors, Ehsan and Inaam. Residents managed to recover the bodies of the unfortunate family members from the wreckage of the house. Assistant Commissioner of Jadba, Hasrat, also arrived at the scene and offered condolences for the loss of three persons.—APP

# Pakistan should shift focus from 'Look Africa' to 'Enter Africa': NHC

Pakistan should forge a deeper connection with Africa to transform the perception of the country and open doors for fruitful collaboration as well as move forward from 'Look Africa' toward 'Enter Africa'

ADIL SHAHEEN

ISLAMABAD : Pakistan should forge a deeper connection with Africa to transform the perception of the country and open doors for fruitful collaboration as well as move forward from 'Look Africa' toward 'Enter Africa,' said H.E. Mohammed Bello Abioye, the outgoing High Commissioner of Nigeria to Pakistan, during a farewell session and launch of his memoirs 'Pakistan: How I Saw It - Memoirs & Reflections,' published by IPS Press, the publishing arm of Institute of Policy Studies (IPS). The session was also addressed by Khalid Rahman, chairman, IPS, Ambassador (r) Syed Abrar Hussain, vice chairman, IPS, Mthuzeli Madikiza, High Commissioner of South Africa to Pakistan, Mary Nyambura Kamau, High Commissioner of Kenya to Pakistan, and attended by officials from the Nigerian Embassy. Speaking about the book, H.E. Abioye stated that Pakistan 'How I Saw It: Memoirs & Reflections' is a game-changing read as it challenges stereotypes and encourages a fresh perspective on Pakistan, which for too long has been misrepresented in books and media that paint a negative picture of the country. Drawing on the background and content of the book, he stated that



the common experiences of both countries can serve as a foundation for broader cooperation in various fields. In this regard, he mentioned governance as a critical aspect of development and its role in fostering stability and progress. He mentioned that Pakistan has significant potential in the science and technological sectors. With the right governance, this potential can catalyze a more positive relationship between Ni-

geria and Pakistan and become a stepping stone for collaborative efforts that could benefit both nations. In his remarks, Khalid Rahman said this book is based on the personal experiences of a seasoned diplomat that would be beneficial for people coming to Pakistan or going to Nigeria. Complimenting the author for the book's emphasis and content, he mentioned that such memoirs help the foreign world understand the true picture of Paki-

stan as well as benefit the residents of the host country about how they are perceived outside the country. He emphasized that diplomats should increasingly record their experiences and observations in a similar manner to propagate a country's true image, which has become increasingly challenging in today's post-truth era rife with misinformation and disinformation. Endorsing H.E. Abioye, he maintained that governance, as the root

cause of development problems, cannot be corrected in one day. A key issue of governance in Pakistan is the electoral system, and to counter this, Pakistan should move to a hybrid system that incorporates the elements of both first past the post and proportionate representation, he said. Earlier, Abrar Hussain elaborated on the IPS' Africa Program, including a lecture series on Pakistan's foreign policy concerning Africa.

## Kazakh-Pakistan trade expands yearly, promising growth

DNA

ISLAMABAD : Ambassador Yerzhan Kistafin of Kazakhstan to Pakistan has said that the bilateral trade between Kazakhstan and Pakistan continues to witness steady and robust expansion each year. "Interaction between Kazakhstan and Pakistan in the scientific and educational spheres is intensifying, coupled with an increase in the number of Pakistani students attending universities in Kazakhstan. Along with a progressive improvement in bilateral relations in the banking sector," he said in a media interview on the occasion of Kazakhstan's Republic Day. The ambassador said that both nations are cele-

brating the remarkable 30-year friendship, peace, and harmony between Kazakhstan and Pakistan. Kistafin said that during the past 30 years, the countries have established and reinforced close relations across various domains, including political interaction, trade, economics, culture, and humanitarian cooperation. He said that positive dynamics have become evident in the industrial production sector. "Key elements driving trade, economic, and investment interaction between the two countries included meetings of the Intergovernmental Commission, Business Council, business forums, and reciprocal visits by business delegations," he added. He further said that cooperation in the field of inter-parliamentary inter-

action, particularly at the upper houses of legislative assemblies, is generating substantial interest not only in bilateral relations but also in multilateral formats. The Ambassador expressed confidence that such interaction at the legislative level would significantly advance the matters discussed between the two governments. He recalled the frequent meetings between President Kassym-Jomart Tokayev of Kazakhstan and Pakistan's Prime Minister Shahbaz Sharif in 2022, which further strengthened their relationship. In 2023, on the sidelines of the Belt and Road Forum, a meeting took place between the President of Kazakhstan and the caretaker Prime Minister of Pakistan, Anwar-Ul Haq Kakar, in Beijing. "This new contract is

expected to drive additional incentives for strengthening and expanding bilateral cooperation". Kistafin underlined Kazakhstan's special focus on developing multifaceted cooperation with Pakistan. He highlighted the increased intensity of interactions between the two countries due to the launch of direct flights during the summer. This development, he said, has already led to a surge in business activities, with Pakistani and Kazakh businessmen exploring opportunities for collaboration. The President of Kazakhstan, Kassym-Jomart Tokayev, has consistently emphasized the high potential for relations between the two nations in the context of developing transit and logistics capabilities.

## Home Net Pakistan celebrates Home Based Workers Day

KARACHI : HomeNet Pakistan celebrated Home-Based Workers Day, a day dedicated to recognizing and celebrating the contributions of home-based workers, with a particular focus on the empowerment and resilience of women in the remote workforce. International Home-Based Worker Day is an occasion to acknowledge the growing workforce of home-based workers, highlighting their dedication, resilience, and adaptability. HomeNet Pakistan celebrated Home-Based Worker Day by engaging workers in various activities. These activities included promoting the CHARTER OF DEMAND, explaining the legal rights and protections available to workers, and raising awareness about basic occupational health and safety practices and potential hazards. HomeNet Pakistan's primary objective is to empower workers across various sectors, whether industrial, home-based, or domestic. The HNP team organized various activities and games to bring happiness and solidarity among the workers. Home-based workers raised banners and charts to demand their rights and express their concerns about working environment, both at home and in the workplace. In an effort to promote environmental sustainability, workers participated in a plantation activity, contributing to the fight against climate change. Several plants were distributed to workers to emphasize the importance of having greenery in their communities. HomeNet Pakistan remains committed to supporting and empowering home-based workers, particularly women, and will continue to work towards creating a more inclusive and equitable working environment for them.—APP

## Punjab cabinet to approve budget for next 4 months

LAHORE : Punjab Chief Minister Mohsin Naqvi on Sunday convened a special meeting of the provincial cabinet tomorrow (on Monday). The cabinet will approve the budget for the next four months of the ongoing financial year 2023-24. Provincial ministers, advisers to the CM, chief secretary, inspector general of police, Punjab, Planning and Board chairman, secretaries of the concerned ministries and other senior officials will attend the meeting. Earlier in June, the caretaker Punjab government approved budget for the first four months of the financial year 2023-24. The government planned to release the four-month budget under the relevant clause of the Constitution with the signatures of the caretaker chief minister as it lacks the authority to approve a full-year budget in the absence of an elected government. In the absence of the provincial assembly, the presentation of the finance bill remains pending. An overall allocation of Rs1,719.3 billion has been made for the four-month period. The budget for the fiscal year 2022-23 amounted to Rs3,206.4 billion.—DNA

## 2 Afghan returnees including woman crushed to death

ATTOK : Two passengers including a woman died and 25 other sustained injuries when a 22-wheeler trailer carrying Afghan refugees from Sangiani to Afghanistan overturned due to a tyre burst near Hattian Chowk on GT Road Attok. According to sources, 5 Afghan families were travelling in the trailer and the passengers were on their way back to Afghanistan. The passengers including women and children were crushed under the cargo after the trailer overturned. "At least two persons were killed and 14 others sustained severe injuries in the mishap," rescue sources said. The injured were shifted to a nearby hospital while 4 injured have been referred to Rawalpindi in critical condition. According to rescue sources, the container was carrying several Afghan families destined to Afghanistan.—APP

## Undocumented immigrants voluntarily repatriate ahead of deadline

PESHAWAR : The repatriation process of undocumented immigrants was expedited through Torkham border where illegal refugees are being seen returning to their homes in significant numbers with only two days left in the October 31st deadline. The return process of undocumented Afghans through the Torkham border has been accelerated from where 33,555 illegal immigrants went to their home country between October 1-23, 2023 in a safe and dignified manner. Lateefur Rehman, spokesman of KP Home and Tribal Affairs Department told APP on Sunday that repatriation of undocumented Afghan refugees was accelerated as the October 31 deadline approaches fast and approximately 33,555 undocumented Afghan immigrants have left for their home country between October 1-23 through Torkham border that connect Pakistan and Afghanistan through Khyber district of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. The Afghan families included 2,772 families, consisting of 8,309 men, 5,457 women, and 19,789 children, reflecting the diverse demographic nature of the Afghan population. The voluntary repatriation process through the busy Torkham border was started after the government instructed all unregistered immigrants to return to their native countries by October 31, 2023. He said Additional Chief Secretary Home and Tribal Affairs Department, Muhammad Abid Majeed has visited Afghan Refugees camps at Torkham border and Landi Kotal tehsil in District Khyber and reviewed all the arrangements for the smooth return of undocumented refugees. Deputy Commissioner Khyber, Abdul Nasir Khan briefed the Additional Chief Secretary on the preparations and facilities of the district administration for the efficient return of all illegal foreign nationals at Landikotal and Torkham border. The Additional Chief Secretary inspected the facilities and arrangements including water, tents and food services made for the smooth and voluntary return of the immigrants. He reviewed preparations for repatriation in relief camps established at the Torkham border and Landikotal and expressed satisfaction with all necessary measures, which were put in place for the smooth return of Afghan refugees. Deputy Commissioner Khyber, Abdul Nasir Khan presented a detailed briefing to the Additional Chief Secretary on the steps taken by district administration to facilitate the dignified repatriation of Afghan refugees to their home country.—DNA

## PSL holds a fourth corporate briefing session

Pakistan Services Limited conducted its fourth Corporate Briefing Session at the Islamabad Marriott Hotel

DNA

ISLAMABAD : Pakistan Services Limited (PSL) conducted its fourth Corporate Briefing Session at the Islamabad Marriott Hotel on Friday 27th October 2023, in compliance with the directives of the Pakistan Stock Exchange. The Senior Management of the Company, including the Vice Chairman of Hashoo Group and Director of the Company, Mr. Mohammad Akhtar Bawany; Chief Financial Officer, Mr. Tahir Mahmood; Company Secretary, Mr. Muhammad Amir; and Board Members, Mr. Shakir Abu Bakar, Mr. M. Ghazali Marghoob, Mr. Rohail Ajmal, Mr. Shahid Hussain, and Mr. Saleem Ahmed Ranjha, were present at the event. The event was



also attended by Chartered Accountants, Corporate Law Professionals, Lawyers, and members of the Company. Mr. Amir, Company Secretary, opened the program by presenting a brief profile of PSL and shared corporate information about the Company. He then shared the journey to the success of PSL and mentioned

that PSL was incorporated in December 1958 and became a part of Hashoo Group in 1985. The Company is principally engaged in the hospitality business and owns and operates a chain of five-star Pearl-Continental Hotels across Pakistan. Currently, PSL owns six five-star hotels in major cities of Pakistan and Azad Jammu





and Kashmir, each of which enjoys a prominent standing in the market. Meanwhile, PSL is expanding its portfolio in key destinations across Pakistan. The Company is in the process of constructing two five-star hotels in Mirpur and Multan. The Company has introduced its new brand, "PC-Legacy," to cater to the demands of the four-star

segment of the business. In addition to the hospitality business, PSL also has interests in the travel and tourism business, operating under the prestigious banner of Destinations of the World (DOTW). This venture is licensed under a master franchise agreement signed with DOTW Dubai. PSL is also engaged in the car rental business through its wholly-owned subsidiary, Pearl Tours & Travels (Pvt) Limited. Moreover, it plans to enter the real estate business through two wholly-owned subsidiaries in this sector. Later, the Chief Financial Officer, Mr. Tahir Mahmood, shared financial and operational highlights of the Company. The event concluded with a comprehensive question-and-answer session.

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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

## RDA accelerates action against illegal housing societies

The authority was conducting operations against the rules violators without any discrimination

**DNA**  
RAWALPINDI: Rawalpindi Development Authority (RDA) on the directives of Director General (DG), Muhammad Saif Anwar Jappa has accelerated its ongoing operation against illegal housing societies. According to RDA spokesman, the authority was conducting operations against the rules violators without any discrimination. Metropolitan Planning and Traffic Engineering (MP&TE) Directorate RDA had issued notices to 13 illegal private housing schemes namely the

Royal Garden City, Chakri Road, Orbit International at Piscal, Rawat Enclave, Kallar Syedan Road, KHR Town Phase-II, G.T road, Kashmir Garden, Rawat, Holy Residencia, Kalyam Sharif near GT road, Meadows Farmhouses, Spring Valley Farm House and Royal Falcon Town, Chak Beli Khan road, National Gold Enclave, Sakho Mor Chakwal road, Subda Pakistan Trust, Mandra-Chakwal road, GB Valley and Tribzon Smart City, Sanghori Sarwar Shaheed road, Rawalpindi. He said the RDA had also directed the Director MP&TE that action

should be taken against illegal advertisements and marketing and FIRs should also be lodged against the owners of the illegal housing schemes. The authority had also warned the management of illegal housing schemes to immediately stop the marketing of unapproved and illegal housing schemes else strict action in accordance with the law would be taken against the rules violators. They had also been asked to contact RDA to get NOCs and formal approval of their schemes as per law, he added. He said that on the directives of

the DG, the citizens had been advised not to invest in illegal housing schemes and to check their status on RDA's official website www.rda.gov.pk before any investment. The spokesman said that the owners and sponsors of illegal housing schemes were misleading the public through advertisements of unapproved housing projects. In this regard, the Planning Wing RDA had also requested the Cyber Crime Wing, FIA to take legal action against the illegal and misleading advertisements of illegal housing schemes, he added.



