



Islamabad POST

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Donald Trump: Legal experts see uphill battle in fraud case

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Solangi asks President to act impartially

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Rohit Sharma outshines AB de Villiers

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Briefs

Justice (R) Arshad new interim KP CM

SHAMIM SHAHID

PESHAWAR: Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Governor Haji Ghulam Ali Sunday signed the summary of Justice (ret'd) Arshad Husain Shah's appointment as the new caretaker chief minister of the province. The development comes after Muhammad Azam Khan — who was the caretaker chief minister — passed away after suffering from a heart attack a day earlier. Azam was appointed as the caretaker chief minister in January this year following the dissolution of the provincial assembly by the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI)-led government. Following his demise, former KP CM Mahmood Khan and opposition leader Akram Khan Durrani held a consultative meeting to discuss the appointment of the new provincial chief executive.

Fazl condemns Israel's barbarism

STAFF REPORT

MURREE: Jamiat Ulema-e-Islam (F) Maulana Fazlur Rehman has strongly condemned the Israeli barbarism against the innocent citizens of Palestine and assured that they are with the Gaza people in this time of agony. Addressing a public gathering in Murree on Sunday, the JUI-F chief called for unwavering support for the Palestinian cause. "It is the duty of the Muslim Ummah during the ongoing Islamic summit to support the Palestinian people," he emphasized. The JUI-F head also stressed the importance of ideological perseverance, stating that it was instrumental in countering external forces, including American and Zionist influences. He asserted that we have to declare clearly that we stand with the Muslims of Gaza.

PPP's opponents will get historic defeat

DNA

KARACHI: Addressing a press conference, Sharjeel Memon said that their opponents will get a historic defeat in the next general elections. He lashed out at PML-N saying that they think of Sindh at the time of elections for their votes but the people of Sindh are ignored when PML-N is in power. However, he claimed that the people of Sindh have always rejected such political parties. PPP will not only form government in Punjab but will clean sweep across Pakistan. Yesterday, Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) delegation arrived in Karachi to meet Muttahida Qaumi Movement Pakistan (MQM-P) and other parties' leadership. As per details, Senior leader said that the delegation will meet Peer Saheb Pagara today and will forward him Nawaz Sharif's message.

'No safe space in Gaza' IOF cripples Al-Shifa and other hospitals

Over 11,100 Palestinians have now been confirmed killed including 8000 children

NEWS DESK

GAZA CITY: There is no safe space in Gaza due to the ongoing Israeli aggression, said the Palestinian Ministry of Foreign Affairs on Sunday as the war raged on for the 37th day in the narrow enclave. Thousands of Palestinians were forcefully evicted South while Israel continued to target hospitals and refugee camps amid protesters across the world calling for a ceasefire. Over 11,100 Palestinians have now been confirmed killed in the monthlong Israeli aggression in Gaza Strip, the territory's media office said Sunday. The number of deaths in the ongoing Israeli military attacks since Oct. 7 includes over 8,000 children and women. "Due to the targeting of hospitals and the prevention of entry of any of the bodies or wounded, the Ministry of Health was unable, on Saturday, to issue accurate statistics for the numbers of dead and injured during the past hours," the media office said. "We recall that the occupation (forces) committed more than 1,130 massacres, and the number of casualties reached more than 11,100 dead, including more than 8,000 children and women, and the number of wounded was more than 28,000," it added. Violent clashes raged on between IOF and Hamas fighters in Al Nasr neighbourhood, home to several

Siraj meets Ismail Haniyeh in Qatar

DNA

DOHA: Emir Jamaat-e-Islami Sirajul Haq met with Palestinian group Hamas chief Ismail Haniyeh in Qatar on Sunday. The central leadership of Hamas was also present in the meeting with Sirajul Haq. Director of Foreign Affairs of Jamaat-e-Islami Asif Luqman Qazi was also there. JI director information Qaiser Sharif said that during the meeting Ismail Haniyeh gave a detailed briefing to the JI chief on the current situation in Gaza. On the occasion Ismail Haniyeh offered thanks to Jamaat-e-Islami and Pakistani nation. Sirajul Haq said the entire Pakistan nation and the Muslim Ummah stand with you. Sirajul-Haq invited him to address the historic Gaza March in Lahore on November 19. Qaiser Sharif said Emir Jamaat-e-Islami Sirajul-Haq returned to Pakistan after a six-day visit and in the last six days, he visited Iran, Turkey and Qatar. He said Sirajul Haque will address the Palestine Convention in Sialkot today.

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Solangi to Alvi Act as a president, not as a PTI spox

The minister also reiterated the ECP's responsibility for conducting free, fair, transparent and impartial elections

DNA

LAHORE: Caretaker Minister for Information and Broadcasting Murtaza Solangi asserted on Sunday that President Dr Arif Alvi should adhere to his constitutional role rather than acting as the spokesperson for a specific political group. Interacting with media here, the minister criticised the president for displaying partiality through his statements when impartiality was expected. He pointed out that the president had been issuing statements favouring a particular party for the past two months along with tweets on constitutional matters. As the symbol of the federation under the constitution, the president should fulfill his responsibilities in alignment with constitutional principles, Solangi said, expressing a desire for continued respect for the nation's president. The minister noted that the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) had several spokespersons who could

Nawaz all set to land in Balochistan

ABBAS HASHMI

LAHORE: PML-N supremo Nawaz Sharif is reaching Quetta on Tuesday (Nov 14) for forging new alliances and boosting his party's organisation in Balochistan, as the three-time prime minister, despite his disqualification, eyes fourth term in office. Nawaz — who is regarded as the comeback man — is confident of regaining power after his conviction in the NAB cases to achieve what has been considered an impossible by many who predicted the end of politics just like during his previous exile when Pervez Musharraf had deported him to Saudi Arabia.

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12,000 land in hospitals due to smog

More than 3,347 patients were admitted to General Hospital

ABID RAZA

LAHORE: At least 12,000 people fell sick due to toxic smog and reached emergencies of various hospitals here, during the last one month. The smog has become a real threat to citizens in the provincial metropolis, though after recent rain, the intensity of smog has lessened. However the situation is still harsh as Lahore is again facing the issue of smog lately. According to the Punjab Health Department (PHD) sources, more than 3,347 patients were admitted to General Hospital, 2,487 to Jinnah Hospital, 2,876 to Mayo Hospital, 5,187 to Services Hospital and 1,859 to Sir Gangaram Hospital emergencies. Prof Ashraf Zia of Jinnah Hospital told APP that complaints of dry cough, sore throat, itchy eyes and difficulty in breathing are still being reported due to smog. He said the number of patients had decreased during the last two days with problems of nose, ear, throat and lungs.



RIYADH: Caretaker Prime Minister, Anwar-ul-Haq departing for Pakistan after completing his three day official visit of Saudi Arabia. — DNA

MQM-N league mull polls plan 'PML-N's entire focus is on Sindh Khawaja Saad says seats issue not discussed with MQM

NAZIR SIYAL

KARACHI: As Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) continues to meet other parties for potential alliance ahead of the February 8 elections, Khawaja Saad Rafique said that their focus was now entirely on Sindh. Speaking during a press conference at the Karachi Press Club on Sunday, Rafique said: "This time our entire focus is on Sindh." The PML-N politician — flanked by fellow party leaders Ayaz Sadiq, Kheel Das Kohistani, Ali Akbar Gujjar, Nihal Hashmi and Bashir Memon — expressed concern regarding the frustration in the province's rural areas. The politicians are visiting Karachi to meet with different political groups in their bid to form a strong coalition in Sindh, where the Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) maintains a stronghold. The PML-N leaders are also set to meet with leaders of the Muttahida Qaumi Movement Pakistan's (MQM-P) at the party's headquarters in Bahadurabad today at 4:30pm.

