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French envoy lauds Pak role in promoting regional peace

Detailed News On Page-08

Sadiq Sanjrani applauds Pak-China friendship

Detailed News On Page-08

Mathews timed out in rare first in int'l cricket

Detailed News On Page-06



KP anti-terror operation Army officer among four soldiers martyred

Security forces of Pakistan are determined to eliminate the menace of terrorism: ISPR



STAFF REPORT
RAWALPINDI: A Pakistan Army officer and three soldiers were martyred in an intelligence-based operation (IBO) in Tirah area of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa's Khyber district, the military's media affairs wing said on Monday. According to the Inter-Services Public Relations (ISPR), security forces conducted an IBO in Tirah on the reported presence of terrorists. During the operation, Pakistan Army troops – led by Lt Col Muhammad Hassan Haider – “effectively engaged the terrorists’ location”.

Continued on Page 06

Foreign weapons used in Mianwali airbase attack
American weapons being traded in Afghanistan

KHAYAM ABBASI

RAWALPINDI: A primary investigation into the Mianwali airbase attack revealed that foreign weapons were acquired from the terrorists who were killed during the attack on the sensitive place. Startling details regarding the assault on the Mianwali base have appeared, showing that foreign-made weapons, specifically of American origin, including RPG-7, AK-74, M-4, and M-16, A4, were recovered from the dead terrorists. Experts say that American-manufactured weapons are being illegally traded within Afghanistan, making them easily accessible to terrorists in Pakistan as well. Experts further point out that, following the United States' withdrawal from

Continued on Page 06



ISLAMABAD: Canadian High Commissioner, Leslie Scanlon calls on Caretaker Prime Minister Anwaar-ul-Haq Kakar. – DNA

Canadian HC calls on PM Kakar

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Canadian High Commissioner, Ms. Leslie Scanlon called on Prime Minister Anwaar-ul-Haq Kakar, today at the Prime Minister's House. The Prime Minister and the High Commissioner discussed various aspects of Canada-Pakistan bilateral relations, including Canada's development programs in Pakistan, humanitarian support post 2022 floods, economic and trade ties as well as Canadian investments in Pakistan, particularly the Reko Diq Project. The Prime Minister emphasized the significance of strong ties between Pakistan and Canada.

Continued on Page 06

Healthcare for all priority: PM WHO, Pakistan to upgrade hospitals

Being executed with the WHO's support, the project will have zero financial implication for the Government of Pakistan

ADIL SHAHEEN

ISLAMABAD: The Ministry of National Health Services Regulations and Coordination and the World Health Organisation on Monday joined hands to refurbish 464 health facilities across the country as a step forward to achieving the government's "top agenda" of Universal Health Coverage. In this connection, a ceremony for the signing of Letter of Understanding between the health ministry and the world health body was held at the PM House which also marked the handing over of health equipment worth over Rs 2 billion including mobile health clinics, ambulances, and mobile vaccination vans. Caretaker Prime Minister Anwaar-ul-Haq Kakar and Caretaker Health Minister Dr Nadeem Jan witnessed the ceremony as Secretary Health Itikhar Ali Shallwani and WHO Representative in Pakistan Dr Palitha Mahipala signed the document.

Continued on Page 06

Solangi for coop with Chinese enterprises
Says Pak-China coop was proceeding to greater depths

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Caretaker Minister for Information and Broadcasting Murtaza Solangi here on Monday said that as China-Pakistan cooperation was proceeding to greater depths, the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting shall play a greater role in extending all possible cooperation to Chinese enterprises in developing greater understanding and cooperation on the areas of common interests. Delivering his speech at the launching ceremony of

Continued on Page 06

Briefs

Raisi to travel to KSA on Sunday

DNA

TEHRAN: Ayatollah Raisi will visit Saudi Arabia next Sunday. The President of the Islamic Republic of Iran will go to Riyadh next week to participate in the summit of the heads of states of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation *OIC* hosted by Saudi Arabia. President Raisi will also meet with the king and crown prince of Saudi Arabia.

ATC grants bail to Sh. Rashid

FAISAL SHEIKH

RAWALPINDI: An anti-terrorism court in Rawalpindi on Monday granted bail to Awami Muslim League (AML) chief Sheikh Rashid Ahmed in the May 9 incidents case. Advocate Sardar Abdul Raziq Khan appeared before court on behalf of former interior minister Rashid. Raziq took the stance that Rashid's name was included in the FIR at the Waris Khan police station on Oct 5 whereas his client had nothing to do with May 9 incidents. Raziq, during the proceedings, said there were no proofs available against AML head Rashid. He said Rashid's name was included in the FIR just to victimise him on mala fide intention. Special Judge Ijaz Asif remarked Rashid was a senior citizen. Keeping in view his age, the court granted him bail against surety bonds of Rs50,000, besides issuing notice to the other party.

SA accuses Israel of 'genocide' Gaza: Israel kills one civilian every 4 minutes

Since October 7 climbed to 10,022 people, including 5,104 children and 2,641 women, while the number of wounded civilians to 25,408

DNA

GAZA CITY: The health ministry has said that one Palestinian civilian is killed every four minutes due to the relentless Israeli bombardment of the beleaguered Gaza Strip since October 7. According to the health ministry in Gaza, the Israeli occupation army kills six children and four women every hour in aerial or artillery attacks. Spokesman for the ministry Ashraf al-Qudra told a news conference on Monday evening that the Israeli army committed 19 massacres during the last hours in the Gaza Strip, claiming the lives of at least 252 civilians. Qudra said that the death toll as a result of the Israeli aggression against Gaza since October 7 climbed to 10,022 people, including 5,104 children and 2,641 women, while the number of wounded civilians to 25,408. "The occupation is waging a vicious war on hospitals and ambulances in the Gaza Strip," the spokesman said.

Continued on Page 06

Pakistan angered over Israeli nuclear threat

KHAYAM ABBASI

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan Monday expressed severe anger over an Israeli minister's statement that his nation was considering dropping a nuclear bomb on Gaza, the strip where the Israeli forces and Hamas have been engaged in over a month-long battle. "We are appalled by statement of an Israeli minister threatening nuclear force against Palestinians," the Ministry of Foreign Affairs said in a statement on X, formerly known as Twitter. Israeli Heritage Minister Amichai Eliyahu said on Sunday that dropping a

Continued on Page 06

Interior Minister may resign

Likely to take part in the general elections

ANSAR BHATTI

ISLAMABAD: The caretaker Interior Minister Sarfraz Bugti is likely to step down from his post in coming days. Sources close to this development say Bugti wants to contest the election. It is however not clear whether he wishes to contest for the provincial or national assembly seat. Sources say he may opt for the provincial assembly seat and may vie for the slot of the chief minister of Baluchistan. Sarfraz Bugti enjoy support of the

Continued on Page 06

Bilawal Bhutto hopeful next PM 'won't be from Lahore'

"Even if our [political] opponents unite [against us] they won't be able to defeat the PPP



NAZIR SIYAL

KARACHI: Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) Chairman Bilawal Bhutto Zardari Monday expressed hope that the country's next prime minister will not be from "Lahore" – the stronghold of Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N). Speaking to media in Karachi, the former foreign minister said that his party will contest the polls "on its own" and on the basis of its elections manifesto. "We won't look towards anyone [else] and [will rely] on public's [support] for

Continued on Page 06

Get ready for elections: Nawaz

Opens process of dialogue with all parties

ABBAS HASMI / DNA

LAHORE: Pakistan Muslim League Nawaz (PML-N) supremo Nawaz Sharif on Monday directed the party leaders to begin their preparations for the elections – scheduled to take place on February 8, 2024. The directions were issued in a meeting at the PML-N's central secretariat in Lahore where the three-time prime minister was welcomed by party president Shehbaz Sharif, PML-N Senior Vice-President and Chief Organiser Maryam Nawaz and other leaders.

Continued on Page 06

SECOND CUP COFFEE COMPANY

NOTHING COMES BEFORE coffee

SECOND CUP BREW THE FINEST OF ALL

RCCI delegation meets Romania's charge D'Affaires

President Saqib Rafiq also expressed deep sorrow over the death of Mr. Nicolae Goia (late) Former Ambassador of Romania in Islamabad.

DNA

RAWALPINDI: A delegation of the Rawalpindi Chamber of Commerce and Industry (RCCI) headed by President Saqib Rafiq called on H.E. Mr. Eduard-Robert PREDA Charge D Affaires a.i/ Minister Plenipotentiary at the Romania Embassy in Islamabad. Charge D Affaires of the Romanian Embassy appreciated RCCI's efforts in promoting trade and diplomatic ties.

He urged Pakistani businessmen to explore trade and investment oppor-

tunities for mutual benefit of the both countries.

Mr. Eduard-Cristian SONEA Political Counselor, Senior Vice President Muhammad Hamza Sarosh, Vice President Faisal Shahzad and Secretary General Irfan Manan Khan were also present in the meeting.

President Saqib Rafiq during the meeting urged for opportunities in non-conventional sectors including Pharma, IT, Services, Surgical Goods, Machinery tools and parts. He said that Pakistan considers Romania an important country not only in the context of the EU but also in

view of Romania's historical role as a supporter of multilateralism.

Matters related to enhancing the bilateral trade, investment opportunities, networking & chamber to chamber connectivity, exploring new markets and visit of trade delegation and information sharing from both sides to enhance trade relations and to explore the potential cooperation between both countries came under discussion.

President Saqib Rafiq also expressed deep sorrow over the death of Mr. Nicolae Goia (late) Former Ambassador of Romania in Islamabad.



Comsats University celebrates 'Student Week 2023'

ABBOTTABAD : Comsats University Abbottabad Campus Monday hosted Student Week 2023, Commissioner Hazara Division Syed Zahir-ul-Islam and the Director of Comsats, Professor Dr. Muhammad Ma'roof Shah were the chief guests. Commissioner Syed Zahir-ul-Islam, in his address, emphasized the importance of education in a nation's progress and the intellectual development of its youth. He stressed that education extends beyond textbooks and lectures, encompassing extracurricular activities that shape students' mental, physical, and moral well-being. He expressed his delight in seeing an institution like Comsats University Abbottabad Campus, which not only provides international-quality education but also encourages holistic development. Furthermore, Commissioner Syed Zahir-ul-Islam highlighted the role of sports in promoting physical health, teamwork, and leadership qualities. On this occasion, the Director of Comsats Abbottabad Campus, Professor Dr. Muhammad Ma'roof Shah, emphasized the relationship between sports and education. He encouraged young individuals to participate in constructive activities, fostering their capabilities further. Culture and manners are the collective assets of any nation, and it is the nation's responsibility to preserve them, adding he said.—APP

Chairman Senate commemorates '10 Years of CPEC'

DNA

ISLAMABAD : In an event held at the Pakistan Institute of Parliamentary Services, Chairman Senate Muhammad Sadiq Sanjrani in his message lauded the remarkable achievements of '10 Years of CPEC' during a report launching ceremony titled "Thousands of Miles with CPEC." Distinguished guests in attendance included Senator Mushahid Hussain Syed, Minister for Information and Broadcasting, Murtaza Solangi, Chinese Ambassador Jiang Zaidong, Mustafa Hayder Sayed, the

Executive Director of Pakistan-China Institute, and Yang Jianduo, Chairman of the All Pakistan China Enterprises Association. In lieu of the Chief guest, Chairman Senate Muhammad Sadiq Sanjrani's presence, a heartfelt message on his behalf, was read out to the attentive audience by the Executive Director Pakistan-China Institute, Mustafa Hayder Sayed.

In his message, read out by ED Pak-China Institute, the Chairman Senate emphasised the enduring friendship between the two nations and commended the significant contributions of Chinese in-

stitutions and organizations operating in Pakistan. Their contributions have played a pivotal role in strengthening bilateral ties, fostering not only government-to-government relations but also nurturing the invaluable people-to-people connections that underpin this exceptional friendship.

"The deep-rooted and historic friendship between Pakistan and China transcends borders and cultures, serving as a model for the world". Chairman Senate in his message lauded the visionary leadership of Chinese President Xi Jinping, highlighting his remarkable vision.