ISLAMABAD: Executive Director General Directorate Of Electronic Media & Publications (DEMP) Arshad Munir presenting a souvenir to the Federal Information Secretary Zahoor Ahmed, on the occasion of the Black Day paintings exhibition held under the aegis of DEMP.— DNA

## Planning Ministry bolsters efforts for agri sector projects

**DNA**

ISLAMABAD: Considering the agriculture sector's paramount importance, already identified as a priority by the Special Investment Facilitation Council (SIFC), the Ministry of Planning, Development, and Special Initiatives has intensified its efforts to execute agriculture-related projects. In the current fiscal year, several projects worth billions of rupees were allocated for the agriculture sector under the Public Sector Development Program (PSDP 2023-24) to tap huge potential in the agriculture sector, according to the Planning Ministry. Pakistan has vast potential for foreign investment in the field of agriculture as the country is a semi-industrialized economy with a well-integrated agricultural sector that contributes 22.9% to Gross Domestic Product (GDP) and creates 37.4% of jobs,

ensures food security and provides raw materials for industries. While gearing up the efforts, the Planning Ministry asked the ministries concerned to accelerate the implementation so that the projects could be completed timely, especially at a time when the SIFC took the lead and agriculture was the top priority besides the other key sectors. The SIFC was established earlier this year to attract foreign and local investments while targeting five key areas which include Agriculture, Defence Production, Mining/Minerals, Information Technology and Telecommunication and Energy. The projects include Cage Culture Cluster Development Project, Commercialization of Potato Tissue Culture Technology in Pakistan, Establishment of consumer-sourcing seed authenticity system and Strengthening of Labs of FSC&RD; Establishment of Plant Breeders Rights Registry and Strengthening of DUS Examination System;

Establishment of Seed Certification Services in Southern Balochistan; National Oilseed Enhancement Program; National Peste Des Petits Ruminants (PPR) Eradication Programme: Phase 1 – Risk Based PPR Control In Sheep and Goats of Pakistan; National Program for Enhancing the Command Area in Barani Areas of Pakistan; National Program for Improvement of Watercourses in Pakistan - Phase II; Pilot Shrimp farming Cluster Development; Productivity Enhancement of Rice; Productivity Enhancement of Sugarcane; Productivity Enhancement of Wheat, Promoting Research for Productivity Enhancement in Pulses, Promotion of Olive cultivation on commercial scale in Pakistan - Phase II; Promotion of Trout Farming in Northern Areas of Pakistan; Sino-Pak Agricultural Breeding innovations Project for Rapid Yield Enhancement; Water Conservation in Barani Areas of KP; Locust Emergency and Food Secu-

riety Project; Mainstreaming of MARC for the promotion of high value agriculture in Gilgit-Baltistan; Pakistan-Korea Joint Program on Certified Seed Potato Production System and Professional Capacity Building in Agriculture TVET National reforms programme. Prime Minister's Initiatives for Green Revolution 2.0 worth Rs 5000 million is a landmark project initiated to address the key constraints to the productivity of agriculture. The government emphasized on promotion of technology to reduce post-harvest losses, value addition for grain, fruits and vegetables, productivity enhancement of major crops, engagement of women and youth in agriculture, agri-business and to promote and support agricultural research. It is noted that the Green Revolution played a key role in the country's economy back in the 1960s while saving millions of people from famine.

## ANF recovers 137 kg drugs in six operations

RAWALPINDI: Anti-Narcotics Force (ANF) while conducting six operations managed to recover over 137 kg of drugs and arrested three accused including a woman, said an ANF Headquarters spokesman. He informed that 3.6 kg hashish was recovered from the possession of an accused, a resident of Karachi arrested in Dera Ghazi Khan. The accused was trying to smuggle drugs from Quetta to Punjab. A woman resident of Okara who was going to Doha by flight number QR-621 from Allama Iqbal Airport was arrested. 59 heroin and Ice filled capsules were recovered from her possession. In the third operation, 85 kg heroin and 10 kg Ice drug, hidden in a house in the Batizai area of Pishin were recovered. In the fourth operation, 26 kg of ice concealed in a house near Turbat was recovered which was concealed to smuggle abroad. The spokesman informed that in the fifth operation, 2 kg crystal meth drug was recovered from the possession of an accused, resident of Chagai, who was going to Sukkur from Quetta. In the sixth operation, 10 kg of hashish concealed for smuggling was recovered from an uninhabited area of Zakhakhal in the Khyber area. Cases have been registered against the accused under the Anti-Narcotics Act while further investigations are under process.—APP

## Pitched battle between JJ activists, police

**DNA**

ISLAMABAD: A pitched battle took place between police and Jamaat-e-Islami activists who gathered at Srinagar Highway on Saturday. A number of people of the politico-religious party gathered at the highway a day ahead of JJ's protest outside the US Embassy in Islamabad against barbaric attacks by Israel in Gaza and loss of lives. JJ Emir Sirajul Haq had given the protest call and urged the world to stand up and fight for the innocent people in Gaza. Police resorted to teargas shelling as some of the JJ activists pelted law enforcers with stones. Some of the protesters suffered minor injuries in the clash.

## 4,275 FIRs, Rs 92,90,304 fine imposed for violating dengue SOPs

RAWALPINDI: As many as 4,275 FIRs had been registered on violations of anti-dengue SOPs from January 1 to date in various areas of the Rawalpindi district, said District Coordinator Epidemics Prevention and Control Dr Sajjad Mehmood here Sunday. Giving details of the penalty actions, the health officer said that the district administration, in collaboration with allied departments,

had sealed 631 premises, issued tickets to 1,267 and a fine of Rs 92,90,304 was imposed on violations of dengue SOPs in 2023. Dr Sajjad informed that around 2,262 confirmed cases had been reported in the district this year, while the number was 1,502 in 2021, and 4,230 in 2022 during the period. The health officer further stated that presently 73 patients were admitted to the district's

hospitals, including 51 to the Holy Family Hospital, 16 to the District Headquarters Hospital, three to Wah General Hospital, two to Kalar Syeda and one to the Taxila Hospitals. Dr Sajjad informed that 2,212 patients were discharged after treatment while presently one patient was in critical condition. During the last day's indoor vector surveillance, the teams checked 6,279 houses and

larvae were detected at 292 sites while during outdoor surveillance larvae were found at 19 spots while inspecting 3,455 places. He added that dengue fever cases have registered a sharp decrease in the city during the last week with changing weather conditions as eight to 20 patients had been reported to the district health facilities daily while during the last month, the number of daily patients was between 40 to 60. The health officer expressed hope that dengue cases would decrease further in the coming days, however, he urged the residents to be careful during the wee hours and in the evening as it was the suitable time for mosquito bites.

## PHA developing more green areas

Ahmed Hassan Ranjha said beautification projects were being undertaken in different city areas. "We want to improve Murree Road involving companies and sponsors from the private sector," he informed.

RAWALPINDI: Director General (DG) of Parks and Horticulture Authority (PHA) Rawalpindi, Ahmad Hassan Ranjha has said that the authority was developing more green areas in the town to add natural beauty and reduce air pollution. He informed that PHA was utilizing all available resources to make the city clean and green and uplift the parks. Talking to APP he informed that the authorities concerned had been directed to complete ongoing renovation and beautification work of all the parks within the shortest possible time

frame. The DG said that efforts were also being made to repair faulty lights, swings and walking tracks besides improving the security of the parks. The PHA officers had also been instructed to utilize all available resources to ensure the provision of the best recreational facilities to the public in all the parks of the town, he added. He said the authority was striving to reduce air pollution and make the city green. The PHA was planting maximum saplings and enhancing greenery, particularly in parks and green belts of the city, he

added. He further informed that PHA Rawalpindi was maintaining a total of 53 parks including four big public parks, Allama Iqbal Park, Rawal Road Park, Liaquat Bagh and Potohar Park. He said the average daily footfall of the big parks is around 1500 to 2000 each which increases up to 4000 to 5000 on weekends. Ahmed Hassan Ranjha said beautification projects were being undertaken in different city areas. "We want to improve Murree Road involving companies and sponsors from the private sector," he informed.

## 5-day anti-polio campaign to begin from October 29

ISLAMABAD: A five-day anti-polio campaign will begin in Peshawar, Khyber and Hangu districts tomorrow (Monday) along with the supplementary dose of vitamin A. According to the district health officer KPK, over one point two million children up to five years of age will be administered anti-polio drops during the drive, the private news channel reported. All-out arrangements have been finalized by the national immunization campaign against Polio to save children from the crippling disease of polio. About four thousand five hundred teams have been constituted to vaccinate the children from door to door. Mobile teams have also been formed which would visit all the areas including the remote, far-flung areas, flood-affected areas and other districts to accomplish the task. The health department urged the religious scholars, NGOs.—APP

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## Briefs

**Govt plans expansion of Eastbay Expressway from Gwadar Port to New Airport**

ISLAMABAD: The government has planned expansion of Gwadar Eastbay Expressway phase II that will connect Gwadar Port to New Gwadar International Airport (NGIA). Ministry of Maritime Affairs' Departmental Development Working Party (DDWP) has prepared PC II of Eastbay Expressway Phase II that will span over 10.5 kilo meter. It will be funded by government of Pakistan. According to a Gwadar Pro's report, the Eastbay Expressway Phase I has already completed and operated on June 03, 2022. It is a six-lane road around 19 kilometer long, as the main artery of Gwadar Port through which the entire traffic of the port flow realizing the dream of making Gwadar logistic and economic hub of the region in line with objectives of CPEC. Eastbay Expressway Phase I cost USD 168 million and it provides primary connectivity of the Port and its Free Zone I and Free Zone II with Makran Coastal Highway (N-10) and Motorway 8 (CPEC's Western route) for smooth logistic transportation of import, export, and transit goods to Khujab, border of China. Gwadar Eastbay Expressway Phase I was approved by ECNEC on January 12, 2015. Contract Agreement was signed between GPA & CCCC on September 24, 2017.

**Hospitals heads to be recruited as per rules**

ISLAMABAD : The Ministry of National Health Services, Regulations, and Coordination clarified on Sunday that the recruitment of heads of major hospitals in the federal capital will be undertaken as per recruitment rules. According to the spokesperson of the Ministry of National Health Services, Regulations, and Coordination, these recruitments will be made strictly on merit, following due process and procedures. In a statement, he said that the decision in this regard was made in a meeting on August 25, 2023, chaired by the Federal Minister for Health. He said that the necessary instructions to initiate the process for filling the posts of various cadres have been issued. He said, "The government believes in upholding the utmost transparency and merit in recruitment." He advised not to pay heed to any unverified stories or speculations circulating on social media. "No infodemic can deter us from our mission of reforms and services to Pakistan." He said that the government or the Ministry of Health has the right and utmost duty to select the most suitable candidates to improve service delivery for the public.—APP

**ISSI holds seminar titled: "A Black Day for humanity"**

The Chairman BoG Ambassador Khalid Mahmood made concluding remarks, affirming Pakistan's |all-out support to the Kashmiris until the dispute is justly resolved

