



Islamabad POST

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Pak looking forward to enhance defense ties with Qatar: COAS

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NATO ready to act on Baltic pipeline damage

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Messi uncertain for Paraguay WC qualifier

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Nawaz to face law upon return, says PM Kakar

Prime Minister directs the ministries to resolve all issues of the newspapers on priority

KHAYAM ABBASI

ISLAMABAD: Caretaker Prime Minister Anwaar-ul-Haq Kakar on Thursday dismissed the impression that Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) supremo Nawaz Sharif returning to Pakistan under a deal with his government. "The caretaker government has 'no soft corner' for PML-N or any other political party... How can a caretaker government strike such a deal," he said in an interview with a digital media platform. The prime minister was responding to a question relating to the PML-N supremo's homecoming from the UK on October 21 after a four-year self-imposed exile. Kakar pointed out that Nawaz had left the country because of a court decision "under the nose of Imran Khan's government, and not the caretaker setup". However, he said that if Nawaz returns and takes part in politics, he will have to face some legal obstacles. "The answers to these legal questions lie in legal remedies," said the interim PM. He added that any leader be it Imran Khan, Asif Ali Zardari, or Nawaz, everyone would have to deal with the law. The caretaker PM said that Pakistani politics had turned into "regimental camps" and the country had been turned into a fighting ground for political positions. He also dismissed the notion that the caretaker setup could be compared to the "Kakar formula" where both then-prime minister Nawaz Sharif and then president Ghulam Ishaq Khan were forced to resign on a proposal of then army chief General (retd) Waheed Kakar to make way for elections. "This comparison is apples and oranges. It is out of context because in our case, the stint of the normal parliament led to its retirement and we are part of the constitutional continuation where leaders of the House and the Opposition agreed upon my name," said Kakar. There has been no interference from any institution in our case, he said. Interim finalising arrangements for polls on general polls, PM Kakar said necessary security and administrative arrangements were in place.

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Babar advocates compulsory voting

STAFF REPORT

ISLAMABAD: Former Senator Farhatullah Babar expressed his reservations about the likelihood of the general elections taking place in the last week of January 2024, emphasizing that it appears probable but not certain. Babar, a prominent figure in the Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP), strongly advocated for ending the involvement of the military establishment in political and electoral matters. He reiterated this point during a consultative session organized by the Pakistan Institute of Legislative Development and Transparency (PILDAT) in Islamabad, where the focus was on ensuring free and fair general elections. The discussion brought together a diverse group of experts and stakeholders, including legal scholars, politicians, members of civil society, media representatives, and academics. They gathered to address the challenges and potential solutions in the context of democratic elections in Pakistan. As the president of the PPP's human rights cell, Babar proposed the exploration of compulsory voting and the introduction of a 'None of the Above' (NOTA) option to enhance the democratic process. He also stressed the need for an independent investigation into the incidents of May 9, the failures of the Result Transmission System (RTS), and the ongoing necessity for electoral reforms.

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Briefs

Asad Umar hails SC verdict

MEHTAB PIRZADA

ISLAMABAD: PTI leader and former minister Asad Umar on Thursday hailed the Supreme Court's landmark verdict on law limiting the chief justice's powers, but wondered what made PML-N president Shehbaz Sharif excited over it. Speaking to reporters outside ATC in Islamabad, he described the SC verdict as a "correct decision". The Supreme Court on Wednesday turned down the pleas against the Supreme Court (Practice and Procedure) Act 2023 with 10-5 majority. The verdict was announced by Chief Justice of Pakistan Qazi Faez Isa. The apex court hearing was streamed live on the PTV.

AC summons Raja Pervaiz in person

DNA

ISLAMABAD: The Accountability Court Islamabad on Thursday summoned National Assembly Speaker Raja Pervaiz Ashraf to attend the next hearing in person. The cases against Raja Pervaiz Ashraf were heard by Judge Muhammad Bashir. However, Raja Pervaiz Ashraf did not appear in Accountability Court No. 3.

REPATRIATION OF ILLEGAL IMMIGRANTS

18 DAYS

Khan's message from jail 'Don't give up, time of trial to end soon'

Imran Khan said: "Those suggesting that I leave country, know that I will live and die in Pakistan, and I will not leave my land to go anywhere"

KHAYAM ABBASI

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) Chairman Imran Khan has reiterated his resolve that he would not back down even an inch from the quest of Haqqeeqi Azadi, urging the nation do not give up, as this time of trial will end because whenever the election will be held the only destiny of this unelected predatory group and their facilitators is defeat. In his message to the nation from the jail, PTI Chairman said: "Regardless of what prison they keep me in, whatever conditions they impose upon me, I will not back down even an inch from the quest of Haqqeeqi Azadi, for the upholding of the rule of law and the Constitution of Pakistan, at the core of which is free and fair elections." Imran Khan said: "Those suggesting that I leave the country, know that I will live and die in Pakistan, and I will not leave my land to go anywhere."

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Nawaz to deliver the masses from economic crunch

DNA

LAHORE: PML-N Senior Vice-President Maryam Nawaz said on Thursday none other than Nawaz Sharif came to country's rescue and embalmed the wounds inflicted on it. The chief organizer made the remark while meeting chairmen, councillors and party workers to discuss modalities of Nawaz Sharif's welcome in Lahore. The chairmen and councillors were from NA-126 and 130. She also took stock of preparations being made for according welcome to the PML-N supremo who,

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KASHMIR DIPLOMACY



ISLAMABAD: Special Envoy of the Secretary General of Organisation of Islamic Cooperation on Jammu and Kashmir Yusef M. Al Dobeay calls on the Caretaker PM Anwaar-ul-Haq Kakar. - DNA

National Day of Spain celebrated

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Ambassador of Spain hosted a reception to mark the National Day of Spain. Federal Minister for Privatization Fawad Hassan Fawad was the chief guest while Chief Justice of Pakistan Justice Qazi Faez Isa also attended the reception. The Minister termed the relations between Pakistan and Spain excellent adding both countries have been cooperating with each other on various regional and multi-lateral forums. He hoped these relations would further be strengthened even in the days to come. Ambassador of Spain in his speech shed light on various aspects of the bilateral relations. He said Pakistan was second largest trading partner of Spain in the European Union. The Ambassador also highlighted the historical and religious importance of Spain.

SNGPL denies issuing schedule for winter

DNA

ISLAMABAD: The Sui Northern Gas Pipelines Limited (SNGPL) has denied issuing a schedule for the supply of gas during the upcoming winter season. A spokesman said the company did not issue any schedule for gas supply in winter. The information circulating in the electronic and

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Calls immediate ceasefire Pak condemns Gaza blockade

FO spokesperson said from from November 1 onwards, illegal migrants will be dealt with under Pakistani immigration laws

Faisal Sheikh

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan on Thursday strongly condemned the brutal Israeli reprisal attacks on the Palestinian enclave of Gaza and said the "indiscriminate and disproportionate" use of force by Tel Aviv against civilians called for an immediate cessation of hostilities. Foreign Office (FO) Spokesperson Mumtaz Zahrah Baloch, during the weekly press briefing, said Islamabad was deeply concerned by the deteriorating and dire humanitarian condition in Gaza due to the "inhumane blockade and collective punishment by Israeli forces". Baloch added that the cabinet

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PTI to hold peaceful protests today

Syria's state media said Israel launched attacks on the airports in Damascus Aleppo

ADIL SHAHEEN

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) hammered out a well-conceived strategy to hold peaceful protests across the country in order to show solidarity with the oppressed and besieged people of Palestine in this trying time. Under the plan, PTI would hold nationwide protests today (Friday) against the ongoing Israeli aggression and

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MBS, Raisi speak first time after ties resume

Both leaders discussed the "need to end war crimes against Palestine"

NEWS DESK

TEHRAN: Iranian President Ebrahim Raisi and Saudi Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman discussed the Palestinian-Israeli conflict on Wednesday, in the first telephone call between the two leaders since a China-brokered deal between Tehran and Riyadh to resume ties. The two leaders' call came as Israel carried out air strikes in the Gaza Strip in retaliation for a deadly



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France in favor of abolishment of death penalty: envoy

Ambassador Nicolas Galey says proud to support JPP in its initiatives

ANSAR M BHATTI / DNA

ISLAMABAD: Ambassador of France to Pakistan Nicolas Galey has said France, like its European partners and dozens of countries around the world, many of which represented here firmly opposed to the death penalty in all places and all circumstances. He expressed these views during a function organized at the French residence. He said this on the occasion of the 21st World Day against the Death Penalty. He thanked the JPP people for their presence and screening of a documentary. Ambassador Galey said, his country supported unequivocally the dynamics of the movement in favor of the universal abolition of the death penalty. In 2002 four new States joined this movement (Kazakhstan, Papua New Guinea, Sierra Leone and Central African Republic). The adoption in December 2022 by a historic number of 125 States, of the United Nations General Assembly resolution calling for a universal moratorium on the death penalty is a real progress. "Despite this progress, executions continue. In 2022 the number of executions reached highest in five years 883 persons, in 20 countries, were executed that is plus 53% compared to the previous year. France deprecates this trend and calls on these countries to observe moratorium like Pakistan since 2019 - with a view to definitely abolishing the death penalty. In this regard, we call on all states to

ratify the second Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights. As we will celebrate the 75th anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights signed in Paris on 10 December, 1948, France is more than ever committed against the death penalty. The ambassador said

the Capital punishment is a cruel and unjust punishment. In 1948 exactly one century before the Universal Declaration of Human Rights was adopted, Victor Hugo, then a member of the French National Assembly tried to pass a law abolishing the death penalty and uttered these words; "The death

penalty is the special and eternal sign of barbarism. The right of life and death belongs only to God". He said as for the supposed exemplary nature of capital punishment it is an illusion and a lie, demonstrated by so many international statistics. They show that many countries that practice capital punishment have a very high crime rate, sometimes among the highest in the world, when criminality is considerably lower in those that have abolished it.

Ambassador Galey added, France strongly believed that justice cannot give to human beings the power of death on other human beings, not only because judicial processes are fallible but essentially because the death penalty is not an implementation of justice; it is a manifestation of vengeance and vengeance is the opposite of justice and of civilization. He said he was proud to share this conviction against the death penalty with JPP, which is leading a courageous, vigorous and determined action against the capital punishment. "It is an honour for the French embassy to have contributed to the development of short videos including the one which has been screened", the ambassador concluded. Ms Sara Belal from the JPP in her speech thanked the French embassy for supporting their initiatives. She also briefed the audience about the background of the short film and an historical perspective of the death penalty, especially in the context of Pakistani laws.



ISLAMABAD: Ambassador of France Nicolas Galey flanked by JPP team sharing his views about the issue of death penalty. - DNA

PM: Kashmir dispute resolution key to peace

KHAYAM ABBASI

ISLAMABAD: Caretaker Prime Minister Anwaar-ul-Haq Kakar on Thursday calling the Kashmir dispute the root cause of tension in South Asia, said peace in the region would remain elusive till the resolution of the issue. The prime minister in a meeting with OIC Secretary General's Special Envoy for Jammu and Kashmir Yousef M. Al Dobeay, said Pakistan was committed to a just and peaceful resolution of the Kashmir dispute in accordance with the UN Security Council resolutions. He welcomed the visit of the OIC dele-

gation to Pakistan and Azad Jammu & Kashmir. He lauded the sustained efforts of the OIC in support of the Kashmir cause, particularly in the wake of India's unilateral and illegal actions of 5 August 2019, and stated that the people of Pakistan and Kashmir had high expectations of the OIC. Highlighting the tremendous sacrifices of the people of Indian Illegally Occupied Jammu and Kashmir for realization of their inalienable right to self-determination, the prime minister said that the Kashmiris had always looked towards OIC and Ummah for support. Prime Minister Kakar also expressed serious con-

cern over the rise of Islamophobia around the world, particularly in the form of Hindutva. He said this constituted a serious threat to global peace and security and urged to step up efforts to counter these forces. Ambassador Yousef M. Al Dobeay assured the prime minister of OIC's principled position on the Jammu and Kashmir dispute. He said that the OIC was fully committed to the Kashmir cause and his visit to Pakistan and Azad Jammu and Kashmir in his capacity as OIC Special Envoy on Jammu and Kashmir was an expression of that commitment.



ISLAMABAD: Russian Ambassador to Pakistan, Danila V. Ganich meeting with the Caretaker Minister of Commerce, Dr. Gohar Ejaz at the Commerce Ministry to discuss bilateral trade relations.—DNA

S&P Global Pakistan earns best workplace accolades

DNA

ISLAMABAD: S&P Global Pakistan has been recognised as one of Pakistan's top four companies to work for in the 'Overall Best Place to Work Category' which analyzed more than 300 companies. It also won the prestigious Best Place to Work recognition, Best Place to Work in the IT Services Industry, and Best Leaders Award. This reaffirms S&P Global Pakistan's commitment to building an inclusive and equitable culture that promotes its core values of discovery, partnership, and integrity. Mujeeb Zahur, Managing Director, S&P Global Pakistan, said, "I am delighted that S&P Global Pakistan has received three awards and has emerged as a top contender in the Best of the Best Award category. The collaborative work culture has also contributed to the company's success in



attracting and retaining top talent. As we celebrate our success today, we look forward to further enhancing our workplace initiatives to ensure that our people always remain at the heart of the organisation's success." These accolades underscore S&P Global Pakistan's relentless dedication to fostering an environment where colleagues are driven by its purpose to accelerate

progress. With approximately 1,500 employees engaged in data, research, and analytics, S&P Global Pakistan has operated in Islamabad for the past 18 years. S&P Global's 'People First' philosophy enables them to place significant emphasis on well-being, offering initiatives that include flexible work arrangements, comprehensive healthcare coverage, skill develop-

ment platforms, and mentorship programs. Under their recently launched People 10.0 policy, the organization has introduced a wide range of initiatives to support both the physical and mental health of their people, including wellness rooms and programs, paid parental leaves, and an interactive DEI learning & development platform, among others.