Congo outbreak: Balochistan govt declares health emergency

QUETTA :The Balochistan government Monday enforced health emergency across all the hospitals in the province as the Congo outbreak affected 44 people in Quetta only, claiming the life of the Agha Khan graduate Dr. Shukrullah jeopardizing the life of many others. Crimean-Congo Hemorrhagic Fever (CCHF) reported on November 3 in ICU of the Provincial Sandeman Hospital infected 112 people including duty doctors, paramedics and attendants. Soon after the lab reports diagnosed the deadly virus among several people in the provincial capital, the health department and the caretaker government started taking preventive measures on war-footings, transporting the serious patients to Karachi via Air Ambulances and patients with mild symptoms through road. In support to the provincial government, the federal government has sent two health practitioners from the National Institute of Health Sciences to assist the health department to contain spread of the virus. "The Sindh government is on board on the alarming situation of the virus outbreak. Management of Agha Khan Hospital and other main hospitals in Karachi have also been taken in loop to ensure the best medical care to the patients being shifted to Karachi," Caretaker Chief Minister Balochistan, Ali Mardan Domki said. He was addressing a high-level meeting to review the measures taken in the aftermath of the deadly virus. Health Minister Ameer Mohammad Jozzezi, Chief Secretary Balochistan Shakeel Qadir Khan, Secretary Health Abdullah Khan, Secretary Livestock Tayyab Lehri, DG Health Services Noor Qazi, Additional Secretary Finance Shujaat Hussain Khosa were prominent among others who attended the meeting. The chief minister directed the finance department to release required funds immediately for the RBCs and granted extension of the services of the public health laboratories. "No stone be left unturned while provision of the health care facilities to the affected people," he stressed adding the Sindh government had been informed about the virus and the hospitals were also on board to ensure that patients receive the best medical care in the hospital on the government's expenses. Mardan Domki also declared Dr Shukrullah martyred, directing the authorities concerned to ensure compensation to the heirs as per law. He called upon the Livestock department to continue spraying livestock with insecticide. "Educate the public about the CCHF," he urged, adding that the public should be aware of the signs and symptoms of the virus and its prevention. Earlier, Secretary Health, Abdullah Khan briefed the meeting about the efforts of the health department and strategy to cop up with the alarming situation.—APP

Turkish, Pakistan Red crescent forge stronger humanitarian ties

ADIL SHAHEEN

ISLAMABAD : In a significant step towards strengthening the bonds of humanitarian collaboration, Head of Delegation from Turkish Red Crescent, Mr. Ergest LIMKA met with Chairman Pakistan Red Crescent Society, Sardar Shahid Ahmed Laghari. The call on, held at National Headquarter of Pakistan Red Crescent here on Monday, showcased the commitment of these two esteemed organizations to work hand in hand for the betterment of communities in Pakistan. The meeting commenced with warm greetings and expressions of solidarity from Chairman Pakistan Red Crescent, who emphasized the longstanding relationship



between the two organizations. Mr. Sardar Shahid Ahmed Laghari acknowl-

edged the pivotal role that Turkish Red Crescent has played in providing sup-

port and assistance during numerous humanitarian crises, both within Pakistan

and on a global scale. Head of Delegation Mr. Ergest LIMKA, representing TRC, reciprocated the sentiment and reaffirmed their dedication to support PRCS in humanitarian endeavors. He commended Pakistan Red Crescent for its tireless efforts in humanitarian work within the country. The discussions during the meeting revolved around various aspects of cooperation, including support in on going PRCS Recovery program in Sindh and Baluchistan which may cover Livelihood ,Cash Voucher Assistance (CVA) Nutrition ,Shelter and Migration program and also Strengthen the effective coordination between the PRCS and Turkish Red Crescent, Support for If-taar and Qurbani project.



ISLAMABAD: Dr. Ahmed Bin Salem Al Amri, President of the Riyadh's Imam Muhammad Bin Saud Islamic University along with Nawaf Bin Saeed Al Malkiy, Saudi Ambassador to Pakistan and President International Islamic University, Islamabad Prof. Dr. Hathal Homoud Alotaibi met with the Caretaker Minister for Federal Education and Professional Training, Madad Ali Sindhi. — DNA

US lawmakers introduce bill sanctioning Hong Kong

A bipartisan, bicameral group of US lawmakers introduced a bill, calling for sanctioning dozens of Hong Kong Special Administrative Region officials for allegedly violating "human rights" and undermining the "rule of law". The proposed "Hong Kong Sanctions Act" would require the US president to decide within 180 days of its passage whether or not to sanction 49 Hong Kong officials, judges and prosecutors under US laws — which is another case of the United States' long-arm jurisdiction. Ironically, most of the 49 targeted people are judges and prosecutors who the US lawmakers claim are allegedly responsible for the continuing persecution of so-called "pro-democracy" activists in the SAR. Among them are the chief justice, other judges and the police commissioner of Hong Kong. However, the bill, intended to further tarnish the image of Hong Kong, will not deter the Hong Kong SAR authorities from implementing the National Security Law for Hong Kong. Neither the central government in Beijing nor the SAR authorities will tolerate foreign interference in China's internal affairs. And the specific purpose of the National Security Law for Hong Kong is to prevent foreign interference in the country's internal affairs. To be sure, this is not the first time Washington is resorting to its geopolitical playbook to interfere in China's.—APP

Governor KPK became a voter of FPCCI

DNA

KARACHI : Leaders of the ruling businessmen panel have started using new tactics to join the voter list in the upcoming elections of Federation of Pakistan Chamber of Commerce and Industry (FPCCI), while Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KPK) Governor Haji Ghulam Ali got his name in the voter list of FPCCI on the quota of small traders of KPK while holding a high office in a province. According to the sources, according to the initial voter list issued by the Secretary General of FPCCI, where there are huge flaws in the list, there is a small businessman on the quota of Peshawar Chamber of Small Traders and Industry on serial number 180 in the voter list.

Instead, the name of KPK Governor Haji Ghulam Ali is present as a member of the governing body, so now the head of a province and the representative of the federation in KPK will cast their vote in the Federation Chamber election to be held on December 30 next month instead of small businessmen. While it is also being feared that Haji Ghulam Ali will use his influence as the head of the province in the FPCCI election to be held next month.

Haji Ghulam Ali was elected president of FPCCI from KPK in 2011 on the quota of the chamber, while in 2017, he participated again for the election of president from Federal Area (ICT) but he failed in this battle. It should be clear that Haji Ghulam Ali is the Chairman of the Executive Businessmen's Panel

in FPCCI in KPK and has also attended the meetings of the Businessmen's Panel while serving as Governor. The business community has expressed great surprise at the nomination of Haji Ghulam Ali as a member of the governing body in FPCCI as a small businessman. The business community says that Haji Ghulam Ali is the President of Pakistan Dr. Arif Alavi is a representative and despite holding an important government post, what is the reason to register himself as a voter instead of small businessmen? Pro-voters have also expressed their surprise at the name of Governor KPK Haji Ghulam Ali in the voter list as a General Body Member. They can solve without prejudice but they have made themselves controversial.

CCPO reviews uplift schemes of police stations

LAHORE : Capital City Police Officer (CCPO) Lahore Bilal Siddique Kamyana, during a meeting held here on Monday, reviewed the progress of various development schemes of police stations. The meeting reviewed the pace of work of different development schemes and welfare based projects of police stations. DIG Operation Syed Ali Nasir Rizvi and SSP (Admn) Atif Nazeer gave a detailed briefing about the uplift schemes of police department Lahore. The meeting discussed in

detail regarding the construction of new police stations, improvement of police stations condition and shifting them at rental buildings carried out under the project of special initiative for police stations. The meeting was especially briefed about the completion of 50 police stations under the said scheme.

The CCPO stressed upon to make early functioning of Bhatti Gate Police Station and other development projects continued under Annual Development Programme (ADP). He said that setting up of more police stations

was dire need of the hour as per proportion of the population of Lahore. Police stations were being strengthened with modern equipments and facilities, he said and added the police stations were being modernised with the state-of-art facilities under the vision of Caretaker CM Mohsin Naqvi. Public must get positive impact from the up-gradation of police stations. He further instructed the staff of Lahore police to behave politely with the people coming to the police station for the redressal of their complaints.

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National Days and Armed Forces Days

NOVEMBER

Nov 01/Algeria National Day

Nov 04/Italy Armed Forces Day

Nov 07/Russian Federation Socialist Revolution

Nov 09/Cambodia National Day

Nov 11/Poland Independence Day

Nov 14/Jordan Birthday of King Hussein

Nov 15/Belgium Kings Day

Nov 15/Brazil Republic Day

Nov 15/Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus National Day

Nov 18/Oman National Day

Nov 18/Morocco Independence Day

Nov 21/Bangladesh Armed Forces Day

Nov 22/Lebanon Independence Day

Nov 25/Suriname National Day

Nov 28/Mauritania National Day

Nov 28/Albania Flags Day

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



Turkish Airlines.....8494949



Emergency

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

Enquiry

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



Hospitals

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



Departments

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

Water Tank

Islamabad.....0321-5744480



ISLAMABAD: Students of Sheikh Zayed International Academy Islamabad taking part in a culture show on the occasion of SZIA Film Festival.—DNA

Less than 20% of Pak issues find a spot in party manifestoes

PPP scored zero in 17 indicators, PTI in 13 and PML-N in 12

MAHNOOR ANSAR

ISLAMABAD: In the wake of upcoming general elections, the Pakistan Institute of Development Economics (PIDE) has drawn a comparison of manifestos amongst three mainstream political parties – Pakistan Muslim League Nawaz (PML-N), Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) and Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) – that have been front-runners in formulating governments during the last three tenures. The aim was to evaluate if the manifestoes have any substance and concrete plan or are these just comprise hollow promises and sweeping statements, without any homework for the future. In this regard, PIDE has been proposing reforms in various dimensions for quite a long time. These targeted reform proposals are based on years of research and evidence and are in line with the global best practices. So, PIDE has picked 18 key issues/sectors that it thinks are fundamental. These include: local government, parliament, elections, cabinet, police, bu-

reaucracy, budget making, debt management, PSDP, real estate, agriculture, energy, taxation, tariff, trade, state-owned enterprises (SOEs) and internet. Each indicator has a maximum of 100 score. PPP scored zero in 17 indicators, PTI in 13 and PML-N in 12.

Overall, the three major political parties scored less than 20%, which means that they talk about or have some solid ideas about only 20% of the key economic and policy issues of Pakistan. Further dissecting the figure 20% tells us out of the country's key issues, only 12% of these find space in the PML-N manifesto, 7% in the PPP manifesto and 1.5% in PTI. This demonstrates that manifestoes don't have any substance at large on key issues of the nation. This means that political parties don't have any concrete blueprint to work on if they come into power. The lack of substance in manifestoes leads to a myopic approach to governance, ad-hocism and serving vested interests only, without any regard for doing something for the long-term development of the country. For

instance, strengthening local government is merely a promise and scored as zero. In contrast, allowing the property tax regime to serve as the primary revenue generator for local government is a concrete point. Thus, this point had been given a 25 score. How did PIDE arrive at such a score? PIDE summarized its proposals in four points for each theme, having equal weightage for each point i.e. 25%, making it 100% for all four points. It then compared it with what each political party proposes against the same theme. If the manifestoes propose one of the points that PIDE proposes then the score will be 25/100 and if their proposals include all that PIDE proposes, then that manifesto will get full marks i.e. 100/100. It is pertinent to note that, manifestoes are being evaluated on actual reform intervention, not mere promises, slogans and sweeping statements. Besides, the Institute, in another research product, has also compared if there is any convergence between what is mentioned in manifestoes and the digital narratives by the party leaders. The

stark disparity between pre-election promises and the reality of online discourse in the post-election landscape, as unveiled by the Pakistan Institute of Development Economics (PIDE), reveals a critical disconnect. PIDE's analysis reveals a concerning neglect of fundamental issues like economic disparities, infrastructure, unemployment, education, healthcare, governance, corruption, security, environment, and human rights on digital narratives by party leaders, which are pivotal for the country's progress. Twitter, identified as a significant influencer in shaping political conversations, remains largely underutilized in addressing Pakistan's socio-economic challenges. Leveraging Latent Dirichlet Allocation (LDA) to analyze afore mentioned party leaders' tweets from 2018-2022, PIDE found no convergence between the vision chalked out in manifestoes and the propagation or discourse on Twitter. The comprehensive analysis shed light on a worrying trend in the online discourse of opposition leaders: PPP and PML-N

leadership ocused mostly on family legacies and political conflicts PTI's leader's discussions primarily revolved around Indian-occupied Jammu and Kashmir overshadowing other essential national concerns. This underlines the lack of focus as well as commitment from the country's top political leadership. PIDE's call for realigning political discourse with manifesto commitments echoes the urgency for leaders to prioritize substantive policy matters for Pakistan's development and prosperity. Manifestoes shouldn't remain as mere paper promises; they should guide the nation's trajectory, providing a clear roadmap for governing parties and feasible policy alternatives for the opposition. The institute stresses the need to shift conversations from personal grievances, familial legacies and political mudslinging to tangible policy matters, urging leaders to re-center discussions and leverage social media tools like Twitter for more focused, relevant, and policy-based communication, to address the perpetual challenges faced by Pakistan.

Impersonator arrested on NAB's complaint at Chakwal

DNA

ISLAMABAD: A resident of Chakwal namely Hamid Iqbal who was impersonating as NAB officer was arrested by local police. Hamid Iqbal was found to be impersonating as NAB officer and was trying to influence WAPDA office Chakwal for undue favours. Upon suspicion, WAPDA authorities informed NAB and it was found that Hamid Iqbal was not an employee of NAB and was impersonating. NAB lodged a formal complaint with local police and as a result impersonator Hamid Iqbal was arrested. NAB advises the general public to report suspicious persons acting as impersonators to law enforcing authorities or to the NAB directly.

Women urged to practice 5-min self-examination

RAWALPINDI: Begum Samina Alvi, wife of the president of Pakistan on Monday said a five-minute self-examination every month could help detect breast cancer at an early stage, thus saving thousands of the lives of women in the country. She said 44,000 deaths due to breast cancer in Pakistan was an alarming situation that needed raising constant awareness about early diagnosis of the disease. Speaking at an awareness seminar on breast cancer here at Behbud Association of Pakistan, Rawalpindi, she stressed the need to sensitize the general public about shunning the taboo about breast cancer. Samina Alvi mentioned that the world overall had a 98 percent recovery rate from breast cancer, however, pointed out that in Pakistan, insufficient mammographic facilities led to a high mortality rate due to the detection of malignancy at a late stage. She said women of all ages including teenage girls of 12-14 years were also being diagnosed with breast cancer. She urged the women and girls to learn the five-minute routine of self-examination and spread the word among at least 20 other women folks in their circle. For the Behbud Mother and Child Hospital, Samina Alvi announced a donation of Rs 500,000 on behalf of her family. Samina Alvi also emphasized the need to focus on the inclusiveness of persons with disabilities, and mental health and ensuring a harassment-free environment for women. She called for accommodating the differently-abled persons with facilities of education and employment and mainstreaming them in society. Lt Gen (ret'd) Nigar Johar, the country's first three-star woman general in the Pakistan Army who belonged to the Army Medical Corps, said one in eight women died of breast cancer in the world, which was a scary figure.—APP

Stock markets, exports, and remittances are growing

MEHTAB PIRZADA

ISLAMABAD: Chairman of National Business Group Pakistan, President Pakistan Businessmen and Intellectuals Forum, and All Karachi Industrial Alliance, and former provincial minister Mian Zahid Hussain said on Monday that the efforts of the caretaker Commerce Minister Goher Ejaz are paying off and positive results are coming.