DNA

ISLAMABAD: The India Study Centre (ISC) at the Institute of Strategic Studies Islamabad (ISSI) organized a seminar today, titled "October 27, 1947: A Black Day for Humanity." Dr. Khuram Abbas, Director ISC in his introductory remarks highlighted the significance of this day and the importance of mobilizing the international community to advance the Kashmir cause. Other participants included: Dr. Maria Saifuddin Effendi, Assistant Professor Department of Peace and Conflict Studies, NDU; Mr. Imran Shafiq, Advocate Supreme Court of Pakistan and International Law Expert; Ambassador Syed Ishtiaq Hussain Andrabi, former Ambassador of Pakistan; Mr. Mehmood Ahmed Saghar, Convener APHC; and Mr. Ilyas Mehmood Nizami, DG South Asia and SAARC at Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Director General ISSI Ambassador Sohail Mahmood, in his remarks, welcomed the guests and highlighted the legal, human rights, and peace and security aspects of the Jammu and Kashmir dispute. He underlined that, on 27 October 1947, the darkest chapter in Kashmir's history commenced when Indian forces illegally landed in Srinagar on the basis of the so-called 'instrument of accession' that has been proven, through meticulous research, to be fraudulent. While maintaining its illegal occupation, India continues to willfully defy the UN Charter and United Nations Security Council resolutions. Ambassador Sohail Mahmood stressed that torture, extrajudicial killings, and collective punishment were



being carried out by the occupying forces with impunity; also a demographic change was being effected in the occupied territory in violation of international law, particularly the 4th Geneva Convention. In terms of further steps, Ambassador Sohail Mahmood suggested proactive and sustained diplomatic outreach; efforts in the legal domain to challenge the illegal Indian measures; including demographic changes; documentation of all human rights abuses to be conveyed to the United Nations human rights machinery; and continuous engagement with the United Nations Security Council to apprise the international com-

munity of the threat to international peace and security. Last but not the least, he said, the government of Pakistan should appropriately recognize the extensive work of eminent scholar Alastair Lamb on the Kashmir dispute. Other discussants highlighted the historical background and the current dynamics of the Kashmir dispute. Dr. Effendi stated that the human rights aspect of the issue did not start from 1947; rather the Kashmiris have been under suppression since 1846 when the Treaty of Amritsar was signed. First under the Dogra Raj and now under India's illegal occupation, IIOJK was facing atrocities being per-

petrated by the occupying forces. The Indian government aimed to 'Hinduize' Kashmir, which placed heavy responsibility on the international community to raise its voice against such illegal actions. She proposed highlighting the Kashmir cause within three frameworks: UN Genocide Convention, structural violence, and right of self-determination. Advocate Imran Shafiq drew parallel between India's illegal actions and violation of international law by Indian forces. He called upon the international community to ensure implementation of the UNSC resolutions providing for as plebiscite, and particularly Resolution 122 of 1957 that nullified

any action taken by the so-called constituent assembly in Occupied Jammu and Kashmir and forbade any demographic change. Ambassador Andrabi extensively discussed about the historical dynamics of 'instrument of accession.' He addressed how India had maliciously indulged in Jammu and Kashmir at the time of the partition and had contacted all the stakeholders who were experienced in forcefully controlling the princely states. Acknowledging the historical struggle of Kashmiris, Mr. Saghar highlighted the most-neglected Jammu Massacre in 1947 in which 250,000 Muslims were killed by Dogra Raj. He stressed the importance of forceful advocacy of the Kashmir cause, with the fullest backing of the entire political spectrum. Mr. Nizami also shed light on the human rights, international law, and peace and security aspect of the Kashmir dispute. He stated that while UN affirms self-determination of Kashmiris, there is an imperative need to implement UNSC resolutions. He noted Pakistan's continuous efforts to advocate the rights of the Kashmiris and added that peace in the region must be the topmost priority for all. Pakistan should work along with the UN to pressure India to release all political prisoners, repeal all draconian laws, allow the safe access of International Organizations to the valley, and implement the UN Security Council resolutions. The Chairman BoG Ambassador Khalid Mahmood made concluding remarks, affirming Pakistan's all-out support to the Kashmiris until the dispute is justly resolved.

**Mobile Registration Centers of BISP to be operational by November**

ISLAMABAD: The Mobile Registration Vehicle Centers to facilitate the registration process for the intending beneficiaries of the Benazir Income Support Programme (BISP), belonging to the remote areas of the country, are likely to be operational by the month of November. The Mobile Registration Centers will enable the deserving women residing in the far-flung areas to access the registration facilities through mobile vehicles. According to the Secretary Benazir Income Support Programme (BISP), Amer Ali Ahmad, the process of induction of Mobile Vans, which started in August, has entered into its last stages. A total of 25 Mobile Vans is being included to serve as Mobile Registration Centers of the National Socio-Economic Registry (NSER) which will facilitate those who were unable to access the registration facility. He informed that as many as 19 Mobile Registration Centers are being established in the remote areas of Balochistan, five in Sindh and one in Islamabad in this phase. "The Mobile Registration service is likely to be operational by November to facilitate the registration process of the beneficiaries residing in the far-off areas of the country", the Secretary BISP said. It is pertinent to mention here that the BISP identifies the deserving beneficiaries through NSER and enrol them in the programme while it is for the first time in the country's history that people with special abilities.—APP

**Fiscal discipline can't be achieved**

DNA

ISLAMABAD: The Federation of Pakistan Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FPCCI) Presidential Candidate for the upcoming election 2024 Muhammad Ali Sheikh, stressed the need 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 fiscal discipline cannot be achieved without initiating structural reforms. Muhammad Ali Sheikh said that we must maintain fiscal discipline and establish controls to create fiscal space to extend relief to the business community. Quoting the reports, he said that the budget deficit continues to grow, entangling Pakistan in an unrelenting cycle of debt. Even if we exclude the impact of debt servicing, our revenues fall short of covering other expenses, implying that all these are met from borrowed funds. At the close of the fiscal year, Pakistan

recorded a budget deficit of Rs 6.52 trillion, equivalent to 7.7% of the GDP, a slight decrease from the previous year's 7.9% of GDP. However, in absolute figures, the budget deficit surged by a substantial 24%, or Rs 1.26 trillion, within just one year. Due to this bleak scenario, the BMP leader said and added that the primary balance registered a negative Rs 690 billion in FY 2023. Encouragingly, Pakistan achieved a noteworthy reduction of Rs 1.3 trillion or 67% year-on-year in its debt portfolio at the primary balance level during FY 2023. According to the Fiscal Operation report the primary deficit, which stood at 3.1% of GDP in FY2022, was reduced to a more manageable level of 0.8% of GDP in FY 2023. This improvement has created some fiscal room, and with continued efforts we can attain a primary surplus, representing the fundamental level of financial discipline. The FPCCI presidential candidate by the BMP Muhammad Ali Sheikh said that it is encouraging to note that at the consolidated level, the government successfully attained an

overall primary surplus of Rs 503 billion. However, by end of the third quarter of FY 2023, overall budget's balance showed a negative figure of Rs 3.07 trillion. Yet, in the last quarter of FY 2023, primary surplus turned into primary deficit, with latter recording a primary deficit of Rs 1.1 trillion. The budget deficit in last quarter of FY 2023 surged to nearly 112% of the cumulative figures from July 2022 to March 2023. Pakistan's budget deficit for the initial nine months amounted to approximately Rs 3 trillion, but in Q4 FY23 alone, it registered a substantial increase of Rs 3.4 trillion. It's worth noting that in the latest budget documents released in June 2023, revised estimate for primary deficit in FY23 was Rs 421 billion. However, there was a primary balance overrun of Rs 690 billion, marking an increase of Rs 269 billion, which is 64% higher than the revised estimates for FY 2023 shared earlier in June of the same year. Contrastingly, according to the budget document from the previous year, a surplus of Rs 153 billion was project-

ed. This highlights the inadequacies in financial planning at ministerial level. While many countries are implementing privatization policies for SOEs, Pakistan remains in debate over the issue without officially announcing any plans for disinvesting in such entities. Meanwhile, the government continues to inject substantial sums of money in the form of subsidies and grants each year to sustain the operations of these unprofitable entities. Ali Sheikh said the focus of the caretaker government to date is not on implementing structural politically challenging reforms but on heavy reliance on realizing pledged foreign direct investment and crackdowns on markets infected by widespread speculations/smuggling with a view to taking the economy out of its ongoing deepening economic impasse. While one would no doubt support these measures yet economic reforms as well as improving governance are critical to ensuring that the economy moves out of the continuing logjam that successive administrations have pushed it into.

**SBP chief says use of RMB to fortify Pak-China economic ties**

ISLAMABAD: Governor State Bank of Pakistan (SBP) Jameel Ahmad said that employing the Chinese Renminbi (RMB) for cross-border trade and investment transactions could further fortify Pakistan-China economic ties. Addressing an event themed "Promoting the use of RMB in Cross-Border Settlement," organized by China's ICBC Bank here, Governor SBP Jameel Ahmad underscored the robust and enduring economic and financial connections between Pakistan and China. According to a Gwadar Pro's report, he stressed that employing the Chinese Renminbi (RMB) for cross-border trade and investment transactions could further fortify these ties. This event celebrated ICBC Bank's designation as the RMB clearing agent in Pakistan by the People's Bank of China (PBoC). The Governor SBP elaborated on the significance of Pakistan's economic relations with China and emphasized that the SBP had established the necessary regulatory framework to facilitate the use of RMB in trade and investment activities. This includes actions like opening Letters of Credit (L/Cs) and accessing financing facilities in RMB. He pointed out that, within Pakistan's regulatory landscape, RMB stands on equal footing with other global currencies, such as the US Dollar, Euro, and Japanese Yen. Both public and private sector entities in Pakistan have the liberty to opt for RMB in their bilateral trade and investment dealings, he added. Thanks to the SBP's endeavors to promote the use of RMB in trade with China, RMB-denominated imports from China have risen significantly, surging from approximately 2% in FY18 to around 18% in FY22, he maintained. Governor SBP also discussed the advantages of a local RMB clearing system and conducting trade transactions in RMB. "These benefits encompass a swift turnaround time and cost reduction for the local banking system, simplified access to RMB settlements, improved and more competitive pricing for bilateral trade, and the opening of new markets for Pakistani businesses," he mentioned. He reiterated the SBP's unwavering commitment to providing policy and regulatory support to bolster economic and financial ties with China, ultimately benefiting consumers and businesses from both nations.—DNA

**UNICEF to provide financial support for primary education**

ISLAMABAD: The Directorate of Elementary and Secondary Education Khyber Pakhtunkhwa is going to establish Early Childhood Education Classrooms in the selected government primary schools (Boys and Girls) of all the districts with the technical and financial support of UNICEF. In this connection, District Education Officers of both male and all districts including Bannu, Battagram, Bajaur, Dera Ismail Khan, Dir Upper, Hangu, Kohat, Kohistan Lower, Khyber, Kurram, Tank, Lakki Marwat, Mansehra, Mohmand, North Waziristan, Orakzai, Peshawar, Shangla, Swabi, Swat, South Waziristan and Torghar have directed to establish early childhood education classrooms in the selected schools. The Directorate of Elementary and Secondary Education Khyber Pakhtunkhwa through this way is going to establish the early Childhood Education Classrooms in the selected government primary schools (Boys and Girls) of all the respective districts. The list of the selected schools has already been finalized and shared with this DEO, male and female, revealed in a letter issued by the P&D Department, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. It is to be mentioned here that one ECE Room will be established in the existing available classrooms in the selected Govt Primary Schools. No separate classrooms will be constructed for ECE classrooms, it was decided. The establishment of ECE Rooms responsibilities has been assigned to the Hashoo Foundation. Before starting the work the representatives of the Hashoo Foundation will hold a meeting with the same schools, which have already been selected. In this regard, a written request has been sent to inform the Head Teachers of the concerned schools to extend their full cooperation with the staff of Hashoo Foundation and after the completion of work in listing the ECE Rooms as per directives, it should be registered in the stock register of the school as well as give completion certificate to the concerned personnel. The decision was taken to extend the early childhood classrooms project to every primary school in other districts.—DNA

**SIFC very important for Pak economic interests**

ISLAMABAD: FPCCI's presidential candidate, Atif Ikram Sheikh said on Sunday that economic security is very important for the sovereignty and independence of the country; therefore, it must be the top priority for a decade so that the country can become self-sufficient. Presently, the country is facing high inflation and a struggling industrial sector. External debt has risen while international financial institutions are imposing tough condi-

tions for loan facilities, compromising sovereignty, he said. Atif Ikram Sheikh who has also served as VP FPCCI, Chairman PVMA and President ICCI said in a statement issued here today that action is underway against hoarding and smuggling, but there are some mafias that need to be tamed. He said that there is a need for immediate measures to prevent economic default. Despite Pakistan's potential and advantageous location, there has been little foreign direct investment due to political uncertainty,

security concerns, weak infrastructure, difficult administrative procedures, a lack of transparency, ineffective government operations, and frequent changes in economic policies, and tax and investment laws. The government unveiled a strategy for economic restoration in June 2023 to focus on harnessing the country's untapped potential in key sectors. In addition to attracting international investment, the plan is focused on indigenous development and uses local resources.—APP

**Fed Health Minister assures to address issues of pharmaceutical industry**

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Dr. Nadeem Jan, Federal Minister for National Health Services, Regulations and Coordination said that the pharma industry is playing a crucial role in meeting the growing demand of medicine and promoting exports, therefore, the government is determined to address its key issues to further strengthen it and boost its exports. He said that the government is working to establish a pharma park with public private partnership and incentives would be offered to the pharma industry for local production of pharma raw material as well as local production of new molecules in the country. He said that he was already in contact with friendly nations for the transfer of technology to the pharmaceutical sector. He said this while addressing a delegation of Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry (ICCI) that called on him led by Ahsan



Zafar Bakhtawari, President ICCI. Dr. Nadeem Jan said that the government plans to digitize the overall health system in the country to meet modern trends. He said that the purpose of technology transfer to the medical sector is to strengthen the country's health infrastructure. He also informed the ICCI delegation about the forthcoming Global Health Security Summit in Pakistan.

He assured that the issues highlighted by the ICCI delegation would be considered for redress. Speaking on the occasion, Ahsan Zafar Bakhtawari, President, Islamabad Chamber of Commerce & Industry briefed the Federal Minister of National Health Services about the key issues of the pharma industry. He said that the pharma industry imports almost 90 percent of raw material to manufacture medicines but due to fluctuation of curren-

cy, the import cost of raw material has increased manifold. He stressed that the government should encourage local production of active pharmaceutical ingredients to reduce production cost of medicines and compete more effectively in the international export market. He said that Pakistan's pharma industry exports were just over US\$ 700 million during the fiscal year 2022-23 and stressed for the collective efforts from the government,

industry players and regulatory bodies to enhance pharma exports to over US\$5 billion in the next few years. Faad Waheed, Senior Vice President ICCI said that many local and international pharma companies are working in Pakistan and emphasized that the government, industry players and regulatory authorities should work together to position Pakistan as a leading player in the global pharmaceutical market.