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PDM reversed all economic achievements of PTI gov't, claims PTI

KHAYAM ABBASI

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) government put the fast dwindling economy of the country on the path of rapid growth despite Covid pandemic that played havoc globally; however, PDM government imposed through regime change conspiracy reversed all the hard economic gains of Imran Khan-led government, inflicting more economic catastrophe to the country than the accumulative damage caused by floods, earthquakes and COVID. PTI issued whitepaper on the economic catastrophe caused by

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EU 'appalled' by reports of 1,000 killed in Darfur

These latest atrocities are seemingly part of a wider ethnic cleansing campaign

NEWS DESK

BRUSSELS: The European Union (EU) said on Sunday it was "appalled" by reports of more than 1,000 people killed this month in Sudan's West Darfur in an apparent "ethnic cleansing campaign" by the paramilitary Rapid Support Forces (RSF).

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Whither PTI as parties kick start election campaign

COMMENT

ANSAR M BHATTI



POLITICAL parties are intensifying their election campaigns in anticipation of the forthcoming announcement of the election schedule by the Election Commission. Notably, the PML-N appears particularly optimistic about its prospects in the upcoming elections, in stark contrast to the PPP, which faces challenges in conducting its campaign. The PPP expresses reservations about its ability to secure favor from the Establishment, believing that it has not successfully garnered their support. Hence we often hear from them about the 'foul play' on the part of the powers-that-be, which, according to PPP, want to keep it out of the parliament. Even if it is so, the PPP should not worry about it at all as it claims to be a party of the underprivileged having deep roots among masses. It also claims to have done a lot for the have-nots, therefore in this case it should not be a matter of great concern for them even if the Establishment has chosen to be on the side of the PML-N!!

The PML-N is poised to encounter significant hurdles in the days ahead within the complex landscape of Pakistani politics. Traditionally, political alliances among key political parties in Pakistan materialize post-elections, with the party securing a simple or absolute majority determining partnerships based on preferences. However, in a departure from this norm, the PML-N appears to have entered into a pre-election alliance with the MQM. Speculation abounds regarding whether this collaboration was a strategic decision or if external factors compelled the party into this alliance. Regardless of the impetus behind this unconventional move, it is evident that the alliance carries potential risks for the PML-N both leading up to and following the elections. Moreover, it appears to be a marriage of convenience rather than an alliance, underscoring its inherent fragility. There are strong indications that the PML-N is poised to lead the next government in collaboration with the MQM and a few other political parties. Efforts are underway to orchestrate a political alliance between the PML-N and the recently established IPP. However, if this alliance materializes, concerns arise that the PML-N might face challenges in completing its term. Recognizing the potential risks, sensible voices within the party are actively working to counter this move. Some leaders

advocate for exploring a strategic seat adjustment with the IPP instead of forming a comprehensive alliance. Nevertheless, a significant majority within the party opposes even the seat adjustment option. The likelihood of Nawaz Sharif assuming the office of the prime minister for the fourth time remains a formidable challenge. The intricacies of this process become particularly apparent when considering the timeline associated with the election schedule. Upon the announcement of the election schedule, candidates are required to submit their nomination papers. This crucial step is anticipated to conclude in December or early January. However, Nawaz Sharif's ability to file his nomination papers hinges on the timely resolution of his appeals seeking acquittal. If the decision on his appeals is delayed, it could potentially impede his ability to file nomination papers within the stipulated timeframe. In such a scenario, it becomes increasingly likely that Nawaz Sharif may opt to participate in by-elections. Nevertheless, this decision would be contingent on the court's verdict. The timing of the court decision holds significant weight, as a delayed outcome could necessitate the appointment of an interim prime minister as a stopgap arrangement. As reports suggest, there is still a kind of disagreement between the PML N and the Establishment. PML N

wants at least a simple majority in order to steer clear the country out of existing political and economic mess. It is however yet to get a positive nod in this regard. The PTI, contrastingly, remains entangled in the repercussions of strained relations with influential forces. During Imran Khan's tenure in power, he seemingly overlooked the crucial role played by the Establishment in propelling him to office and sustaining his position. Over time, an illusionary sense of genuine popularity seemed to engulf him, leading him to believe that his three years in office had significantly improved the lives of the less privileged in the country. Unfortunately, this misconception exacted a substantial toll, as he found himself facing the consequences of a misjudged assumption. However, the undeniable truth persists that the abrupt removal of his government and the subsequent rise of PDM figures triggered a significant change in public sentiment, ultimately swaying support towards the PTI leader. The subsequent lackluster performance of the PDM not only reversed Imran Khan's status from a political underdog to a hero but also cemented a narrative that the PDM leadership continues to grapple with, a mistake that will haunt them indefinitely. The pivotal question at hand revolves around the prospective trajectory of the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) and its charismatic

leader, Imran Khan. Analyzing Imran Khan's political future reveals a stark reality: his chances of clinching victory in upcoming elections seem remote, contingent upon a significant discord between the Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) and the Establishment. The PTI's ascendancy to the forefront becomes plausible only when such differences reach a threshold, positioning the party as the sole viable alternative. Despite this, the PTI might secure participation in elections, albeit without prominent figures. Allowing the PTI to be part of the electoral landscape is pragmatic, as their absence could render the entire electoral process futile. Intriguingly, there are internal voices advocating for a PTI boycott of the elections. However, irrespective of internal debates, the PTI should not relinquish its position and must field candidates across all constituencies. Learning from past missteps, the PTI should refrain from repeating the error of resigning from assemblies, a move that inadvertently cedes ground to its adversaries. Instead, adopting a strategy of active participation ensures that the PTI remains a formidable force, resilient in the face of challenges. In essence, the party must navigate the complex political terrain with strategic nominations, avoiding self-imposed sidelines and contributing to shaping the political landscape, even in the absence of high-profile figures.