The growth in the stock market after several months is welcome, as it has crossed 53500 points, while the prices of essential commodities are also decreasing due to strict control on smuggling by the

government, he said. Mian Zahid Hussain said that after a decline in textile exports in the last 12 months, October has seen an increase of five percent, while exports have seen an overall increase of 14 percent. Speaking to the business community, the veteran business leader said that foreign remittances have also increased by five percent following the crackdown on illegal dollar trade.

The cotton production is also expected to be 11 million bales, which is double that of last year, but for long-term results, the government will have to get rid of the failed state-owned companies that are

losing Rs 1200 billion annually, he said.

Mian Zahid Hussain said that power companies are also losing 1000 billion rupees annually, and the IMF delegation has asked for a fresh report on the losses of government-owned companies.

The business leader said that now is the time to get rid of all these losses and provide relief to the people. He said that apart from general inflation, house and shop rents are also rising faster than people's income, which needs to be regulated. Traders doing business in rental shops and millions living in rented houses are worried about rising

rents. The income of the businessmen and people is continuously decreasing, but the expenses and rents are continuously increasing, which has taken away their peace of mind. In order to improve the situation, an effective and efficient system of rent control should be introduced in the country.

There is a need for reforms in the power sector, a push for import substitution, and to increase in the share of solar power and wind power in the energy basket while reforming the agricultural sector and corporate farming. The import of palm oil should be reduced through sunflower production, he said.

PAJCCI Condemns recent SRO issuances

FAISAL SHEIKH

ISLAMABAD: President Pakistan-Afghanistan Joint Chamber of Commerce and Industry (PAJCCI), Junaid Makda expressing deep concern and condemnation of the recent issuance of several Statutory Regulatory Orders (SROs) that have caused distress within the business communities from all over Pakistan (KPK, Chaman, Lahore, Islamabad, Faisalabad) and in Afghanistan across the border. The SROs in question, specifically SRO No. 1397(I)/2023, SRO 1380(I)/2023, SRO 1401(I)/2023, and SRO 1402(I)/2023, have triggered widespread consternation among the business communities in both Pakistan and

Afghanistan. These recent regulatory measures have raised significant challenges and uncertainties for businesses and trade relations across the border. The PAJCCI firmly believes that maintaining and enhancing economic ties between Pakistan and Afghanistan is vital for the prosperity and well-being of our peoples. It is in this context that we express our concerns and urge the authorities to reconsider the implications of these SROs on the bilateral and transit trade and economic cooperation between two countries. We understand that regulatory measures are often necessary to safeguard the interests of a nation, but we also believe that such measures should be taken with due consideration of business.

Iranian ambassador calls on minister for Power



ISLAMABAD: Ambassador of the Islamic Republic of Iran to Pakistan Dr. Reza Amiri Moghaddam called on caretaker Federal Minister for Power and Petroleum Muhammad Ali here Monday. They discussed areas of mutual interest and promotion of brotherly relations between the two countries, said a statement issued here.—DNA

Rain with snowfall expected in country's upper parts

Farmers of barani areas are advised to manage their crop activities accordingly while tourists and travellers visiting northern areas

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan Meteorological Department (PMD) has forecast rain-wind/thunderstorm with snowfall over mountains in upper parts of the country from November 08-09 which would decrease day temperatures from two to three celsius grade. A shallow westerly wave, affecting western parts of the country, is likely to grip upper parts on November 08 (evening/night) and persist in northern areas till November 10 after noon.

Under the influence of this weather system, light to moderate rain-wind/thun-

derstorm is also expected in Quetta, Kharan, Harnai, Chaman, Ziarat, Qilla Abdullah, Qillah Saif Ullah, Loralai, Pishin, Zhob, Musa Khel, Sibbi, Mastung, Kalat, Noshki and Chaghi on November 06 (evening/night) and November 07.

Light rain-thunderstorm is expected in Dera Ismail Khan, Dera Ghazi Khan, Layyah, Bhakkar, Sargodha, Mianwali, Khushab, Islamabad and Pothohar region on November 07 (evening/night).

Light to moderate rain-wind/thunderstorm with hailstorm is also expected at isolated places of Chitral, Dir, Swat, Shangla, Buner, Kohistan, Manseh-

ra, Abbottabad, Haripur, Swabi, Mardan, Nowshera, Peshawar, Kohat, Kurram, Bannu, Lakki Marwat, Waziristan, Bhakkar, Mianwali, Sargodha, Khushab, Murree, Galliyat, Islamabad, Rawalpindi, Attock, Chakwal, Jhelum, Mandi Bahauddin, Gujranwala, Gujrat, Sialkot, Narowal, Lahore, Faisalabad, Jhang, Sheikhupura and Hafizabad on November 08 (evening/night) and November 09. Rain-wind/thunderstorm, with snowfall over the high mountains, is expected in Kashmir, (Neelum valley, Muzaffarabad, Poonch, Hattian, Bagh, Haveli, Sudhanoti, Kotli, Bhimber,

Mirpur), Gilgit Baltistan (Diamir, Astore, Ghizer, Skardu, Hunza, Gilgit, Ghanche, Shigar) during the period. Fog/smog is likely to develop (patches) in plains of Punjab and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa in the coming days especially late-night and early morning hours. About the impact of rain, the PMD said that day temperatures are likely to drop 02 to 03 celsius degree during the spell. Farmers of barani areas are advised to manage their crop activities accordingly while tourists and travellers visiting northern areas are advised to remain cautious during the period.

Briefs

Dengue cases decreases with changing weather

RAWALPINDI: District Coordinator Epidemics Prevention and Control (DCEPC), Dr. Sajjad Mehmood, Monday said that dengue fever cases had decreased as only four cases were reported in the district during the last 24 hours. He said that around five to 15 patients had been brought to the allied hospitals of the city during the last 15 days while earlier in September the number of patients was 50 to 60 per day. "This year, around 2,431 cases were brought to the district health facilities while the number of cases was 1,972 in 2021 and 4,488 in 2022," he added. The health official said that the district administration, in collaboration with allied departments, had registered seven FIRs, issued tickets to five and a fine of Rs 4,000 was imposed on violations of anti-dengue during the last 24 hours. He expressed the hope that in the coming days, the dengue cases would witness a further drop as the weather turned cooler, which was not suitable for the survival of the dengue parasite.—APP

PRCS distributes relief goods among affected families

ISLAMABAD: The Pakistan Red Crescent Society Azad Jammu and Kashmir (PRCS AJK) is actively responding to a recent fire incident that has left the residents of the Refugee Camp in Ambore in dire need of assistance. PRCS AJK, with the generous support of PRCS National Headquarters Islamabad and in collaboration with its dedicated volunteers and staff members, has swiftly mobilized relief efforts to provide support to the affected families. On November 2nd, a devastating fire broke out in the Refugee Camp in Ambore, causing significant damage to the camp and leaving 25 families homeless.

According to initial report of PRCS AJK Disaster Management Department 13 houses have been destroyed as a result of the devastating fire outbreak. Recognizing the urgency of the situation, PRCS AJK immediately initiated a relief operation to address the immediate needs of the affected population. The relief operation involved the distribution of essential relief items, including Tents, Shelter tool kits, Blankets, Hygiene Kits, Water Filter coolers, shelter materials, lamps, and tarpaulin sheets. In this context, a distribution ceremony was held here at Deputy Commissioner Office Muzaffarabad. The Secretary PRCS AJK State Branch Gulzar Fatima, Deputy Commissioner Muzaffarabad Raja Tahir were also present and distributed relief items among affected families.—APP

ICCI calls for immediate halt to genocide of Palestinians

ICCI Executive Members including Maqsood Tabish, Hamayun Kabir, Aamir Hussain, Muhammad Rizwan Chheena, Sheikh Muhammad Ejaz, Malik Jalil Ahmed Awan, Dr. Muhammad Usman, Khalid Mehmood and others were in the ICCI delegation

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Ahsan Zafar Bakhtawari, President, Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry (ICCI) leading a delegation met with H.E. Ahmed Jawad A.A. Rabaei during a visit to Palestine Embassy and showed solidarity with the Palestinian people. Ahsan Zafar Bakhtawari presented a cheque of Rs.2.0 million on behalf of ICCI as a token of support for the people of Gaza who have been destroyed by the Israeli bombardment. Speaking on the occasion, Ahsan Zafar Bakhtawari, President, Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry said that the business community and the Pakistani nation is very concerned over the cruelties being committed by the Israeli forces against the innocent Palestinian. He said the whole Muslim Ummah is standing along with the people of Palestine and urged that the Muslim rulers and the international community should make collective efforts to protect the Palestinians from the brutalities of Israel. He said that the genocide of the innocent Palestinians is not acceptable at all and stressed that the world powers should come forward to stop Israel from such brutalities. He said that Pakistan supports the right of self-determination and establishment of a secure & sovereign Palestinian state to end this conflict. He assured that the business community of Pakistan is always ready to



extend all possible support to the Palestinian brothers and sisters to mitigate their sufferings. H.E. Ahmed Jawad A.A. Rabaei briefed the ICCI delegation about the details of casualties and destruction committed by Israel against the Palestinians. He said that about 10,000 Palestinians have been martyred so far by the Israeli forces in Gaza and other places out of which 80 percent are children and women. He said that out of a total 35 hospitals, 11 hospitals have been destroyed

and Israeli forces are threatening Palestinians to evacuate the rest of the hospitals otherwise, they would also be killed. He termed it a brutal genocide of innocent Palestinians, which needs to be stopped by the world powers. He thanked the ICCI delegation for showing solidarity with the Palestinians in this difficult time. Faad Waheed, Senior Vice President ICCI said that Israel's actions violate international humanitarian & human rights law and constitute war crimes as well

as crimes against humanity. He stressed that the world community should play a role to stop Israel from these war crimes. Engr. Azhar ul Islam Zafar, Vice President ICCI called for an immediate ceasefire; an end to the siege of Gaza; and the facilitation of humanitarian corridors for unrestricted relief supplies to the affected Palestinians. Zafar Bakhtawari, former President ICCI and Secretary General UBG said that the core issue behind the current war is the failure

to implement the two-state solution. He stressed that the UN and other stakeholders should ensure an independent and sovereign state of Palestine to end this conflict once for all. ICCI Executive Members including Maqsood Tabish, Hamayun Kabir, Aamir Hussain, Muhammad Rizwan Chheena, Sheikh Muhammad Ejaz, Malik Jalil Ahmed Awan, Dr. Muhammad Usman, Khalid Mehmood and others were in the ICCI delegation.

PO organizes workshop on improving agri productivity

DNA

ISLAMABAD: A four-day international workshop on 'Improving Agricultural Productivity through Mechanization' jointly organized by National Productivity Organization (NPO), Pakistan, and Asian Productivity Organization (APO), Tokyo, Japan started at a local hotel on Monday. The workshop would be attended by 19 overseas participants from 10 APO member countries, 07 local participants and sessions would be delivered by the international resource speakers from Japan, Thailand and Pakistan. The main aim of this workshop was to promote understanding of the latest technologies and measures for mechanization in agriculture, policies and frameworks to support mechanization on small farms. Farm mechanization was viewed as a package of technology to ensure timely field operations, increased productivity, reduced crop losses and improved quality of grain or product. Addressing the inaugural session as chief guest, Sikandar Mustafa, Chairman of Millat Group of Companies and Millat Tractors, appreciated the APO's role in the development of Asia-Pacific region. He de-

liberated that it was time to revitalize our commitment and strive to achieve APO's vision of "Inclusive, innovative-led productivity growth in the Asia-Pacific". He welcomed the international delegates and conveyed his gratitude to APO and NPO for addressing this important topic. Sikandar Mustafa was of the view that working in tandem with APO, Pakistan would be able to find solutions to long-standing issues of the productivity. NPO was facilitating to complement and strengthen the Ministry's mandate through its vision "Economically Productive and Globally Competitive Pakistan." NPO is solely responsible for Productivity & Quality enhancement in Pakistan, he mentioned. Mr Toshinori Mitsunaga, program officer Asian Productivity Organization, Tokyo, Japan expressed his sincere gratitude to the Government of Pakistan for its sincere efforts to continue Productivity Movement. He also appreciated the efforts of APO Country Director for his strong leadership and support; and NPO head for the keen interest. He also mentioned the APO & NPO team for their efforts for Productivity enhancement in the region. Mr. Mitsunaga, apprised the participants about the

APO's journey of success stories and major achievements in the region. CEO NPO Muhammad Alamgir Chaudhry thanked Sikandar Mustafa and APO Program officer for their presence and time. He welcomed all the participants, resource persons. He said that Vision of MoI&P (Ministry of Industries and Production) was to achieve efficient, sustainable and inclusive industrial development." He said with an estimated 48 million hectares of arable land, there exists a sizeable potential for improving efficiencies, yield, and productivity of the agriculture sector with better farm equipment and machinery. The Government of Pakistan was committed to support this sector, with the hope that the country can increase yields and exports of primary crops, fruit and vegetables, poultry, and dairy products - and in doing so become an important supplier for the region. To achieve this objective, the government was encouraging increasing private-sector interventions, investment by offering several direct and indirect assistance programs.