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## Positive signal for healthy Sino-US relations

After two rounds of talks between Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi and United States State Secretary Antony Blinken, the two sides agreed to further increase direct passenger flights between the two sides. An upcoming bilateral meeting to coordinate affairs concerning people with disabilities, which may lead to a memorandum of understanding on corresponding cooperation, was also agreed. At the level of state-to-state relations, the two sides agreed to hold consultations respectively on maritime issues, arms control, proliferation prevention, and foreign policies. And they reached a consensus on making concerted efforts for a meeting of the countries' leaders on the sidelines of the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation Economic Leaders' Meeting in San Francisco next month. Wang's visit to Washington can certainly be considered successful given the list of "deliverables" it produced. But its real significance lies in the fact that the two parties are finally to take meaningful moves toward honoring promises of keeping the lines of communication open. Just as Beijing has stated on several recent occasions and Wang repeated on his Washington trip, Beijing's hope is that China-US relations "get back on track". Wang's trip and the potential San Francisco meeting between leaders of the two countries are all about making that happen. No matter how different their views are on many things – be it the Taiwan question and the South China Sea issue or the Russia-Ukraine conflict and the Israel-Palestine conflict – it is of critical importance that the two sides keep the conversation going. Wang's visit was constructive in that he met not only his US counterpart, but also US President Joe Biden and US National Security Advisor Jake Sullivan, and told the US leader what Beijing cares about the most. The principles he laid out, essentially about both countries following the guidelines set out by Beijing for handling bilateral ties, may sound less than actionable to Washington's policy circles as they seek "all-of-government competition", rather than win-win cooperation. But just as the White House has stressed on multiple occasions, face-to-face communication is conducive to avoiding misunderstandings and misjudgments. The "road to the San Francisco summit will not be a smooth one" and the course cannot be left to "autopilot", Wang reportedly said. Given the array of differences the two governments have, that is no doubt the case. But as Wang told his hosts, the twists and turns in the path of China-US relations this year offer lessons to learn from and experience to draw on – not least the fact that candid and constructive high-level exchanges have repeatedly produced positive outcomes, and are therefore crucial to further improving their relations. The common interests of the two countries outweigh their differences and disputes. Rather than viewing their relationship as a zero-sum game, the two sides should recognize that bringing their relationship back on the track of healthy and steady development would benefit both of them. Therefore, not only should the two sides resume dialogue, the dialogue should be "in-depth and comprehensive", as Wang told Blinken. So long as both sides bear the benefits in mind, there is no reason why it can't be.

## UN resolution highlights ongoing conflict

The United Nations General Assembly's adoption of the resolution "Protection of civilians and upholding legal and humanitarian obligations" represents a key global consensus on the Palestinian question. The recorded vote of 121 in favor to it, 14 against, with 45 abstentions, highlights that the resolution points to the right direction to resolve the Israel-Palestine hostilities, which flared up on Oct 7. However, the resolution will not immediately affect the situation, as most of the 45 abstentions in the vote on the Gaza resolution, which calls for an immediate, sustained humanitarian truce leading to cessation of hostilities between the two conflicting sides, are from the US camp. They include the United Kingdom, Germany, Canada, Australia, Italy and Japan, plus India, which is doing Washington a big favor, no doubt, in exchange for something in the future. That the resolution was passed on the same day that Israel initiated a large-scale incursion into the north of Gaza, amid reports that Washington is mulling an emergency plan to withdraw US citizens from the Middle East, is an indication of a fact. That is Washington is not applying pressure on its ally in pursuit of peace, but instead preparing for the continued escalation of the conflict, not only between Israel and Palestine, but the whole Arab world. While the US clique has been divided on the issue thanks to some of its members' grave concerns about the way Israel is nagging in "self-defense". These countries' abstention in the vote means they have chosen to acquiesce in the US' open support of Israel, which already has the indisputable upper hand in the conflict. If the US and its allies are preparing for a prolonged conflict, viewing it as an opportunity to resolve the Palestinian question in favor of the US' key regional ally, the conflict will not be quickly brought to an end, the Ukraine crisis being an evidence of that. In other words, the West is still holding an opaque "united front" on the Palestinian question, as it has over the past decades, which is why the "two-state solution", ostensibly agreed by the two sides decades ago, was not truly implemented. As such, although the international pressure might lead to some channels being opened to provide limited humanitarian aid, there is still a long way to go to transform the UN Gaza resolution into concrete actions that can bring an end to the conflict. The Israel-Palestine crisis is undoubtedly another proxy conflict for the US and its clique. The urgent need for humanitarian aid and a cessation of hostilities, as civilians, including those on the Israeli side, are paying with their lives day and night, have never been a concern of Washington. Its sole consideration is how it can best steer and exploit the conflict, along with its spillover effects, so that it produces the utmost advantages on the geopolitical chessboard of the US.



## Finally, Pakistan was saved...

Qamar Bashir



Pakistan faced a severe crisis as the value of the US dollar skyrocketed compared to the Pakistani Rupee. In the interbank market, it was trading at an alarming rate of Rs. 307, while in the open market, it reached an even higher rate of Rs. 340. Speculations were rife that it might even reach Rs. 500 within a month. This situation led to a rush of people into the currency markets, desperate to exchange their rapidly depreciating Pakistani currency for any foreign currency available, including the Afghan Afghani. The market faced an acute shortage of foreign currency, and the Rupee's value continued to plummet with each passing day. People were witnessing their hard-earned savings evaporate. Strangely, Pakistan's foreign currency reserves were adequate to meet local needs even though the US dollar was disappearing from the local market at an unprecedented rate making imports more expensive, eroded the purchasing power of the common people, and increased the challenge of repaying international loans and debts, which had become a daunting task for the government's financial managers. The anticipation of a bleak economic and financial future, with no visible remedies in sight, prompted families with the means to seek safety in other countries, driven by the need to protect their hard-earned income and secure a better future for their children. The skyrocketing value of the US dollar was not the sole issue plaguing the economy. Rampant smuggling of essential commodities like flour, sugar, fertilizer, oil, and other precious goods was causing them to disappear from the market. This, in turn, led to rising costs and hyperinflation, triggering panic buying, exacerbating shortages, and driving up prices, ultimately contributing to economic and social unrest. But the challenges didn't end there. The unchecked smuggling of Iranian petrol into the country was rapidly depleting the government's petroleum levy, a vital source of revenue needed to sustain government operations. And the story continued. The unbridled and un-

regulated smuggling of illicit psychoactive drugs and their ready availability even at the school level were fueling a drug epidemic among students in schools, colleges, and universities, spreading like wildfire. A more significant and pressing threat loomed over the nation: the unchecked and escalating incidents of terrorism. These acts of violence targeted soldiers, police officers, government officials, ordinary pedestrians, and worshippers alike. The Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP), operating from Afghan soil, were launching attacks within Pakistan. It was highly likely that they were abetted and supported by the interim government of the Afghan Taliban. Despite repeated requests, the Afghan authorities refused to take decisive action, assuming they could continue without facing any consequences, as they had in the past. Deep down, the authorities in Pakistan realized that these crimes, which undermined the very foundations of the country and subjected it to financial, economic, social, and cultural perils, couldn't be solely of Pakistani origin. There had to be critical outside factors contributing to the destruction of the nation. This realization led the law enforcement agencies and the establishment to investigate further. They soon discovered that behind all these illegal, anti-state activities, terrorism, and smuggling, a common factor emerged: illegal Afghan nationals. These individuals were enjoying the civil, legal, social, business, trade, and investment facilities available to them as if they were common citizens of Pakistan. However, instead of showing gratitude and complying with the country's rules, regulations, and laws, they were, in fact, undermining the very roots and branches of the nation, depriving it of its potential. These illegal Afghan nationals were rapidly transferring much-needed foreign exchange from Pakistan to Afghanistan, leading to an unprecedented appreciation of the Afghan Afghani. Essential commodities urgently required in Pakistan were smuggled to Afghanistan and then exported to Central Asian countries, generating substantial profits. They were also involved in drug smuggling, jeopardizing the future generations of Pakistan, while the money earned was being used to send both dollars and commodities to their home country without any consequences. The change in leadership at the top of the establishment served as a wake-up call for our law enforcement agencies. These anti-state activities had been ongoing under their very noses for an extended period, sapping the life and vitality out of the already fragile body of the country. This vulnerability left Pakistan susceptible to various threats, including economic, social, and political crises. Simultaneously, those involved in these activities were advancing their personal interests and filling their coffers to the brim. They were actively transferring their ill-gotten wealth to foreign countries

often referred to as safe havens while relocating their families abroad. Recognizing the speed at which the country was descending into chaos, the new leadership at the top of the establishment realized that it would soon become uninhabitable. A shift away from the status quo was undertaken to address the rapid deterioration plaguing the nation. The policy of appeasement towards Afghans and their sympathizers was replaced by a strategy driven by the paramount national interest. A meticulously crafted, integrated, and effective policy, supported by resolute political commitment from the establishment, was put into action. This strategy encompassed a comprehensive seven-pronged plan of action, executed with precision. It included robust border control measures, closure of smuggling routes using modern technology, the formalization of the Afghan-Pakistan border, stringent passport and visa regulations, cooperation from legal currency dealers to obtain vital information about bulk dollar purchases for hoarding and smuggling, crackdowns on Hawala and Hundi markets, and the imposition of regulatory duties on Afghan Transit Trade to deter unnecessary imports and smuggling back into Pakistan. These measures collectively aimed to protect national interests and restore stability to the country. Illicit businesses that had been operating with complete impunity, such as water hydrants and the hoarding of wheat, sugar, fertilizers, oil, and other essential commodities, were subjected to thorough raids. Their stockpiles were confiscated and then sold in the open market at controlled prices. A comprehensive crackdown was launched against drug smuggling and the distribution network of illegal drugs. Operatives involved in this illicit trade were apprehended and placed behind bars. An amnesty period of one month was provided to all illegal aliens, allowing them to leave the country without facing legal consequences for their unauthorized stay in Pakistan. This primarily included 1.7 million Afghans who had been residing in the country for a significant duration, as well as those who had fled Afghanistan following the establishment of the Taliban's rule. A few of them had been promised evacuation to the UK, USA, and other European countries, but these host countries had been slow in fulfilling their promises, leaving Pakistan to bear the burden alone. The government's prudent decision eventually spurred the UK and USA to re-activate their programs and fulfill their commitments to repatriate the Afghans, as initially pledged after the establishment of the Taliban's rule in Afghanistan. The action taken against the 1.7 million illegal Afghan migrants was resolute and unwavering. They were duly warned that after the expiration of the one-month amnesty period, they would be placed in detention camps, and their assets, both immovable and movable, would be confiscated. This decision sent shockwaves across the global community, with many coun-

tries and international media outlets strongly criticizing Pakistan. The United Nations issued a stern warning, and Nobel Laureate Malala Yousafzai echoed UN experts' calls, urging the Pakistani government to reconsider its hurried policy of mass deportation. The US State Department expressed deep concern, emphasizing that the decision could have a devastating impact on the lives of millions of Afghans, particularly women and children. The UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) also voiced concerns about the potential consequences for Afghan refugees in Pakistan. The Afghan government expressed worry that the repatriations might be carried out in an inhumane or disorderly manner. International media outlets rallied to support the Afghan refugees. Reports from Al Jazeera, the BBC, and The Guardian highlighted criticism from the international community, deeming the decision unrealistic, inhumane, and potentially leading to a humanitarian crisis. One report emphasized the grave risk of human rights violations, including arbitrary arrest, detention, torture, and inhuman treatment, if those facing deportation were returned to Afghanistan. Bloomberg noted that the arrest of Afghans following the October 31 deadline marked a low point in cross-border relations. The undue pressures and media reports were dismissed by Pakistan, and rightly so. The seven-pronged coordinated actions have yielded significant dividends for the country: The currency stabilized, becoming one of the top-performing currencies globally against the US dollar and major world currencies. The availability of essential commodities within the country provided much-needed reassurance, averting a state of emergency and panic. The stock exchange turned bullish, breaking records for business activity over the past five years. Dollar availability improved, benefiting businesses in the country. Incidents of terrorism were curtailed, reducing in both frequency and lethality. Tightened border controls substantially reduced smuggling of petroleum products, illegal drugs, foreign goods, and the reentry of Afghan transit trade into Pakistan. This provided a boost to the consumption of locally made goods and commodities, offering much-needed relief to our manufacturing and consumer sectors. Those who were contemplating leaving the country in panic found solace. All in all, the establishment made prudent decisions, with an outstanding strategy and unwavering political will. The immediate results have instilled a sense of security and hope for a better and more secure future among the nation. Refusing to succumb to external and internal pressures, this approach aligns with the collective desire and wish of the entire nation to safeguard the country's legitimate interests, and this strategy will persist until all objectives are achieved.