ANF seizes 208 kg drugs in three operations

DNA

RAWALPINDI: Anti-Narcotics Force (ANF) while conducting three operations managed to recover 208 kg of drugs and arrested three accused, said an ANF Headquarters spokesman here on Thursday. He informed that ANF foiled a major drug smuggling attempt in Gadap Town Karachi and recovered 168 kg hashish from a truck loaded with apples. Charas was concealed in secret cavities of the truck. During the operation, an accused, resident of Qila Abdullah, was also arrested. In another operation in Quetta, 40 kg of hashish was recovered from a car. A resident of Quetta was arrested during the operation. In the third operation, 274 narcotic (ecstasy) tablets were recovered from the possession of a local resident arrested from Jamrud Road Peshawar. The accused was trying to smuggle drugs from Khyber to Punjab. Separate cases have been registered against the accused while further investigations are under process.

Another turn in the TRG Saga: The Turmoil at TRG

Why has Ibex's share price reduced by 50% from its peak? Has TRG violated Pakistani law by having an affiliate or subsidiary buy its shares? Has TRG violated a state bank mandate to promptly return foreign currency to Pakistan? Has TRG violated FBR regulations on taxes? Shareholders deserve to know

TRG Pakistan, a leading technology company, is in the midst of a corporate governance crisis. On September 25, 2023, the company's largest shareholder, Zia Chishti, initiated a process of removing essentially all members of the board of directors through an Extraordinary General Meeting (EOGM). This move comes after months of allegations of mismanagement and wrongdoing against the current board, led by CEO Hasnain Aslam. Chishti has also accused TRG of violating Pakistani law by having an affiliate or subsidiary buy its shares, and of violating a state bank mandate to promptly return foreign currency to Pakistan. He has also raised questions about the company's financial performance, noting that Ibex's share price has reduced by 50% from its peak. Within this context, one of TRG's subsidiaries, Afiniti, has experienced a substantial decline in revenue; a loss of approximately Rs.30 billion a year, a mass exodus of employees and a lack of clear strategic direction. In addition to the allegations of sexual harassment and financial misconduct, Chishti has also accused TRG of the following: -Causing at least Rs 8 billion in losses to the Government of Pakistan through the avoidance of due taxes -Violating Clause 8.13 of the 2005 Preferred Stock Purchase Agreement which governs the relationship between TRGP, TRGI, and their principal shareholders. -Reducing TRGP's voting interest in TRGI to 45.3% despite TRGP having an economic interest of 68.8% in TRGI through a maneuver undisclosed to TRGP. TRG has denied all of the allegations against it. However, the company has refused to provide any evidence to support its claims. In fact, TRG has gone to great lengths to suppress information about the allegations of harassment against Aslam and the company's financial performance while receiving a stay order from court. For example, TRG failed to disclose Chishti's arbitration against the company in its March 2023 financial statements. TRG shareholders have a right to know the truth about what is happening at the company. TRG should release all relevant information about the allegations against Aslam and the company's financial performance. Why has Ibex's share price reduced by 50% from its peak? Has TRG violated Pakistani law by having an affiliate or subsidiary buy its shares? Has TRG violated a state bank mandate to promptly return foreign currency to Pakistan? Has TRG violated FBR regulations on taxes? Shareholders deserve to know.—DNA

Rs. 345.2m fine imposed on 2,739 electricity thieves

DNA

FAISALABAD: The Faisalabad Electric Supply Company (FESCO) imposed Rs. 345.2 million fine on 2,739 electricity thieves during the last 34 days. Spokesman Tahir Sheikh said here on Thursday that FESCO launched a vigorous anti-theft drive on special direction of Minister for Energy (Power Division) and, during 34 days of the campaign, caught 2,739 power pilferers from its eight districts. The company imposed a total fine of Rs. 345.2 million on the pilferers under the head of detection units of 7.592 million in addition to recovering Rs.167.1 million from them. FESCO also got cases registered against 2,633 accused whereas the police arrested 2,153 electricity thieves, he added. Giving further details, he said that the FESCO teams continued checking power pilferage and caught 53 electricity thieves during the last 24 hours, who were stealing electricity through various modes including direct supply. The company had imposed a fine of more than Rs.5.367 million on these electricity thieves in respect of more than 114,000 detection units. e said that in Faisalabad district, up till now, 925 electricity thieves were caught and handed down with a fine of more than Rs.114.7 million under 2.484 million detection units. He said that 266 electricity thieves were caught in Jhang district so far and fined more than 993,000 detection units amounting to more than Rs.41.8 million. —APP

Ministry of HR announces white cane safety day walk

ISLAMABAD: The Directorate General of Special Education, Ministry of Human Rights is proud to announce a special event in honor of White Cane Safety Day. On the 13th of October 2023, this event will bring together individuals from all walks of life to raise awareness and celebrate the capabilities of those with visual impairments. White Cane Safety Day, observed internationally, is a day dedicated to recognizing the importance of the white cane, a symbol of independence and mobility for individuals who are

blind or visually impaired. It is a day to promote understanding and ensure that people with visual disabilities can participate fully in society. The event will commence with a Walk, starting at China Chowk, Islamabad. The walk will be led by the esteemed Chief Guest, the Caretaker Federal Minister for Human Rights, Mr. Khalid George. Mr. George's presence underscores the Ministry's commitment to the well-being and inclusion of individuals with disabilities. Participants and attendees will have the opportunity to engage with individuals who are visually impaired

and gain insights into their daily lives, challenges, and triumphs. The walk is intended to foster an environment of understanding and support for the visually impaired community. Details of the event are as follows: - Date: 13th October 2023 (Friday) - Walk Start Time: [10:00 am Sharp] - Walk Starting Point: [China Chowk, Islamabad] - Walk Ending Point: [D Chowk, Islamabad] The Directorate General of Special Education, Ministry of Human Rights, invites the public, media, and all concerned individuals to join us in this important event, to show their solidarity with the visually impaired, and to celebrate their achievements.

CM gives 312 new vehicles to PHP Police

LAHORE: Caretaker Chief Minister Punjab Mohsin Naqvi gave keys of 312 new vehicles and uniforms to Punjab Highway Patrol (PHP) Police at a ceremony held at his office here on Thursday. Addressing the ceremony, the CM said that the incumbent government had given new vehicles to the Punjab Highways Patrol Police after a hiatus of 19 years. Only 47 vehicles were provided to the patrolling police after 2003-04, he said and maintained that the government was bound to give two uniforms to the policemen every year. From now on, every jawan and senior police officer would be given two uniforms besides the provision of additional funds, he said. Punjab Highway Patrol police had been given the responsibility

of checking the axle load. If the police performed this responsibility in a befitting manner, it would take a lead to Punjab police and traffic police, he remarked. Naqvi noted, "Police Khidmat centers are also serving the masses but along with this, we have to change the archaic police culture to provide justice to the common man." Meanwhile, the plan for the up-gradation of 750 police stations with Rs.1.90 billion had been chalked out as some police stations lacked their own buildings even in a city like Lahore. "I have visited the Samanabad police station; it is impossible for a human being to live there," the CM maintained and noted that the policemen were also working in such police stations. The government would do whatever possible for the Punjab

Highways Patrol police, he added and reiterated that the government would extend full support to the patrolling police. Similarly, the police must treat the public with good manners and do justice to them, he concluded. Chief Secretary Zahid Akhtar Zaman said that the Punjab Highways Patrol police had been given the responsibility to deal with the important problem of axle load. A summary was being forwarded to the chief minister regarding giving incentives to the PHP. The IG police said that CM Naqvi had done an exemplary job for the welfare of the police in a short period. Rs.120 crores were released for the families of the policemen who died during service and an ex-gratia amount of 80 crore rupees was also released for the families.—APP

Egypt offers Pakistan to collaborate in pharma

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Minister for Health and Population Egypt Dr. Khaled Abdel Ghaffar on Thursday offered Pakistan to collaborate in the fields of pharma and vaccines. He was talking to Federal Minister for National Health Services, Regulations and Coordination Dr. Nadeem Jan on the sidelines of the 70th Session of the WHO's Regional Committee for Eastern Mediterranean in Cairo. Dr. Nadeem Jan congratulated Dr. Khaled Abdel Ghaffar on achieving the milestone of eliminating Hepatitis C from Egypt.

Chinese consul general visits APNS offices

DNA

KARACHI: The Consul General (CG) of the Peoples Republic of China Yang Yundong visited the office of All Pakistan Newspapers Society (APNS). The President Mrs. Nazafreen Saigol Lakhani and Mr. Sarmad Ali Secretary General welcomed the honorable guest and stated that Mr. Yang Yundong was the first diplomat to visit APNS House. Mr. Yang Yundong thanked APNS for inviting him to their head office and said that the 3rd Belt and Road Forum (BRF) will be held in Beijing on October 17 and 18 in which more than 130 countries and over 30 International Organizations are expected to participate. The Chinese Consul General said the belt and road forum under the theme of High-quality Belt and Road

cooperation, together for common development and prosperity will provide an opportunity for progress and development of the region and the globe. The

Consul General added that 2023 marks the 10th anniversary of BRI. Over the past decade, the BRI has established more than 3000 cooperation

projects and galvanized nearly USD 1 trillion of investment, creating an array of livelihood projects and milestones of cooperation. Referring to China Paki-






stan Economic Corridor projects, Mr. Yang Yundong said this is a pilot project of the BRI and the land mark project for China-Pakistan cooperation in the new era. He said the Chinese Media sector has made several advancements according to the needs of the modern age. He welcomed Pakistani media and APNS taking benefit from it and the Chinese media will be happy to get suggestions from the APNS to boosting the China-Pakistan relations, better development of CPEC and media exchanges and collaborations. "We are looking forward to working with all of you strengthen the "iron-clad" friendship between China and Pakistan and promote friendly cooperation", He concluded.



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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

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Bomb Disposal.....15
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MH.....5611116
Cantt Hospital.....9270907-11
DHQ.....5556311-4
RGH.....9290301-7
Holy Family.....9290322-7
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Shifa International 4603666



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Met Office.....9250360-6
RDA.....5555864
TMA.....5770886
Cantonment Board 9270151-3

Water Tank

Islamabad.....0321-5744480

ICCI calls for focusing on trade fairs and exhibitions

Faad Waheed said that about 13000 exhibitions are held every year in the USA, about 12000 in Europe and around 2500 in China. However, Pakistan holds around 40-50 exhibitions per annum, which are quite insufficient to promote trade and exports

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Faad Waheed, Acting President, Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry (ICCI) said that the exhibitions are a permanent feature of business promotion in developed countries and stressed that Pakistan should focus on trade fairs and exhibitions to promote trade, exports and investment that would help revive the economy. He said that Pakistan is a huge market of 240 million consumers and fifth largest country in the world in terms of population, therefore, it needs to organize at least 500 exhibitions every year to uplift the businesses and the overall economy. He said that the patronage of the government with the private sector is so important to promote such activities in the country. He said this while talking to a delegation of Pakistan Association of Exhibition Industry (PAEI) that visited ICCI led by its Chairman Federal Muhammad Khurshid Barlas. Amin ur Rehman, Fahad Barlas, Shamraiz Iqbal, Sheikh Rehman ur Rehman and Zeeshan Amjad were in the delegation. Faad Waheed said that about 13000 exhibitions are held every year in the USA, about 12000 in Europe and around 2500 in China. However, Pakistan holds around 40-50 exhibitions per annum, which are quite insufficient to promote trade and exports. Speaking on the occasion, Muhammad Khurshid Barlas, Chairman Federal, Pakistan Association of Exhibition Industry said that the private sector is very dynamic in Pakistan, but it needs the support of the government to promote the economic activities through



exhibitions. He emphasized that all the relevant ministries and departments of the government dealing with commerce, trade, industries, planning and financing should extend all possible support and cooperation to the exhibitors and trade fair organizers as well as participants to make Pakistan a hub of business and economic activities. He desired that the government should encourage exhibitions and trade shows in cooperation with the chambers of commerce and industry of the country as the involvement of the

private sector in organising such exhibitions is very important to make them successful and result-oriented. He also highlighted the role of PAEI in promoting the exhibition industry and said that close cooperation of ICCI with it would add value to its efforts to uplift the local industry. Engr. Azhar ul Islam Zafar, Vice President ICCI said that the current state of the economy necessitates fast boost in exports and regular exhibitions in domestic and major international markets are

the best tool to introduce our exportable products and increase their exports. He assured that ICCI would fully cooperate with PAEI to promote trade fairs and industrial exhibitions in the region to accelerate the economic activities. Khalid Iqbal Malik Group Leader ICCI, Zafar Bakhtawari, Muhammad Ejaz Abbasi, Baser Daud, Maqsood Tabish, Ameer Hamza, Ch. Javed Iqbal, Hamayun Kabir, Muhammad Shabbir, Khalid Chaudhry, Faizan Shehzad and others were also present on the occasion.

Pak is a lucrative destination for future investments

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Naguib Sawiris, Chairman & CEO of Ora Developers, expressed his enthusiasm for the progress of the prestigious Eighteen housing project in Pakistan during a press conference held in Islamabad. The project, which aims to redefine the standards of luxury living in Pakistan and create a world-class community, blending modernity with natural beauty, has achieved significant milestones in infrastructure development. This includes the visit of the Regional Dispatch Centre of China Gezhouba Group Company (CGGC). The China Gezhouba Group Company is also playing a vital role in the construction of the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) by doing some key projects in Pakistan. Followed by the inauguration of The Market

as well as a state-of-the-art, 9-hole professional Golf Academy, various recreational facilities like sports clubs, fitness centers, and sports complexes. Furthermore, a vibrant handover ceremony of an 8 Kanal Villa in the Dandelion Cluster at Eighteen, and the Penthouse of the Heights, was held in the presence of Naguib Sawiris. The Chairman presented the clients with symbolic keys to commemorate the occasion while highlighting Ora Developers' commitment to delivering high-quality property and amenities for residents. Looking ahead, Sawiris expressed his views that Pakistan is a lucrative destination, with significant potential for future investments. The launch of The Club at Eighteen, a modern masterpiece in the heart of the development, accompanied by the initiation of the exclusive clubhouse Membership Program,

marks a significant milestone in the development. The clubhouse is the pinnacle of premium living, offering world-class facilities, set amidst the natural beauty of a state-of-the-art, 18-hole championship golf course, offering panoramic views and a life of unparalleled luxury. However, it's important to note that the attractiveness of any investment destination can depend on various factors, including economic stability, government policies, regulatory frameworks, and market conditions. Investors like Sawiris assess these factors before committing to investments in a particular country. Sawiris's positive outlook on Pakistan as an investment destination indicates his optimism about the country's potential for growth and profitability in the future. This may lead to further exploration and expansion of ORA Developers' presence in Pakistan.