NARC distributes over 300 tons of 7 high-yielding wheat seeds varieties

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan Agriculture Research Council (NARC) has provided over 300 metric tons of certified wheat seeds to farmers in order to enhance per-acre crop output in the country and increase farm profitability for achieving sustainable agriculture growth and economic development. The council had distributed 07 wheat seed varieties among farmers and different seed companies including Punjab Seed Corporation which will cement the efforts of the government to ensure the availability of certified seeds during the current, Wheat Program Coordinator in the National Agriculture Research Center Maqsood Qamar. Talking to APP here on Monday, he said that the distributed seed varieties were comprised of heat and stem rest-tolerant, which would help the local farmers enhance their crop output during the season and maximize their farm income. Out of the total 07 seed varieties, four varieties were for rain-fed areas and three were for irrigated areas and would help to enhance local output of both irrigated and rain-fed areas.—APP

KSA announces 700 scholarships for Pak students

ISLAMABAD: Kingdom of Saudi Arabia (KSA) has announced 700 fully funded scholarships for Pakistani students to study in top 25 universities of KSA. According to the details, the Embassy of Riyadh in a notification stated that Kingdom of Saudi Arabia had announced 700 fully funded scholarships for Pakistani students to study at the level of Diploma, Bachelor, Master and PhD in 25 universities of the Kingdom. "Previously the number of scholarships was 600, which has now been increased to 700" the embassy statement added. The students residing in Pakistan and legal resident in the Kingdom both can apply for these scholarships through the university's unified online website i.e. <https://studyinsaudi.moe.gov.sa>. It is to mention here that 75 percent students will be awarded scholarships from Pakistan, whereas 25 percent scholarships will be given to Pakistani students residing in the Kingdom. Other relevant information which includes a procedure to apply for scholarships, eligibility criteria, and benefits of scholarships is given at <https://studyinsaudi.moe.gov.sa>. HEC has asked all Principals, Educational Heads to announce and disseminate the scholarships details/information among senior students (XI-XII / O-A Level) of their respective schools and also arrange to place on the notice boards/school gates for the information of parents as well.

SAPM Mushaal concludes visit at Norwegian parliament

ISLAMABAD: Special Assistant to Prime Minister on Human Rights and Women on Monday concluded her visit to Norway where she effectively highlighted the human rights abuses in Indian Illegally Occupied Jammu and Kashmir at the Norwegian parliament and brought along "beautiful memories" of love and support. The SAPM, in a video message, expressed her gratitude to the Norwegian people and the Norwegian community, especially the Pakistani diaspora and Norwegian Parliament's Foreign Affairs and Defence Standing Committee Member Dag-Inge Ulestein for organizing a "powerful" seminar on the Kashmir issue at the Norwegian Parliament. "It was a historical event. I presented my case there on human rights, on the case of Kashmiris, the plight of Kashmiris and interfaith harmony," she remarked. At the seminar, her daughter also appealed to the world through the Norwegian Parliament that her father Yaseen Malik should be saved. "I'm taking with me a lot of beautiful memories of unconditional love, support and prayers from the Norwegian people, the politicians, the civil society, the human rights activists... And yes, I enjoyed moving around to the museums, to the Church of Oslo. I met the bishop.

ANF recovers 1788 kg drugs

RAWALPIND: Anti-Narcotics Force (ANF) while conducting a major operation against drug smugglers in Gwadar managed to recover over 1788 kg of drugs, said an ANF Headquarters spokesman here on Monday. He informed that a key member of the drug smuggling gang had concealed a huge quantity of drugs in various places. ANF personnel conducted an operation and recovered 1788 kg of drugs including 1740 kg of hashish, 28 kg of Ice drug and 20 kg of morphine. The recovered drugs were manufactured in Afghanistan and brought in Gwadar to smuggle abroad. Some of the drugs were recovered from a hut made of wood and leaves while the rest of the drugs were recovered from tunnels dug into the hills. The spokesman informed that after the recovery, the drug storage places were burnt. A case has been registered against the accused under the Anti-Narcotics Act.—APP

Pakistani handicrafts debut at China International Import Expo

DNA

SHANGHAI: Pakistani exhibitors present new handicrafts at the 6th China International Import Expo (CIIE) taking place in Shanghai from Nov. 5 to 10, set to attract and amaze strings of visitors from China and other parts of the world. Camel skin lamps, made from the skin of sacrificial camels from Eid ul Adha and Eid ul Fitr, shine at CIIE with their attracting luster, exquisite patterns, and rich cultural connotations, China Economic Net (CEN) reported on Monday. With a history of 900 years and having been recognized by 25 countries, this intangible art and craft of Pakistan is sold at a lucrative price of RMB 50-200 at CIIE. Habib Ur Rehman, an exhibitor at the booth, told CEN reporter this was his second time at this grand expo. "Last time in 2021, our Himalaya Salt Lamps were warmly received by Chinese consumers, which made us realize the huge potential of Pakistani handicrafts in the Chi-



nese market", Habib said. Around the world, camel skin lamp only exists in Pakistan. "There is a group of only 30 to 60 people who are making this in Pakistan", Habib told CEN reporter, adding, "normally it takes about ten days to make such a lamp from

the very first process of cleaning the skin, drying the skin, modeling, till the painting of the patterns on the lamp". "If we don't utilize the skin of sacrificial camels, they will also be used for other purposes, like for storage, or become waste", Habib explained.

"I hope by introducing these lamps to more people, we can support Pakistan's home cottage industry and intangible art and encourage more and more young people to enter this industry", Habib said. It is learned that the 6th China International Import Expo

has attracted over 20 Pakistani enterprises to showcase their products in one of the most bustling markets in the world, ranging from food, carpet and clothes, jade and jewelry, stone and bronze handicraft, football, wooden furniture, etc.



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CIIE boosts Chinese economy, inspires confidence

The popularity of the China International Import Expo, evident at the opening of its sixth edition in Shanghai, in more ways than one attests to China's resolve to further open up its economy to the outside world and the global business community's confidence in the Chinese economy. The expo, which will continue till Friday, has attracted guests from 154 countries, regions and international organizations, more than 3,400 exhibitors and 394,000 professional visitors. Notably, about 200 companies have taken part in all the six CIIEs despite the COVID-19 pandemic, which raged on for almost three years. Among the 69 countries taking part in the "Country Exhibition" section of the expo, 16 are least-developed countries, demonstrating that the CIIE treats all countries as equals and promotes the common development of the Global South. In fact, the CIIE has come to symbolize China's high-standard opening-up, rebutting claims that China has slammed its door shut on the outside world. The annual expo has leveraged the strengths of China's huge market to procure goods and services from other economies, promote investment and people-to-people exchanges, and help create a new global development pattern. The event plays a special role in boosting economic globalization, and stabilizing the global industry and supply chains at a time when some developed countries are doing the opposite. With China's GDP growing by 5.2 percent in the first three quarters of this year – 4.4 percentage points of it being driven by consumption – the Chinese market will remain a magnet for multinational corporations. Those spreading China's "economic collapse" rumors must realize one basic fact: an economy with a middle-income group of 400 million people cannot go bust just because some in the West wish it to. According to a report released recently by the China Council for the Promotion of International Trade, more than 80 percent of the foreign enterprises it surveyed are satisfied with China's business environment, and the Chinese market remains attractive to foreign enterprises. However, with the global economic recovery foundering, the world requires the solidarity and cooperation of all countries to promote common development, as President Xi Jinping said in a letter to the expo on Sunday. In the letter, Xi emphasized that China will advance high-standard opening-up and continue to make globalization more inclusive, balanced and beneficial to all. In this regard, the CIIE can help foster a new development pattern, create new opportunities for the world based on China's sustainable growth and high-quality development, and make it easier for other economies to share the dividends of China's vast market. It can also play a bigger role in providing public goods and services, creating a platform for countries to pool their efforts to foster an open world economy and ensure every one benefits from win-win cooperation.



US lawmakers introduce bill sanctioning Hong Kong

A bipartisan, bicameral group of US lawmakers introduced a bill calling for sanctioning dozens of Hong Kong Special Administrative Region officials for allegedly violating "human rights" and undermining the "rule of law". The proposed "Hong Kong Sanctions Act" would require the US president to decide within 180 days of its passage whether or not to sanction 49 Hong Kong officials, judges and prosecutors under US laws – which is another case of the United States' long-arm jurisdiction. Ironically, most of the 49 targeted people are judges and prosecutors who the US lawmakers claim are allegedly responsible for the continuing persecution of so-called "pro-democracy" activists in the SAR. Among them are the chief justice, other judges and the police commissioner of Hong Kong. However, the bill, intended to further tarnish the image of Hong Kong, will not deter the Hong Kong SAR authorities from implementing the National Security Law for Hong Kong. Neither the central government in Beijing nor the SAR authorities will tolerate foreign interference in China's internal affairs. And the specific purpose of the National Security Law for Hong Kong is to prevent foreign interference in the country's internal affairs. To be sure, this is not the first time Washington is resorting to its geopolitical playbook to interfere in China's internal affairs. In May, the US Congressional-Executive Commission on China issued a report in an effort to deter the SAR from using the National Security Law for Hong Kong against so-called "pro-democracy" activists. But neither Beijing nor Hong Kong will bow to such long-arm jurisdiction. Echoing Beijing's long-standing opposition to such practices, Hong Kong officials have already condemned the US' "bullying". "The Hong Kong SAR turns its nose up at these so-called 'sanctions' without any fear of intimidation," said a statement issued by the SAR government. "These despicable and shameless behaviors reflect the hypocrisy and barbarity of these politicians that have sinister intentions. I once again condemn them in the strongest possible terms," said Hong Kong Chief Executive John Lee Ka-chiu. The US has to wake up to the inconvenient new reality that Hong Kong, despite being a special autonomous region, is an integral part of China, and the National Security Law is a part of the region's statute and necessary to administer the region without any interference by foreign forces. Washington's long-arm jurisdiction, since the very beginning, has been a tool to maintain the US' global hegemony, suppress foreign competitors, interfere in the internal affairs of other countries, and even subvert the governments of other countries. But the days when the US could play such dirty tricks and succeed are history.

Gaza war drowns out sane voices

James Dorsey

A hostage negotiator, former advisor to Israeli prime ministers, critic of the Israeli occupation of Palestinian lands, and an investor in East Jerusalem housing for Palestinians, Mr. Baskin negotiated Hamas' 2011 release of Israeli soldier Gilad Shalit in exchange for 1,027 Palestinians, including the group's Gaza leader, Yahya Sinwar, from Israeli prisons. Mr. Baskin recalls his Hamas counterpart Ghazi Hamad, a member of the group's political bureau and erstwhile proponent of a two-state resolution of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, involving the creation of an independent

Gershon Baskin may be one of the few sane voices left on both sides of the Israeli-Palestinian divide.

Mr. Baskin speaks with authority when he denounces the Israeli assault on Gaza as a war crime and Hamas for its brutal October 7 attack on Israel that killed 1,400, primarily civilian, Israelis.

A hostage negotiator, former advisor to Israeli prime ministers, critic of the Israeli occupation of Palestinian lands, and an investor in East Jerusalem housing for Palestinians, Mr. Baskin negotiated Hamas' 2011 release of Israeli soldier Gilad Shalit in exchange for 1,027 Palestinians, including the group's Gaza leader, Yahya Sinwar, from Israeli prisons. Mr. Baskin recalls his Hamas counterpart Ghazi Hamad, a member of the group's political bureau and erstwhile proponent of a two-state resolution of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, involving the creation of an independent Palestinian state alongside Israel, as saying on the day of Mr. Shalit's release: "Next time we will negotiate peace!" Those were the days. In hindsight, they are days of missed opportunities wasted by leaders on both sides of the Israeli-Palestinian divide that either wanted to thwart any chance of an equitable solution of the conflict and/or cared more about their personal interests than the fate of their people. Last month, the man who asserted he wanted to negotiate peace celebrated Hamas' October 7 wanton slaughter of innocent civilians and called for more. "We must teach Israel a lesson. We will do this again and again."

The Al Aqsa Flood was just the first time and there will be a second, a third, a fourth... Will we have to pay the price? Yes, and we are ready to pay it... We are the victims of the occupation. Period. Therefore, nobody should blame us for the things we do. On October 7, October 10, October one-millionth, everything we do is justified," Mr. Hamad told the Lebanese Broadcasting Corporation. Calling for the "annihilation of Israel," Mr. Hamad was referring to the October 7 attack by Hamas' codename for the assault. Mr. Baskin should not have been surprised by Mr. Hamad's turn around.

"Whenever in the past I talked with Baskin, I always came away both frustrated and impressed. Frustrated that he always accepted his private face to face discussions of Palestinian leaders, while they would right afterwards turn around and incite publicly for violence. Impressed at his commitment to work for peace, no matter how frustrating his Palestinian interlocutors were," said Paul Shindman, a former journalist and friend of Mr. Baskin in an email to the author. Moreover, Mr. Hamad and other Hamas leaders seem locked into a competition with Israeli leaders on who can make the most blood-curdling statements. Israeli leaders have echoed Hamas' justifications for the October 7 slaughter, justifying Israel's indiscriminate bombings by asserting there are no innocent civilians in Gaza and that Israel is fighting "human animals."