—Press Secretary to the President (Rtd)  
Former Press Minister at Embassy  
of Pakistan to France  
Former MD, SRBC

## A distracted world cannot afford to ignore Sudan's growing plight

Hafed Al-Ghwel

Neighboring Libya's woes are a stark reminder of the kind of future that awaits Sudan. Thankfully, efforts persist to bring the feuding sides together at the negotiation table. It is much too premature to opine on whether the latest iteration of talks will either establish a durable ceasefire, freeze the conflict in an uneasy stalemate, or simply sow more discord. Still, the imminent return of Sudan's army and RSF to negotiation talks convened by the US and Saudi Arabia does offer some hope, with both sides indicating a readiness to resume

As the world takes stock of six months of unrelenting civil war in Sudan, the scale of human suffering and devastation is staggering and impossible to ignore. The conflict has claimed up to 9,000 lives and displaced almost 6 million people, forcing them to seek refuge in neighboring countries. An estimated 25 million people are in dire need of aid. However, the world's priorities have largely been drawn away from this catastrophe. The war in Ukraine and the escalating crisis in the Middle East have diverted the focus of the international community, leaving Sudan's conflagrations suffering an inadvertent "visibility crisis." Irrespective of how profound the devastation in Sudan may be, its plight is likely to worsen, as pleas for empathetic global intervention and support get suffocated under the weight of the world's divided attention. Adding to the complexity of this situation is a growing health crisis. The conflict-ridden parts of Sudan are already grappling with cholera outbreaks, with more than 1,000 suspected cases reported. Continued fighting not only hampers aid efforts but also exacerbates the spread of this and other communicable diseases, creating a vicious cycle of violence and despair. As the war rages on, there is also the potential for significant long-term damage, creating another "lost" or displaced generation. Basic services are crumbling, infrastructure is devastated, and the social fabric torn asunder. The underfunding of humanitarian efforts, with just 33 percent of the required \$2.6 billion received, further compounds these challenges. Extensive research has consistently shown that neglecting conflicts of this nature not only exacerbates the dire humanitarian crises, but also leaves room for the propagation of extremism, the threat of regional destabilization, and generational loss to an entire nation. If left to fester, Sudan's tumult could mature into a crisis of unimaginable proportions. So, after six months of escalation, sporadic violence and brief lulls, what is the situation in Sudan today? At the heart of the conflict remain the two powerful entities: the Sudan Armed Forces and the paramilitary Rapid Support Forces. Both were instrumental in the overthrow of the Omar Bashir regime in 2019, and engineering a subsequent military takeover that effectively sidelined civilian participation in the post-Bashir interim government just two years later. However, a deep-seated power struggle over the integration of the RSF into the SAF has resulted in these erstwhile allies becoming enemies, with

catastrophic consequences for Sudan's civilian population. If left to fester, Sudan's tumult could mature into a crisis of unimaginable proportions. As it stands, the SAF has managed to secure its base in Eastern Sudan, headquartered at Port Sudan along the Red Sea coast. This strategic positioning gives the SAF a degree of control over maritime trade routes, which could potentially be leveraged for military advantage. However, the capital Khartoum, once the emblem of a unified Sudan, is under the control of the RSF. The SAF's ability to dislodge the RSF from Khartoum (or not) will be a critical determinant of the conflict's trajectory. On one hand, the RSF's control of the city is significant, not just symbolically, but also for the practical control it offers over the country's remaining, still-functional administrative apparatus. Moreover, the RSF's seizure of the town of Kas in South Darfur has allowed it to strengthen its foothold in Sudan's peripheries, highlighting the group's ability to expand operational reach. Tragically, a "return" to Darfur with unremitting violence, much attributed to the RSF, paradoxically surpasses the brutality of the Janjaweed, the RSF's notorious predecessor, intensifying the damage to Sudan's social fabric. Meanwhile, the SAF's control of Eastern Sudan and Port Sudan offers it a strategic advantage. This region's proximity to the Red Sea could potentially facilitate foreign military assistance, notably from Egypt, with which the SAF has a well-established historic relationship. This rush to establish competing areas of influence risks transforming Sudan into a disastrous mirror image of neighboring Libya, yet another casualty of a chaotic post-2011 era, and now torn apart by internal conflict and external meddling. Foreign patrons, with vested interests and reduced deterrence from a distracted global community, will likely continue fueling this conflict, or hardening the resolve of either side in hopes of tilting the balance of power and gaining an upper hand in ceasefire negotiations. The SAF, for example, still maintains a few stubborn strongholds in and around Khartoum. A haunting anxiety hangs over the city, its fate relying on the unknown pendulum of military strategy. Will the SAF employ artillery or muster air power to expel the RSF? Failure to negotiate a credible truce and the need to use the stakes would only deepen the humanitarian catastrophe, as civilians and critical infrastructure are caught in the crossfire. Clearly, the international community's role in this conflict is influential. The UAE's documented relationship with the RSF and Egypt's ties with the SAF could potentially tip the scales

in either direction. After all, the possibility of foreign reinforcement for either of the combatants could drastically alter more than just the military landscape in Sudan – it could also shape the contours of an enduring settlement. Unfortunately, despite renewed attempts, encouraging diplomacy and conciliatory efforts at conflict resolution, the quest for an enduring peace remains elusive.

Neighboring Libya's woes are a stark reminder of the kind of future that awaits Sudan. Thankfully, efforts persist to bring the feuding sides together at the negotiation table. It is much too premature to opine on whether the latest iteration of talks will either establish a durable ceasefire, freeze the conflict in an uneasy stalemate, or simply sow more discord. Still, the imminent return of Sudan's army and RSF to negotiation talks convened by the US and Saudi Arabia does offer some hope, with both sides indicating a readiness to resume discussions. The military's declaration that it will not stop fighting raises serious concerns, but it could just be more bluster to eke out greater leverage before engaging in dialogue behind closed doors. However, the situation on the ground remains as precarious as ever. Prolonged inaction has planted the seeds of disillusionment and distress, while intense battles and the fog of war nurture fertile grounds for malign actors to emerge in pursuit of interests diametrically opposed to Sudan's stabilization. As it stands, the balance of power seems to oscillate between the SAF and the RSF, with both sides showing an uncanny resilience and a troubling defiance when neighboring Libya's woes are a stark reminder of the kind of future that awaits Sudan. The international community's role in this conflict, particularly that of regional powers, will be crucial in determining the eventual outcome. It is a grim situation, and the world must act swiftly and decisively to quell the violence and restore peace in Sudan. Should fighting resume, as always, it is civilians who will endure unimaginable suffering amid this power tussle. Thus, the global community must develop a coordinated response, not only to broker a lasting peace but also to address the unfolding crisis, while taking care not to repeat the mistake of facilitating Sudan's stabilization and transformation with deadlines and ultimatums. The conflict in Sudan is not merely a localized squabble to be compartmentalized and dismissed, but a regional crisis with potential global implications.

—Sourced by Arb News

## Briefs

Gaza hospitals  
on 'verge of  
collapse'

FROM PAGE 01  
pressing humanitarian issues, such as protecting civilians and helping the wounded." The Palestinian health ministry had earlier said 12 hospitals and 32 health care centers were forced out of service due to Israeli bombing or lack of fuel and medical supplies. United Nations Secretary-General Antonio Guterres warned on Sunday that the situation in Gaza is declining rapidly as he repeated desperate appeals for a ceasefire to end the "nightmare" of bloodshed.

Siraj voices  
strong  
solidarity...

FROM PAGE 01  
He said that he announced to hold a protest before the US Embassy but the US deputy secretary of the state contacted the Pakistani rulers to stop the protest. He said that he and his workers faced police baton charge and arrests before the protest. He announced to continue the series of protests against the Israeli barbaric moves against Palestinians across the country until an end to the war. SirajulHaq announced to organise a million march in Lahore on November 19.

Pakistani  
journalists  
unprotected  
despite...

FROM PAGE 01  
The report went on to say that the federal Protection of Journalists and Media Professionals Act was passed by the National Assembly during PTI Chairman Imran Khan's tenure. "In these two years, both the Khan and Sharif governments failed to establish a safety commission mandated by the law which meant that in effect the federal law remained non-operationalised and hence failed to help a single of the 93 journalists in Islamabad that were killed, attacked, injured, threatened or harassed in the two years since its enactment. The two governments also failed to enforce the law," it said.

PM pays  
tribute  
on 100th  
Republic...

FROM PAGE 01  
The Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan's dynamic leadership under which the country's progressed to advancements, undergoing economic transformation. He also praised him for utilising the transformation to promote the mutually reinforcing goals of peace and prosperity, which, he said, received global recognition. Taking to X, formerly Twitter, PM Kakar wrote: "On behalf of the government and people of Pakistan, I extend our warmest felicitations to the brotherly people of Türkiye on the auspicious occasion of the centenary of the Turkish Republic."

'Safer than  
ever before'

FROM PAGE 01  
with the historic moves of investment, we are determined to crown the second century of our Republic with the Century of Türkiye. Our republic is safer than ever before and in safe and competent hands." In a separate message, Erdogan said by taking inspiration from Türkiye's "rich historical heritage and timeless values," they are actively working to make the country ready for the challenges of the coming century. "Just as emphasised by Gazi Mustafa Kemal Atatürk, it is our foremost responsibility to ensure the perpetual existence of our Republic, which was originally established as the protector of the vulnerable," he said. He said the nation is determined to elevate the "ideal of a great and powerful Türkiye without heeding external and internal adversaries."



ISLAMABAD: Ambassadors of Azerbaijan Khazar Farhadov and Eduard Preda attended the training session with the Nishtar and Rising Stars Hockey Clubs, at the Naseer Bundha Hockey Stadium. The team members welcomed the new players. Australian High Commissioner Neil Hawkins is already a member of the team. - DNA

## Fury wins 'toughest fight in 10 years'

World heavyweight champion bags split decision against MMA fighter Ngannou

## SPORTS DESK

RIYADH: Reigning WBC heavyweight champion Tyson Fury's appearance against an MMA fighter making his boxing debut figured to be another show to go along with his other ventures. Francis Ngannou proved, however, he wouldn't be the pushover so many anticipated.

Ngannou not only shockingly took Fury the 10-round distance, he came within one judge's scorecard of pulling off the upset early Sunday morning. Juan Carlos Pelayo of Mexico scored the fight 96-93 for Fury and Alan Krebs of the United States gave him a 95-94 victory. Ed Garner of Canada gave the fight to Ngannou at 95-94. "That definitely wasn't in the script," Fury said. "Francis is a hell of a fighter - stronger, big puncher and a lot better boxer than we all thought he would ever be."

Fury remained undefeated at 34-0-1 with 24 knockouts. Ngannou, whose UFC record was 17-3, knocked down Fury in the third round, but this was a missed opportunity at a major upset. Ngannou landed only six of 38 punches in the final two rounds, according to CompuBox, compared to 14 of 37 for Fury. Fury landed more punches overall (71-59), but Ngannou hit the mark with more power shots (37-32). "I feel fantastic," Ngannou said. "I'm very happy. It didn't go my way, but I want to thank ... the kingdom of Saudi Arabia (for) the opportunity to prove people wrong one more time." Fury's championship belt was never on



the line in this bout, though it counts as an official fight. He was a prohibitive minus-1,800 favorite, according to FanDuel Sportsbook, though some late money came in on Ngannou. "He was very awkward," Fury said. "He wasn't coming forward. He was standing back waiting for me to land my punches and then try to counter. He's a good fighter. He's given me probably one of my toughest fights in the last 10 years." Fury relied on his jab early and switched to left-handed briefly in the second round when Ngannou made some headway and even opened a cut above Fury's left eye. Then with 43 seconds remaining in the

third round, Ngannou sent Fury to the floor with a left hook, the seventh time he has been knocked down in his career. Ngannou staggered Fury early in the fourth, but Fury stayed on his feet and the rest of the round was fairly even after that. Fury appeared to gain control late in the fifth round and carried it over into the sixth, but Ngannou showed in the seventh he wasn't going anywhere as both boxers traded blows. Ngannou delivered three powerful lefts early in the eighth and then staggered Fury with two strong combinations midway through the round. Fury found himself holding on as Ngannou grabbed the momentum.

Fans chanted "Francis! Francis!" early in the 10th round, and just the fact the fight went the distance was an upset in itself.

Recording artists Kanye West and Eminem also attended, as did soccer star Cristiano Ronaldo, UFC headliner Conor McGregor and current and former boxing greats such as Sugar Ray Leonard and Manny Pacquiao. Taking on this fight is the latest venture for the 35-year-old Brit, who has appeared in the WWE and been the focal point of a Netflix reality series. The money, a reported \$50 million, to open the country's entertainment festival called Riyadh Season, also likely piqued his interest.

The host country did its part in making Fury-Ngannou a stand-alone event. That fight was inside 26,000-seat Kingdom Arena, and the preliminary bouts were in a nearby outside venue constructed for this night. Recording artists Lil Baby and Becky G performed in the main arena before both boxers entered. Then each fighter took his place on a throne wearing robes fit for a king. If Fury figured to be in his element in a boxing ring, this was definitely a move out of the comfort zone for Ngannou, the Cameroon native, Las Vegas resident and former UFC heavyweight champion more accustomed to fighting in an octagon cage. Former heavyweight champion Mike Tyson, who also made the trip to Saudi Arabia, helped Ngannou get ready for his boxing debut. This not only was his first boxing match, but Ngannou hasn't competed at all since beating Caryl Gane in UFC 270 in January 2022.

Govt, army  
chief working  
on getting...