Alumni of ICG f6/2 “Bachpan Say Pachpan Tak” celebrated

This reunion was attended by many notable teachers and students who are at the height of their careers, and the credit goes to their alma mater

DNA

ISLAMABAD: The memorable event of Islamabad college for girls (ICG) f6-2 organised and over 200 old students of institution participated “Bachpan se pachpan tak” was the tagline of Alumni reunion to celebrate 55 glorious years of success and achievements of college. The Chief Patron for Life Ms. Nusrat Khan, Chairperson and principal college Prof. Sabah Faisal, President Ms. Saira Kamran, Vice President Ms. Zainab Raza, Secretary Ms. Asia Malik and Treasurer Sana Haris were the driving force behind this event. This reunion was attended by many notable teachers and students who are at the height of their careers, and the credit goes to their alma mater. Some of the golden personalities from year 1970 to 1980 included Ms. Anis

Sheikh, Ms. Rashida zafer, Ms. Naheed Saleem, Ms. Ruqqiya younis., Ms. Chand Qaiser, Ms. Tazeen Rehman, Ms. Shahnaz Ansari, Ms. Fouzia Mujahid, Ms. Shehnaz and the list goes on and on. Very Gem students of the college who are now serving important positions in both government and private sectors were all in attendance, including Ms. Noor Anna Malik, Ms. Sadia Naeem, Ms. Irum Mumtaz, Ms. Rida Kamran and many, many more. The huge gathering comprised graduating batches of 1970's till 2020's. Most of the girls came from all over the world to attend this meritorious event and were very much excited to explore and revive their golden memories of every nook and corner of their institution. The event started with the Name of Allah and Recitation of Holy Quran. The highlight of the event was video

presentation of our gems, who are no more with us, including teachers and students. ICG Anthem was sung with great zeal and spirits along with National Anthem. Ms. Nusrat Khan and Ms. Saira Kamran presented the brief history of ICG and the role it has played in the lives and careers of all. Prof Sabah Faisal highlighted the point that this institution will welcome its alumni always and be there for all. The event also included Qawali Night and a very mouthwatering dinner. The event ended with the presentation of Alumni Shield to Ms. Nusrat Khan and Prof Sabah Faisal by the team as a token of appreciation for all the efforts and dedication. The night Sky lantern were flown to commemorate the 55 glorious years of the institution. In the end, all participants prayed for palistanian muslims and raised funds for them. All in all, it was a very happening event.



Rs.453.8m fine imposed on 3694 power pilferers

DNA

FAISALABAD: The Faisalabad Electric Supply Company (FESCO) caught 3,694 power pilferers during the last 65 days and imposed Rs. 453.8 million fine for stealing electricity in various areas of the company during the ongoing special anti-power theft drive. Spokesman Tahir Sheikh said here on Sunday that over 9.813 million detection units were charged. A sum of over Rs. 270.8 million was also recovered from the defaulters. He said that 3506 cases were registered against power theft in various police stations whereas the police also arrested 3060 pilferers so far. He further said that the FESCO teams detected electricity theft at 1183 points in Faisalabad district and imposed a fine of Rs.143.4 million on them under the head of 3100,000 million detection units. In Jhang district, the FESCO teams caught 394 electricity thieves and imposed a fine of Rs.55.8 million under 1343,000 detection units. Similarly, 399 cases of electricity theft were detected in Bhakkar district and the company handed down the power pilferers with a fine of Rs.50.3 million under 985,000 detection units. He further said that 393 electricity thieves were caught from Chiniot district and they were imposed a fine of Rs.56.3 million under 1230,000 detection units.

Disable children protest against Israeli atrocities in Palestine

ABBOTTABAD: In a demonstration of solidarity with the Muslim population of Palestine and condemnation of the atrocities committed by the Zionist forces, the Association for Physically Disabled Children and Women on Sunday held a protest in Abbottabad. The protest, attended by notable figures including Dr. Aram Sadiq, former MPA Amina Sardar, Chairperson of Special School Sobia Shaukat, Sameena Kouser Rajput, Chairperson of SEEM Special School, Sadiya Sajid Awan from RISE Special School, and Zeb-un-Nisa from Orion School,

aimed to shed light on the discrimination faced by physically disabled children and women in the wake of the heinous acts perpetrated by the Zionist forces. During the protest, strong condemnation was expressed for the ethnic cleansing in Palestine and the blatant violations of human rights laws. The speakers urged Muslim leaders to take practical steps to stop the ongoing atrocities in Palestine. Sobia Shaukat, the founder and chairperson of the SEEM Institute, remarked that today's youth seem to be losing themselves in the vibrant colours of social

media, neglecting the actions and sacrifices of their predecessors. The speakers highlighted the silence surrounding the cries of Muslim daughters and children in Palestine and the desecration of Masjid Al-Aqsa. The protest from physically disabled children and women in Abbottabad is a determined voice, aiming to awaken Muslim leaders and youth. They emphasized that the global Muslim community must continue raising its voice for the protection of the rights of Muslims in any region.—DNA

Joint efforts transform Rakh Damyal cemetery: RCCI

DNA

RAWALPINDI: The Rawalpindi Chamber of Commerce and Industry (RCCI) President and Chairman RWMC Saqib Rafiq has said that all efforts will be put to make Rakh Dhamial a model graveyard. The Rawalpindi Waste Management Company (RWMC) will maintain cleanliness in the graveyard,” he said. The boundary wall of the graveyard for Muslims has been completed and the ground leveling work is in progress. He made these remarks at the inaugural of a graveyard developed on 100 Kanals for minorities at Rakh Dhamial area of Rawalpindi. Commissioner Rawalpindi



Liaqat Ali Chatha, Pastor Adil Gill, MCR representatives and graveyard committee members were also present on the occasion.

Saqib Rafiq in his address said that Rakh Dhamial Graveyard was a long-standing problem of the residents of Rawalpindi, for which the



RAWALPINDI: British High Commissioner, Jane Marriott lays wreath at the Rawalpindi War Cemetery to honour the British Indian ay soldiers on the occasion of Remembrance Day. – DNA

7 SHOs suspended, 14 reshuffled to improve performance

FAISALABAD: City Police Officer (CPO) Captain (ret'd) Muhammad Ali Zia has suspended Station House Officers (SHOs) of seven police stations on charge of negligence and delinquency in addition to reshuffling 14 others for improving performance of police department. A police spokesman said here on Sunday that among the suspendees included SHO Samanabad police station Sub Inspector Muhammad Zeeshan Khalid, SHO Dijkot police station Sub Inspector Muhammad Sha-keeb Raza, SHO Sandal Bar police station Sub Inspector Zahid Ali Awan, SHO Mansoorabad police station Sub Inspector Khawaja Imran Mannan, SHO Khurarianwala police station Sub Inspector Ghazi Muhammad Afzal, SHO City Jaranwala police station Inspector Mansoor Sadiq and SHO GARH police station Sub Inspector Shahid Ali Awan. Meanwhile, SHO Jhang Bazaar police station SI Rizwan Shaukat was transferred and appointed as SHO Samanabad police station, SHO D-Type Colony police station SI Muhammad Muazzam Aslam as SHO Dijkot police station, SHO Lundianwala police station SI Javid Iqbal as SHO D-Type Colony police station and SHO Civil Line police station Inspector Arif Hussain as SHO Lundianwala police station. Similarly, Inspector Zahid Hussain was transferred from Police Lines and appointed as SHO Sandal Bar police station.—DNA

Farah allegedly kept secret passport for laundering

LAHORE: Investigations have revealed that former first lady Bushra Bibi's close friend, Farhat Shehzadi alias Farah Gogi, possesses a secret passport from an unknown country named Vanuatu. This revelation has unearthed another ploy of Farah Gogi to conceal her ill-gotten wealth. Investigations revealed that Farah got a secret passport made for an unknown country called Vanuatu for money laundering. She undertook several foreign trips to hide her wealth in different

countries. Furthermore, the son of a property tycoon was tasked with buying a secret international passport, the probe added.

The property tycoon offered a businessman \$130,000 for the passport. Investigations further said that on March 28, 2022, Farah's secret passport was handed over to Bushra Bibi, former first lady and the wife of former prime minister Imran Khan.