The competition suggests that raw emotions, deep-seated mutual resentment, and the desire for vengeance on both sides of the Israeli-Palestinian divide will take years to overcome. Some hope, in the belief that Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu's political days are numbered because he will have to take the blame for Israel's October 7 intelligence and military failure, that a Hamas defeat and change in Israel will open the door to talks to definitively resolve the conflict.

Ram Ben Barak, a former senior intelligence official and contender for leadership of Yesh Atid, Israel's main opposition party, this week illustrated just how deep and widespread Israeli anti-Palestinian sentiment is. In an interview with Israel's Channel 12, Mr. Ben Barak called for the expulsion of Palestinians from Gaza. "If they are refugees, it's better to be a refugee in Canada than in Gaza. So, let us distribute Gazans all over the world. They are 2.5 million people. Each country takes 25,000. 100 countries. That's humane and needs to be done. If the world wants to solve the Palestinian problem, it has the ability to do so." To be fair, Mr. Ben Barak has also called for an end to settler violence against Palestinians in the West Bank. Even so, Mr. Baskin, the hostage negotiator, tore this week into Mr. Hamad in an open letter to the Hamas official

whom he has known for 18 years, spoken to more than 1,000 times, met four times, and unsuccessfully tried to meet again in 2021. "I think you have lost your mind and you have lost your moral code. You have crossed the line between humanity and inhumanity. I have never justified the killing of innocent people. I never imagined that you would justify the killing of innocent civilians... These are not the actions of human beings," Mr. Baskin wrote. "I always thought you were a man with principle of humanity. How can you justify the things that your people did? How can you call for 1 million October 7? I have called Israel's bombing of innocent civilians in Gaza a war crime," Mr. Baskin added.

Mr. Hamad's Israeli interlocutor described how he shrugged off Gazan assertions that Hamas only cared about itself and not about Palestinians. He advised Gazans to talk to the Hamas official.

"You built tunnels and bunkers for your own people – not 1 single shelter for the people of Gaza. You ran away from Gaza and deserted your people. I am sure you took your privileged family with you when you ran away," Mr. Baskin thundered. Hamas political bureau member Moussa Abu Marzouk confirmed Hamas' attitude in an October 30 interview with Russia Today's Arabic channel. "We have built the tunnels because we have no other way of protecting ourselves from being targeted and killed. These tunnels are meant to protect us from the airplanes. We are fighting from inside the tunnels. Seventy-five percent of the population of Gaza are refugees, and it is the UN's responsibility to protect them," Mr. Abu Marzouk said.

Mr. Baskin's letter is more than an expression of anger, revulsion, and disappointment in a man he had come to trust and with whom he believed Israel could do business.

It testifies to the deep, difficult to bridge rift, which will be a destructive legacy of a war that has shattered the lives of a majority of Gazans and the lives of Israeli victims of the Hamas attack and their families as well as Israel's confidence and own proclaimed moral code.

How to tackle sub-Saharan Africa's water crisis

Talmiz Ahmad

DR. MAJID RAFIZADEH

First of all, poor infrastructure and governance, as well as a lack of investments and financing to set up and maintain reliable and basic water services, are some of the critical problems. These deficiencies become even more noticeable in rural areas. Eisa Gouredou, a regional consultant for the World Bank, highlighted in March that rural areas are disproportionately impacted. She wrote: "180,000 children under the age of five die each year in sub-Saharan Africa from diarrheal diseases caused by lack of water, sanitation and hygiene services ... 85 percent of those without

Water should be considered a fundamental human right, to which all human beings are entitled, regardless of their background, ethnicity, nationality, religion or race. But consider yourself fortunate if you do have access to clean water around the clock, because it is alarming to see that one in four people globally still do not have access to safe drinking water, while 1.6 billion people lack access to basic sanitation. One of the regions that has the highest percentage of people that lack access to safely managed drinking water is sub-Saharan Africa. More than half of the people in Niger, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Ethiopia and Chad lack access to basic water services, along with 48 percent in Eritrea, 44 percent in Somalia and Uganda, 43 percent in Angola and 37 percent in Mozambique. It is important to examine the underlying reasons behind this humanitarian catastrophe in order to be able to efficiently chart a path that could address this critical concern.

First of all, poor infrastructure and governance, as well as a lack of investments and financing to set up and maintain reliable and basic water services, are some of the critical problems. These deficiencies become even more noticeable in rural areas. Eisa Gouredou, a regional consultant for the World Bank, highlighted in March that rural areas are disproportionately impacted. She wrote: "180,000 children under the age of five die each year in sub-Saharan Africa from diarrheal diseases caused by lack of water, sanitation and hygiene services ... 85 percent of those without water and 70 percent without sanitation live in rural areas."

As a result of not having access to basic water services, people are forced to gather water from unsafe rivers, swamps, lakes or ponds. Water and gender tend to be interconnected in

such situations, with women and girls disproportionately affected.

Another important problem is that water and gender tend to be interconnected in such situations, with women and girls disproportionately affected by this crisis. It is women and girls who bear the burden when there is no access to clean water services, since they are often the ones who have to spend many hours each day fetching water and carrying heavy cans of unclean water in order to provide for their families. In other words, a lack of access to clean water services leads to greater gender inequality. In addition, this crisis is adding extra risks to these women and girls when it comes to being subjected to sexual abuse, contracting diseases and dropping out of school. When they are trying to access clean water, they are often alone and are more vulnerable to gender-based violence. It is thought that at least 17 million girls and women in Africa collect water every day, often spending more than 30 minutes doing so. So, if there were easy access to clean water throughout sub-Saharan Africa, about 8.5 million hours every day – or 7 million working days every year – would be saved. Clean water gives women hope, health and opportunity. They have time to start businesses, invest in their families and take charge of their own futures. It means that girls are able to spend more time in school to further their education and aspirations. Clean water gives women a chance to make their dreams a reality," said Julia Anderson of Charity: Water. It is a step in the right direction that Goal Six of the UN Sustainable Development Goals for 2030 is ensuring the "availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all." Through this framework, governments around the world can work together to provide universal access to safely managed water services. However, while some progress

has been made, much more still needs to be done in order to achieve the SDG target of providing water in Africa and a basic level of drinking water service.

Governments around the world can work together to provide universal access to safely managed water services.

This vital process can be accelerated if it includes initiatives such as carrying out water sector reforms, attracting more investments and financing, enhancing the management of water resources and service delivery, and improving governance in sub-Saharan African nations. We should not forget that another important factor that is contributing to the lack of access to drinking water in sub-Saharan Africa is climate change. Long periods of drought in some areas are having a negative impact on water supply, as well as food production. This is subsequently affecting people's health.

In the long term, if the damage caused by climate change, such as water scarcity and a lack of agricultural resources, continues to increase, freshwater resources will be depleted in some countries. This will have an impact on national security and political stability in the region. It is alarming that the UN estimated in 2016 that two-thirds of the world's population could be living in areas facing water scarcity by 2025. In other words, sub-Saharan Africa's water crisis should not be viewed as solely Africa's problem, but rather as a global problem that needs to be resolved through cooperation.

In a nutshell, water is life and access to it should be a fundamental right of every human being. However, people in sub-Saharan Africa, particularly women and girls, are significantly impacted by a lack of access to water. Providing more money to improve this region's infrastructure, including carrying out water sector reforms, and tackling climate change are key steps to take.

—Sourced by Arab news.

Briefs

Army officer among four soldiers...

FROM PAGE 01
As a result, three militants were "sent to hell" while three others were injured, the ISPR said. The ISPR said that during an "intense exchange of fire", 43-year-old Lt Col Haider, 31-year-old Naik Khushdil Khan, 27-year-old Naik Rafique Khan and 33-year-old Lance Naik Abdul Qadir embraced martyrdom. "Sanitisation operation is being carried out to eliminate any terrorists found in the area. Security forces of Pakistan are determined to eliminate the menace of terrorism and such sacrifices of our brave soldiers further strengthen our resolve," the ISPR said. The incident comes two days after terrorists attacked the Pakistan Air Force's (PAF) heavily-guarded M.M. Alam Base during the early hours of Saturday morning.

Bilawal Bhutto hopeful...

FROM PAGE 01
[success in elections], Bilawal said adding: "[Although] anyone can be a candidate for the prime minister, the final decision is that of the people." Bilawal also termed PPP's success in Sunday's local government by-polls as merely a "trailer" and said: "The people proved [by voting] that they are with the PPP". The PPP leader's remarks come as the party, on Sunday, won big in the LB by-polls held across 14 districts of Sindh with Karachi Mayor Murtaza Wahab winning the union committee (UC) chairman seat from Karachi's Saddar Town area. Meanwhile, Karachi's deputy Mayor or Salman Murad of the PPP along with Saifullah Noor also won the chairman's seat from Malir district and Maurpur town, respectively. "Even if our [political] opponents unite [against us] they won't be able to defeat the PPP," Bilawal said.

Gaza: Israel kills one civilian...

FROM PAGE 01
He accused the Israeli army of lying about the presence of safe corridors for displaced civilians and medical personnel, warning that Israel's alleged safe routes are "nothing but corridors of death." While, a child was killed and three other Palestinians were injured after the Israeli occupation aircraft bombed parts of the roof of the Shifa Medical Complex in Gaza City. The occupation aircraft bombed the roof of the emergency department at Al-Shifa Medical Complex, which is considered the largest hospital in the Gaza Strip, wounding a group of civilians, and killing a child.

Pakistan angered over Israeli...

FROM PAGE 01
"nuclear bomb" on the Gaza Strip is "an option," according to local Anadolu Agency. The Foreign Office mentioned that the statement reflects an intention for ethnic cleansing and genocide. "This is a wake up call for int'l community to the threat posed by Israeli aggression to regional peace, security & stability," the foreign ministry added. Eliyahu, a minister from the far-right Otzma Yehudit party, said: "One of Israel's options in the war in Gaza is to drop a nuclear bomb on the Strip."

Canadian HC calls on PM Kakar

FROM PAGE 01
He highlighted the steps being undertaken by the Government in priority areas, particularly for the stabilization of the economy, facilitation of foreign investment through Special Investment Facilitation Council (SIFC), and repatriation of illegal foreigners. The Canadian High Commissioner appreciated the support extended by the Government of Pakistan to Canada's Afghan Relocation Program.

SL Cricket Board sacked after WC loss to India

The decision comes after months of corruption allegations against the country's richest sports organisation

SPORTS DESK

COLOMBO: Sri Lanka's sports minister, Roshan Ranasinghe, made a bold move on Monday by dismissing the country's cricket board, Sri Lanka Cricket (SLC), after a humiliating defeat by India at the ICC World Cup 2023. The decision comes after months of corruption allegations against the country's richest sports organisation. In a statement released by Ranasinghe's office, he announced that Arjuna Ranatunga, the country's 1996 World Cup-winning skipper, will be the newly appointed chairman of a new interim board. "Sports minister Roshan Ranasinghe has formed an interim committee for Sri Lanka Cricket," the statement said. The board's main focus will be to investigate the matter of poor performance of the Sri Lankan team in the World Cup. The Sri Lanka board of directors has appointed a new seven-member panel, which includes a retired Supreme Court judge and a former board president, following the resignation of secretary Mohan de Silva. The move is seen as an effort to restore the image of Sri Lankan cricket, which has been marred by allegations of corruption



and poor performance. Ranasinghe publicly demanded the entire board's resignations following a 302-run loss to hosts India at the World Cup. The defeat saw Sri Lanka at one point 14-6 and all out for 55, sparking public outcry and police deployment outside the board office in Colombo since protests on Saturday. Ranasinghe had said that SLC officials had no moral or ethical right to remain in office and "they should voluntarily resign". He had previously accused the board of being "traitorous and corrupt". Sri Lanka plays Bangladesh later on Monday and needs a mathematical miracle if they are to squeeze into the last four of the World Cup. Ranasinghe on Saturday wrote to full members of the International Cricket Council (ICC) — which has rules against political interference in the sport — asking for understanding and support. "Sri Lanka Cricket

has been besieged with complaints of player disciplinary issues, management corruption, financial misconduct and match-fixing allegations," Ranasinghe said in the letters, released to Sri Lankan media. The minister was forced by the ICC to withdraw a three-member panel he had appointed last month to investigate alleged corruption at the board after it was deemed to be political interference. There was no immediate reaction from the ICC to Ranasinghe's latest move, which dismissed a board that was elected in May, with president Shammi Silva on his third consecutive term. Sri Lanka has not won the World Cup since 1996, with Ranasinghe blaming the board for the "deterioration" of standards. Another cabinet minister, Prasanna Ranatunga — brother of the newly appointed interim board chairman — told parliament in August that the 1996 triumph had been "the biggest curse for our cricket". "Money started flowing to the cricket board after 1996 and with that came those who wanted to steal," he said. A former sports minister, Harin Fernando, introduced tough anti-corruption laws in 2019 after saying that the ICC considered Sri Lanka one of the world's most corrupt cricketing nations.