FROM PAGE 01  
which could be tapped by taking responsibility. Dr Alvi also congratulated REAP on its journey from the exports of \$300 million to \$3 billion. He told the REAP members they could move to joint ventures and focus on value-added rice items. He said that "Briyani Festival" was a good idea and it was a value addition. He also invited REAP to organise the festival in the President's House. The president said rice research institutions should be revived to further grab the international market. He further remarked that market-oriented institutions should be jointly established by the government and REAP.

England  
on brink of  
elimination  
after India...

FROM PAGE 01  
Mohammad Shami was India's definite pick of the bowlers as the pacer bowled a remarkable spell, taking four wickets for 22 runs and making it nearly impossible for the English batters to connect with the ball. Jasprit Bumrah was the second highest wicket taker for India with three scalps to his name. During the second innings, a record was made as for the first time in the history of the Cricket World Cup, the number three batters of both teams - Virat Kohli and Joe Root - lost their wickets without scoring a run. Barring first, Indian batters struggled on the tricky wicket of Lucknow from the start as opener Shubman Gill lost his wicket after scoring nine runs, leaving his side 26-1 in four overs.

Rupee  
recovery  
hinges on  
IMF review

FROM PAGE 01  
On the last day of trading, the rupee lost 48 paisa, with an intraday high of 280.5 and a low of 280.15 against the greenback. Analysts said the rupee weakened against the US dollar during the outgoing week as the country awaited the approval of the next tranche of its \$3 billion loan from the IMF. The rupee's performance is closely linked to the IMF programme, which has been providing Pakistan with financial support under a standby loan approved in July this year to address its balance of payments crisis and implement structural reforms. The IMF is due to review Pakistan's progress on its economic targets on November 2 and subsequently release the next tranche of about \$700 million.

President  
condoles  
with martyrs'  
families

FROM PAGE 01  
their services and sacrifices for the country. The president offered heartfelt condolences to the families and prayed for grant of patience to bear the loss with equanimity.

Messi eyes eighth  
Ballon d'Or crown

PARIS: Lionel Messi is the favourite to win the eighth Ballon d'Or of his remarkable career when this year's ceremony to crown the planet's best footballer takes place in Paris on Monday, while Spain's World Cup-winning star Aitana Bonmati is tipped to take the women's prize. The prestigious award has been dominated over the last 15 years by Messi and his old adversary Cristiano Ronaldo, who have won it 12 times between them. Only two other players have won the Ballon d'Or since Ronaldo claimed his first in 2008 - Luka Modric won it in 2018 and Karim Benzema was crowned last year following a brilliant season with Real Madrid. Messi is set to benefit from a recent change which means the award is now based on a player's record over the last season, course of the calendar year. Last season saw Messi to glory at the World Cup in seven times and was named the winner. It was the crowning moment of his career, and is likely to mean Messi's reputation elsewhere in the world. Most notably, he has won the English Premier League and UEFA Champions League under Pep Guardiola. The 35-year-old is Erling Haaland's closest competitor in the UEFA Player of the Year award for last season. "I always said should be in two sections, that look for the other one," Haaland said. "We won the Ballon d'Or one for Messi, and after Guardiola said recently, the treble and he scored. "But of course if you tell it would be the best season." "Both deserve it, so what I want it to be Erling because he helped us to achieve what we achieved. I

Bellingham's  
brace secures  
Real Madrid  
Clasico win

PARIS: Jude Bellingham's stunning double snatched Real Madrid a 2-1 comeback victory at Barcelona in his first La Liga Clasico. The England international, who has started his Madrid career in remarkable goalscoring form, unleashed a rocket into the top corner from distance after Ilkay Gundogan had sent hosts Barcelona ahead at the Olympic Stadium. Bellingham then fired home a second in stoppage time from close range to silence Barcelona fans and reach 10 goals in the top flight in the ongoing La Liga season. Barcelona hit the woodwork twice and had the better of the game but Bellingham, La Liga's top goalscorer, is in unstoppable form and inevitably made his mark in his first Clasico. Bellingham's brace sent Madrid to the top of La Liga, ahead of Girona on goal difference, with both teams four points ahead of Barcelona in third. - APP

Jorge Martin  
wins Thailand  
MotoGP thriller

THAILAND: Spain's Jorge Martin won a thrilling Thailand MotoGP race Sunday to close the gap on Francesco Bagnaia to 13 points in the world championship, with three legs of the season to go. Italy's Bagnaia crossed the line third, behind Brad Binder, but was awarded second place after the South African was penalised one position for exceeding track limits on the final lap. The trio had been involved in a titanic tussle over the closing laps with the lead changing hands before pole-sitter Martin, on a Pramac-Ducati, piped his rivals and celebrated wildly as he crossed the line. "I'm so happy. This feeling is amazing because today I wasn't better than them," said Martin. The Spaniard managed the race masterfully from pole position, conserving his tyres to leave him with enough grip to withstand the late onslaught from the fast-finishing KTM rider Binder and factory-Ducati pilot Bagnaia. "I had the same tools, same tyres, but I had better pace than them and I had to go more than 100 percent on the last lap to stay in front," added Martin. "I was pushing on the last lap like it was qualifying." Bagnaia, attempting to defend his world title, came into the weekend with a 27-point cushion in the championship but saw that slashed by Martin, who also won Saturday's sprint at the Buriram International Circuit. "I felt like I was in a (video) game room. It was incredible," said Bagnaia of the final daredevil minutes of the 26-lap race around the 4.554-km-long circuit that saw the leading trio go wheel-to-wheel. "That last lap was on the limit but second place is positive for the championship this weekend considering where I was at the start," added Bagnaia, who began from sixth on the grid and was down to seventh by the fourth lap. - Agencies

## Champions Trophy 2025 berth at stake

Defending champions Pakistan will get a direct qualification, regardless of where the men in green finish their World Cup campaign

## OUR CORRESPONDENTS

LAHORE: The top seven sides at the conclusion of the group stage of the ongoing ICC World Cup 2023, besides hosts Pakistan, will qualify for the ICC Champions Trophy 2025. Defending champions Pakistan will get a direct qualification, regardless of where the men in green finish their World Cup campaign, since they are the hosts of the eight-team tournament, which will mark its return after eight years. According to the details, an ICC spokesperson confirmed to ESPN Cricinfo, that the qualification scenario for the Champions Trophy 2025 was approved by the ICC Board in 2021 when the multi-national tournament was brought back. However, several nations' cricket boards including those, who are not participating in the ongoing World Cup, were not aware of the Champions Trophy 2025 qualification being dependent on the results of the mega

event. Consequently, notable cricketing nations like West Indies, Ireland and Zimbabwe, who failed to qualify for this year's

World Cup will not feature in the Champions Trophy 2025. For the unversed, ICC, in November 2021, announced a series

of international cricket competitions for both men and men in the 2024-2031 cycle, which also features the 2025 and 2029 Champions Trophy editions. Moreover, the ICC had said in a statement that the Champions Trophy 2025 will be an eight-tournament and the structure "will follow previous editions with two groups of four, semi-finals and final". It is worth mentioning here that for the 2013 and 2017 editions of the Champions Trophy, The top eight teams in the ODI rankings at a certain cut-off date were eligible to feature in the tournament. Notably, the Champions Trophy 2025 qualification scenario was highlighted this week by Bangladesh captain Shakib Al Hasan following his side's upset defeat against the Netherlands. "I mean, not the semi-final hope. It is not a semi-final possibility," said Shakib. At least, do a little better. Suppose, you have to be in the [top] ranking 8 if you want to play in the Champions Trophy. So, there are still three matches left considering that in mind."



## Briefs

## G7 urges China to repeal Japanese food bans

TOKYO : The Group of Seven (G7) industrial powers called on Sunday for the "immediate repeal" of import curbs on Japanese food products, a reference to China's restrictions after Japan began releasing wastewater from the Fukushima nuclear power plant. The G7 trade ministers, in a statement after a weekend meeting in Osaka, did not mention China but they also denounced what they consider its rising economic coercion through trade. "We deplore actions to weaponize economic dependencies and commit to build on free, fair, and mutually beneficial economic and trade relationships," said the 10-page statement. China slapped a blanket suspension of Japanese fish imports two months ago when Japan started the release of treated radioactive water from the wrecked Fukushima plant into the Pacific. While Japan and the U.S. have called the curbs unfair, Russia announced a similar restriction earlier this month. China's foreign ministry did not immediately respond to a request for comment on the G7 statement outside business hours. The G7 - the United States, Japan, Germany, Britain, France, Italy and Canada - expressed "concern" over recent control measures on the export of critical minerals. China, the world's top graphite producer, this month announced export curbs on the key material, used in electric vehicle batteries, in another bid to control critical mineral supply in response to challenges over its global manufacturing dominance. —APP

## Shanghai port claims Chinese title with draw

HONG KONG : Shanghai Port claimed the Chinese Super League title at the end of a foul-tempered clash with nearest rivals Shandong Taishan on Sunday, picking up the point they needed with a 1-1 draw at Pudong Arena in a game that featured five red cards. Lu Wenjun had given Shanghai a 16th minute lead only for bedlam to break out late in a first half that had been growing increasingly fraught, with referee Mametjan Ahmet handing out a flurry of red cards. Lu was the first to be given his marching orders following a clash with Chen Pu on the edge of the six-yard box, earning him a second yellow card in the 41st minute. Tempers flared and Shandong's Moises was sent off as a scuffle broke out all over the Shanghai penalty area, while Port were soon reduced to nine men after Ahmet consulted the pitchside monitor. The referee returned to the field to send off Cai Huikang for having earlier grabbed Moises by the throat, a decision that incensed Shanghai coach Javier Pereira and earned the Portuguese coach a red card of his own. —Agencies

## Car crashes into London bus stop, 9 injured

LONDON : Nine people are in hospital after a car crashed into a bus stop in central London, police have said. Officers were called at approximately 03:30 GMT on Sunday to reports that a vehicle had hit a number of pedestrians in Aldwych. London Ambulance Service (LAS) confirmed eight people were taken to hospital for treatment. A man in his 20s was arrested on suspicion of dangerous driving and he was also taken to hospital. The ambulance service said three of the patients were taken to major trauma centres and the others to local hospitals. Road closures remain in place. The Metropolitan Police said at this stage, the incident was not being treated as terror-related.

## Envoy Haque inaugurates Pak pavilion at Sichuan expo

The Pavilion introduces the famous touristic sites in Pakistan and displays a number of the agriculture goods produced by the country

## NEWS DESK

BEIJING : Pakistan's Ambassador in China, Moin ul Haque, inaugurated Pakistan National Pavilion at the Sichuan Agriculture Expo in Chengdu, China Economic Net (CEN) reported. He was joined by Vice governor of Sichuan Province Hu Yun, Secretary Trade Development Authority of Pakistan (TDAP), Dr. Farheed Iqbal and Pakistan's Acting Consul General in Chengdu Agha Hunain Abbas Khan. The Pavilion introduces the famous touristic sites in Pakistan and displays a number of the agriculture goods produced by the country. More than a dozen Pakistani companies displayed their agricultural products here. And the Pavilion attracted great interest from the participants attending the Expo. Earlier on the same day, the Ambassador participated in the Opening Ceremony of the 9th Sichuan Agriculture Expo, where Pakistan is the Country of Honor. In his address during the opening ceremony, the Ambassador highlighted the strong bilateral relations between Pakistan and



China, that are based on political trust, strategic communication, and practical cooperation. He also highlighted the close cooperation between Pakistan and Sichuan, including through sister province and city collaborations.

Pakistan's participation in the Expo will inject impetus to the on-going cooperation between Pakistan and China in the agriculture sector. Recently five important agriculture SPS protocols have been finalized between the

two sides, giving Pakistan access to a market of USD 30 billion in cooked beef, dairy, chilies, cherries and other livestock products. This endeavor will contribute to Pakistan's efforts to increase its exports to China.

Sichuan Agriculture Expo is the largest agriculture expo in western China and caters to over 400 million people. More than 2000 exhibitors are attending the Expo and more than 200,000 people are expected to visit it.

## Gas price hike threatens accelerated inflation: PIAF

## DNA

LAHORE: The Pakistan Industrial and Traders Associations Front (PIAF) has anticipated that taking the effect of gas price hike into account, the average Consumer Price Index for FY24 will likely reach 25% as the announcement of a massive hike of up to 193% in gas tariff for different sectors of the economy is feared to accelerate the already high inflation. PIAF Chairman Faheemur Rehman Saigol said that the caretaker government has increased gas tariff with effect from Nov 2023 just before the first IMF review under the \$3 billion short-term loan program. This is the second gas price increase in 10 months. The

gas price hike is a condition attached to the loan programme. It may pave the way for the release of second IMF tranche of \$700 million. Calling for reverting the decision, he said that the industries that may resort to price increase include fertilizer, cement and steel, which will make agricultural production and construction material more expensive. The inflation forecast is higher than the State Bank of Pakistan's (SBP) projection of 20-22%. The central bank governor has said that the expected gas price hike has been incorporated into the inflation forecast. Faheem Saigol said that feed and fuel stock prices are forecast to increase to Rs580 per million British thermal units (mBtu)

from the current price of Rs510, and to Rs1,580 per mBtu from the current price of Rs1,500, respectively. Earlier, the Oil and Gas Regulatory Authority (Ogra) had notified revised gas prices in February 2023 for consumers of Sui Southern Gas Company (SSGC) and Sui Northern Gas Pipelines Limited (SNGPL), after which Fauji Fertiliser Bin Qasim Limited (FFBL) and Engro Fertilisers jacked up fertilizer prices. As per proposed revised gas tariff for other categories of gas consumers, the gas price for bulk consumers is proposed to be raised from Rs 1,600/mmbtu to Rs 2,000/mmbtu, while the gas price for special commercial (Roti Tandoor) will remain the same at Rs 697/mmbtu and gas price for

commercial consumers is proposed to go up from Rs 1,650/mmbtu to Rs 3,900/mmbtu. Similarly, gas tariff for Liberty Power is proposed to increase from existing Rs 2,406/mmbtu to Rs 3,890/mmbtu while the gas price for Liberty Power is based on HSFO linked formula and not fixed by the government. Likewise, gas price for fertilizer plant of FFBQL (feed) is proposed to be increased from existing Rs 510/mmbtu to Rs 580/mmbtu while no change in gas price for Engro is proposed as Engro Fertiliser Ltd (new plant) has a claim of extended period for feed gas concessionary tariff of US\$ 0.7/mmbtu due to non-supply of gas by SNGPL and Sindh High Court has granted stay order to maintain the status quo.