Only six days before Imran Khan's government was toppled, Farah Gogi was

made to flee to Dubai. After reaching Dubai, all the travels were made on this secret passport to evade coming on the radar of investigation agencies.

To stash all the ill-gotten wealth abroad, she made secret trips on this secret passport and also maintained bank accounts through it. Just two days ago, the front-person was proved to be the owner of Rs14.5 billion worth of assets. In the three years during Imran's rule, Farah's wealth increased by Rs4.5 billion.—DNA

Naqvi reviews progress on 43 welfare projects

DNA

LAHORE: Punjab Caretaker Chief Minister Mohsin Naqvi, during a meeting at Planning & Development (P&D) board office on Saturday, reviewed progress being made on 43 public welfare preferential projects through the drone footage. Chairman Planning & Development Board Iftikhar Sahu briefed the CM about physical progress made on the projects. Mohsin Naqvi issued directions to the secretaries concerned to complete the ongoing projects within stipulated time period. Progress on Shahdara multi grade flyover Imamia Colony overhead bridge, Akbar Chowk flyover and Ring Road Southern Loop was reviewed during the meeting. A briefing was given about the construction of dual road from the Wahno Interchange up to Benazir Chowk to link Gujranwala

with the Sialkot-Lahore Motorway, construction of Abdullahpur flyover at Faisalabad and construction of road from Gajjumata up to Kasur Ferozepur Road. CM expressed his grave concern over sluggishness being shown in the pace of work on the Multan Shujaabad flyover project and directed to speed up pace of work on the project. Progress with regard to upgradation work of other hospitals including new GOR, Services, Ganga Ram, Lady Willingdon, Mayo and General Hospitals was reviewed during the meeting. A briefing was given during the meeting about the upgradation work of Lahore Zoo, Safari Park and Safe City Authority projects of Faisalabad, Rawalpindi and Gujranwala. Establishment of a Cadet College Multan, Gujranwala University, restoration of Fort Kohna Qasim Bagh Multan and establishing a park was also reviewed

during the meeting. The participants were given a briefing about PAFDA (Punjab Agriculture, Food and Drug Authority) Laboratory and Bio Gas plants. A fatiha was offered for salvation of the soul of Director General Punjab Forensic Science Agency Doctor Muhammad Ashraf Tahir late. The participants paid tributes to the invaluable services of Doctor Muhammad Ashraf Tahir late. CM remarked that Doctor Muhammad Ashraf Tahir late was an asset and his services in PAFSA will always be remembered. Meanwhile, Punjab Caretaker Chief Minister Mohsin Naqvi paid glowing tribute to Police Sub-Inspector Rizwan Mehboob for embracing martyrdom in a firing at Dera Ghazi Khan. In his message, Naqvi expressed his heartfelt sympathy and condolence with the heirs of the martyred.

Experts advocate local empowerment for flood mitigation

The workshop titled “Hill Torrents: Turning Risk into Opportunities”, was organized by International Water Management Institute (IWMI) Pakistan with support from USAID

DNA

PESHAWAR: Environmental experts at an international workshop noted that empowering local communities to assume a central role in flood risk mitigation is paramount, given that they are the most directly affected by such events. “By equipping these communities with the requisite resources and technical knowledge and tools for effective water management, we can transform this flood from a risk into an economic opportunity,” observed the experts. The workshop titled “Hill Torrents: Turning Risk into Opportunities”,

was organized by International Water Management Institute (IWMI) Pakistan with support from USAID. “This workshop was marked by engaging discussions, collaborative presentations, and expert insights, as community members and stakeholders gathered to address water-related issues and explore solutions in the challenging context of hill torrents,” said Dr. Sarfraz Munir, Researcher, IWMI Pakistan. “Through this consultation, our aim is to foster collaboration and engagement with relevant government departments, policymakers, the private sector, academia and, most importantly, the local communities. We are

committed to listening to and learning from firsthand experiences, as we collectively work towards addressing and mitigating the challenges posed by changing rainfall patterns and the increasing threat of floods,” said Mr. Muhammad Nawaz, Development Specialist, USAID/Pakistan. The Community Listening Session served as a platform where community members were convened to engage in a meaningful dialogue regarding their experiences and challenges while confronting with the heavy rainwater originating from the hills in the form of hill torrents. This interactive gathering provided an invaluable opportunity

for community elders to share their perspectives and insights. The communities who participated in the discussion were from the Daraban Zam, Tank Zam and Gomal Zam areas, of District Tank and Dera Ismail Khan, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. This constructive exchange was enriched by informative presentations delivered by representatives from non-governmental organizations (NGOs), the private sector, and the public sector. Distinguished speakers included Engr. Tariq Ali from the Irrigation Department, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Munawar Khatak of HELVETAS Pakistan, and Engr. Zahoor

Ahmad from Ages Consultants, Peshawar. The event featured an enlightening panel discussion chaired by Nazim Ali, a USAID representative, focusing on the priorities of public and non-governmental sectors. This panel brought together key stakeholders from the public and private sectors, along with representatives from NGOs, to exchange views and highlight collective priorities. “Hill Torrents: Turning Risk into Opportunities” workshop underscored the pivotal role of community engagement, cross-sector collaboration, and expert guidance in harnessing the potential for transformative change in these challenging environments.

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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

Hotels & Restaurants



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



Turkish Airlines.....8494949



Emergency

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



Enquiry

Edhi Ambulance.....115
PIA Flight Info.....114
PIA Cargo.....9280979
Railway Inquiry.....117
Railway Exchange9270831-5
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

ICCI urges CDA and MCI to address key issues

The representatives of various markets also highlighted various issues and emphasized that the CDA and MCI cooperate in addressing issues and facilitating the trading community for better growth of trade activities

MEHTAB PIRZADA

ISLAMABAD: Ahsan Zafar Bakhtawari, President, Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry (ICCI) said that the business community is the major contributor to tax revenue generation and emphasized that CDA and MCI should facilitate them in promoting business activities. He said that Pakistan is going through a difficult economic situation and all concerned government departments should facilitate the business community in business promotion that will help make the economy self-sustainable. He said this while talking to Rana Muhammad Waqas Anwar, Chief Officer, MCI during his visit to ICCI along with Yasir Farhad DMA and Rana Waqas Director Revenue. Ahsan Bakhtawari said that providing clean drinking water and other facilities is the basic responsibility of a municipality and urged that CDA and MCI should provide these facilities to the business community in Islamabad. He stressed that CDA, MCI and ICT Administration should set up one window facility in their respective domains to address the key issues of the business community under one roof. He said that CDA should allocate a playground to ICCI for promoting sports activities. He stressed that CDA should set up flower markets in commercial centres including I-8 Markaz and G-11 Markaz for young entrepreneurs. He proposed that CDA and



MCI should allocate some funds for Traders Welfare Associations to complete the pending development works markets. He said that old sewerage lines are often blocked in markets and stressed for their replacement with new ones. Speaking on the occasion, Rana Muhammad Waqas Anwar, Chief Officer, MCI said that one window for payments of fees will be operational soon. He said that CDA and MCI would utilize funds for the development of markets. He said that an increase in taxes will be made in consultation with the business community. He

assured that the issues of cleanliness of markets and auction of areas for flower markets will be addressed. He suggested that a team of ICCI should visit MCI to finalize the plan for addressing issues step by step. Yasir Farhad, Director DMA said that smart parking solutions in markets and the city are being planned. He said that payment of license and other fees can now be made online. He said that ICCI and market associations should cooperate with CDA and MCI in addressing the issue of encroachments in markets. Rana Waqas, Director