Verstappen wins again as Alonso snatches third on the line



SAO PAULO: Max Verstappen secured his 17th win in a record-breaking season on Sunday, resisting early pressure from Lando Norris to triumph in an accident and incident-hit Sao Paulo Grand Prix. Red Bull's three-time world champion came home 8.277 seconds ahead of McLaren's Norris on a sunlit afternoon at a packed Interlagos circuit. Behind them, Fernando Alonso snatched third for Aston Martin by just 0.053 seconds from Sergio Perez in the second Red Bull. Alonso and Perez provided a thrilling finale as they battled through the final laps before the Spaniard regained the podium position and held the Mexican at bay as they roared across the line. Lance Stroll finished fifth in the second Aston Martin ahead of Carlos Sainz of Ferrari, whose team-mate Charles Leclerc crashed out on the formation lap, and Pierre Gasly of Alpine. Seven-time champion Lewis Hamilton finished eighth for

Mercedes after a race-long survival battle against degrading tyres ahead of Alpha Tauri's Yuki Tsunoda and Esteban Ocon in the second Alpine. For Verstappen, it was his 52nd career win, lifting him one clear of four-time champion Alain Prost on the list of all-time winners. "It was really good," said Verstappen. "A well-executed race by the team, perfect pit-stops and well done I think. I had two good starts which was very important and then managed the tyres." For Norris it was a seventh podium this year and 13th of his career, the most by any driver without recording a victory. "I couldn't have done any better," Norris said. "P2 is as good as it gets nowadays. So, I'm happy with that. Max always had an answer." Alonso held off Perez after the two swapped places twice in the closing laps. "It was like 30 laps of pressure from Checo! When he passed me two laps from the end, I thought a podium

was not possible and it was gone, but I got it back," said the Spaniard. After the extreme weather of Friday and Saturday, the race began in moderate conditions with a track temperature of 46 degrees and the air at 23 as Verstappen took the lead from his 11th pole of the year. By then, the luckless Leclerc was already out. He lost hydraulics on the formation lap, smacking into the barriers and damaging his front wing. "Why am I so unlucky?" he asked. Without a front-row rival, Verstappen powered away but a collision involving Williams' Alex Albon and Kevin Magnussen of Haas brought a red flag. Both drivers escaped injury. Replays suggested Albon hit both Haas cars, of Nico Hulkenberg and Magnussen, who in turn hit the rear wing of Oscar Piastri's McLaren. In the chaos, a tyre snapped off Hulkenberg's Haas and bounced onto Daniel Ricciardo's Alpha Tauri. After a 30-minute delay, the race restarted with Piastri and Ricciardo setting off from the pit-lane following repairs. Verstappen streaked clear again. Norris resisted a Hamilton attack and Alonso used slipstream to profit and pass the Mercedes man who fell to fourth ahead of team-mate Russell. Following team advice, Hamilton was preserving his tyres — to avoid a repeat of Saturday's sprint race debacle. He could not hold off Perez on lap 19 and then pitted, swapping his softs for mediums. The leading duo pitted together on lap 27 and rejoined with Verstappen 4.7 seconds clear of Norris and Alonso, who also pitted, third. — Agencies

Bangladesh knock Sri Lanka out of World Cup

SPORTS DESK

NEW DELHI: Bangladesh defeated Sri Lanka by three wickets in the 38th match of the ICC World Cup 2023 at the Arun Jaitley Stadium, Delhi, India, on Monday and knocked the Islanders out of the tournament. Bangladesh's skipper Shakib Al Hasan and Najmul Hossain Shanto orchestrated their team's second victory in the tournament, forging a pivotal 169-run partnership that helped them get close to the 280-run target, which was eventually chased in 41.1 overs. The presence of dew on the outfield made it exceedingly challenging for the Islanders to defend the target, hampering their ability to take wickets. In the 32nd over, Angelo Mathews dismissed Shakib for 82 runs and celebrated by gesturing towards an imaginary watch in reference to an incident from the earlier innings. Shakib's dismissal triggered a rapid succession of wickets for the Tigers, momentarily suggesting a potential resurgence for the Islanders. However, Towhid Hridoy ultimately secured the win for Bangladesh. Following three prior defeats against Sri Lanka, this victory marked Bangladesh's first win over the Islanders in World Cup history. Batting first, Sri Lanka faced an early setback with Kusal Perera departing on the last ball of the first over, leaving the team at 5-1. Skipper Kusal Mendis and Pathum Nissanka then steadied the innings, constructing a 61-run partnership after the initial loss. Mendis contributed 19 runs before losing his wicket, while Nissanka fell short of his fifty, dismissed by Tanzim Hasan Sakib after scoring 41 runs. With the team at 72-3 in 12.4 overs, Sri Lanka faced a challenging phase until another 63-run partnership offered respite. After Sadeera Samarawickrama lost his wicket in the 25th over, an incident occurred as the veteran Angelo Mathews came to bat and became the first-ever batter to be timed out in the history of cricket. Mathews was ready to take strike when the strap of his helmet broke. The former Sri Lanka captain called for a new helmet and while that wait ensued, Shakib appealed with the umpires consequently ruling the batter timed out.

Yuvraj hails fitness of Pakistan team in 2017 Champions Trophy

The Australian guys have always been very fit. South African team has been fit. Kiwi guys very fit

NEW DELHI: Former Indian cricketer Yuvraj Singh showered praise on the fitness levels of international cricket teams, emphasizing the importance of physical conditioning in the modern game. While giving an interview, Yuvraj, highlighted the excellent fitness standards of teams from Australia, South Africa, New Zealand, and even Pakistan during the 2017 Champions Trophy. "The Australian guys have always been very fit. South African team has been fit. Kiwi guys very fit. When we lost Champions Trophy to Pakistan in 2017, that Pakistani team was very fit," Yuvraj said. It is worth noting that Pakistan won the ICC Champions Trophy, under the leadership of Sarfaraz Ahmed on June 18, 2017. Pakistan defeated India in the final at The Oval by 180 runs to win their first-ever Champions Trophy title. After being asked to bat first by India, Pakistan posted a daunting total of 338-4. While chasing the target, India were dismissed for 158 runs in 30.3 overs. Fakhar Zaman was awarded player of the match for scoring 114 runs off 106 balls, meanwhile Hasan Ali bagged the player of the tournament award after taking 13 wickets in five innings. — Agencies

Zaka Ashraf denies reports of rifts in Pakistan squad

LAHORE: Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) Management Committee Chairman Zaka Ashraf on Monday brushed aside the reports of discord within the national squad, saying that there was no conflict between the team members. "The entire team is united. Cricket enemies are making up baseless stories," Ashraf said while talking to media in Bahawalpur. It is pertinent to mention that team's below-par performance recently in the World Cup 2023 had ignited rumours about an "internal rift" inside the national squad that led to consecutive failures for the team in the showpiece event. Earlier, PCB had also "strongly" denied the speculations about any internal discord in the national cricket team. Ashraf said that he had invited former chief selector Inzamam-ul-Haq — who stepped down last month from his post after conflict of interest allegations — for a meeting but he resigned from the post before it. He reiterated that the Pakistani cricket team is cohesive, saying that there was no dispute between the players. He then expressed his best wishes for the national squad. The PCB chief also said that there was a proposal that the Pakistani cricketers will be allowed to play only one league apart from the Pakistan Super League (PSL).



Appreciating the players, Ashraf said that the Pakistani openers put up a great show in the previous match of the World Cup 2023. He then regretted that the Pakistani cricketers are relatively underpaid. "Our cricketers get very little money." The PCB chief further stated that he had no conversation with Pakistan skipper Babar Azam. Speaking about Pakistan's representation in India after many years, Ashraf said that seeing a huge national flag in Ahmedabad cricket stadium during the World Cup match with the arch-rivals on October 14. — DNA

Swiatek beats Sabalenka in WTA Finals semis Pole defeats world number one 6-3, 6-2 to face fifth seed in title match

OUR CORRESPONDENTS

MEXICO: Second-ranked Iga Swiatek defeated world number one Aryna Sabalenka 6-3, 6-2 to reach the title match of the WTA Finals, where she will face fellow unbeaten Jessica Pegula. By downing the reigning Australian Open champion, Swiatek denied Sabalenka a victory that would have clinched the year-end top ranking for the 25-year-old from Belarus. Instead, reigning French Open champion Swiatek of Poland can claim the year-end world number one spot for the second consecutive season by defeating American Pegula in Monday's championship match. "I feel like it's still a long way away because I feel like tomorrow's match will be the toughest one," Swiatek said. "We can talk about it tomorrow after the match. I'm just going to continue doing what I've been doing." Sabalenka overtook Swiatek for the top ranking two months ago but

would keep it only if Pegula wins. Pegula beat compatriot Coco Gauff 6-2, 6-1 in an hour on Saturday to reach the WTA

Finals championship match, stretching her overall win streak to nine matches. Swiatek owns a 5-3 career edge over



Pegula in their rivalry but the American has won two of their three meetings this year, at the United Cup and in an August semi-final on Montreal hardcourts. Swiatek beat Pegula in this year's Doha final. "I can't truly tell you the keys for tomorrow," Swiatek said. "I'm going to work on that." The final was delayed to Monday due to rain that played havoc with the week's schedule at the outdoor hardcourts in Cancun, Mexico — including stopping Swiatek and Sabalenka only three games into their semi-final on Saturday night. Swiatek was ahead 2-1 on serve when play resumed Sunday and the Pole went on the grab the only break of the opening set. Swiatek broke early in the second set and broke again for 5-2 with an overhead smash, then held serve to win on her first match point on a service winner. Sabalenka had beaten Swiatek in last year's WTA Finals semi-finals and they had split two prior meetings this year, both on clay.

Foreign weapons used in...

FORM PAGE 01

Afghanistan, foreign weapons have been increasingly used against Pakistan. It is crucial for the Afghan government to take steps to prevent its territory from being used by terrorists. It is worth noting that on November 4, terrorists attempted an attack on the Pakistan Air Force base in Mianwali, but their efforts were foiled by security forces, resulting in the killing of all nine terrorists.

Get ready for elections: Nawaz

FROM PAGE 01

Khawaja Muhammad Asif, Ahsan Iqbal, PML-N Election Cell Chairman Senator Ishaq Dar and Central Information Secretary Marriyum Aurangzeb also attended the meeting. The PML-N's election campaign has entered a new phase as Nawaz starts his meetings with party members, said the party on its official X account, formerly Twitter. In the meeting, the members also discussed the future political activities of the party and the current political situation in the country. Speaking to the leaders, Nawaz said that they will start the journey to development from where it was left off. This was the first meeting of the PML-N supreme at the central secretariat after his return to Pakistan. He arrived in the country on October 21 after four years of self-exile in London.

WHO, Pakistan to upgrade...

FROM PAGE 01

Being executed with the WHO's support, the project will have zero financial implication for the Government of Pakistan. Under the project, the WHO would support Pakistan in renovation of 464 health facilities across the country including 41 in AJK and Gilgit Baltistan, 131 in Balochistan, 64 in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, 26 in Punjab and 202 in Sindh. The WHO would support the upgrade of 21 health facilities, 14 labour rooms and six EPI training centers in AJK and GB; 99 health facilities, 26 labour rooms, and six EPI training centers in Balochistan; and 36 health facilities 21 labour rooms and seven EPI training centers in KP. The project also consists of refurbishing 15 labour rooms, nine EPI training centers and two nutrition stabilisation centers in Punjab; and 150 health facilities, 46 labour rooms and six EPI training centers in Sindh.

Solangi for coop with Chinese...

FROM PAGE 01

the report on ten years of China Pakistan Economic Corridor by All Pakistan China Enterprises Association and Pakistan China Institute, he said that the Ministry of Information and its associated organizations like Pakistan Television, Pakistan Broadcasting Corporation and Associated Press of Pakistan were already engaged with their counterparts in a structured framework to enhance the media cooperation. Appreciating the Pakistan-China Institute for hosting such a timely and important event, he said, "This event is important in the sense that it will highlight the significance and outstanding work being done by Chinese enterprises in Pakistan to the world". He said that the PCI's commitment to promotion of the sustainable endeavors of Chinese enterprises had been pivotal in enhancing the understanding of the public regarding the work of the Chinese enterprises.

Interior Minister may resign

FROM PAGE 01

Establishment as well therefore it will not be a difficult call for him to become the next Baluchistan chief minister. Sources say JUI and PML N may also be in the run for this coveted slot. Sources also confided that a leading businessman from Lahore has been tipped as the new Interior Minister. The said businessman is already in Islamabad and being interviewed by powers-that-be.

Briefs

Tokyo holds first missile evacuation drill

TOKYO: Tokyo residents dashed for cover inside a train station on Monday (Nov 6) as part of the first missile evacuation drill in the capital for years as Japan frets over the growing threat from nearby North Korea. Around 60 residents participated in the drill in Tokyo's Nerima ward, which follows a series of recent test launches from the nuclear-armed North of everything from short-range and cruise missiles to massive intercontinental ballistic missiles (ICBMs) that can strike the continental United States. Some of these launches, including a missile that flew over Japan's southern islands on Aug 24, have triggered Japan's J-Alert system which allows authorities to instantly send warnings via television, email and cellphone notifications to residents. Drill participants line up in front of Nerima train station, while a protester is seen holding a banner, before the evacuation starts, in Tokyo, Japan. However, Mutsumi Takahashi, a disaster prevention official helping to run Monday's drill, said some people still don't know what to do when the J-Alert goes off, underlining the need for more simulations.