Sawiris expressed gratitude to the government and people of Pakistan for their support and trust in Ora Developers. He also called for more ease of doing business in Pakistan through long-term investment-friendly policies by the government, emphasizing the importance of a conducive business environment for future investments. CEO of Eighteen, Tarek Hamdy, attributed the project's success to the Eighteen management's deep understanding of Pakistan's real estate market. Hamdy also noted a shift in customer preferences towards eco-conscious homes, indicating a growing demand for green properties with excellent amenities. "With a track record of delivering world-class projects, we are dedicated to setting new standards in luxury and innovation within the real estate industry," Tarek added.

Call for infrastructure up-gradation to boost tourism

ISLAMABAD: Infrastructure including roadways, airports and public transit systems should be upgraded to facilitate easier access to different tourist sites which promote tourism in the country at large. Talking to APP, a tourist Aleena Khan said that enhancing the country's infrastructure by upgrading transportation networks will facilitate national and international visitors. She said that she visited different places in Azad Jammu and Kashmir along with her family and found roads in dilapidated condition and faced miseries and hardships by commuting from one site to another. Khan said Pakistan has rich tourism potential which attracts most domestic and foreign dignitaries to come to visit the country. She stressed the need to improve road infrastructure as a large number of international tourists are thronging to the country to enjoy their trip or make the journey memorable. Another tourist Ahsan Ali said that developing a strong infrastructure would pave the way to encourage tourists to visit various recreational and religious sites, adding that tourism is contributing a lot to economic growth as well. He said that infrastructure including air, ground, port and tourism services like hotel rooms and car rental services plays an important role in travel and tourism competitiveness, serving as the arteries of the industry. It may be mentioned here that the tourism ministry has started work on the launch of a "Tourism App" to provide one-click information about tourist destinations, this app includes all the information regarding restaurants, hotels, transport, travel facilities, culture, entertainment and historical places.—APP

Qatar Envoy meets Chairman Senate

Issa bin Muhammad Al-Dasam Al-Kubaisi, the charge d'affaires of the Qatar Embassy, acknowledged the investment opportunities in Pakistan, pledging to fully explore and capitalize on them

ISLAMABAD: Chairman Senate Muhammad Sadiq Sanjrani engaged in a constructive meeting with Issa Bin Muhammad Al-Dasam Al-Kubaisi, the Chargé d'affaires of the Qatar Embassy Islamabad, who called on him today at the Parliament House. Discussions during the meeting centered around mutual interests, emphasizing bilateral relations, and fostering institutional cooperation. Both parties expressed satisfaction with the ongoing progress in trade, investment, and other collaborative endeavors between the two nations. Chairman Senate Muhammad Sadiq Sanjrani underscored the significance of the enduring and friendly ties between Pakistan and Qatar, highlighting mutual support during challenging times and the robust cooperation witnessed at international forums such as IPU, Asian Parliamentary Assembly, and others. Addressing the substantial investment potential in Pakistan, particularly in Gwadar, Chairman Senate emphasized the favorable business environment for Qatari investors. He identified key sectors, including energy, infrastructure, and mining, where investments can significantly accelerate economic activities. Chairman Senate Muhammad Sadiq Sanjrani affirmed Pakistan's commitment to elevating its relationship with Qatar to a formidable political and economic partnership. The meeting also saw an agreement to enhance parliamentary cooperation and facilitate high-level exchanges. Issa bin Muhammad Al-Dasam Al-Kubaisi, the charge d'affaires of the Qatar Embassy, acknowledged the investment opportunities in Pakistan, pledging to fully explore and capitalize on them. He emphasized the potential for further enhancement of bilateral relations through intensified trade and investment initiatives. Pakistan's willingness to broaden cooperation across diverse fields was also acknowledged and reciprocated.—DNA

Quality education, major requirement for country's development: President

ISLAMABAD: President Dr Arif Alvi on Thursday stressed the universities to provide quality education to the students as it was the foremost requirement for the development of the country. He directed the education ministry and Higher Education Commission (HEC) to support universities in designing the courses and departments in accordance with the demand of jobs in the market. Addressing the Convocation ceremony of the Quaid-i-Azam University here, the president said Pakistan was passing through the economic crisis but hoped that the country would rise again soon by ensuring quality education, rule of law and justice. "Pakistan has full potential to develop and the sun of development and prosperity would rise in the country soon," he remarked. During the ceremony, the president gave away medals to the top position holders and conferred degrees to the successful students in various departments of the university. Referring to the shortage of professionals, especially in the medical field in the country, the president advised the female professional not to sit at home after completing their degree. He said women of the country were very hard-working and they could play key role in the development of the country by working shoulder to shoulder with the men. However, he stressed the need to stop their harassment at workplaces so that they could work freely.—DNA



ISLAMABAD: Chairman Senate, Muhammad Sadiq Sanjrani exchanging views with Chargé D'affaires, Issa Bin Muhammad Al-Dasam Al-Kubaisi Embassy of the State of Qatar, at Parliament House.—DNA

Foreign journalists visit churches

ISLAMABAD: A group of journalists from foreign media outlets on Thursday visited the churches in Jaranwala to see the restoration work after they were burnt down during the mob violence. Multiple churches were set on fire in August, which triggered strong condemnation from the country's political and religious parties. The journalists from leading media outlets including AFP, BBC, Washington Post, Russia Today, DPA (Germany), La Croix (France), Anadolu (Turkey), NHK (Japan) and Arab News took a tour of the churches. They also interacted with the bishops and the local Christian community to get feedback on the restoration of churches. The visit was organized by the government of Pakistan to provide the international media with an opportunity for first-hand information about the restoration of churches. The restoration of churches is part of Pakistan's commitment to ensure the rights of religious minorities with the liberty to practice their faith in accordance with the country's constitution.—APP

Dengue tally reaches 1,732 cases in Rawalpindi

RAWALPINDI: The Rawalpindi's dengue total tally had reached 1,732 positive cases with the arrival of 26 more patients during the last 24 hours. District Coordinator Epidemics Prevention and Control (DCEPC), Dr Sajjad Mehmood Thursday said that 18 patients had arrived from the Potohar town urban area, five from Municipal Corporation Rawalpindi, two from Rawalpindi Cantonment and one from Chaklala Cantonment. He informed that 1,650 confirmed patients had been discharged after recovery while 130 patients were admitted to the district's health facilities of which 82 were positive cases. During the last 24 hours, Dr Sajjad said that the district administration had registered 33 FIRs, issued tickets to 12, sealed two premises, and a fine of Rs 80,000 was imposed against the violations of dengue SOPs. During indoor surveillance, in the last 24 hours, the teams checked 9,741 houses and larvae were found in 343 homes. Similarly, he added that while checking 2,619 places, the teams found larvae at 25 sites during outdoor surveillance.—APP

Need urged for attracting FDI in agriculture sector to curb import bill

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Chairman Pakistan Hitech Hybrid Seed Association (PHHSA) Shehzad Ali Malik on Thursday said Pakistan must actively attract investments in the agricultural inputs industry and agro-processing sector. The initiative would help to address effectively the challenges of soaring import bills, suboptimal export growth, and ever-increasing rural poverty. Talking to a delegation of progressive farmers here today led by Shoukat Ali Arain, he said Pakistan is in dire need of foreign direct investment (FDI) to improve its foreign exchange reserves and to bridge the investment gap the country is currently experiencing. He said such investments are crucial to boost its agricultural and industrial production, which can lead to job creation, increased exports, and the generation of additional tax revenues. He said the agriculture sector has gained notable prominence among the sectors with significant potential for FDI and various factors, including the ongoing food crisis in the country, availability of uncultivated land spanning millions of acres, and cost-effective workforce.

Briefs

Motorcyclists advised to use safety helmets

DNA

RAWALPINDI: City Traffic Officer (CTO) Rawalpindi Tamoor Khan here on Thursday advised the bikers to use safety helmets to reduce severity of head injury in case of any road accidents. He informed that the government on the request of Traffic Police had increased helmet fine amount from Rs 200 to Rs 2000 across the province. The increase in helmet fine is not meant to collect revenue but to protect the lives of citizens, the CTO added. He asked the bikers to wear helmets not to avoid challan but to save life. During first 9 months of 2022, over 351 citizens lost their lives in road accidents across the province while in 2023, over 280 citizens died in traffic accidents. Motorcyclists were directly or indirectly affected in more than 50,000 accidents this year. This year, 71 precious lives were saved by the helmet enforcement campaign, the CTO informed. The CTP were ensuring the protection of the precious lives despite the increasing population and the sharp increase in vehicles and motorcycles on city roads, said Tamoor Khan. This year, strict action in accordance with the law was taken against more than two million bike riders for not using safety helmets across the province. Special campaigns were also launched to spread awareness regarding traffic rules, the CTO adding, all available resources would be utilized to make the lives of the citizens safe from road accidents. Zero tolerance policy would be adopted on major roads particularly on Mall Road and Peshawar Road, Tamoor Khan informed. The CTP by strict implementation of the traffic rules, succeeded to reduce road accidents on the roads, he added. He informed that Traffic Wardens had been directed to take strict action against the violators. The CTO said that wearing a helmet could save a driver's life in case of road accident.

Fed Railways secretary plans China visit

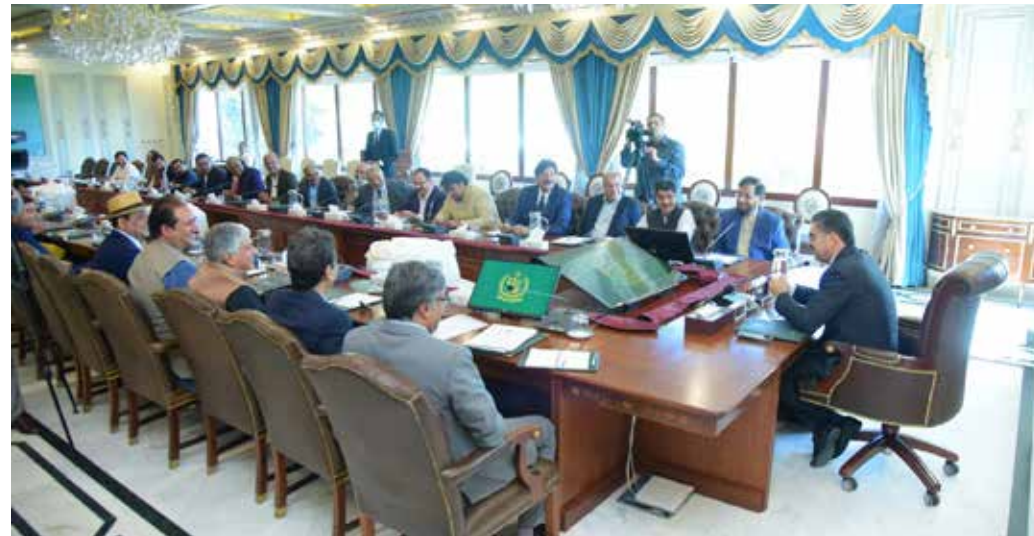
ISLAMABAD: Federal Railways Secretary Syed Mazhar Ali Shah chaired a meeting to prepare for an impending visit to China, focusing on the Belt and Road Forum (BRF). The primary objectives included promoting the ML-1 project and showcasing railway initiatives for potential investors. The overall preparations were assessed as satisfactory. Furthermore, additional significant railway projects will be presented to potential investors for execution. Among the notable projects are Gawadar connectivity, Quetta Taftan rail link upgrade, a new link connecting Quetta-Zhob and Dera Ismail Khan, the Dedicated Freight Corridor (DFC) between Karachi Port and Pipri, a fresh rail link between Kohat, Thal, and Kharlachi, solarization in the railways, and the development and commercialization of railway stations. The chair expressed contentment with the state of preparedness.—APP

PM for resolving issues of newspapers on priority

Talking to a delegation of Council of Pakistan Newspapers' Editors (CPNE) led by its president Irshad Arif here, the prime minister said the newspapers should play their role in promoting such an environment in which everybody should listen to the differences of opinions

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Caretaker Prime Minister Anwaar-ul-Haq Kakar on Thursday directed the ministry of Information and Broadcasting and the finance ministry to resolve all issues of newspapers on priority. Talking to a delegation of Council of Pakistan Newspapers' Editors (CPNE) led by its president Irshad Arif here, the prime minister said the newspapers should play their role in promoting such an environment in which everybody should listen to the differences of opinions. He said currently an organized propaganda campaign was being launched against the state. He said during his visit to the US, an organized campaign of false news and undue criticism was launched against him. He said he accompanied a very short delegation during his visit to the US where he effectively presented the Pakistan's case of climate change. The prime minister pointed out that he presented the cultural aspect of climate change to the world by referring to the holy Qur'an. With respect to smuggling of foreign currency, he



said strict measures were being taken to stop smuggling of dollars in the short term.

The rising value of the rupee against the dollar is a testament to the success of this campaign, he said adding that the Managing Director International Monetary Fund (IMF) had also appreciated the government's measures to stop smuggling of foreign currency. The

prime minister said the smuggling of petroleum products also continued to cause serious damage to the country's economy. Likewise, he said steps were being taken across the country to prevent power theft. He said Pakistan had billions of dollars of trade potential with Central Asian states, adding "I am trying my best to take such measures during the short period by which we can use out

trade's capacity." Speaking about his upcoming visit to China, PM Kakar informed that Pakistan-China strategic relations, bilateral trade, China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) and tourism promotion would be discussed during the visit. Similarly, he said plans to take full advantage of the potential of tourism in Gilgit-Baltistan would also be part of the discussions. He said the govern-

ment was making the process of privatization of loss-making state-owned enterprises (SOEs) fast and transparent as privatization of loss-making public institutions would reduce the loss to the country's exchequer. With the involvement of the private sector, the prime minister said positive business competition would increase and the best facilities would be available to the public. With respect to the Afghan refugees' issue, he said "Afghans are our brothers, and no one is sending back legally residing Afghan refugees". However, he made it clear that the illegal aliens were being deported and strict action would be taken against them after October 31. On Israel's recent aggression in Palestine, he said it was a war between oppressor Israel and oppressed Palestinians. "Pakistan stands side by side with the oppressed Palestinians until they achieve their right to self-determination and an independent Palestinian state," he added. Editors of national and regional newspapers from across the country participated in the meeting. Secretary Information, Principal Information Officer and relevant senior officials also attended the meeting.