Revenue MCI assured to resolve the tax payment issues of the business community. Khalid Iqbal Malik, Group Leader ICCI said that frequent transfers of the Heads of CDA and ICT Administration slow down the pace of development works in the city and stressed that the government should appoint them for at least 3 years to ensure continuity of development works. Zafar Bakhtawari, Former President ICCI and Secretary General UBG Pakistan said that filtration plants and public washrooms are the basic needs and emphasized

that CDA should provide them in markets to facilitate the traders. He further stressed for providing parking, carpeting of roads, repair of footpaths in markets. Muhammad Ejaz Abbasi, Former President ICCI stressed that the CDA should revise the terms and conditions for the auction of plots in consultation with the stakeholders. The representatives of various markets also highlighted various issues and emphasized that the CDA and MCI cooperate in addressing issues and facilitating the trading community for better growth of trade activities.

Gilgit-Baltistan Pavilion enthalls visitors at Lok Mela

DNA

ISLAMABAD: The Gilgit-Baltistan (GB) pavilion has emerged as a captivating attraction at the ongoing Lok Mela at Lok Virsa Islamabad, captivating visitors with its vibrant cultural tapestry as the pavilion, which proudly presents the region's rich heritage and traditions, has garnered immense interest from attendees. A jam packed musical night was held on late Saturday at Lok Virsa and this time it was Gilgit-Baltistan that has to entertain the audience with their melodious songs. A large number of people from all provinces enjoyed the folk songs presented by the musicians in different regional languages of GB with the beats of their traditional musical instruments. A throng of curious visitors has been drawn to the GB pavilion, eager to explore the diverse array of cultural artifacts, handicrafts, gemstones, showpieces, and delectable local delicacies on display. The exquisite craftsmanship, unique gemstones, and tantalizing local cuisine presented by the artisans have garnered widespread praise. There were some appetizing food dishes that local people love to eat in which some of traditional cuisines that are a special trademark of this stunning valley were showcased in the event. The food lovers from diverse cultures were seen enjoying the regional cuisines at different food stalls and the major attractions for the visitors were included dumplings (Mamtoos), Dodao, Lakhman, Suman, Chapshuro, Gyalang.

PIDE unveils insights into socio cultural landscape of Pakistanis

MAHNOOR ANSAR

ISLAMABAD: The Pakistan Institute of Development Economics (PIDE) announces the release of groundbreaking research encapsulating the historical, socio-cultural, and behavioral aspects of the Pakistani population. This extensive study, titled "BASICS," compiles diverse research notes that delve into the beliefs, attitudes, social capital, institutions, community, and self of Pakistanis. The results, derived from a nationwide survey, provide a detailed focus on the representative trends and patterns across the six thematic areas that BASICS research explores. To unravel the reasons behind these trends, the study conducted qualitative research through focus group discussions and episodic interviews. This in-depth analysis took place in key regions, including Upper and Southern Punjab, Islamabad Capital Territory,

Rawalpindi, Bahawalpur, and Multan. A total of 16 focus group discussions and multiple interviews engaged participants from universities, including students, academic and administrative staff. Additionally, entrepreneurs, religious minorities, and transgender communities were interviewed for a comprehensive understanding. The study introduces three interrelated themes—Identity, Inclusion, and Social Capital—along with contemporary sub-themes defined by gender, profession, political affiliation, ethnicity, religious ethos, and sexual orientation. Authored by Dr. Durre Nayab, Pro Vice Chancellor, PIDE, and Dr. Fahd Zulfiqar, Assistant Professor, PIDE, the qualitative report initiates with a critical examination of identity. Addressing the layered, intersectional, and multi-vocal nature of identities for Pakistanis, the research taxonomizes identity into Individual (self,

collective, contrived, gendered, and performative), Social (shared identities defined by ethnicity, religiosity, and majority-minority divides), and National (nationality and a sense of longing and belonging to the homeland). The research underscores that identities are predominantly gendered for women, nationalistic and ethnicized for men, communal for religious, and marginalized for sexual minorities. Another focal point of the study is Social Capital, wherein the research identifies the forms of capital possessed by respondents, explores variations in their habitus, and scrutinizes the role of cultural capital in reinforcing social power dynamics. The study also investigates the role of vertical and horizontal social capital in social networking and in the development of gendered, professionalized, and spatial relationships. Addressing inclusivity, the study reports that

Pakistanis exhibit circumventing behaviours toward religious minorities, marginalizing tendencies towards transgender individuals, patriarchal, sexist, and heteronormative attitudes towards women, and majoritarian inclinations towards men. The issue of trust emerged as a central theme, with participants expressing mistrust in key institutions, including the State, government, judiciary, police, and army. Reasons for this mistrust, narrated from the lived experiences of the respondents, range from case pendency and political influence in the judiciary to complicity in criminal activities and excessive government footprint. The current study, the first in the series on "Who Are We?" (Qualitative Analysis), sets the stage for subsequent reports. The next report will feature diverse individuals articulating their beliefs, attitudes, selves, communities, social capital, and perceptions of institutions.

Mushaal meets Chief Advisor to His Excellency Pope Francis

ISLAMABAD: Special Assistant to Prime Minister for Human Rights and Women Empowerment Mushaal Husseini Mullick had a comprehensive meeting with Chief Advisor Adel to His Excellency Pope Francis head of the Catholic Church, the bishop of Rome and sovereign of the Vatican City State. They discussed matters of mutual interest including Interfaith, working towards co-existence, eliminating the possibility of discord, violent or non-violent, said in a press release issued here on Sunday. Both the dignitaries agreed that the teachings of all religions are based on peace, love and harmony and a true follower of any religion can never think of provoking hatred against other faiths. They reaffirmed their commitment that through broader dialogue and effective communication, each side will be able to understand the other dispassionately and curb those prejudices that give rise to hatred and conflict in religion. The Chief Advisor to His Excellency Pope Francis Head of the Vatican invited Mushaal to visit the Vatican City and send the message of peace and interfaith harmony to the world as a Muslim woman of the 21st century. Mushaal said that it was need of the time to develop and identify mystical interpretations around the true moderate and tolerant message of Islam to the world and become an enabler towards meaningful interfaith dialogues. The guiding idea is not to tamper with the basic tenets of Islam or any faith but to present them in a form wrapped with the message of love, tolerance and moderation, as the Sufis did in order to avoid a clash of civilizations and resolve global conflicts. Both agreed that religious leaders, as spiritual guides and moral authorities, have a profound influence on their followers. Their collective voice can be utilized as a powerful force for the peaceful settlement of issues concerning humanity, especially the conflicts of the Palestine-Israel and Kashmiri as human lives are priceless regardless of caste, colour, creed, religion and nationality. DNA