Somalia floods displace 113,000, one year after drought

MOGADISHU :Floods caused by heavy rains across parts of Somalia have displaced more than 113,000 people and "temporarily affected" hundreds of thousands, the U.N. Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (UN-OCHA) said on Monday. The rain comes a year after the Horn of Africa nation suffered its worst drought in four decades, which combined with violence and a rise in food prices caused by the war in Ukraine killed as many as 43,000 people, according to the UN. The current October-December rainfall season has seen intense downpours in Puntland, Galmudug, South West, Hirshabelle states and in areas along the Juba river in Jubaland State, OCHA said, driven by El Nino. El Nino is a natural climate phenomenon in which surface waters of the central and eastern Pacific become unusually warm and cause changes in weather patterns around the world. "Over 706,100 people have been temporarily affected, with over 113,690 people temporarily displaced from their homes across the country," the office said in its latest update. Southwest and Jubaland states were the worst hit, with a total of about 536,608 people affected, OCHA said. In the Luuq area of southwest Gedo region, some 2,400 people were trapped by floods, the agency said, adding that steps were being taken to rescue them.—APP

Mexico's 2024 pre-election campaign begins

MEXICO CITY : The pre-election campaign for the general elections scheduled for June 2, 2024 kicked off Monday in the states of Mexico City, Jalisco and Yucatan, according to the National Electoral Institute calendar. The pre-campaign period for popularly elected positions is expected to begin on Nov. 5 and conclude on Jan. 3, 2024. President of the National Action Party (PAN) Marko Cortes Mendoza urged support for Xochitl Galvez, who will be the presidential candidate of the opposition coalition Frente Amplio por Mexico, made up of the PAN, the Party of the Democratic Revolution and the Institutional Revolutionary Party. The ruling National Regeneration Movement party will wait until Nov. 10 to announce and promote some of its candidates. Mexico will see the largest elections in its history in June 2024, as more than 20,000 public offices are up for election, with an estimated 98 million Mexicans eligible to vote.—APP



ISLAMABAD: Ambassador of Azerbaijan Khazar Farhadov in a group photo with the students of Bahria University.—DNA

UN: Taliban rule sees opium cultivation plummet by 95%

This presents a real opportunity to build towards long-term results against the illicit opium market and the damage it causes both locally and globally, said Ghada Waly

NEWS DESK

UNITED NATIONS : Opium poppy production in Afghanistan has plummeted since the Taliban imposed a drug ban last year, according to a new survey by the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, UNODC. According to the Afghanistan Opium Survey 2023, released by the Vienna-based agency on Sunday, the supply of opium declined by an estimated 95 per cent, falling from 6,200 tons in 2022 to 333 tons in 2023, corresponding to a fall in the area under cultivation, from

233,000 hectares to just 10,800 hectares over the same period. The near-total contraction of the opiate economy is expected to have far-reaching consequences, UNODC said, highlighting the urgent need for alternative development support for rural communities to build an opium-free future for the Afghan people. "This presents a real opportunity to build towards long-term results against the illicit opium market and the damage it causes both locally and globally," said Ghada Waly, UNODC Executive Director. "At the same time, there are impor-

tant consequences and risks that need to be addressed for an outcome that is ultimately positive and sustainable, especially for the people of Afghanistan," she added. The survey noted the sharp reduction has had immediate humanitarian consequences for many vulnerable rural communities that relied on income from cultivating opium. Farmers' income from selling the opium harvested in 2023 to traders fell by more than 92 per cent from an estimated \$1,360 million for the 2022 harvest to \$110 million in 2023, the survey added. "Today, Afghanistan's

people need urgent humanitarian assistance to meet their most immediate needs, to absorb the shock of lost income and to save lives," Ms. Waly said, noting that over the coming months, the country will require strong investment in sustainable livelihoods, to provide farmers with opportunities away from opium. UNODC also emphasized that though there are high levels of opiate use within Afghanistan, evidence-based treatment options remain limited. It called for evidence-based treatment to be integrated in public health measures and assis-

stance, including to prevent people with opiate use disorders from turning to potentially even more harmful substances. Beyond Afghanistan, less heroin may lead to reduced trafficking and use, or it could spur the emergence of harmful alternatives, such as fentanyl and other synthetic opioids, UNODC warned. Data on seizures indicate that traders are selling off their opium inventories from past record harvests to weather the shortfall in 2023, while heroin processing has decreased. However, trafficking in other drugs, namely methamphetamine, has surged in the region.

Guinea jailbreak: 9 killed, ex-dictator briefly freed

CONAKRY : At least nine people were killed during a weekend jailbreak in Guinea that saw armed commandos briefly pluck ex-dictator Moussa Dadis Camara from prison, officials said on Monday. Guinean security forces carry out searches after former junta leader Moussa Dadis Camara was sprung from prison by heavily armed men in a suburb of Conakry on November 4. Heavily armed men burst into the prison in the capital Conakry early on Saturday, taking Camara and three other former officials who were on trial alongside him over a 2009 massacre during his presidency. It was unclear whether Camara had escaped of his own free will in the raid, which the army described as an attempt to "sabotage" government reforms. Later on Saturday, the army and Camara's lawyer said he had been recaptured and was back behind bars, without providing details on how he was recaptured. Two of the men seized alongside Camara were also returned to the prison, while a third, Claude Pivi, was still at large. On Monday, a statement from Prosecutor General Yamoussa Conte said that nine people had died as a result of the jailbreak commando operation, including three suspected attackers, four security forces and two people, presumed to be civilians, who had been in an ambulance. Press reports had said earlier that civilians inside an ambulance had been hit during an exchange of gunfire during the raid. Dadis Camara has been detained since going on trial in September 2022. He and about 10 other former military and government officials are accused over a 2009 massacre carried out by security forces loyal to the then junta leader. The killing of 156 people and the rape of at least 109 women started at a political rally in a Conakry stadium on September 28, 2009, and continued in the days that followed, according to a UN-mandated inquiry. Camara — who himself came to power in a coup in December 2008 — and his co-defendants are charged with murder, sexual violence, torture, abduction and kidnapping. —DNA

Zelensky: No talks with Moscow until troop withdrawal

FOREIGN DESK

KYIV : Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky said that he was "not ready" for talks with Russia unless its invading troops withdraw, as Kyiv investigated a deadly strike on its soldiers. Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky on Sunday said he was "not ready" for talks with Russia unless its invading troops withdraw, as Kyiv investigated a deadly strike on its soldiers. The sprawling frontline between the warring sides has remained mostly static for almost a year despite a much-touted Ukrainian counter-offensive, with Russian forces entrenched in southern and eastern Ukraine. Officials from the United States and Europe — Kyiv's key allies — are reported to have suggested holding negotiations to end the grinding 20-month-old conflict, which Zelensky denied on Sunday. The United States "know I am not ready to speak with the terrorists, because their word is nothing", he told

NBC television, referring to Russia. "They have to go out from our territory, only after that, the world can switch on diplomacy," Zelensky added. The Ukrainian leader conceded the war was in a "difficult situation" and reiterated his need for more air defences to end Russia's control of the sky. Ukraine probes "tragedy" A Russian missile strike killed multiple Ukrainian soldiers at what media described as an "award ceremony" this week, leading Kyiv to open a criminal investigation. Local media said the attack, which is reported to have killed at least 20 troops, took place on Friday as a brigade gathered to receive awards in Ukraine's southern Zaporizhzhia region. "This is a tragedy that could have been avoided," Zelensky said in an address on Sunday. "A criminal investigation has been registered into the tragedy," he added. "The main thing is to establish the full truth about what happened and

to prevent this from happening again." AFP was unable to immediately verify the circumstances of the strike or the number of people killed. The Ukrainian army confirmed on Saturday that a number of soldiers from its 128th Mountain Assault Brigade had been killed in a missile strike the day before, without providing figures. Russia said in a defence ministry briefing on Saturday that it had inflicted a "fire defeat" on a Ukrainian assault unit in Zaporizhzhia and that up to 30 people had been killed. One Ukrainian soldier said on social media that 22 people from the brigade had been killed, criticising commanders for having held the ceremony. The dead troops "became victims of military rudimentary traditionalism in its worst form", Ivan Savvitsky said. Elsewhere on the front line, Ukrainian cruise missiles damaged a ship docked at the annexed Crimean peninsula, Russia said on Sunday, a day after Ukraine claimed

the strike. Since launching its counter-offensive earlier this year, Kyiv has ramped up attacks on the peninsula Moscow annexed in 2014, in a bid to debilitate Russia's Black Sea naval fleet. Ukraine launched 15 cruise missiles at the B.E. Butoma shipyard based in the east coast city of Kerch on Saturday, with air defences shooting down 13, Russia's defence ministry said. "As a result of being hit by an enemy cruise missile, a ship located at the plant was damaged," it added, without specifying the damage or naming the vessel.

Debris from the downed missiles also fell on a nearby dock, but no one was injured, Crimea's Russian-installed governor Sergei Aksyonov said. Ukrainian and Russian attacks in and around the Black Sea have intensified since Moscow's withdrawal from the Black Sea grain deal, which aimed to ensure safe passage to civilian ships.

Philippines seeks 'Reciprocal' troop pact with Japan

MANILA: The Philippines hopes to reach an agreement with Japan "at the soonest possible time" on allowing the deployment of military forces on each other's soil, the Philippine defense secretary said on Monday. The two close U.S. allies have agreed to negotiate a reciprocal access agreement (RAA) amid growing tensions in the region. Both countries have maritime territorial disputes with an increasingly assertive China. "We look forward to this reciprocal access agreement between both our countries given the commitment of the Japanese government and the Philippine government to preserve the rules-based international order and international law," Defense Secretary Gilberto Teodoro told a press briefing. Once an agreement is reached, it would have to be submitted to the Philippine Senate and Japanese legislature for ratification, Teodoro said. Japanese Prime Minister Fumio Kishida, on a visit to the Philippines on the weekend, said his country, the Philippines and the United States were cooperating to "protect the freedom" of the South China Sea. Teodoro was speaking on the sidelines of a ceremony at a military base, north of the capital, which is one of nine bases the United States has been given access to under the Enhanced Defense Cooperation Agreement (EDCA). The United States has said it would allocate \$100 million for infrastructure improvements at the sites. "The United States is helping the Philippine government in hardening its defensive posture to include its assertion of its legitimate rights in the West Philippine Sea," Teodoro said, referring to an area where tension has been rising between the Philippines and China over an overlapping territorial claim.—DNA

NTT to test driverless tech with Toyota

TOKYO : Japan's Nippon Telegraph and Telephone (NTT) (9432.T) plans to test driverless vehicle technology with Toyota Motor (7203.T) and invest in a U.S. startup developing self-driving systems, a spokesperson for the telecommunications firm said on Monday. NTT aims to start tests with autonomous buses and taxis as early as 2025 and invest about 10 billion yen (\$66.91 million) in U.S. startup May Mobility, the spokesperson said, highlighting growing momentum behind self-driving technology in Japan. The Nikkei newspaper first reported on Monday that NTT will invest in May Mobility, adding that both NTT and Toyota would jointly develop vehicles. Both the NTT spokesperson and a Toyota spokesperson said they had no plans for joint development. Toyota did not comment further.—APP

Tokyo stocks end higher

DNA

TOKYO : Tokyo stocks closed higher for the fourth straight trading day on Monday over market speculation that the U.S. Federal Reserve might stop raising interest rates. Japan's benchmark Nikkei stock index, the 225-issue Nikkei Stock Average, ended up 758.59 points, or 2.37 percent, from Thursday at 32,708.48, marking the sharpest increase this year at the highest level since Sept. 20. The broader Topix index, meanwhile, finished 38.07 points, or 1.64 percent, higher at 2,360.46. On the Tokyo market, buying was also encouraged by the view that accommodative monetary policy will continue following Japanese central bank head's remarks on Monday. On the top-tier Prime Market, gainers were led by nonferrous metal, machinery and transportation equipment issues. Issues that rose outpaced those that fell by 1,260 to 372, while 27 ended the day unchanged. Japanese financial markets were closed last Friday for a public holiday.

Jammu's martyrs provide courage to Kashmir's freedom movement

Ali Raza Syed said that we shall continue to raise our voice against the constant atrocities committed by brutal Indian forces in Indian Illegally Occupied Kashmir

DNA

BRUSSELS: Paying great tribute to the martyrs of Jammu of 6th November (of 1947), Chairman Kashmir Council Europe (KC-EU) Ali Raza Syed said, the martyrs of Jammu provided a great courage and support to the freedom movement of Jammu and Kashmir. In a statement issued from Brussels on the occasion of martyrdom day of Jammu (of 6 November 1947), Ali Raza Syed said, Kashmiri martyrs presented their life for the great cause of Kashmir. Ali Raza Syed said, above seven and half decades history of Jammu and Kashmir is full of sacrifices especially people of occupied Kashmir are still paying a huge price to freedom struggle for liberation of their homeland from Indian occupation. There is a less comparative example of genocide of the people of Jammu and Kashmir by the Indian occupation forces.



Chair of Kashmir Council EU said, martyrs of Jammu and Kashmir have very important role in the freedom movement. Chairman Kashmir Council EU Ali Raza Syed said that we shall continue to raise our voice against the constant atrocities committed by brutal Indian forces in Indian Illegally Occupied Kashmir (IIOK). Ali Raza Syed said, "We are highlighting issue of Kashmir including violations of human rights at the international forums until accessibility of the justice and right to self-determination to the people of Jammu and Kashmir." He urged the international community including UN and EU to take serious notice of the severe situation of human rights in Jammu and Kashmir. Calling essential role of the world community for just resolution of Kashmiri issue he said, a peaceful resolution of the Kashmir issue is crucial for peace and prosperity of the South Asian region.