CPEC not a debt trap or a roll booster for Pakistan

DNA

ISLAMABAD: "China's CPEC has dragged Pakistan into a quagmire of debt," recently, such a cliché has flooded with Western media discourse, one more time, making someone question this flagship project under the Belt and Road framework. Statistic from the newest KTrade Securities Limited (KASB) report showed that Pakistan's external public debt was recorded at USD 84.1 billion at end June 2023, according to report published by Gwadar Pro on Thursday. The report stated that External Debt to GDP ratio grew from 16.65 percent in FY17 to 26.02 percent by FY23, resulting in higher USD denominated debt burden. Objectively, the debt crisis in Pakistan could be attributed to many factors, including the Ukraine conflict, the United States Federal Reserve raising interest rates, as well as Pakistan's own economic problems. One of the primary reasons for Pakistan's external borrowing has been the necessity to bridge the trade deficit, import essential goods, and fund significant infrastructure projects. However, can CPEC be accused of being a "debt trap" for Pakistan? To assess debt sustainability of a country, the general benchmark for emerging countries is 70 percent for the debt to GDP ratio.

IRSA releases 112,100 cusecs water

ISLAMABAD: Indus River System Authority (IRSA) on Thursday released 112,100 cusecs water from various rim stations with inflow of 77,500 cusecs. According to the data released by IRSA, water level in River Indus at Tarbela Dam was 1529.45 feet and was 131.45 feet higher than its dead level of 1,398 feet. Water inflow and outflow in the dam was recorded as 40,300 cusecs and 45,000 cusecs respectively. The water level in River Jhelum at Mangla Dam was 1216.30 feet, which was 166.30 feet higher than its dead level of 1,050 feet. The inflow and outflow of water was recorded 10,100 cusecs and 40,000 cusecs respectively. The release of water at Kalabagh, Taunsa, Guddu and Sukkur was recorded as 47,300, 69,700, 58,400 and 19,700 cusecs respectively. Similarly, from River Kabul, a total of 8,900 cusecs of water released at Nowshera and 7,200 cusecs released from River Chenab at Marala.—APP

UNFPA and SoLF launch theatre performances

DNA

ISLAMABAD: United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), in collaboration with the School of Leadership Foundation (SoLF) has embarked on a mission to raise awareness and spark a discussion on social norms around reproductive health of young people, gender-based violence, child marriage and more, across Pakistan. Under the umbrella of the Hifazat campaign, initiated in 2022 to enhance reproductive health and wellbeing awareness through digital media, this groundbreaking project will bring the power of theater to the forefront to foster meaningful discus-

sions within communities across 10 districts in Pakistan.

Twenty impactful theater performances will be curated and executed by Theatre Wallay, a non-commercial group of dedicated artists passionate about theater and literature. To ensure a widespread reach across provinces, these performances will take place in Charsadda, Swabi, Swat (Khyber Pakhtunkhwa); Lasbela (Balochistan); Rawalpindi, Multan, and Bahawalpur (Punjab); as well as in Sukkur, Khairpur, and Larkana (Sindh).

Premiering in Rawalpindi, the performance was met with a resounding applause from the audience. One participant highlighted the importance of sensitizing

elders to these crucial issues. "This play should be performed for our elders as they need to learn how to discuss reproductive health and child marriage with their children. They need to understand that child marriage is detrimental and harmful," said Nasir Khan of the Anam Education Foundation. To encourage ongoing dialogue and deep reflection, post-performance discussions and awareness sessions will follow each theater performance. Through these interactive sessions, we aim to provide community members with the opportunity to share their perspectives, ask questions, and engage in further conversation to enhance their

understanding on key topics affecting us all.

"This play should be performed in rural communities in the far-flung areas of Gilgit-Baltistan, and Balochistan where these issues are prevalent", highlighted Shoab Ali, a young boy who attended the theater performance in Stars College, Rawalpindi.

This collaborative effort between UNFPA and SoLF underscores the significance of collective action in addressing societal challenges. By leveraging creative storytelling mediums like theater, this project is dedicated to spark conversation on vital topics and creating awareness within communities.

China creates opportunities for integrated development of Pakistan

ISLAMABAD: Gwadar Port is increasingly becoming a regional logistics hub, and China, creating opportunities for the integrated development of Pakistan and regional countries," said Zamir Ahmed Awan, Founding Chair of an Islamabad-based think tank, Global Silk Route Research Alliance. At the Gwadar deepwater port in southwest Pakistan, cargo loading and unloading are proceeding in an orderly manner, accompanied by the breeze of the Arabian Sea and the sound of sirens; on the Eastbay Expressway connected to the port, trucks are driving from this emerging port to all parts of the country; supporting airport and water supply projects have been completed or are about to be completed, according to a report carried by Gwadar Pro on Thursday. Being a core of CPEC, Gwadar deep seaport is poised to play a greater role in regional and global trade. From bulk cargo of agricultural products, to containerized goods such as fertilizers and livelihood supplies, to staple products such as liquefied petroleum gas, port stevedore Ahmed, was deeply moved, "Business volume has increased significantly since the beginning of this year. All of us are much busier than ever." Statistic from the newest KTrade Securities Limited (KASB) report showed that in the first half of this year, Gwadar Port completed container throughput of 1,162 TEUs and bulk cargo throughput of 506,800 tons. Apart from being a port itself, Gwadar connects China's western economic zones to the sea, such as Kashgar which is 4500km away from the Shanghai seaport but only 2033km from Gwadar, the KASB report mentioned. "About 60 percent of Chinese oil imports are from the Middle East and the opening of Gwadar port reduces the marine distance from 16000 km to 5000 km and the duration from 45 days to 10 days," the report added. Pakistan will benefit through this opportunity as it is estimated that CPEC would generate transit revenue of USD 70 billion per annum through Gwadar port. So far, the Gwadar Port Free Zone has been allocated 2,281 acres of land for infrastructural development. The first phase (60acres) of the project is completed. 46 enterprises have been registered in the Free Zone while 3 companies have started production. The report also involved as for transportation, the 19km long Eastbay Expressway was inaugurated on June 22, 2022, which has connected the Free Zone with the network of National Highways for smooth logistic transportation of import, export, and transit goods.—DNA

American Business Council Pakistan Welcomes US Consul General Tribble

KARACHI: The American Business Council Pakistan (ABC) hosted an exclusive welcome and CEO Roundtable session on "Diplomacy and Business Relations: US Support to Pakistan's Business and Economic Environment" for U.S. Consul General Conrad Tribble and his team in Karachi. The Executive Committee of ABC, along with about 20 CEOs and senior management of ABC's member companies, were in attendance. Mr. Jamshed Saffar, President of the American Business Council Pakistan, kicked off the event with a warm welcome address. "We are honored to host U.S. Consul General Conrad Tribble and his team. Their presence underscores the importance of strengthening ties between American businesses and U.S. Consulate Karachi. Today's session promises to be a catalyst for valuable



partnerships and shared opportunities." Following Mr. Saffar's remarks, U.S. Consul General Conrad Tribble spoke about the important relationship between the United States and Pakistan. "Pakistan is a key partner for the United States, and events like these provide us with a platform to connect, share perspectives, and explore avenues for mutual growth. I am excited to

engage with the American business community and look forward to building stronger bonds between our nations." The United States has been a leading investor in Pakistan for the past 20 years and is Pakistan's largest export market, with potential for further growth. In 2021, the United States imported nearly \$5.3 billion in Pakistani goods - more than

Pakistan's second and third largest countries of export combined. Overall, U.S.-Pakistan trade stood at over \$9 billion in 2022, up from \$6.8 billion in 2020. The highlight of the event was a dynamic question-and-answer session, affording ABC member companies a unique opportunity to engage directly with the Consul General and his team.—APP

Punjab revenue authority meeting takes place at RCCI

DNA

RAWALPINDI: The Rawalpindi Chamber of Commerce and Industry (RCCI) President Saqib Rafiq has said that lowering tax rates and a close partnership between Revenue Authority and Business Community can help the Government to achieve the revenue targets. Addressing the meeting of Punjab Revenue Authority (PRA) at chamber house, he urged for rationalizing the tax rates and added that chamber platform is available for awareness with respect to e-IMS, POS installation and Restaurant Invoice Monitoring System (RIMS). Commissioner PRA, Tahira Javed said that the PRA aims at providing maximum facilities to taxpayers. She appreciated RCCI role in providing a platform to address the grievances of traders and also welcomed the suggestions including incentivizing credit and debit payments, compliance, appeals, audit and social protection of taxpayers. Matters related to

the registration and show cause notices, withholding tax and compliance related issues came under discussion. PRA team team including Saaima Yunus Additional Commissioner, Arslan Tariq, Enforcement Officer, Afshan Nazeer, Enforcement Officer, Sobia

Anum, Enforcement Officer, Hira Rauf, Audit Officer, Adeel Ahsan, Audit Officer, visited Rawalpindi Chamber of Commerce and Industry (RCCI). President RCCI Mr. Saqib Rafiq, group leader Sohail Altaf, Senior Vice President Muhammad

Hamza Sarosh, Vice President Mr. Faisal Shahzad, Chairman Standing Committee PRA, Faraz Fazel, representatives of trade and restaurant associations and distinguished RCCI members were also present on the occasion.





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Fair, inclusive human rights governance needed

China secured its sixth term as a member of the Geneva-based United Nations Human Rights Council, defeating the machinations of some Western countries to sabotage its re-election to the UN body on Tuesday and becoming one of the most frequently elected members of the council since it was established in 2006 to replace the UN Commission on Human Rights. China was one of 15 states elected through secret ballot by the UN General Assembly for a three-year term starting from Jan 1, 2024. The other four re-elected members are Cote d'Ivoire, Cuba, France and Malawi. About one-third of the council's 47 members are replaced every year to ensure they serve staggered three-year terms so other members get a chance to be elected to the UN body. China's re-election reflects the international community's recognition of not only its achievements in protecting and promoting human rights at home but also its contribution to improving global human rights governance. And now that it has been re-elected to the council, it can help transform its vision into reality through concrete actions. That those anti-China elements and self-proclaimed champions of human rights are also trying to use human rights as a tool to fulfill their narrow ends could not be a coincidence. It is they that use human rights issues as a ploy to interfere in other countries' internal affairs and smear their governments. It is they that claim to protect human rights, while actually creating humanitarian crises and using them as an excuse to overthrow foreign governments and install puppet governments that would dance to their tune. The "color revolutions" instigated by the United States in the Middle East, North Africa and Central Asia over the past decade are apt examples. To reach a consensus in a divided world, it is necessary to set aside biases, and respect each other. One country imposing its values on others will only increase instability and harm the cause of human rights. As China advocates, how human rights should be protected and improved in different countries should not be determined by just using the Western yardstick, for human rights concepts and practices differ from country to country. In particular, human rights concepts are different for the Global North and the Global South, because their needs, demands and national conditions are different. It is therefore important to seek common ground while respecting the differences, and accept that different countries and regions can choose a path to human rights development that best suits their national conditions. Although China's concept of human rights is starkly different from the West's, it remains committed to taking concrete actions, rather than indulging in empty talk, to make global human rights governance fairer and truly inclusive.



Sino-EU partnership flourishes, focus on growth

In what is seen as a bid to enhance mutual trust between China and the European Union and stabilize China-EU ties, EU foreign policy chief Josep Borrell is leading a delegation on a three-day visit to China. During those three days, the delegation will attend the 12th round of the China-EU High-level Strategic Dialogue. Indeed, the rapidly changing global geopolitical landscape, coupled with an array of high-stake challenges facing the world, has made it increasingly difficult for Beijing and Brussels to steer their relations through choppy waters. Yet, as close economic partners and important players on the global stage, the two sides are clear about the mutual need to foster a steady relationship. Borrell's visit, however, is only part of the two sides' efforts to improve ties and enhance mutual understanding. Chinese and EU leaders have held frequent talks since the beginning of this year in order to stabilize their relationship. In fact, the two sides just concluded the 10th High-level Economic and Trade Dialogue in Beijing. They are expected to prepare for the China-EU Summit during Borrell's visit. All these positive developments will continue to intensify interaction, help bridge the differences, and expand cooperation between them. For China-EU ties to stabilize and gain vitality, however, much more needs to be done by the EU side, not least because "de-risking" has become an over-riding policy choice for the bloc to navigate its trade and economic ties with China. The EU has already imposed punitive tariffs on 20 Chinese steel and stainless steel products, and set import quotas for them. Now it is mulling launching anti-subsidy investigation into Chinese steel producers and electric vehicle makers. These measures, unnecessary and ill-intentioned, have prompted Beijing to conclude that the EU's "de-risking" policy is actually "de-coupling" by another name. China has repeatedly opposed the West's "de-risking" rhetoric as it reflects the zero-sum game mentality, which is at odds with the trend of the times. In today's globalized world, "de-risking" will only create more risks for the world and lead to lose-lose outcomes. The EU apparently needs to develop a more objective and impartial view about China's development, as China-EU cooperation, resilience of the Chinese economy and the EU's urgent need to shore up its sluggish economy all indicate the two sides have everything to gain from deepening cooperation, and everything to lose from "de-risking". Hopefully, Borrell's visit will help Brussels adopt a more pragmatic and cooperative attitude toward its relationship with Beijing, and allow the two sides to instill more confidence in both parties, and work together to address regional and global issues such as the Ukraine crisis and the sudden eruption of fighting in the Middle East.

How can PTI become relevant again???