## Migrant protest at Rhodes port causes chaos

They added that "transfers from the island are carried out regularly" and are overseen by the police and the coastguard

ATHENS : Some 400 migrants and refugees protested at the port of Rhodes island on Sunday, demanding to be transferred elsewhere in Greece and obstructing port traffic, the Greek coastguard told AFP. Most who protested their conditions had been rescued after making the perilous Mediterranean crossing, then transported to Rhodes for processing. The migrants obstructed the launch of the "Nissos Chios" vessel, preventing it from leaving the island, meaning an incoming ship was unable to dock. They demanded to board the vessel to be taken immediately from the southeastern Aegean island to the Greek mainland or to proper accommodation, the coastguard said. Negotiations were underway between port police and the migrants. Greek Ministry of Migration and Asylum sources said that it had allocated as many places as needed in its reception facilities for the registration and accommodation of all migrants on the island, as Rhodes does not have its own reception facilities. They added that "transfers from the island are carried out regularly" and are overseen by the police and the coastguard. —APP

## Pakistani businessman holds jewelry preview for CIIE

SHANGHAI : In a bid to give full play to the spillover effect of the China International Import Expo (CIIE) to promote Pakistani jewelry culture, Aqeel Chaudhry, founder of Pakistani jewelry band WINZA, who has been residing in China for the past 22 years, organized a grand Pakistani jewelry brand preview of the CIIE at New World DAIMARU, one of the first class shopping malls in Shanghai. The preview drew attendees including potential buyers, industry professionals, and enthusiasts, Gwadar Pro reported on Sunday. Aqeel Chaudhry showcased a stunning collection of traditional and contemporary Pakistani jewelry, highlighting the rich heritage and craftsmanship of the country. Guests were captivated by the display of exquisite necklaces, earrings, bracelets and rings, all reflecting the diversity and beauty of Pakistani jewelry. The sixth CIIE will be held at the National Exhibition and Convention Center Shanghai from November 5 to 10, which is the fifth time for Li Long to participate in the CIIE. Recognizing the immense potential of the Chinese market, Aqeel has seized the opportunity to introduce Pakistani jewelry to a wider audience. He sees the CIIE as a platform to keep abreast of the latest trends, urge his product progress and learn from peers. This year, he will display rubies, sapphires from the world's major producing regions as well as peridot and most famous emeralds from Pakistan at his 36-square-meter booth at CIIE. With the success of this preview, Aqeel believes that Pakistani jewelry is poised to make a lasting impression at the upcoming CIIE, further strengthening the cultural and economic ties between Pakistan and China. —DNA

## Crackdowns on dollar hoarding amid rupee volatility

Anjum Nisar says administrative measures clamp down informal market speculative practice

## DNA

ISLAMABAD: The Federation of Pakistan Chambers of Commerce and Industry' Businessmen Panel (BMP), while calling for tightening the noose of law through constant crackdowns on smuggling and hoarding of dollars to maintain stability of rupee, has said that the local currency has once again started declining mode after emerging among the world's top-performing currencies in the past two months. FPCCI former president and BMP Chairman Mian Anjum Nisar said the rupee appreciation run is to be attributed to gov-

ernment's administrative measures against dollar smuggling and hoarding. The appreciation comes amid a crackdown against informal channels that are used to smuggle currencies into neighboring countries. These administrative measures have clamped down speculative and hoarding practices of informal markets. FPCCI former president and BMP Chairman Mian Anjum Nisar said that in the past few sessions the rupee has lost around 1% and this development came after the interim government cracked down on smuggling and hoarding of foreign currency, while the central bank suspended the authorization of nine

exchange companies for noncompliance of rules and regulations and serious violations, which need to continue to stable the rupee. He said that the rupee recently saw one of the longest appreciation runs against the US dollar, surging around 10% since the start of September, making it the best-performing currency globally after Afghanistan's afghani. The improvement came after the State Bank of Pakistan (SBP) announced a list of structural reforms last month, targeting the Exchange Companies (ECs). The recent appreciation of the Pakistani rupee will likely be short-lived, given soaring interest costs and only short-term arrangements with the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and bilateral financing to support the external balance, he said. Countrywide raids were also reported with dozens of illegal currency exchanges barred from running operations and foreign currency worth millions confiscated. However, risk remains as investors brace for possible unrest as the nation prepares to hold national elections in the first few months of next year, he said, adding that the muted growth in country's export and remittance inflows have made Pakistan more dependent on foreign inflows from friendly countries in the Middle East as well as China.

## Pakistani dancer Tehreema Mitha's memorable NCA performance

Tehreema, an alumna of NCA and a practitioner of classical and contemporary dance. She performed 3 classical dances including Pushpanjali, choreographed by her and Main Na Boolongi and Jathiswaram

## DNA

ISLAMABAD : A memorable performance of dance by Pakistan's eminent dancer and choreographer Tehreema Mitha was hosted by the Vice Chancellor Prof. Dr. Murtaza Jafri at National College of Arts (NCA) Islamabad Campus on 28 October 2023. Tehreema, an alumna of NCA and a practitioner of classical and contemporary dance. She performed 3 classical dances including Pushpanjali, choreographed by her and Main Na Boolongi and Jathiswaram, jointly choreographed with her mother. In the second half, Tehreema performed three contemporary dances including Aasar-e-Ghaib, Ray Nu, and Yeh Raat Hum Donon Ki (This Night,



Yours and Mine); all choreographed by Tehreema. The audience gave a standing ovation when Tehreema's guru and mother Mrs. Indu Mitha, a practitioner and a teacher of classical dance for over 6 decades, came on stage to pass the light of excellence to her daughter and only disciple to take on dance professionally. Tehreema is not only continuing her mother's legacy but taking it to new heights. She did her first solo performance in 1986 and has been pursuing classical and contemporary choreography, dance for 36 years and counting. She composes the accompanying music and designs her own costumes along with the choreography. Through her dance, besides the more traditional compositions, Tehreema also

highlights contemporary issues such as women rights, honour killings, environment, and progressive interpretations of sufi traditions. Tehreema Mitha moved to the U.S. in 1997 and registered her Dance Company in 2001 and has performing across the globe for decades. Tehreema continues to visit Pakistan and is always keen to promote and perform dance in the country of her origin. Through her work she creates a new universe in which the past and present do not collide so much as collaborate. This evening was a great opportunity for the students and the residents of the twin cities to witness creativity and artistic excellence of Tehreema Mitha and they widely appreciated NCA for arranging this memorable event.

## Death toll hits 42 in Kazakh mine fire

LONDON : The death toll from a fire at a coal mine in Kazakhstan rose to 42 on Sunday, with four people still missing, the press service of Kazakhstan's Ministry of Emergency Situations said. It added that rescue operations were being "hampered by the presence of destroyed mining equipment, as well as rubble in some places." The fire broke out on Saturday at the Kostenko mine, which is owned by Luxembourg-based steel giant ArcelorMittal and located in Kazakhstan's Karaganda region. Tokayev, third right, expresses condolences to the families and friends of the miners who died in the fire in Karaganda, Kazakhstan, Saturday, Oct. 28, 2023. (Kazakhstan's Presidential Press Office via AP, File) Kazakhstan confirms nationalization of ArcelorMittal subsidiary after mine fire kills at least 32 FILE - Chinese family tourists rent traditional Thai costumes and take selfies at Wat Arun, or the "Temple of Dawn," in Bangkok, Thailand, on Jan. 12, 2023. Thailand's new cabinet has approved a temporary visa exemption for tourists from China and Kazakhstan in its first meeting on Wednesday, Sept. 13, for a bid to boost tourism and the economy. (AP Photo/Sakchai Lait, File) Thailand's government, seeking return of tourists from China, approves visa-free entry for 5 months. It is the latest in a string of workplace deaths at sites operated by ArcelorMittal Temirtau, the local unit of ArcelorMittal that operates the country's largest steel plants and several coal and ore mines. In August, four miners were killed after a fire erupted at the same mine, while five people died following a methane leak at another site in November 2022.—Agencies

## Saudi refinery oil exports rise in Aug

RIYADH: Saudi Arabia's exports of refined oil products grew by 16 percent in August compared to July, marked by higher shipments of diesel, according to data collated from the Joint Organizations Data Initiative. The total volume of exported refined oil products reached 1.3 million barrels per day in August, a significant rise from the previous month's 1.1 million bpd. Refinery oil output is the outcome of processing crude oil within refineries to produce various refined petroleum products. This comprehensive procedure transforms raw crude oil into everyday products for consumers and industries. Diesel shipments exports in August surged 45 percent, registering the highest monthly growth rate observed in the last three years, to 587,000 bpd. However, fuel oil exports in August declined by 15 percent or 24,000 bpd compared to July. Motor and aviation oil fell by 7 percent or 20,000 bpd during the same period. According to the JODI database, diesel constituted 44 percent of the total refinery oil exports, motor and aviation oil 21 percent and fuel oil 11 percent. The database also showed that the Kingdom shipped 55 percent of refinery output in August compared to 44 percent in July. Specifically, 50 percent of the diesel produced in August was exported, compared to 39 percent in July.—APP

## Australian university announces scholarships for Pakistani students

SYDNEY : Australia's University of Wollongong (UOW) has announced its most prestigious Vice-Chancellor's Leadership Scholarships for Pakistani students. Punjab Higher Education Commission sources told APP that for the first time, a prestigious Australian university has offered scholarships for Pakistan. The programme is aimed at inspiring new generation of young, passionate leaders and providing them with knowledge, skills and worldviews to be future leaders. Two Pakistani students will be awarded the scholarship every year, HEC sources said.—DNA

## Briefs

### Munir Akram stresses resolution of old disputes to for peace

NEW YORK: Pakistan's Ambassador to the United Nations, Munir Akram, has called for resolving festering disputes involving the peoples' right to self-determination – like Palestine and Kashmir – so that they don't get more aggravated and threaten regional peace and stability. Speaking to an international youth delegation at the Pakistan Mission, he said that the ongoing conflict in the Middle East highlighted the need for a push to settle old disputes. The delegation comprised youth delegates from various countries who were in New York for a 4-day Global Peace Summit, which concluded on Saturday. Ambassador Akram told the delegation that India had denied Kashmiris their inalienable right to self-determination in contravention of international law, the UN Charter and the UN Security Council resolutions. The 76 years, he said, have witnessed exemplary sacrifices rendered by the different generations of Kashmiris in their legitimate, just and indigenous struggle for freedom from India's illegal and immoral occupation. He briefed the delegates about the Kashmir dispute and Black Day, which was observed on Friday, identifying various facets of the Kashmiris' freedom struggle. – APP

### PML-Q calls for an end to Israeli oppression

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan Muslim League-Quaid (PML-Q) Chaudhry Muhammad Sarwar and Shafay Hussain, while calling for intervention amid Israel's barbarism in Gaza, have urged the United Nations to safeguard the lives and property of Palestinians and take measures to halt Israel's assaults. In the event that Israel fails to adhere to UN resolutions, they have advocated for swift sanctions to be imposed. Addressing a demonstration outside the Lahore Press Club to express solidarity with Palestine, Chaudhry Sarwar, the former Punjab governor, highlighted that while the people of the US and European nations are expressing solidarity with Palestine, their governments continue to support Israel. Despite worldwide protests against Israel's actions, the ongoing violence persists. He firmly urged that sanctions be imposed on Israel if it refuses to comply with United Nations resolutions. Sarwar stressed the necessity for unity among the Muslim Ummah to advocate for an independent Palestinian state, emphasizing that mere verbal expressions of support are insufficient.