Kashif highlights importance of digital transformation

ISLAMABAD: Coordinator to Minister of State and Federal Tax Ombudsman Meher Kashif Younis here on Sunday said the global Information Technology (IT) services market is expected to grow from \$1.3 trillion in 2022 to \$2.1 trillion by 2025

and Pakistan must prioritise digital transformation of businesses to meet the global challenges. Speaking at a seminar on "Impact of Digital Transformation of Businesses" organized under the aegis of Gold Ring Economic Forum, a strategic think tank, he said that

digital transformation and IT export were vital for economic growth and competitiveness in the 21st century, said a news release. He said that Pakistan had made significant progress in this sector in recent years. By predicting future trends, we can anticipate that there

will be more opportunities and challenges for Pakistani businesses in this sector in the coming years, he added. Meher Kashif said that the digital economy was growing rapidly and it was expected to contribute significantly to the country's economic growth in the coming years. Pakistan is a developing country with a population of 240 million, 65 percent of whom are between 15.-APP

Air pollution impact on vegetation in Pakistan

M BASHIR FARHAN

Air pollution can have adverse effect on vegetation in Pakistan. Effect depends on the specific pollutants involved and their concentrations. Here are some ways in which air pollution impact on vegetation in Pakistan. Sulfur dioxide (SO2) and nitrogen oxide (NOx) could be threat for photosynthesis the process by which plants make their food whenever photosynthesis will be reduced ATPs production will be reduced and it will lead to stunted growth and productivity. Ground level ozone O3 a major component of smog it can lead to damage plant tissues and reduce growth.

Symptoms on leaves include yellowing and stippling and can decrease plant ability to produce food through photosynthesis. When sulfur dioxide and nitrogen oxide bond with each other lead to acid rain formation. Acid rain become threat for soil pH harm and plant roots Some heavy metals are very toxic for plants such as lead, mercury, and cadmium deposited in to soil. These metal become serious threat for plant growth and development. Plants also need to breathe When air will be polluted then airborne particulates matter and pollutants can clog stomata due to this the respiratory system of plant is disturbed. Due to air pol-

lution immune system of the plants is also disturbed pollution make it more susceptible to disease, pest and environmental stresses. As plants are sensitive to pollution and air pollution lead to change the composition of plants plant have to tolerate that environment otherwise plant decline or die. Air pollution can have significant economic implications, especially in agriculture. It can lead to food scarcity and economic losses for farmers. Air pollution can disturb ecosystem by harming vegetation that are the main source of food and habitat and lead to disturbance in entire food web. Air pollution also show impact on desert vegetation. The deposition

of pollutants effect their growth and health. Some air pollutants have the ability to disturb the reproductive systems of plants and lead to alteration in flowering and seed production. Pakistan has taken steps to address the air pollution such as National environmental Quality standards (NEQS) and to produce air quality monitoring, effective enforcement and efforts to reduce emissions form industries and factories. Raising public awareness and air pollution is difficult for promoting environmental protection and public health. Here are some ways to promote public awareness about air pollution in Pakistan,



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Briefs

11 outlaws arrested; drugs, liquor and weapons recovered

ISLAMABAD: Islamabad Capital Police apprehended 11 outlaws from different areas of the city during the last 24 hours and recovered liquor, drugs and weapons with ammunition from their possession, a public relations officer said. He said that, following the special directions of Islamabad Capital City Police Officer (ICCP) Dr. Akbar Nasir Khan, the Islamabad Capital Police has intensified crackdown against the criminal elements in order to eliminate the crime from the city. Following these directions the Shalimar police team arrested an accused namely Said Aziz Shah and recovered one 12 bore gun from his possession. The Tarnol police team arrested an accused namely and recovered one 30 bore pistol with ammunition from his possession. Likewise, the Sangjani police team arrested an accused namely Muhammad Nawaz involved in illegally gas refilling. The Sihala police team arrested an accused namely Esab Khan and recovered 250 gram heroin from his possession. Similarly, the Humak police team arrested two accused namely Ishfaq Ghafoor and Adeel Abbas and recovered 3556 gram heroin from their possession. The Lohi Bher police team arrested two accused namely Shahbaz and Shakeel and recovered 1057 gram hashish from their possession. Moreover, the Phulgran police team arrested an accused namely Idrees and recovered 213 gram heroin from his possession. The Sabzi Mandi police team arrested two accused namely Muhammad Amir and Sheraz and recovered 10 liters liquor and 110 gram heroin from their possession. —DNA

Prof. Choudhary honored with another international distinction

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Tianjin Institute of Industrial Biotechnology, Chinese Academy of Sciences (TIB-CAS) has appointed H.E. Prof. Dr. M. Iqbal Choudhary, Coordinator General COMSTEC as visiting professor. Prof. Yan-He Ma, Director General of TIB-CAS bestowed this prestigious honor in a magnificent ceremony held at Tianjin, China. Prof. Choudhary is the only Pakistani scientist who has been honored with this appointment. This appointment underscores Prof. Choudhary's significant contributions to the field of medicinal chemistry and recognizes his expertise in the industrial biotechnology. The award ceremony, held in Tianjin city, China, was a momentous occasion attended by distinguished guests and scholars. Commenting on the achievement, Prof. Choudhary expressed his gratitude for the recognition and emphasized the importance of international collaboration in advancing scientific research.

The Tianjin Institute of Industrial Biotechnology (TIB) has emerged as a pioneering force in industrial biotechnology, achieving significant breakthroughs in key technologies. With over 500 research projects undertaken, TIB has excelled in high-throughput screening, genome editing, gene synthesis, and novel bioprocess design. TIB stands out as a leader in cost-efficient microbial production, utilizing metabolic engineering and synthetic biology to create novel cell factories and green bioprocesses. TIB's commitment to technology transfer has resulted in the successful transfer of over 30 technologies to industries, fostering collaborations with more than 100 enterprises across China. Recognized as a national base for international S&T cooperation, TIB is actively seeking global partnerships, aiming to elevate its status as an international research hub in the field of biotechnology. The COMSTEC team extends warm congratulations to Prof. Choudhary, acknowledging this milestone as a proud moment for the scientific community in Pakistan and across OIC region.

Fixing economy is the key priority: Punjab Law Minister

He said that PIA should be privatized and the private sector should be encouraged to launch new airlines that would strengthen Pakistan's direct air links with all major markets and contribute significantly in reviving the economy

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Kanwar Muhammad Dilshad, Punjab's Minister for Law and Parliamentary Affairs said that fixing the economic problems is the top priority of the government and all possible measures are being taken to revive the economy. He said that the business community is the key stakeholder in the economic development of the country and the government is determined to provide them maximum facilitation in business development. He assured that he would play a role in taking up the key issues of the business community at relevant forums for their early redress so that they can promote businesses with ease. He said this while addressing as chief guest at a Business Networking Lunch organized by the former MNA Kanwar Qutbuddin Khan in honor of Ahsan Zafar Bakhtawari, President, Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry.