Qamar Bashir



The ongoing struggle between PTI and the Army became evident through a PTI-sponsored survey indicating strong public support for Imran Khan, with a 61% positive opinion. Regionally, 29% from Punjab, 28% from Sindh, and 14% from KP had a favorable view of Imran Khan. However, 37% expressed a negative opinion. Notably, Nawaz Sharif and Bilawal Bhutto also garnered far less public support, with 36% having a positive opinion of both. Shehbaz Sharif, on the other hand, faced a 65% negative rating, with only 32% expressing a positive opinion. In my official capacity, I had close associations with both PTI and PML(N) leadership during their respective times in government

In the context of PTI's relevance to the elections and to the politics of the country, the challenge lies in PTI's current confrontational stance towards the powerful Army, which plays a significant role in Pakistan's politics. PTI is perceived as actively seeking favor from the public and institutions to establish its superiority over army and its leadership by cultivating its retired and serving officers and by maligning, weakening and discrediting the army as an institution and its leaders. Whereas, the army as an institution has decided to vehemently frustrate all such efforts by all means at its disposal and at all costs. The ongoing struggle between PTI and the Army became evident through a PTI-sponsored survey indicating strong public support for Imran Khan, with a 61% positive opinion. Regionally, 29% from Punjab, 28% from Sindh, and 14% from KP had a favorable view of Imran Khan. However, 37% expressed a negative opinion. Notably, Nawaz Sharif and Bilawal Bhutto also garnered far less public support, with 36% having a positive opinion of both. Shehbaz Sharif, on the other hand, faced a 65% negative rating, with only 32% expressing a positive opinion. In my official capacity, I had close associations with both PTI and PML(N) leadership during their respective times in government. It's common for the party in power to conduct surveys to boost their ratings, often through friendly agencies. As a counter strategy, the parties in opposition conduct counter surveys to validate their higher rating and prove the earlier survey as biased. However, this time around neither the PML(N) nor PPP conducted the counter surveys, but intriguingly the army did. The Army conducted its own survey, titled "National Public Opinion Poll Report," which received an impressive 88% rating. This survey, conducted between June 10 and June 30, gathered responses from 3,500 participants across all four provinces of Pakistan. Some critics argued that assessing the Army's popularity was unnecessary, as such surveys traditionally focus on public figures rather than the military. However, it's worth noting that similar surveys are commonplace in advanced democracies, including the UK and the USA. For instance, the Pew Research Center conducted a survey in 2018, revealing that the military is the most trusted institution in the United States, with 72% of Americans expressing a great deal of trust and confidence in it. Similarly, a 2022 YouGov Survey found that 62% of Britons have a favorable view of the British Army, while only 16% held an unfavorable view. The significance of the two surveys conducted in Pakistan lies in their timing, reflecting a prevailing perception that PTI and the Army were engaged in a contest for gaining popularity against each other. This perception, whether rightly or wrongly held, carries profound and far-reaching consequences. In national discourse, it's not uncommon for political parties to compete with each other. However, when the perception arises that a political party is competing for popularity against the country's most sensitive and critical institution, and vice versa, it raises serious and troubling concerns. The stark reality is that the Army, as the most powerful institution, has historically held control over political, economic, and financial discipline in Pakistan. It often remains neutral while vigilantly monitoring the direction each aspect of discipline takes. It has established upper and lower limits of tolerance or acceptable behavior, and when any of these boundaries are breached, it intervenes to bring them back within acceptable bounds. Seasoned and tra-

ditional political parties have learned these limits and, no matter the circumstances, strive to operate within the established norms. However, PTI, being relatively new to the political landscape and facing the formidable influence of the establishment for the first time, miscalculated the extent of support it could muster through street protests and massive public backing to challenge the Army's overarching role in national politics. If the PTI had previously encountered the establishment's "smart power" with full force, it might have refrained from exceeding the established limits of tolerance. PTI, along with its public supporters and alleged involvement of retired and serving army officers, had underestimated the extent to which the Army would take action against them, particularly after the disturbing, violent, and unlawful events of May 9. The Army employed a meticulously coordinated combination of kinetic and soft power to effectively remove PTI from the national discourse. It utilized its coercive power to silence PTI's chairman and leaders, preventing them from conveying the party's perspective through national media. High-profile PTI figures and supporters were apprehended, effectively muting their presence in national discussions. It employed fear mongering tactics to dissuade public support for Khan and PTI. This included arbitrary arrests and detentions, often incommunicado for extended periods. Detainees suspected of involvement in attacks faced alleged torture and ill-treatment. Allegedly, families of detainees were threatened with reprisals if they didn't confess to their alleged involvement. Concurrently, a highly successful strategic communication campaign was launched to undermine PTI and its leadership. It leaked stories to the media while disseminating propaganda and information about Imran Khan and PTI. Released footage showcasing violence involving PTI workers clashing with the police and damaging property was employed to shape public opinion. Journalists were briefed on the violence, and provided with its own version of events to sway the narrative. Engaged with political parties, civil society, and community leaders to discourage support for mass protests, while cautioning the public against participating in protests with threats of consequences. It employed sophisticated technique of narrative framing consistently negative and unfavorable towards Imran Khan and PTI. For instance, Khan was portrayed as a divisive and dangerous figure. Techniques such as priming were employed, repeatedly accusing Khan of corruption and incompetence. A repetition of negative messages about Khan and PTI was used to create an adverse public image. A bandwagon effect was created, giving the impression that the majority of the public opposed Khan and PTI, with claims that most supported the military establishment and the government. Most likely the PTI leadership and its advisors did not have any idea to face such a massive, sophisticated combination of hard and soft power. But so far the PTI leadership has not learnt the crucial lesson and is continuing to directly confront the army leadership or the institution itself which is a highly risky and perilous undertaking. It is not ready to learn the bitter lesson that the army had a history of successfully achieving its objectives, often reducing opposing parties to insignificance, regardless of their popularity or public approval

ratings. Despite enduring significant trials and retribution, PTI seemingly failed to grasp this lesson. Recent social media posts from PTI leaders who have evaded the law and their supporters openly challenging the army's authority are unwise and provocative. Such confrontational behavior provides the army with justification to respond assertively and decisively. This confrontational stance likely accelerates the use of smart power against the PTI, further diminishing its prospects for a fair and equitable contest in the upcoming elections. PTI should change its posture sooner the better from its belligerent relationship with the powerful armed forces and should actively seek avenues for constructive and open dialogue with the military leadership. This dialogue should aim to understand the concerns and goals of the armed forces. PTI must maintain transparency about its intentions, policies, and objectives, addressing any misconceptions held by the military. Finding common areas of interest and collaboration for the betterment of the nation is crucial. Respecting the constitutional framework and ensuring that the party's actions align with the laws governing the military's role is imperative. In cases of specific grievances or conflicts, engaging in conflict resolution processes such as mediation or negotiation to reach mutually acceptable solutions is a wise approach. Building trust over time through consistent, responsible actions and a commitment to conflict resolution is a fundamental step. Above all, the PTI should avoid any actions or statements that may provoke the armed forces or create unnecessary tensions. Simultaneously, it should change its posture towards other political parties. Rather condemning them of corruption and refusing to engage with them for national construction efforts, it should work on building a consensus with them through collaboration and dialogue which can lead to a more stable political environment. It should prioritize good governance, addressing economic and social issues effectively, and plans of action to fundamentally improve the public service delivery to the people in all sectors and disciplines. It should fundamentally change its narrative from negativity against the army and political parties to positivity through policies and actions that resonate with the population, addressing their concerns and needs while maintaining transparency in its actions and decisions to build trust with the public and institutions. Above all, PTI needs to strike a balance between pursuing its political agenda and collaborating with key institutions to ensure stability and progress in Pakistan's political landscape. It's anticipated that with such concrete, honest, and conviction-driven actions, a change of hearts within the establishment may occur. Deep down, they also recognize that excluding a major political party from participation could significantly compromise the credibility of elections. In democratic systems, it's crucial for elections to be inclusive and allow fair competition among various political parties. The exclusion of a major party could be perceived as undemocratic, raising concerns about the legitimacy and fairness of the election. Perhaps the establishment is waiting for the right signals and movements from PTI to allow PTI's leadership and the party to launch an election campaign against other political parties rather than against the military.

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

Israel-Palestine conflict and Gulf States approach

Dr. Muhammad Akram Zaheer



They are torn between their budding relationships with Israel, their concerns about Iranian influence in the region and the mounting international pressure to support the Palestinian cause. The Gulf Arab states have, in recent years, taken significant steps towards establishing ties

The delicate and intricate geopolitics of the Middle East have been a source of global concern for decades and the recent conflict in the region underscores the complex web of alliances, rivalries and interests at play. In the midst of these complexities, the Gulf Arab states, particularly Saudi Arabia, find themselves in a challenging position. They are torn between their budding relationships with Israel, their concerns about Iranian influence in the region and the mounting international pressure to support the Palestinian cause. The Gulf Arab states have, in recent years, taken significant steps towards establishing ties with Israel, exemplified by the Abraham Accords. These agreements signaled a shift in the traditionally frosty relationship between Arab nations and Israel. They were motivated, in part, by a shared interest in countering Iran's expanding influence in the region. As Iran continued to support groups and promote instability, particularly through its backing of organizations like Hamas, the Gulf countries sought to align themselves with a more moderate and technologically advanced partner in Israel. They believed that closer ties with Israel could enhance their security, trade and cooperation with the United States, ultimately making their region more stable. However, the recent violence in the Gaza Strip, triggered by the conflict between Hamas and the Israeli government, has complicated this dynamic. The Gulf states have found themselves in a precarious position. On one hand, they are reluctant to overtly support Israel's actions in Gaza, which they perceive as detrimental to the Palestinian people and as a factor contributing to regional instability. On the other hand, they are equally hesitant to break their burgeoning ties with Israel, which they view as pivotal for their security and economic interests. The Gulf countries, especially Saudi Arabia, have refrained from taking a definitive stance on the ongoing crisis. They

are essentially walking a tightrope, neither fully endorsing the Israeli government's actions nor disavowing their newfound relationships with Israel. Their silence reflects their unwillingness to directly back Israel in a manner that could alienate their Arab and Muslim populations, who remain deeply sympathetic to the Palestinian cause. One of the primary reasons for the Gulf states' hesitancy to align more overtly with Israel lies in their concerns about public opinion. As the Israeli government, led by Benjamin Netanyahu, has pursued policies deemed aggressive and unfavorable by a significant portion of the Arab world, including violent actions against Palestinians and hostile rhetoric towards Arabs, public sentiment has grown increasingly hostile towards Israel. The Gulf nations are not oblivious to this groundswell of anger among their populations and consequently do not wish to be seen as implicitly endorsing such actions. Furthermore, the Gulf Arab states are frustrated with the perceived inaction of their own leadership and Western countries in holding Israeli leaders accountable for their actions. The sense of injustice is palpable among their populations and they expect their governments to advocate for Palestinian rights and interests. Despite these challenges, there is a subtle shift in the Gulf Arab states' disposition towards the Palestinian issue. They are, to some extent, signaling their support for the Palestinian people and their legitimate aspirations. This approach helps them maintain a degree of credibility among their populations and demonstrates a willingness to engage with the broader Arab and Muslim world. However, at the same time, the Gulf States are deeply concerned about the role of Iran in the ongoing conflict. Iran's support for Hamas was once connected to the Muslim Brotherhood and is now closely aligned with Iran, poses a significant threat to the stability of the region. For the Gulf Arab nations, who have their own

long-standing rivalries with Iran, this is a cause for alarm. They recognize that escalating tensions with Iran could jeopardize their own national security and the economic growth they have worked hard to achieve. Disrupting the delicate balance between their relationships with Israel and their regional interests is not a risk they are willing to take lightly. The Gulf Arab states are, therefore, advocating for a pragmatic and measured approach. They are likely to maintain their silence on the Israeli-Palestinian conflict for the time being, neither condemning nor fully endorsing any party involved. They are cautious about taking sides; as such a stance could disrupt their carefully cultivated relationships and exacerbate regional tensions. The Biden administration's role in this delicate equation should not be underestimated. The United States, while committed to supporting Israel's right to defend itself, also recognizes the need for a lasting and just solution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. The Biden administration will likely engage in diplomatic efforts to encourage the Gulf States to support Israel's position, emphasizing the importance of countering terrorism and instability in the region. The Gulf Arab states, particularly Saudi Arabia, find themselves in a challenging predicament. They are committed to maintaining their growing relationships with Israel, while also being mindful of the political and public sentiment that is increasingly critical of Israeli actions in the Palestinian territories. Simultaneously, they are wary of the Iranian factor and the consequences of a more pronounced rift in the region. These countries will continue to tread cautiously, hoping for a swift resolution to the conflict and an Israeli response that minimizes harm to innocent Palestinians. The Gulf Arab states are undoubtedly aware that they must navigate this complex landscape with finesse to safeguard their strategic interests and maintain regional stability.

Briefs

Nawaz to face law upon...

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He said the caretaker government in collaboration with the Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) was in the process of finalising required measures. Country seeing reversal of dollar for first time on Pakistan's economic stability, PM Kakar said the country for the first time witnessed a reversal of the value of the dollar with a consistent descent of about Rs 40-45. He said the continuation of the Special Investment Facilitation Council (SFIC) would lead to sustainability. He dismissed the impression that the army had taken over the mining sector on the SFIC platform. "The army's role is a stop-gap arrangement to run the matters and at SFIC, it is providing impetus in the facilitation process," he said. "Pakistan not recognising Israel" Asked about any possibility of recognition of Israel, PM Kakar said, "There are no such deliberations going on."

Babar advocates...

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Furthermore, Babar pointed out the critical concerns related to the participation of minorities and the manipulation of election results through social media, particularly by state institutions. He called for a serious discussion on separating the voting list from the National Database and Registration Authority (NADRA) database since NADRA data is security-driven and CNICs (Computerized National Identity Cards) are based on citizens' requests. Meanwhile, ShoaibShaheen from the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) addressed pressing issues related to missing persons and the party's political workers, underscoring the diminishing trust and faith in the system.

Pakistan condemns...