### Trump pledges to reimpose Muslim 'travel ban'

DONALD Trump used a speech to a Republican Jewish convention Saturday to promise reimposition of a controversial travel ban that targeted a slew of mostly Muslim countries if he gets re-elected. "We will keep radical Islamic terrorists the hell out of our country," Trump told the audience attending the annual summit of the Republican Jewish Coalition. "You remember the travel ban? On day one I will restore our travel ban." At the start of his presidency in 2017, Trump imposed sweeping restrictions on the entry of travelers from Iran, Libya, Somalia, Syria, Yemen and, initially, Iraq and Sudan. The order was quickly challenged in court as discriminatory against a religious group, but the bans, along with Trump's hard-line anti-immigration agenda, were popular with his base. President Joe Biden reversed the ban in his first week in office in 2021. Biden "was proud to overturn the vile, un-American Muslim ban enacted by his predecessor," a White House spokesman said. – Agencies

# Romania, Pakistan cooperation in defence field exemplary, says envoy

Ambassador Preda acknowledges the exceptional professionalism of the Pakistani Army, the deep patriotism of its men and women in uniform, sacrifices they made in fighting terrorism

ABID RAZA

ISLAMABAD: Acting Ambassador of Romania Eduard Preda has said celebration of the Romanian Army Day has a special meaning, focused on the idea of respect for fallen heroes. Historically, the decision to celebrate the Romanian Army Day on October 25th was a long process that reflects the various stages of the Romanian Army development in the second half of the XX century as well as its contributions on various fronts of the First and Second World Wars. Therefore, the 25 of October is symbolizing the day in which the entire Romanian territory was liberated by the Romanian Army during the Second World War, on 25 October 1944.

He expressed these views while speaking on the occasion of the Armed Forces Day of Romania. Air Marshal Irfan Ahmed of Pakistan Air Force was the chief guest. Ambassador Preda further said, Army Day crowns through its symbolism a whole series of anniversary moments, attended not only by those dressed in military uniform, but by all segments of our society. It became a date with special significance in the calendar of celebration days in Romania. "Today, Romanian Armed Forces, completely reformed and modernized up to the NATO and European Union standards, are assigned to foreign missions, contributing alongside with the allied and partner countries to the common effort of keeping peace and stability worldwide. In compliance with the commitments deriving from the international treaties, agreements and memoranda whose signing party is, Romania had contingents of different sizes from all services – Army, Air and Naval Forces – available to multinational coalitions authorized to carry on peace support operations, humanitarian assistance, within the framework of UN, NATO, OSCE and EU-led Observing, Monitoring, Liaison and Training missions".

He said for the Romanian Armed Forces, these years of contribution to foreign missions meant the maintenance, almost continuously, of a military force of variable size, integrated into UN, NATO and EU missions carried out in Africa and Asia, in the theatres of operations in Afghanistan, Iraq and Western Balkans. Almost 40,000 Romanian troops took part in different operations and missions out of national borders, gathering a valuable professional experience extremely useful in the transformation and the cooperation enhancement process



of the Romanian Armed Forces with their NATO and EU counterparts. The contribution of the Romanian troops to the collective defence, peace keeping and restoration missions to enforce the UN Security Council Resolutions, of the international legislation and law reveals that the Romanian state complies consequently and in full faith with the commitments agreed with the allies and partners, according to the international legislation and treaties whose signing party Romania is, he added. He said, "Today, unfortunately, we are living in a very complicated security environment. The challenges we have to deal with every day, along with the war going on at NATO, EU and Romanian borders,

all these prove that we need to be ready to defend our common values and freedoms and grant security and stability". He said, Ukraine's security means European and Euro-Atlantic security. In line with the NATO and European Union's policy, Romania stands in full solidarity with the people and government of Ukraine in the heroic defence of their country, helping Ukraine to uphold its fundamental right to self-defence with unprecedented levels of support as a response to the Russian Federation's full-scale, unprovoked and unlawful invasion of Ukraine. He said he was pleased to underline the excellent cooperation existing between Romanian and Pakistani Armed Forces

which have developed over the years into a true and mutually partnership. Since there is not enough time to elaborate on the multifaceted and complex character of the cooperation, I will only mention that the Pakistani Navy will soon receive their third patrol vessel built at Damen Shipyards Galati, Romania. These vessels will provide the Pakistani Navy with highly effective search and rescue capabilities that will allow it to play an important role in safeguarding international trade routes from piracy and other threats like drugs and human trafficking or terrorism. "Also, this year, between February 10 and 14, Romania participated in the 9th edition of the multinational naval exer-

cise AMAN 2023, conducted by the Pakistan Naval Forces, held in the Arabian Sea, with 50 participating countries. The Exercise helped participating navies to exchange their experience and knowledge and provided a platform to the participants to nurture their maritime capabilities". He acknowledged the exceptional professionalism of the Pakistani Army, the deep patriotism of its men and women in uniform, the sacrifices they made in fighting terrorism, their presence in multiple international coalitions authorized to participate in maintaining peace, humanitarian assistance and other operations meant to ease the sufferings of the people in different regions of the world.

## 'We won't accept ignoring genocide against Palestinians'

CARACAS: The Cuban President has strongly condemned Israel's genocidal campaign in the Gaza Strip and blamed Israel and the United States for 75 years of occupation and violating the "inalienable" rights of the Palestinians. In his statements to national television on Saturday, Miguel Diaz-Canel expressed his country's strong condemnation of the genocide, and the destruction of homes, hospitals, and civilian infrastructure perpetrated by the Israeli forces in Palestinian land. "We will not accept any selective indignation that seeks to ignore the danger of the genocide that is being perpetrated against the Palestinians, portray the Israeli side as the victim, and ignore 75 years of aggression, occupation, violations, and exclusion," he said. "We reject the killing of innocent people as a result of the current escalation and fierce and indiscriminate aggression, without distinction of race, origin, gender, or belief," Diaz-Canel stressed. He described Israel's

bloodshed in Gaza as "unjustifiable" and in "serious violation" of humanitarian and international laws. "Israel violates all United Nations resolutions and all commitments imposed on it as an occupying power as stipulated in the Fourth Geneva Convention," he said, adding, "The Security Council was unable to call on Israel to stop the ongoing massacre, as the United States used the veto right." "The United States is the historical accomplice of 'Zionist barbarism,'" he added. JUST NOW: Cuban President Miguel Diaz-Canel condemns Israel & the United States for waging 75 years of genocide & occupation of Palestine. Cuba stands with the Palestinian people & says that the only solution can come from Palestine's right to exercise its self-determination. pic.twitter.com/ecsls0iGa – Manolo De Los Santos (@manolo\_realego) October 29, 2023 "The comprehensive, just, and permanent solution to the conflict undoubtedly requires the real exercise of the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people and the establishment of their independent and sovereign state within the borders of pre-1967, with its capital in East al-Quds," the Cuban President highlighted. He also confirmed that a group of countries, including Cuba, proposed a draft resolution to the United Nations General Assembly, which was recently approved, demanding an immediate ceasefire, the establishment of an urgent mechanism to protect Palestinian civilians, rejecting the displacement of civilians and human rights defenders, and provision of emergency humanitarian aid. – Agencies

## Netanyahu will face defeat 'greater than what he fears'

GAZA City: The Palestinian resistance movement Hamas has warned Israeli prime minister Benjamin Netanyahu against any plans to expand the regime's ground invasion of the Gaza Strip after more than three weeks of incessant bombardments in the besieged area. Abu Ubaida, spokesman for the Gaza-based movement's military wing, al-Qassam Brigades, issued the warning after Netanyahu announced what he claimed to be the "second stage" of a ground incursion by the Israeli occupation army into Gaza. "We are still waiting for him," Abu Ubaida said in a video statement. "We will make him taste, by the strength of God, a defeat greater than what he expects or fears." The al-Qassam spokesman also hit out at Arab countries for a lack of humanitarian assistance to the besieged Gaza Strip and said the occupying regime was to blame for the failure to achieve an agreement over a prisoner swap with Palestinians. "To the leaders of our Arab nations...We do not ask you to mobilize your armies and tanks, God forbid, to defend the children of Arabs and Islam in Gaza," Abu Ubaida said. – Agencies

## Pence withdraws from 2024 presidential race

WASHINGTON: Former US Vice President Mike Pence has withdrawn from the 2024 presidential race, saying "this is not my time". He made the announcement at the Republican Jewish Coalition in Las Vegas on Saturday afternoon. "We always knew this would be an uphill battle, but I have no regrets," he wrote in a statement. Mr Pence is the first major Republican candidate to suspend his campaign in a race led by former President Donald Trump. Mr Pence had languished in recent polls and had struggled to gain the support of Republican voters. The former vice president's campaign had also racked up large amounts of debt, with Mr Pence ending September owing \$621,000 (£512,038) and having only US\$1.2m (£989,446) in the bank - significantly less than other Republican rivals. "I am leaving this campaign, but I will never leave the fight for conservative values," he wrote in a statement addressed to his supporters. The 64-year-old lost the support of many Republican voters when he publicly broke with Mr Trump over the 6 January Capitol riot in 2021, and when he presided over the certification of Joe Biden's 2020 election results in Congress. Mr Trump admonished Mr Pence for lacking "courage" when he refused to overturn the Democratic leader's election victory. Some rioters were heard chanting "hang Mike Pence" as they stormed the halls of Congress in 2021, and since then many Trump loyalists have viewed him as a traitor. The former vice-president said in March that Mr Trump's encouragement of the rioters had "endangered my family and everyone at the Capitol that day". Read more: Who are the Republican hopefuls not named Trump? In his resignation, Mr Pence did not endorse any other Republican candidates for the presidential election. But he called on Americans to choose a leader that "will appeal to the better angels of our nature" and not only lead us to victory but also lead our nation with civility and back to those time-honoured principles that have always made America strong, prosperous and free." Mr Pence's decision to withdraw from the Republican presidential campaign came shortly before the third presidential debate on 8 November. – Agencies

## ECP gets over 1,300 objections on preliminary delimitations

DNA

ISLAMABAD: The Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) has received 1,324 objections on preliminary delimitation of constituencies and will start hearing on the matter from November 1 at its headquarters. The ECP had extended the deadline to file objections till 12 pm of October 27 for the convenience of the general public. Out of the 1,324 objections from the provinces and federal capital, 672 were submitted in Punjab, 228 in Sindh, 293 in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, 124 in Balochistan and seven in Islamabad. "A total of 1,324 objections have been submitted on which the Election Commission will start hearing from November 1, 2023. Benches have been constituted for hearing," said the electoral watchdog. Notices have also been sent to the objectors for hearing on November 1 and 2. After the hearing, the final publication of the constituencies will be made on November 30. To hear the objections two benches have been formed. The first bench will hold

hearings on November 1 at 10am regarding objections about delimitation, concerning districts Islamabad, Shikarpur, Jacobabad, Kashmore, Sialkot, Khuzdar and Rajapur while the second bench will hold hearings on objections about Kurram, Khyber, Nankana Sahib, Attock, Jhelum, Kohat and Korangi. According to the schedule for November 2, the first bench will hold a hearing concerning Malir, Sanghar, Swat, Hariapur, Chakwal and Pishin, while the second bench will conduct a hearing about Mardan, Karachi East, Musa Khel, Lodhran, Noshero Feroz, Hub, Lasbela and Awaran. Political analysts have raised concerns about a possible delay in the polls past January, with several noting that no political party seems in the "election mode", while others mentioned that politics have also cautioned about the "harsh weather" during winters that could hamper the polling process. The country has been gripped in political uncertainty ever since the Imran Khan government was removed through a no-confidence motion in April 2022. A coalition government that took over after

Imran Khan's ouster dissolved the National Assembly on August 9 of this year. Following the premature dissolution of national and provincial assemblies, the ECP was required to hold elections within the 90-day time period, meaning the polls should take place no later than November 6. However, the ECP said it was constitutionally bound to draw fresh boundaries ahead of the elections as the Council of Common Interest (CCI) had approved the census, hence holding elections within the stipulated time period was not possible. Key political parties including Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI), Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP), and others urged the ECP to hold polls at the earliest to end prevailing uncertainty in the country. But in September the uncertainty ended to an extent after the Election Commission announced that it would hold polls in the country in the last week of January. In the same month, the ECP also released the provisional report on the delimitation of constituencies based on the recently concluded census moving a step closer to the most sought-after general elections.

## Bomb kills one, injures dozens in Kerala

INDIA: One person was killed and dozens injured when at least one homemade bomb exploded at a convention centre in the southern Indian state of Kerala on Sunday where a Christian group was holding a prayer meeting, police said. Preliminary investigation has shown that an improvised explosive device was used and that 36 people were injured, Kerala Director General of Police Shaik Darvesh Saheb told reporters. Local newspaper Mathrubhumi, citing witnesses, said at least three explosions occurred inside the convention hall. When asked whether it was a terror attack, Saheb told reporters, "at this stage I cannot say anything; only after investigating I can confirm the details". State Transport Minister Antony Raju said more than 10 people have suffered serious burns and were in critical condition. The incident took place during a Jehovah's Witnesses convention at the centre in Kalamassery, about 10 kilometres (6.21 miles) northeast of Kochi. The group was holding a three-day zonal convention that had seen more than 2,000 attendees, according to local media. Kerala Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan said the incident was very unfortunate and that the police have taken it very seriously. Police was appointing a special investigation team, Saheb told reporters, adding that strict action would be taken against those involved in the incident. An eight-member team from the National Security Guard, the Indian government's counterterrorism unit, is on its way to Kerala to investigate as well, media reported. The health and medical education departments have been instructed to provide high-quality treatment, said Kerala's health minister, Veena George. "The explosion occurred seconds after the end of a prayer as part of the day's event. The first blast took place in the middle of the hall. Seconds later, two more explosions rocked simultaneously on either sides of the hall," TA Sreekumar, regional spokesperson for the Jehovah's Witnesses said. – Agencies