Speaking on the occasion, Ahsan Zafar Bakhtawari, President, Islamabad Chamber of Commerce & Industry said that Pakistan is a country of very young population and we need to develop a strong economy to give them a better future. He said that the business community has a lot of hopes from the Special Investment Facilitation Council and we are confident that it would steer the economy out of the current



economic crisis. He said that the government is planning to impose a fixed tax on retailers and retailers and emphasized that this should be done in consultation with the stakeholders to avoid any unnecessary problems to the business sector. He assured that the business community would fully support the government in its endeavors for the revival of the economy. Former MNA and renowned

businessman Kanwar Qutbuddin Khan said that the real estate sector has the potential to steer the economy out of the current crisis as the growth of over 50 allied industries is linked with this industry. He said that the government should focus on creating a conducive environment for the real estate and construction industry to attract more investment, promote business activities, create new jobs and revive

the overall economy. Khalid Iqbal Malik Group Leader ICCI said that Pakistan has great potential to increase exports by focusing on new markets including Africa, Central Asia and ASEAN region and stressed that the TDAP should take business delegations from the private sector to explore these markets for exports promotion. Zafar Bakhtawari, former President ICCI and Sec-

retary General UBG Pakistan highlighted the importance of connecting Pakistan through direct air links with potential markets for improving the country's trade and exports. He said that PIA should be privatized and the private sector should be encouraged to launch new airlines that would strengthen Pakistan's direct air links with all major markets and contribute significantly in reviving the economy.

Call to improve value-added textile exports by adopting diversified marketing

DNA

ISLAMABAD: There is a need for giving a boost to the export sector by adopting diversified marketing techniques and extending practical support to the industry. This was stated by the Pakistan Ready-made Garments Manufacturers & Exporters Association (PRGMEA) North Zone's new chairman Amad Hanif, who had been elected recently for the year 2023-24, pledging to continue with his efforts for the promotion and protection of the apparel sector, calling for enhancing value-added textile exports. Amad Hanif said that it was an

honour for him to assume the office of the NZ chairman for the year 2023-24. Addressing a ceremony held here today, the new regional chairman vowed to promote the Association to the new heights, thanking the members for reposing confidence on him to lead the PRGMEA in north zone. He paid tribute to the outgoing regional chairman Wasim Akhtar Khan, also appreciating the whole body, which had been actively promoting the interests of the value-added textile industry throughout 2022-23. Amad Hanif observed that his top priority would be smooth energy supply at regionally competitive prices to the apparel sec-

tor, resolution of tax related issues, and a favourable environment for the promotion of garment industry in Pakistan especially in Punjab. He drew attention of the garment exporters to meet the challenges in international market so that momentum of exports could not only be maintained but also new opportunities be fully exploited. He encouraged the exporters not to worry about threats of globalization, rather the hidden benefits should be explored and utilized. He, however, said that increasing productivity, improving efficiencies and reducing wastages would be the practical remedies to be adopted by exporters to

be able to compete in the world market. PRGMEA Central chairman Mubashar Butt, other leadership, including Naseer Malik, Ijaz Khokhar, Sohail A. Sheikh, Sajid Saleem Minhas and Wasim Akhtar Khan congratulated the newly-elected zonal chairman, expressing the hope that he would continue the excellent work in the best interest of the entire value-added textile sector. The new zonal chief expressed the confidence of making full efforts to work selflessly to resolve issues and problems faced by the industry in the best interests of PRGMEA members and in further enhancing and boosting the exports.

Chinese, Pak experts preserve Upper Indus rock paintings

ISLAMABAD: Chinese and Pakistani experts jointly worked to preserve Upper Indus rock paintings corridor, Gwadar Pro reported. A joint China-Pakistan archaeological survey team led by Chongqing Normal University for the project of conserving the Upper Indus Rock Painting Corridor held its opening ceremony in Bahawalpur. In a groundbreaking collaboration, the joint effort aims to preserve and promote the region's rich cultural heritage while fostering international cooperation in the field of archaeology. The corridor of Buddhist rock paintings and Chinese inscriptions on the Upper Indus is not only an extremely valuable historical and cultural heritage of the local people but also belongs to all mankind.

These rock paintings were left behind by various travelers, traders, pilgrims, and ancient inhabitants of the area who passed along the trade routes, and date back as early as between 5000 B.C. and A.D. 1000, providing valuable insights into the lives and beliefs of the ancient civilizations that once thrived in the area. Recognizing the significance of this cultural treasure, the Chinese and Pakistani governments have collaborated to ensure the preservation of



these ancient artworks. The joint initiative brings together experts from institutions and universities of both countries including Chongqing Normal University, Xi'an Jiaotong University, Lanzhou University, Pakistan Higher Education Commission Corridor Authority, University of Bahawalpur, Punjab Archaeology Department, and others. Multiple units from Chongqing will also actively participate in the project, providing technical and logistical support for the archaeological work. The project team will carry out a 3-year field investigation and survey to comprehensively investigate and protect major sites and artifacts in the project area, and conduct academic seminars, personnel training, achievement presentations, and other work. Furthermore, the project also includes capacity-building initiatives where local communities are actively involved in the conservation efforts. By engaging the local population, the project aims to create awareness about the meaning of the rock paintings and foster a sense of ownership and responsibility among the community members. Conservation efforts in the Upper Indus Rock Painting Corridor are expected to have a major impact on the tourism potential of the area. As the site becomes better preserved and accessible, it is likely to attract both domestic and international tourists, further contributing to the socio-economic development of the area.—DNA

400 new products, technologies, and services introduced at CIIE

DNA

ISLAMABAD: This year over 3400 companies from 128 countries attended the six sessions of China International Import Expo (CIIE), releasing over 400 new products, technologies, and services, China Economic Net (CEN) reported. According to the report, the CIIE witnessed more and more enterprises growing from exhibitors to investors. Meanwhile, their confidence in the Chinese market and Chinese opportunities has been unwavering", said a quote from Archer-Daniels-Midland Co, a US agricultural origination and processing company that has been participating in CIIE for 4 years in a row. At the CIIE, the company has debuted a series of products and signed contracts with multiple Chinese grain enterprises. One can find countless cases as such in the grand six-day expo lasting from Nov. 5 to 10. "China's unwavering practice of high-level opening-up has enabled the annual CIIE to attract top enterprises in the world like a huge magnet", said Zhu Linbo, President for China at ADM. This year, over 3400 companies from 128 countries attended the Business Exhibition. Among them, over 200 companies have participated in CIIE every year since its inception six years ago. To debut innovations at CIIE has become an increasingly common practice for exhibitors. At the exhibition stand of Johnson & Johnson, over a third of the products are displayed for the first time in China. With full attendance at all six sessions of CIIE, the company still managed to present a new look by releasing an updated Chinese brand logo.

Pakistan's IT sector targets the African market

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan's robust IT sector is eyeing the lucrative African market for exports, which will be highly beneficial for this promising sector, while the country will also get much-needed foreign exchange. The Pak-Africa Business Forum (PABF) and the High Commission of Pakistan to Rwanda arranged a Zoom meeting between reputable names in Pakistan's and Rwanda's IT sectors. High Commissioner Naem Khan and PABF's President Omar Shahid Butt hosted the meeting. The Permanent Secretary of the Ministry of Information, Communication Technology, and Innovation Rwanda (ICT), Mr. Yves Iradukunda, also graced the occasion. A former executive member of the Pakistan IT Industry Association, Salman Dar, coordinated the meeting proceedings.