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has condemned Israel over the aggression. She said Pakistan is a member of the Organisation of Islamic Cooperation (OIC), and a special meeting is also underway to discuss the ongoing conflict in Palestine. Referring to the expulsion directives for illegal aliens, the FO spokesperson said from from November 1 onwards, illegal migrants will be dealt with under Pakistani immigration laws. Adding more, she said the move from the Afghan government to expedite action against outlawed organisations will always be welcomed. During the briefing, she also touched upon the issue of Zainab Abbas, a Pakistani cricket presenter. Baloch said that it is India's responsibility to provide security and a favorable environment to the Pakistani cricket team as a host country for ICC World Cup 2023.

MBS, Raisi speak first...

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attack by Palestinian Hamas militants in Israel. Raisi and the Saudi crown prince discussed the "need to end war crimes against Palestine," Iranian state media said. The Saudi crown prince, for his part, "affirmed that the Kingdom is making all possible efforts in communicating with all international and regional parties to stop the ongoing escalation," Saudi state news agency SPA said. He also reiterated Saudi Arabia's rejection of targeting civilians in any way, SPA added. Saudi Arabia and Iran agreed to resume ties in March under a deal negotiated by China after seven years of hostility, which had threatened stability and security in the Gulf and helped fuel conflicts in the Middle East, from Yemen to Syria. Asked about Raisi's call with the crown prince, a senior U.S. State Department official said Washington, which staunchly backs Israel in its fight against Hamas, was in "constant contact with Saudi leaders". Saudi Arabia and Iran agreed to resume ties in March under a deal negotiated by China after seven years of hostility, which had threatened stability and security in the Gulf and helped fuel conflicts in the Middle East, from Yemen to Syria.

Zhengzhou Open 2023

Jabeur's roller coaster journey to Zhengzhou quarters

World number seven Ons Jabeur defied a bad knee on Thursday to finally defeat Italian Lucia Bronzetti 6-3, 7-6 (7/5) and reach the quarter-finals of the Zhengzhou Open

SPORTS DESK

SHANGHAI: World number seven Ons Jabeur defied a bad knee on Thursday to finally defeat Italian Lucia Bronzetti 6-3, 7-6 (7/5) and reach the quarter-finals of the Zhengzhou Open.

Playing with her right knee taped, the Tunisian three-time Grand Slam finalist failed to serve out the victory on three occasions and needed five match points to move past the 63rd-ranked Italian in just under two hours. A champion in Ningbo two weeks ago, Jabeur will next face eighth seed Daria Kasatkina, who beat home player Bai Zhuoxuan 6-2, 6-4. "It was a tough finish obviously, she's a great player, such a fighter," said the 29-year-old Jabeur. "So, I'm glad that I got to finish in two (sets). It would have been a different story if it was three sets. We will learn a lot from this match. "I tried to do my best, it's the end of the season and it's very, very tough with the knee. Today it wasn't 100 per-



cent." A seesaw opening set saw a combined five breaks of serve but it was Jabeur who carved out a 5-2 gap and the Tunisian took

a one-set lead after 45 minutes. The fourth seed earned a double-break lead in the second set and looked on track for a smooth

victory when she served for the match at 5-2. But Bronzetti had other ideas and snatched the next three games, breaking Jabeur

twice to level the frame for five-all, saving a match point along the way. Jabeur stopped the bleeding as she used her signature drop shot to maximum effect to break Bronzetti and put herself in position to serve for the win for a third time. Still the North African could not close as Bronzetti saved three more match points and broke serve on a Jabeur double fault to take the set into a tiebreak. Jabeur finally closed out the 74-minute second set, and the contest, on her fifth match point. Kasatkina also had to overcome a second-set fightback from her opponent and needed four match points before she completed a 90-minute victory over 117th-ranked Bai. The 26-year-old Russian has lost her last five matches to Jabeur. "Ons is an amazing player, she's creative on the court and you never know what to expect from her," said Kasatkina.

Germany's Laura Siegemund upset 11th seed and recent Beijing runner-up Liudmila Samsonova 3-6, 6-2, 6-1 to book a quarter-final against Italian Jasmine Paolini.

McGregor returns, USADA splits with UFC

COLORADO SPRINGS, Colo: Former UFC champion Conor McGregor's return to action helped trigger a split between the league and the US Anti-Doping Agency, which has been testing the league's mixed-martial arts fighters for the past eight years.

McGregor announced on social media this week that he is returning to the USA-DA testing pool — a step the 35-year-old fighter must take before returning to the octagon for the first time since suffering a leg injury in July 2021. McGregor was expected to fight Michael Chandler in December, though the timing of their meeting has been in flux because of the testing rules. USADA requires any athlete who has been out of action to submit to six months' of test-



ing and provide at least two negative tests before returning. In a statement Wednesday, USADA CEO Travis Tygart said the agency had been "clear and firm"

about those requirements applying to McGregor, who during the summer went on social media and said that because of the testing rules "I feel like I'm being kept

from my livelihood, and I've been feeling this for years." "Unfortunately, we do not currently know whether the UFC will ultimately honor the six-month or longer requirement because, as of January 1, 2024, USADA will no longer be involved with the UFC Anti-Doping Program," Tygart said. "Despite a positive and productive meeting about a contract renewal in May 2023, the UFC did an about-face and informed USADA on Oct. 9 that it was going in a different direction." The Associated Press sent an email to a UFC spokesman that was not immediately returned. The bulk of USADA's work involves Olympic sports. When it partnered with UFC in 2015, it marked the agency's first deal with a US professional sport.—Agencies

SL U19 team lands in Pak for multi-format tour

KARACHI: Sri Lanka U19 squad on Thursday, landed here to feature in one four-day and five one-day matches against Pakistan U19. The touring side received a warm welcome upon their arrival here and was presented with traditional souvenirs before being taken to a local hotel under tight security. All six matches will be played in Karachi's National Bank Stadium from 15 to 31 October. The tour will begin with the four-day game from 15 October which will start at 1000 PKT. The five one-day matches will be played between 22 to 31 October, where the first ball will be bowled at 0930 PKT. As per the ICC's eligibility criteria for the ICC U19 Cricket World Cup 2024, players born on or after 1 September 2004 will be eligible to get selected. This will be the Pakistan U19 team's second bilateral series this year. In April, Pakistan U19 toured Bangladesh and featured in a series consisting of one four-day, five one-dayers and one T20. Pakistan U19 won all the three-format series, which included winning the five-match one-day series by 4-1. Last year in November, Bangladesh U19 toured Pakistan and played one four-day, three one-dayers and two T20 match series in Multan. Usman Wahla, PCB Director - International Cricket: "We are delighted to welcome the Sri Lanka U19 team to Pakistan for this exciting bilateral series. The series will provide an excellent platform for young talent to showcase their skills and gain an invaluable experience ahead of next year's ICC U19 World Cup.—DNA

Female fighters demand equal treatment, 12 rounds

LONDON: Women boxers should have the choice of 12-round title fights like men, undisputed featherweight world champion Amanda Serrano, along with two dozen other current and former female fighters said in a statement on Tuesday. Women's championship fights are typically scheduled for no more than 10 rounds with each round lasting two minutes. Serrano plans to fight 12 rounds at three minutes each for her unified title fight against Danila Ramos later this month in Orlando, Florida, a move that Most Valuable Promotions (MVP) said was supported by the WBO, WBA, and IBF. The Puerto Rican's fight is an outlier, however, and will be the first women's unified championship fight to be fought under the same rules as the men, according to Sky Sports. "We stand together with the desire and dedication to have the CHOICE to perform on the same stage, with the same rules, as men in professional boxing," the fighters' statement read. "We have earned the CHOICE of 3 minute rounds, with 12 rounds for championship fights to demonstrate our skill and greatness."—APP

Messi uncertain for Argentina Paraguay WC qualifier

BERLIN : Lionel Messi, the famous soccer player, may not be able to play in Argentina's big World Cup qualifier game against Paraguay. This is because he got hurt while playing for his club in the United States. Even though he looked good while practicing, his coach, Lionel Scaloni, isn't sure if he's ready to play. Messi has only played for a very short time in recent matches due to his injuries. He played just 37 minutes since September 3, which is not much at all. The coach said they need



to see how Messi feels after one more training session. They also have to

think about the next game against Peru, which is just five days after the Paraguay match. It's important to make sure Messi is fully fit and won't get hurt again. If Messi can't play, the coach might start with two other good players, Julian Alvarez from Manchester City and Lautaro Martinez from Inter Milan. They've played together before and could do well. Argentina has done well in the qualifiers, winning both of their games so far. They are tied with Brazil at the top of the table, each having six points.

In another game, Brazil is going to play against Venezuela. Brazil is taking this match seriously and won't underestimate Venezuela, even though they're not the favorites. Brazil's coach is new, and the team is still getting used to his style of play. They are working hard to adapt quickly. Other matches happening on Thursday include Colombia against Uruguay, Bolivia against Ecuador, and Peru against Chile. It's an exciting time for soccer fans as teams battle to qualify for the World Cup.— Agencies

Pakistan women's squad for Bangladesh tour unveiled

OUR CORRESPONDENTS

LAHORE: Pakistan national women's team's chief selector Saleem Jaffar today announced a 15-member squad for the Bangladesh tour scheduled to take place later this month. Nida Dar-led Pakistan women's squad will depart for Bangladesh on 20 October to feature in a six-match white-ball series which also includes three ODIs, part of the ICC Women's Championship 2022-25. The series itinerary will be announced in due course by the home board. The experienced Iram Javed stages a comeback to the national side after a gap of one year. The right-handed batter last played for Pakistan in the Commonwealth Games in Birmingham in 2022. Iram also featured for Super Women against Amazons in the three women's exhibition T20 matches earlier this year in Rawalpindi. Shawaal Zulfiqar and Syeda Aroob Shah have been excluded from the squad that played against South Africa last month in the white-ball series in Karachi, while Fatima Sana, who got injured in the second ODI against South Africa, is still in the process of recovering. Both Shawaal and Aroob are part of the 28 probable of the Pakistan women's emerging team taking part

in the training camp in Muridke. The emerging team will play a bilateral series and a triangular tournament involving West Indies and Thailand's emerging cricket teams later this month. Chief Selector Saleem Jaffar: "Our selection committee has carefully deliberated over the squad for the Bangladesh tour, aiming to strike the right balance between bat

and ball, as we believe this squad is well-equipped to face the challenges in Bangladesh. "Young Shawaal Zulfiqar has been omitted from the squad as she requires more grooming before representing again at the international level. The members of the selection committee have recalled experienced Iram Javed in the squad. Iram's presence

will undoubtedly strengthen our batting order in Bangladesh conditions. "Fatima Sana is on the road to recovery, and we are committed to giving her the time she needs to be fully prepared for the upcoming away series against New Zealand where the selection committee feels the right-arm fast bowler will be more productive." Meanwhile, the Pakistan

women's team will undergo a six-day camp at Ghani Institute for Cricket in DHA, Lahore from Saturday, 14 October before departing for Bangladesh via Dubai from Lahore in the wee hours of 20 October. The players besides taking part in practice sessions will feature in different match scenarios and will also play a 50-over practice match in the camp.



PTI to hold peaceful...

FORM PAGE 01
war crimes in Palestine. PTI would organize peaceful protests in all major cities of the country including Islamabad, Lahore, Karachi, Peshawar, Quetta, Muzaffarabad and Gilgit. The peaceful demonstrations would be held outside press clubs in all major cities after Friday prayers. As per the plan, the peaceful demonstration would be held in front of the National Press Club Islamabad at 3 pm and outside Peshawar Press Club at 4 pm. Similarly, the PTI would also protest in Gilgit-Baltistan at GhariBagh after Friday prayers. PTI appealed to the public across the country to fully participate in these protests to show solidarity and support with their beleaguered Palestinian brothers in this hour of need. Syria's state television said Israel launched attacks on the main airports in the capital Damascus and the northern city of Aleppo on Thursday.

'Don't give up, time...

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Talking about the bogus Cipher case, he stated that the bogus case was designed to protect former Army Chief General Bajwa and Donald Lu. "I was the elected Prime Minister of the country. Treason was committed against me and my government by General Bajwa, instead of investigating the foreign conspiracy in orchestrating a regime change, a case has been filed against me for informing the people of Pakistan, the real protectors of this country, about this treason," he added. "When I was illegally incarcerated in Attock Jail, the first few days were particularly challenging. I wasn't provided a bed and had to sleep on the floor and had insects and mosquitoes all over me. But with time I have adjusted well to the prison conditions."

Nawaz to deliver the...

FROM PAGE 01
she said, always pulled the country out of quagmire. She said her father saved Pakistan from internal and external challenges, and made Pakistan world's seventh and Islamic world's first atomic power. Sharif was intimidated and offered inducements, she said, but he did not compromise on country's defence and dignity. He it was who said the Pakistanis were a free people and they would remain free, she stressed. "We don't accept a life of bondage," said Maryam who added that it was Sharif's tradition to take stand for the just cause. The PML-N chief organiser said the embattled Pakistan needed Sharif at this juncture to put the house in order. He had the reputation of saving the country in the past, she reiterated.

SNGPL denies...

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social media is baseless, he stressed. The SNGPL is constantly working to ensure supply to consumers, the spokesman added. The statement comes in the wake of media reports that the government had completed its preparations to implement a substantial increase in gas tariffs. The proposed tariff hike, as revealed by official sources, is set to be one of the most significant in recent years -129% for domestic consumers. The Ministry of Energy was reported to have drafted a comprehensive working paper, outlining the planned tariff revisions, with the following key highlights: A staggering 136% increase for commercial customers 71% for export industry 117% for industrial users 144% in Compressed Natural Gas (CNG) tariff 25% increase for bulk consumers 193% for cement industry These tariff changes will not be implemented without official approval, and the Economic Coordination Committee (ECC) and the federal cabinet are expected to review and authorize the new rates. The implementation date has been set for October 1 for a nationwide rollout. It was also reportedly recommended that the tariff for protected domestic consumers and tandoor operations remain unchanged. Additionally, the government is contemplating raising fixed monthly charges for domestic users from a mere Rs10 to a more substantial Rs400.