Briefs

Azerbaijan launches e-visa service for Pakistanis

DNA

ISLAMABAD: In an effort to facilitate tourism and strengthen cultural ties, the government of Azerbaijan has launched a user-friendly online service for the issuance of e-visit visas to citizens from various countries, including Pakistan. This exciting development comes in November 2023, providing Pakistani tourists with a hassle-free entry into Azerbaijan. Nestled between the Caspian Sea and the majestic Caucasus Mountains, Azerbaijan offers a diverse range of experiences, bridging the gap between Asia and Europe. Hidden within hillside towns, visitors can explore ancient mosques and minarets, while also witnessing some of the most impressive modern architecture in the world. Baku boasts the stunning Flame Towers, showcasing the perfect blend of past and present. Azerbaijan's e-visa fee for November 2023:

- Standard Category: For a single-entry 30-day electronic visit visa, Pakistani tourists can avail of the standard category at a fee of \$69. The processing time for visa applications in this category ranges from 3 to 5 days.
- Urgent Category: In the urgent category, the visit visa for Pakistani nationals costs \$119. This option offers a swift consideration period, with visa applications processed within three to five hours.

Delhi pollution: No school, no play

New Delhi: That is the refrain that six-year-old Vanraj's mother, Pakhi Khanna, is bracing herself to deal with for the next couple of days in the Indian capital Delhi. The 38-year-old has cut her son's outdoor playtime to 30 minutes from two hours; his classes have shifted online this week, and football coaching has been called off. Vanraj is among thousands of schoolchildren in Delhi whose schedules have abruptly changed due to air pollution rising to alarming levels. Over the past few days, Delhi's AQI - which measures the level of PM 2.5 or fine particulate matter in the air - has consistently crossed the 450 mark, nearly 10 times the acceptable limit. Breathing this toxic air is akin to smoking 25-30 cigarettes a day, according to lung specialists. Things are so bad that Delhi's Environment Minister Gopal Rai has asked all schools to remain shut until Friday, with offline classes only for high schoolers. This isn't the first time that air pollution has disrupted learning in Delhi - it has been happening every winter over the past four-five years. - Agencies

India-Canada thaw remains remote despite visa easing

Mending frayed relations between India, Canada will be a long process after each side adopted maximalist positions

NEWS DESK

OTTAWA/NEW DELHI: Mending frayed diplomatic relations between India and Canada will be a long process after each side adopted maximalist positions, despite New Delhi's surprise move to ease some visa curbs on Canadians, officials and experts say. India recently decided to partially restore visa services, weeks after suspending them in anger at Ottawa's claim that Indian agents may have been involved in the murder of a Canadian Sikh separatist leader from Punjab state. Mutual recriminations since that accusation, which India strongly denies, have strained ties between the two countries - close for almost a century and with extensive links through the Sikh diaspora - to their worst in memory. And while India's relaxation on visas may have raised some expectations of improved relations, it was not a breakthrough, as neither side has much incentive to hasten a return to normalcy, officials and experts in both countries said. Neither New Delhi nor Ottawa looks likely to take dramatic steps to reconcile soon as Canada's murder investigation proceeds and Prime Minister Narendra Modi prepares for Indian national elections by May.

"The relationship is in deep crisis, perhaps its worst ever," said Michael Kugelmann, director of the South Asia Institute at the Wilson Center in Washington. "Each side may have a strong interest in the crisis not getting completely out of control, but that doesn't mean there are strong incentives to resolve the crisis." Ajay Bisaria, India's ambassador to Canada from 2020 to 2022, said the relationship is in a "de-escalation phase" following "quiet diplomacy". Even with the reprieve, the visa curbs are expected to hinder the movement of tens of thousands of Indians and people of Indian origin who live in Canada or plan to study there. Although both governments have spared business and trade links, the acrimony has delayed discussions on a free-trade deal and threatens Group of Seven member Canada's Indo-Pacific plans, where New Delhi is critical to efforts to check an increasingly assertive China. On September 18 Prime Minister Justin Trudeau said Canada was "actively pursuing credible allegations" linking Indian government agents to the June killing in a Vancouver suburb of Hardeep Singh Nijjar, 45, who had advocated the fringe position seeking to carve an independent Sikh homeland of Khalistan out of India. Canada expelled India's intelligence chief in Ottawa. India

quickly responded by halting 13 categories of visas for Canadians and cutting Canada's diplomatic presence in India, a move Ottawa said violated the Vienna Conventions. Then on October 25, New Delhi said it would resume issuing visas under four categories, a measure Indian officials said aims to help people of Indian origin travel to India during the wedding season beginning this month. "This is not a thaw," an Indian foreign ministry official told Reuters. "People can read whatever they want into it." Ottawa triggered the crisis and must take the first step towards climbing down from its position, another official said. A senior Canadian government source said that while Ottawa's ultimate goal was to return to where things were, unpredictability in coming months over the murder investigation and trial, as well as India's elections, could interfere. "This is a difficult moment, but Canada is not abandoning its Indo-Pacific strategy," the source said. Officials in India and Canada spoke on condition of anonymity as they were not authorised to speak on the subject. The Indian foreign ministry did not respond to a request for comment. Canada's foreign ministry pointed to comments made by Foreign Minister Melanie Jolie on Oct. 30. "We have a long-term approach when it comes

to India because this is a relationship that has spanned decades, and we all know that we have very strong people-to-people ties with the country," Jolie said, adding she continued to talk to her Indian counterpart. Canada has the largest Sikh population outside Punjab, with 770,000 people reporting Sikhism as their religion in the 2021 census. India is by far Canada's largest source of foreign students, accounting for 40% of study permit holders - a vital source for Canada's fast-growing international education business, contributing over C\$20 billion (\$15 billion) to the economy annually. India-Canada tensions over Sikh separatism have haunted the relationship since the 1980s. Modi, who heads a Hindu-nationalist party and cultivates a strongman image, is unlikely to be seen backing down, especially before the elections. Despite the "modest de-escalation" over visas, Kugelmann said most of the retaliatory measures remain "and there's still a lot of anger on both sides. So we shouldn't overstate the de-escalatory potential here". Michael Bociurkiw, a foreign policy expert at the Atlantic Council, said "a pause" was needed "for cooler heads to prevail and to get the relationship back on track". "But it is not going to happen overnight. It will take time."

Chairman Senate applauds Pak-China friendship

ADIL SHAHEEN

ISLAMABAD: Chairman Senate Muhammad Sadiq Sanjrani highlighted the enduring and deep-rooted friendship between Pakistan and China and commended the substantial contributions made by Chinese institutions and organizations operating within Pakistan, underscoring their significance in strengthening the bond between the two nations. In his message lauding the remarkable achievements of '10 Years of CPEC' during a report launching ceremony titled "Thousands of Miles with CPEC", he emphasized the enduring friendship between Pakistan and China. The ceremony was held at the Pakistan Institute of Parliamentary Services and distinguished guests in attendance included Senator Mushahid Hussain Syed, Minister for Information and Broadcasting, Murtaza Solangi, Chinese Ambassador Jiang Zaidong.



ISLAMABAD: Caretaker Prime Minister Anwaar-ul-Haq Kakar witnesses a ceremony of the signing of letters of understanding between WHO and the Government of Pakistan on Universal Healthcare, in Islamabad. - DNA

IMF demands report on state-owned enterprises' losses

ISLAMABAD: The Finance Ministry has been asked by the International Monetary Fund (IMF) to submit a fresh report regarding the losses incurred by state-owned enterprises. The Fund's mission, which is currently in Pakistan to review the country's loan tranche, said it won't accept the reports based on old statistics, the sources said. Therefore, it has demanded that the Central Monitoring Unit team submit its first updated assessment report for the first quarter of the current financial year. The IMF's review mission is in Pakistan currently to complete the first review under the \$3 billion loan programme and the possibility of releasing the second tranche of \$700 million by the end of December 2023. The tranche would go through if both sides are able to strike a staff-level agreement at the end of the talks. Pakistan and the IMF teams are currently holding technical-level talks while the policy-level talks will be held next week from November 13-16. The Finance Ministry, on the other hand, has sought time from the IMF for submission of the report by December 2023, sources added. In its reply to the Fund's delegation, the team said that government-owned enterprises are currently under scrutiny and the new statistical report will soon be completed, the sources said. Earlier today, The News reported that the visiting IMF mission is focused on Pakistan's fiscal framework for the ongoing financial year 2023-24 to turn the primary deficit into surplus under the \$3 billion standby arrangement (SBA). The IMF is not concerned by the overall rising fiscal deficit due to the escalating debt servicing of Rs1 trillion for the current fiscal year. - DNA

Opponents of ceasefire in Gaza are 'endorsing death'

CAIRO: Queen Rania of Jordan on Sunday urged a collective call for a ceasefire in Gaza and said those who are opposed to a truce were "endorsing and justifying the death of thousands of civilians." In an interview with American news channel, Queen Rania responded to US Secretary of State Antony Blinken's rejection of a ceasefire while in Amman. After meeting Arab leaders on Saturday, Blinken said a ceasefire in Gaza would only enable more Hamas attacks. Queen Rania said: "There has to be a collective call for a ceasefire and I know some who are against a ceasefire argue that it will help Hamas. However, in that argument they are inherently dismissing the death, and in fact endorsing and justifying the death of thousands of civilians. That is just morally reprehensible, short-sighted and not entirely rational." "If [Israel] manage to eliminate all of Hamas, the root cause of this conflict is its illegal occupation, routine human rights abuses, illegal settlements, disregard to UN resolutions and international law. If we do not address the root causes, you can kill the combatant but you cannot kill the cause." - Agencies

Australian PM meets Xi Jinping in long-awaited China visit

Australian writer Yang Hengjun - whose health is said to be rapidly deteriorating - has been imprisoned in China on espionage charges since 2019, and Mr Albanese is facing pressure at home to secure his release

BEIJING: Australian PM Anthony Albanese and Chinese President Xi Jinping have met for talks aimed at easing years of tensions in Beijing. Mr Albanese, who landed in Shanghai on Saturday, is the first Australian leader to visit China since 2016. The visit is seen as a key moment in thawing relations, after a string of trade and security disputes. Trade will top the agenda - Mr Albanese is calling for the removal of Chinese tariffs on Australian goods. Mr Xi is expected to ask for more access to key Australian sectors. "What I've said is that we need to co-operate with China where we can, disagree where we must and engage in our national interest," Mr Albanese told reporters in Beijing on Monday, ahead of the meeting. His trip follows a diplomatic deep

freeze prompted by - among other things - Australia's calls for an investigation into the origins of Covid-19, and economic sanctions enacted by Beijing on key Australian exports such as beef, wine and barley. It also coincides with the 50-year anniversary of Gough Whitlam's iconic visit to China to visit Mao Zedong in 1973, marking the first trip by an Australian prime minister after the establishment of diplomatic ties. Asked by reporters if Australia can "trust" China, Mr Albanese said his past engagements with Mr Xi have been "positive" and "constructive". "But we recognise, as well, that we come with different political systems, very different values arising from that and different histories. But we deal with each other on face value." But a list of sticking points and security

concerns will hang over Monday's talks. Australian writer Yang Hengjun - whose health is said to be rapidly deteriorating - has been imprisoned in China on espionage charges since 2019, and Mr Albanese is facing pressure at home to secure his release. Canberra's growing military ties with Washington and a recent overhaul of its defence posture - widely seen as aimed at countering China - could make it difficult for the two sides to find common ground outside of economic interests, analysts say. Some experts predict Beijing could push for greater access to Australia's resources and renewable energy sectors, but in recent years, the Australian government has taken measures to inhibit Chinese ownership of critical minerals and mining projects. - Agencies

SC all set to take up Musharraf's plea

ISLAMABAD: The Supreme Court will start hearing on a set of appeals moved by now deceased former president Pervez Musharraf, seeking to overturn the Dec 17, 2019, death sentence awarded to the dictator by the Special Court in the high treason case. The hearing will commence on Nov 10. The four-member bench comprises CJF Qazi Isa, Justice Syed Mansoor Ali Shah, Justice Aminuddin and Justice Athar Minallah. The former president had moved the appeal through his counsel Salman Saffar. He pleaded to set aside the conviction since the trial was conducted and completed "in sheer violation of the Constitution as well as the CrPC 1898 as well as the suspension of justice in the interest of justice and fair play." - DNA

French envoy lauds Pakrole in promoting regional peace



MEHTAB PIRZADA

ISLAMABAD: Caretaker Minister for Defence, Lieutenant General (R) Anwar Ali Hyder on Monday said Pakistan would continue to work closely with France on all matters of bilateral interest. He made these remarks during a call on paid by Ambassador of the France, Nicolas GALEY at him here at the Ministry of Defence, a news release said. The Defence Minister highlighted that Pakistan attached great importance to its relations with France both bilaterally and in the context of European Union. He emphasized

on enhanced collaboration between the Armed Forces of the two countries. The Minister stressed that Pakistan was committed to stability and peace in the region with particular focus on its relations with Afghanistan and India. He also stated that the collaboration in addressing global challenges, such as terrorism and extremism is important part of our bilateral relations. The Minister highlighted that Pakistan strongly condemns terrorism in all its forms and manifestations. The visiting dignitary appreciated Pakistan's role in regional stability and ensured to play his role for further improvement in diplomatic cooperation with Pakistan at all levels.

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