Briefs

German police crackdown on illegal crossings

FORST: It's early morning when 30-year-old Syrian Adem Ahmed walks across a railway bridge that starts in Poland and ends in Germany. Moments later, he and 21 fellow Syrians are detained by German federal police, after the government stepped up border checks to combat a surge in illegal migrant crossings. "The smuggler who was supposed to drop them off in a lorry on German soil probably fled when he saw the police and left them on their own," said federal police spokesman Jens Schobranski. The dawn police operation witnessed by AFP took place in the border town of Forst this week, in Germany's former communist east. Berlin announced in early October it was increasing police checks along its borders with Poland and the Czech Republic to crack down on popular smuggling routes. A surge in arrivals in recent months, mainly from Syria and Afghanistan, has reignited a fierce immigration debate in Germany with local authorities saying they are overwhelmed by the number of asylum seekers. The influx has fuelled support for the far-right, anti-immigration Alternative for Germany (AfD) party, which made major gains in two regional elections this month. The number of people coming to Germany "is too high at the moment", Chancellor Olaf Scholz said recently, vowing to speed up the deportation of failed asylum seekers.—APP

Court to decide Italy PM's case against reporter Saviano

ROME :An Italian court is set to decide on Thursday on a defamation case pitting Prime Minister Giorgia Meloni against journalist Roberto Saviano, which he has characterised as a battle for free speech. The case relates to comments Saviano made back in December 2020, before the far-right Meloni took office, criticising her stance on migration and the charity ships that rescue migrants making the perilous journey across the Mediterranean from North Africa. It went to trial in November 2022, just weeks after she took office at the head of a hard-right coalition elected in part on a promise to end mass migration into Italy. "I am being prosecuted for the words I used to criticise the populist lies uttered against NGOs and migrants in recent years," Saviano wrote on Thursday on X, formerly known as Twitter. He previously said the judge "will have to establish whether or not it is possible to exercise the right of criticism" in Italy.—DNA

Japan revokes recognition of unification church

TOKYO :The Japanese government said Thursday it was seeking to strip official recognition from the Unification Church, the influential sect under intense scrutiny since the assassination of former prime minister Shinzo Abe. Prime Minister Fumio Kishida last year ordered a probe into the church after it emerged that Abe's alleged killer was motivated by resentment against the group. It has been accused of pressuring its followers into making hefty donations and blamed for child neglect among its members. If granted, the court dissolution order sought by the government would see the church lose its tax-exempt status, among other legal privileges, but still be allowed to continue its religious practices. "In view of the extensive damage caused, we find that it falls under the grounds for ordering dissolution as stated in the religious corporations law," Education Minister Masahito Moriyama told reporters after a panel of experts unanimously agreed with the decision. The church "forced a number of people to contribute donations and buy items ... in a way that restricted their free decision-making and sabotaged their sound judgement", he added.—Agencies



ISLAMABAD: Deserving people stand in long queue to take free food from van during lunch time outside Pakistan Institute of Medical Science in Federal Capital.—Online

Putin visits Kyrgyzstan amid international arrest warrant

Putin traveled to Kyrgyzstan Thursday on his first foreign visit since the International Criminal Court issued an arrest warrant for him in March

DNA

BISHKEK: Vladimir Putin traveled to Kyrgyzstan Thursday on his first foreign visit since the International Criminal Court issued an arrest warrant for him in March. President Putin is wanted by the court over the deportation of Ukrainian children. Its ruling requires members of the ICC, which does not include Kyrgyzstan, to make the arrest if he sets foot on their territory. Televised footage showed Putin greeting Kyrgyz counterpart Sadyr Japarov in the capital Bishkek for a summit of the Commonwealth of Independent States. "I would like to thank the president for the invitation. We have good reasons (to be here), but even without reasons this vis-

it is long overdue," Putin said in talks with Japarov. The long-time leader has rarely left Russia since launching the Ukraine offensive in February 2022. This year, he has traveled only to Russian-occupied parts of Ukraine, with his last foreign trips to Belarus and Kyrgyzstan last December — a far cry from the busy international schedule he had earlier in his rule. He is expected to travel to China next week. Moscow has likened the prospect of Putin being arrested abroad to an act of war, calling the warrant "illegal." In practice, however, it has taken precautions: in August, Russia sent Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov to a BRICS summit in ICC member South Africa, instead of Putin. While the full-scale Ukraine offensive made Putin a



persona non grata in the Western world, the ICC ruling virtually closed the door to a large part of the globe for him. The Rome Statute, a treaty requiring members to adhere to ICC rulings, has been ratified by 123 countries. The ruling caused a legal headache for ICC member South Africa, which hosted the BRICS summit

to which Putin was invited. In a last-minute decision, Moscow sent its foreign minister instead of Putin. "Why should I create some problems for our friends during an event?" Putin said this month, commenting on his absence from Johannesburg. "If I come, a political show will start," he added. Putin is wanted alongside his children's rights commissioner Maria Lvova-Belova for the war crime of allegedly unlawfully deporting thousands of Ukrainian children to Russia. Moscow rejects the allegations. The visit comes amid rifts among Russia's allies. Armenian leader Nikol Pashinyan will skip the summit attended by Putin, host country Kyrgyzstan announced two days before the event. Pashinyan had criticized Moscow for not inter-

vening when Azerbaijan launched a successful offensive to take over the breakaway Nagorno-Karabakh region last month. His snub came after Armenian lawmakers moved to join the ICC, angering Moscow and potentially limiting Putin's travel options further. Putin is planning to meet with the leader of Armenia's arch-foe, Azerbaijani president Ilham Aliyev. Ahead of Putin's trip, Kyrgyzstan said it had ratified an agreement for a common air defense system with Russia. Moscow has similar deals with other allied countries including Kazakhstan, Belarus and Tajikistan. But suspicion of Russia in parts of the region has grown since the conflict in Ukraine. None of the Central Asian countries supported Russia in a key UN vote on Ukraine last year.

Ukraine says 'holding ground' in frontline town under attack

KYIV: President Volodymyr Zelensky said Thursday Ukrainian forces were "holding our ground" in Avdiivka, after Moscow said it had improved its position in the frontline eastern town. The Donbas town is symbolically and strategically important to Kyiv and near the Russian-controlled city of Donetsk, seized by separatist forces in 2014. "Avdiivka. We are holding our ground," Zelensky said on social media, sharing pictures from the frontline town. "It is Ukrainian courage and unity that will determine how this war will end," he said. "Our defenders are courageously holding the defense: they have repelled more than 10 enemy attacks in the Avdiivka area," Andriy Kovalyev, spokesman of the General Staff of the Armed Forces of Ukraine, said in televised comments. Russia's defense ministry on Wednesday said its forces had improved their position close to Avdiivka, which had around 31,000 inhabitants before the war and is dominated by a huge coke plant. About 1,600 civilians remain, according to local authorities. Avdiivka's mayor, Vitaliy Barabash said on television: "We withstood everything, we held our positions, all the attacks were repulsed. In some places (we) even tried to counterattack." The mayor said the situation there was "very tense," calling it the "largest offensive" on Avdiivka since last year's full-scale invasion. "For the third day, the fighting around the town has not subsided, with shelling both on positions and on the town itself," the mayor said, adding that a missile attack hit the town overnight. The coke plant, currently mothballed, is "constantly under fire from rockets and artillery," Barabash said. Rybar, an influential pro-Russian Telegram channel that has good sources in the military, said Russian troops had captured an important slag heap north of the town. Rybar also said that Russian forces had entered the village of Stepove northwest of Avdiivka and that there was fighting there, while Ukraine said it had repelled attacks east of the village.

Engagement with Belarusian writers' union



DNA

MINSK: The Embassy of Pakistan in Minsk hosted an interactive session with the Members of the Union

of Writers of Belarus (poets, writers, translators and journalists) on 11 October 2023.

Ambassador Sajjad Haidar Khan highlighted Pakistan's interest in ex-

panding contacts with the literary community of Belarus and in this regard shared the Embassy's plans for the next six months. Guests were shown a documentary vid-

eo on Pakistan and were also offered to try select Pakistani cuisine. The Ambassador also presented a copy of the recently published book "Colors of Pakistan" to the guests.

IEA: limited risk of oil supply disruptions

PARIS :The International Energy Agency said on Thursday the risk of oil supply disruptions due to the conflict between Israel and Hamas is limited but that it stands ready to intervene in markets if necessary. The Paris-based agency, in addition to its analysis and advisory roles, coordinates the release of emergency stocks held by its 31 mostly advanced-economy member nations. A surprise weekend attack by Hamas on Israel has left thousands dead and rattled oil markets amid fears that other nations might intervene and possibly disrupt shipments in the Middle East. The region accounts for more than one-third of the world's seaborne oil shipments. "While the prospect that oil supply flows will be impacted currently remains limited, the deadly strikes prompted traders to price in a higher geopolitical risk premium," the IEA said in its regular monthly report. "There has been no direct impact on physical supply," it added.

But with supply and demand on the oil market currently tightly balanced, the IEA said it "stands ready to act if necessary to ensure markets remain adequately supplied".—Agencies

US auto strike expands with 8,700 more workers

WASHINGTON : An auto workers strike in the United States expanded with 8,700 more employees walking off their jobs, said the United Automobile Workers (UAW) union, as a deal with major automakers remained elusive. The staff at Ford's Kentucky Truck Plant in Louisville join some 25,000 other UAW members on strike against the "Big Three" companies — General Motors, Ford and Stellantis. The UAW launched a targeted strike on September 15 on GM, Ford and Stellantis, when a previous contract expired without a replacement. It called for stoppages at a handful of plants, while leaving most of the union's 146,000 US hourly auto workers on the job. But the latest move came "after Ford refused to make further movement in bargaining," the UAW said in a statement. In a separate statement, Ford called the latest strike decision "grossly irresponsible," saying it had put an "outstanding offer" on the table. The Kentucky plant produces Ford Super Duty pickup trucks, Ford Expeditions and Lincoln Navigators, and Ford added that the vehicles produced at the facility generate \$25 billion a year in revenue. Ford warned that the widened strike affects direct employees and work stoppage "will generate painful aftershocks," such as impacting other company operations and suppliers. While previous expansions of the strike took place at a deadline set in advance by the union, the UAW statement dubbed the latest measure a "surprise move".—APP

SA first seaplane company takes off

RIYADH: Red Sea Global on Wednesday launched Saudi Arabia's first seaplane company to transport guests to the Kingdom's Red Sea island resorts. Named Fly Red Sea, the company has an initial fleet of four Cessna Caravan 208 seaplanes, which will be flying on sustainable aviation fuel, RSG announced on its website www.redseaglobal.com. "Each aircraft can accommodate a pilot and up to six guests with luggage for guest transfers to water-based resorts, or up to nine guests for scenic tours across the entire destination," RSG said. "As a pilot myself, I was deeply invested in the efforts to build Fly Red Sea," said John Pagano, Group CEO of Red Sea Global, the multi-project developer behind the world's most ambitious regenerative tourism destinations, The Red Sea and Amaala. "Our goal was to create a company that would ... explore technologies to reduce the aviation industry's carbon footprint, and prioritize giving skilled.—APP

NATO ready to act on Baltic pipeline damage

FOREIGN DESK

HELSINKI: NATO will discuss damage to a gas pipeline and data cable running between member states Finland and Estonia, and will mount a "determined" response if a deliberate attack is proven, NATO Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg said on Wednesday. Damage to the Balticconnector pipeline and telecommunications cable was confirmed on Tuesday after one of the two pipeline operators, Finland's Gasgrid, noted a drop in pressure and possible leak on Sunday night during a storm. Helsinki, which is investigating, has said the damage was probably caused by "outside activity." That has stoked concern over regional energy security and pushed gas prices higher. "The important thing now is to establish what happened and how this could happen," Stoltenberg told reporters

in Brussels ahead of a meeting of the military alliance. "If it is proven to be a deliberate attack on NATO-critical infrastructure, then this will be, of course, serious, but it will also be met by a united and determined response from NATO." Finland's National Bureau of Investigation said "external marks" had been found on the seabed beside the damaged pipeline and that it was reviewing the movements of vessels in the area at the time of the rupture. "We are now focusing on the technical investigation of the pipe damage site and examining the seabed at the scene," bureau chief Robin Lardot told reporters on Wednesday. Risto Lohi, the bureau's chief investigator, told a news conference that anchor damage had not been ruled out, adding: "At the moment it looks like the damage was caused by mechanical force, not an explosion. The pipeline runs between Inkoo in Finland and Paldiski in Estonia

across the Gulf of Finland, part of the Baltic Sea which stretches eastward into Russian waters and ends at the port of St. Petersburg. NATO defense ministers will discuss the damage on Thursday when they gather for a second day of meetings in Brussels, Finnish defense minister Antti Hakkanen told reporters late on Wednesday. "We do know that the infrastructure is vulnerable and needs to be better protected," Hakkanen said. Balticconnector is jointly operated by Estonian electricity and gas system operator Elering and Finnish gas transmission system operator Gasgrid, which each own half of the pipeline. The operators said in a statement that planning and carrying out repairs to the pipeline would take at least five months, with gas transfers unlikely to resume before April. Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov described the incident as "disturbing" and told a regular news briefing that the September 2022 at-

tack on the Nord Stream pipelines that cross the Baltic Sea between Russia and Germany have set a dangerous precedent. Those larger gas pipelines were damaged by explosions that authorities have said were caused by sabotage. Henri Vanhanen, research fellow at the Finnish Institute for International Affairs, said the central issue was how NATO would react if there was evidence that a state actor was behind the new pipeline damage. "I think the big question in the long term is ... do we have a clear set of potential countermeasures for such (sabotage) activities? What is the deterrence?" he said. President Sauli Niinisto and other officials were briefed on Wednesday and preparedness levels raised at critical infrastructure facilities, the Finnish government said. Meanwhile, Norway and Lithuania moved to tighten security at onshore energy installations. Pipeline "pulled from one side" "It can clearly be seen

that these damages are caused by quite heavy force," Estonian Defense Minister Hanno Pevkur told Reuters, with possible causes including "mechanical impact or mechanical destruction." The pipeline and telecoms cable run in parallel at a "significant" distance from each other, according to the cable operator, Elisa. The two were damaged "within the same time frame" early on Sunday, Finnish investigators said, with the pipeline break believed to have been in Finnish waters while the cable breach was in Estonian waters. The pipeline, encased in concrete for protection, looks like "someone tore it on the side," Estonian Navy Commander Juri Saska told public broadcaster ERR. "The concrete has broken, or peeled off, specifically at that point of injury." The damage would not impact Finland's electricity system, grid operator Fingrid said. Gas accounts for 5 percent of Finland's energy needs.

Briefs

US SoS Blinken visits Israel

TEL AVIV: US Secretary of State Antony Blinken has arrived in Israel in a show of support after the weekend's deadly attacks by Hamas. Mr Blinken is expected to seek the release of hostages kidnapped by Hamas, some of whom are American. He will also urge restraint and seek safe passage for Gaza's civilians ahead of a possible Israeli ground offensive. At least 1,200 Israelis died in the attack, and over 1,100 Palestinians have died in air strikes on Gaza. Some 22 US citizens are also known to have died in Israel. Hamas, which is designated a terrorist organisation by the US, took up to 150 people hostage when its fighters breached the border fence in several places in the Gaza Strip on Saturday and launched the most serious cross-border attack Israel has faced in a generation. - Agencies

ECP issues list of 174 political parties

DNA
ISLAMABAD: The Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) on Thursday issued a list of 174 political parties, including the Istehkam-e-Pakistan Party (IPP), ahead of the general elections. In 2018, 154 political parties took part in the general elections. After 2018, 24 new political parties came into existence. The IPP had been placed on the 174th number in the ECP registration list. The Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) had been ranked in the 83rd position, while the Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) had been placed in the 90th position. The Jamaat-e-Islami (JI) had been placed on the 31st number, while the Jamiat Ulema-e-Islam Fazl (JUI-F) had been placed on the 34th number. The Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) had been listed in 100th place. The Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) registered on Thursday IPP. The electoral watchdog had issued a notification of the IPP's registration. On the occasion, IPP Spokesperson Firdous Ashiq Awan said: "On the ballot paper, the IPP's name and eagle's symbol will be published".

'Gaza is not garden, it will be very costly: Hamas

A Hamas leader has said that the group is prepared for any potential deployment of Israeli troops inside Gaza amid strong indications that Israel is preparing a ground offensive into the besieged enclave in response to Saturday's attack. "We are not afraid. We are a strong people. We have a strong determination to continue. We have a lot of fighters and a lot of people who want to support us," said Ghazi Hamad, a member of the Hamas political bureau. "Even people in the borders of Jordan, Lebanon and everywhere, they want to come here and fight for us. Gaza is not a garden and it will be very costly for them," Hamad warned. - Agencies

CPEC contributes to progress in Pak: KASB

EO of Freebird music Yahya Farid Khwaja also spoke on the occasion and shared his views about the project. He highlighted salient features of the project and termed it a significant initiative in terms of regional connectivity and integration



DNA
ISLAMABAD: "Generally, the Chinese side has always wanted that Pakistan must grow and must develop using the advantage of China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC). It would become a new engine for the economic development of Pakistan," Chairman of KASB Group, Nasir Ali Shah Bukhari, said on Thursday, according to Gwadar Pro. Speaking at the event "10 Years of Belt and Road Initiative - CPEC" held in Serena Hotel, Islamabad, Nasir said that CPEC was launched as a game-changer project in Pakistan, and it changed the livelihoods of millions of people in the country. "Energy, transportation infrastructure and power projects such as Gwadar port, Gwadar East-Bay Expressway and Sahiwal Power Plant have laid a solid foundation for Pa-

kistan's economic development," he added. Since its inception, CPEC has opened doors for economic and social welfare in Pakistan. This has been achieved through the creation of jobs, exchange of personnel, poverty alleviation, and various relief projects. These findings were revealed in a report by Pakistan's stock brokerage and corporate advisory firm, KASB KTrade Securities, during the event. According to the report, CPEC has signif-

icantly contributed to Pakistan's economy by boosting the development of industries such as energy, infrastructure, agriculture, and textiles. During the seminar, Fawad Hasan Fawad, Federal Minister for Privatisation of Pakistan, delivered a keynote speech. He said that learning takes place across various platforms under CPEC. "Starting to develop a global vision, which is a hallmark of Chinese thinking in every sphere of life. They also look at it in terms of all possible futuristic potential that it can offer. That is one singular reason for Chinese success, which is so remarkable and provides us an opportunity at that point in time to learn from them," added Fawad. Ex CPEC Head Hassan Daud But also addressed the event. He dismissed rumors related to CPEC and said that the decade-long CPEC has contributed to the sustainable development and growth of Pakistan. CPEC is now entering a new stage of high-quality development, expanding cooperation in science and technology, agriculture and people's livelihood. CEO of Freebird music Yahya Farid Khwaja also spoke on the occasion and shared his views about the project. He highlighted salient features of the project and termed it a significant initiative in terms of regional connectivity and integration. In the panel discussion session, guests including Tahir Aslam, MD of Fongrow, Ali Majid, General Manager of Pakistani Division, LONGI, and Sufian Ahmad Ch, Head of Marketing, Xiaomi Pak, shared ideas on topics such as agriculture, energy and Information Technology.

Foreign journalists visit churches in Jaranwala

ISLAMABAD: A group of journalists from foreign media outlets on Thursday visited the churches in Jaranwala to see the restoration work after they were burnt down during the mob violence. Multiple churches were set on fire in August, which triggered strong condemnation from the country's political and religious parties. The journalists from leading media outlets including AFP, BBC, Washington Post, Russia Today, DPA (Germany), La Croix (France), Anadolu (Turkey), NHK (Japan), and Arab News took a tour of the churches. They also interacted with the bishops and the local Christian community to get feedback on the restoration of churches. The visit was organized by the government of Pakistan to provide the international media with an opportunity for first-hand information about the restoration of churches. The restoration of churches is part of Pakistan's commitment to ensure the rights of religious minorities with the liberty to practice their faith in accordance with the country's constitution. - DNA

Pakistan, Qatar vow to enhance defense, security cooperation



STAFF REPORT
RAWALPINDI: Lieutenant General (Pilot) Salem Hamad Eqail Al-Nabet, Chief of Staff of Qatar Armed Forces called on General Syed Asim Munir,

NI (M), COAS at GHQ, today. During the meeting matters of mutual & professional interest and regional security situation were discussed. COAS said that Pakistan values its brotherly relations with Qatar and Pakistan Army also looks forward for enhanced

defence and security cooperation with Qatar Armed Forces. The visiting dignitary appreciated Pakistan Army continuous efforts for peace and stability in the region and pledged to keep working for better relations between the two countries.

Gaza hospitals risk turning into morgues

GAZA: Hospitals in Gaza risk turning into morgues without electricity, the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) says. Gaza's only power plant ran out of fuel on Wednesday, and back-up generators could stop working in hours, it adds. Medical centres have been overwhelmed after Israel imposed a "complete siege" on Gaza and pounded the territory with air and artillery strikes. Hamas launched an unprecedented attack on southern Israel on Saturday. Israel has vowed not to restore electricity or allow basic resources and humanitarian aid into Gaza until Hamas releases around 150 hostages it abducted during its attacks on Saturday. "As Gaza loses power, hospitals lose power, putting newborns in incubators and elderly patients on oxygen at risk. Kidney dialysis stops, and X-rays can't be taken," said Fabrizio Carboni, the ICRC's director for the region. "Without electricity, hospitals risk turning into morgues." He added that hospitals were still running on generators - but fuel would only last "for a few hours". Hospitals in Gaza are seeing long queues outside hospitals, with injured people waiting for emergency rooms. They are running out of essential medical equipment and appealing for blood donations. Children - some seriously wounded - are lying in hospital beds crying, waiting for treatment. Doctors are now having to make tough decisions on who to operate on as fuel supplies run critically low. Doctors say only life-saving treatment is being carried out in many cases. The absence of humanitarian corridors is resulting in unprecedented problems for hospitals. In previous wars, the ICRC and UN were able to secure corridors to deliver aid but Israel has not yet allowed for this. - DNA

South Africa down Australia in Lucknow

LUCKNOW: South Africa secured a dominant 134-run victory over Australia in the 10th game of the ICC Men's ODI World Cup 2023 at the Ekana Stadium in Lucknow on Thursday. The Aussies crumbled in chase of 312 with Proteas' pacers having an upper hand over the five-time champions. Ace bowler Kagiso Rabada finished with figures of 3/33 while Marco Jansen, spin duo of Keshav Maharaj and Tbraiz Shamsi bagged two wickets each. Australian trio of Marnus Labuschagne (46), Mitchell Starc (27) and Pat Cummins (22) showed resistance but the five-time World champions were bowled out for 177. Earlier, Quinton de Kock, in a repeat performance of his second successive century, contributed to South Africa's total of 311-7 against a lacklustre Australia side that dropped five catches. The 30-year-old De Kock, who is set to retire from ODI cricket at the end of the

tournament, reached his 19th ODI century in 90 balls, including eight fours and five sixes. He had previously achieved a century in South Africa's opening victory over Sri Lanka. He was eventually dismissed for 109, bowled out by off-spinner Glenn Maxwell while attempting a reverse sweep in the 35th over. Markram, who had previously scored the fastest World Cup century in just 49 balls during the victory over Sri Lanka, quickly reached 56, making the most of a dropped catch by Australia's skipper Pat Cummins when he had only scored a single. It was a woeful day in the field for Australia, as South Africa's captain, Temba Bavuma, was also dropped twice when he was on 19 and 32. In their opening game, Mitchell Marsh dropped Virat Kohli when the Indian star had reached 12. Kohli subsequently went on to score a match-winning 85. Bavuma's luck ran out when he was caught at midwicket by David Warner off Maxwell, with a score of 35. Teaming up with De Kock, the skipper had a 108-run partnership for the first wicket. After Markram was dismissed by Cummins, the Proteas continued with Marco Jansen (26) and David Miller (17), taking them past the 300-run mark. - Agencies

Pak Army wins silver medal in UK's Cambrian Patrol col

LONDON: Pakistan Army has secured silver medal in one of the toughest military competitions of the world known as 'Cambrian Patrol' in Wales, UK. Army and Air Attache Pakistan High Commission UK Col Taimur Rahat said the competition had been held since 1959 and was considered NATO's toughest patrolling test with world class testing parameters. This year a total of 113 teams including 38 international teams participated. Teams from the UK, Pakistan, India, Saudi Arabia, Albania, Germany, Armenia, France, Denmark, Mexico, Latvia, the Netherlands, Spain, the USA, Uzbekistan, Qatar, Italy, Ghana, Ireland, New Zealand and Poland participated in the competition. Some of the units which participated representing various countries have a 200-year-old history. The Pakistani team (67 Punjab Regiment) was led by Lt Awais Usman. Team Manager Maj Osama and Observer Maj Haseeb also played a pivotal role. Cambrian Patrol comprises 48 hours of tactical endurance exercise covering 60 kilometres of area. Complete set of battle drills and combat techniques are tested. It includes casualty evacuation, water gap crossing, section attack, close target recce, counter explosive ordnance etc. The competition tests highest level of physical and mental endurance of soldiers. 67 Punjab Regiment of Pakistan Army received silver medal for their exceptional performance. The Infantry Battalion was raised in 1972 and has numerous accolades to its credit which includes grant of 1 Sitara e Basalat and 7 Tamgha e Basalat in operational area. Pakistan Army will continue to participate and showcase its outstanding professional combat skills under any environment against the best teams of the world. - Agencies

Police arrest 91 protesters outside civil secretariat

DNA
LAHORE: The Lahore police have conducted a crackdown on government employees including teachers protesting outside the Civil Secretariat for demands and arrested 91 people. The organisers of the protest had reportedly disappeared overnight, prompting police to begin collecting information from nearby private hotels to trace their location. Police have declared that anyone who comes under their radar will face detention. It's worth noting that some women who were part of the protest were allegedly subjected to police baton charge and subsequently arrested. Sources said police initiated the operation late at night. Police teams from some police stations in Lahore were involved in the operation. Three superintendents of police (SPs) oversaw the operation against the participants.

IHC clubbed together Imran's pleas

DNA
ISLAMABAD: The Islamabad High Court has clubbed together Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf chairman's petitions seeking the suspension of the trial court proceedings in the cipher case and the dismissal of the case altogether. IHC Chief Justice Aamer Farooq, who conducted the hearing on former prime minister's petition seeking to suspend the former prime minister's trial in the cipher case today (Thursday), clubbed it with the main plea seeking to dismiss the case against him altogether. Appearing before the court, Sardar Latif Khosa, the counsel for the PTI chief, explained that the petitions sought to stay the trial court proceedings and challenge the special court's indictment order. He further informed that the matter was pending with an IHC bench and a verdict had been reserved. He told the court that the Lahore High Court had also issued a stay order in a case by the Federal Investigation Agency

(FIA). Khosa reasserted that he had urged the special court not to act in haste as the matter was pending before the high court, adding that he had concerns over the application of the Official Secrets Act in the case. The PTI chief's counsel questioned that what security was compromised or what secrecy was leaked, recalling that "(Zulfikar Ali) Bhutto sahib had made similar remarks in his speech at Raja Bazaar." Khosa argued that his client was a national hero and "the whole world knows that. Although he is innocent, he is now behind the bars". When Chief Justice Aamer Farooq asked Latif Khosa if the separate petition might be combined with the one seeking the dismissal of the case, he replied in the affirmative, but conditioned that it be fixed before October 17. On this, Justice Farooq inquired what would happen on October 17. The counsel replied that there would be great unpleasantness, as the indictment would be taking place in the trial on the day. At this, CJ Farooq observed that he

would make sure that the petitions were fixed for hearing before October 17. The cipher case pertains to the alleged missing of a diplomatic document from the PTI chief's possession which the party alleges contained a threat from the United States to remove the former prime minister from the office. On Wednesday, the PTI chief through his counsel Sher Afzal Marwat moved the high court challenging a special court's order to indict him in the cipher case. The state, judge special court, and Secretary Interior Yousaf Naseem Khokhar were made respondents in the petition. Meanwhile PTI chief's another lawyer, Naeem Haider Panjutha, deplored the delay in the hearing of the bail plea of his client in the cipher case. Panjutha expressed his displeasure in a post on X, stating the hearing was supposed to start at 2pm but it had not started till 2:34pm at least. He added that even the previous hearing began late, due to which it had to be adjourned.

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