On the occasion, PABF's President Omar Shahid Butt said that revenue in the African IT services market is projected to reach \$23.66 billion in 2023, business process outsourcing dominates the market with a volume of \$8.70 billion. The revenue in African market is expected to show an annual growth of 14.06%, resulting in a market volume of US\$45.68 billion by 2028, he added. He added that Africa needs significant investments in broadband connectivity, secure data infrastructure, and governmental and legal reforms that can spark competition. He added that building digital and physical connections by eliminating barriers like broadband coverage gaps and digital illiteracy will allow people and businesses to reach bigger markets, build businesses, and create jobs. He said the meeting was part of the PABF's initiative to promote mutually beneficial trade ties between Pakistan and the African continent. High Commissioner Naem Khan and Omar Butt were both of the view that Pakistan should boost its exports to the untapped market of Africa. The African market is less regulated, entering it is comparatively easy therefore it should get proper attention of our IT exporters.—DNA

Elections will result in a stable economy: Atif Ikram

ISLAMABAD: FPCCI's presidential candidate, Atif Ikram Sheikh, said on Sunday that elections will result in a stable economy as the elected government can implement tough reforms to strengthen the country facing serious problems. Alignment between the elected government and people will stabilize the political and economic scenario, which is necessary for development and luring international investments, he added. Talking to the business community, Atif Ikram Sheikh, who has also served as VP of FPCCI, Chairman of PVMA, and President of ICCI, said that Pakistan was facing unparalleled economic challenges that needed to be overcome. The business leader lauded the government for undertaking the required reforms to improve the economy but added that a lot has to be done in this regard. "The business community supports all structural reforms, as this will place Pakistan on a trajectory for sustainable, long-term economic growth that will support its growing population," he said. He also stressed women's empowerment as a means of expanding the national economy through their contribution. Atif Ikram also emphasized the need to broaden the country's tax base, rectify foreign exchange issues, and tackle escalating debt that is a substantial burden on its economy. We must educate women and cultivate a technologically adept workforce to steer the national economy back on track. However, the present education system only benefits the elite. The government should strive to ensure a conducive environment for foreign companies, widen the tax base to augment revenue, establish a more equitable tax system, implement agricultural reforms to enhance crop yields, ensure food security, and promote sustainability. The authorities must undertake energy sector reforms to meet the escalating demand for clean energy and empower women as an economic force by enhancing their access to loans and education and simplifying regulations. Pakistan is already working on a program aimed at sparking economic growth, integrating the economy into international capital markets, and ensuring policy continuity. Additionally, a Special Investment Facilitation Council (SIFC) has been established to streamline foreign investment procedures in sectors like IT, energy, agriculture, mining, and defense production. Substantial foreign investments in various projects are expected, indicating a promising influx of funds, including those from Canadian firm Barrick Gold and Saudi wealth fund.—DNA

Food insecurity caused by human design

Enhancing access to education and resources for small scale farmers, particularly in developing regions, empowers communities to become self sufficient

MUHAMMAD SAEED

No youngster should be left behind when it comes to food security, according to my favorite author, Ertharin Cousin. The fundamental right of human beings is food. However, hunger affects one third of the world's population. Food emergencies are implemented in certain countries, such as Palestine and Somalia. In Pakistan, 16.4 out of 100 households did not have enough food to feed their child in the 2019-2020 fiscal year. Following COVID-19, the social reform profile image has shifted as a result of supply chain disruption and wealth being con-

centrated in a small number of hands. Actually, even in industrialized nations, this resulted in a high rate of inflation. Deep worries about food security in developing nations have been raised by the present phase's rapid rise in cereal and other food prices. Even though the vast majority of people in poor nations already experience widespread malnutrition, these individuals are expected to become even more vulnerable as a result of the sharp increase in food prices. Since the majority of the impoverished are net consumers of food, food price shocks have an effect on their standard of living. Since the beginning of life, competition for resources has

grown, but the introduction of lethal weapons has made it a threat. Powerful human races attack the weaker ones. On our small world, the conclusion of one battle ushers in the next. In that kind of crisis, women and children are the ones most impacted; occasionally, the situation is so bad that there isn't a single meal to eat, not a bottle of water to drink, neither a tablet for pain. The need for sustainable agriculture techniques must grow as the population does, as this could result in overuse of natural resources, deforestation, and degraded soil. The number of newborns born worldwide increases by 200,000 per day. There is an exponential

growth pattern. As time goes on, climate change becomes increasingly significant in contributing to food insecurity. Food security is significantly impacted by climate change, creating a difficult and wide-ranging problem. Droughts, floods, and other extreme weather patterns become more common and severe as temperatures rise due to increasingly erratic weather patterns. Over and beyond quick relief operations, a diversified strategy is needed to address food insecurity. Long-term care is just as important as emergency care. First and foremost, food production may be increased by enhancing agricultural practices

and raising crop yields through sustainable farming methods. Investment in infrastructure, such as irrigation system and storage facilities, can help reduce post-harvest losses. Enhancing access to education and resources for small scale farmers, particularly in developing regions, empowers communities to become self sufficient. A comprehensive approach that encompasses these elements can pave the way for a more food-secure and equitable world. Our holy prophet says; "An individual should not eat until he feed someone who is hungry" We should act upon the saying of our holy prophet as an emergency solution of food security.

Ceasefires alone won't ensure civilian safety

For most people in a rational frame of mind, a cease-fire is imperative to bring an end to the slaughter in Gaza. The foreign ministers of the G7 countries and the high representative of the European Union think otherwise. They have instead called for "pauses" in the fighting to facilitate urgently needed humanitarian assistance. That might seem to some to be quibbling over words. But a cease-fire is a cessation in the fighting with the intention of bringing a permanent end to the hostilities. A pause is a brief interruption of an action, which then continues. So it is disingenuous for the G7 foreign ministers and the EU representative to then say that they are committed to a broader peace process and sustainable long-term solution. To be fair, they do admit that the rise in violence by extremist Israeli settlers in the West Bank against Palestinians threatens the prospects for a lasting peace and say it "is unacceptable". They also acknowledge that a two-state solution, which envisions Israel and a viable Palestinian state living side by side in peace, security, and mutual recognition, "remains the only path to a just, lasting, and secure peace". But they pointedly do not call for a cease-fire. Now they are even seemingly trying to lay the blame for the humanitarian crisis at China's door. In her speech during the European Union Ambassadors Conference 2023 on Monday, European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen mentioned China 21 times and said that "every measure of influence that Beijing has on Hamas and on Iran needs to be used to prevent further escalation". In fact, China has been steadfastly striving to secure a binding international consensus on concrete steps to de-escalate hostilities and secure a cease-fire. Its position is clear. It calls for ending the fighting as soon as possible, protecting civilians, and realizing the peaceful coexistence of Palestine and Israel based on the two-state solution as soon as possible. The two-state solution may not be considered ideal by some on either side. But it is the only way for the two sides to break the long cycle of violence that has resulted in nothing but bloodshed and suffering and the breeding of mutual hatred. This is not "a" solution to be dictated by Washington but rather "the" two-state solution agreed in previous negotiations between the two sides under the framework of United Nations resolutions. The statement issued after the G7 foreign ministers' meeting in Tokyo on Wednesday is like the crocodile tears US officials have shed for the children killed in Ukraine while demonstrating a callous indifference to those being killed in Gaza. Having called for "humanitarian pauses" instead of a "cease-fire", it is clear that the other G7 members lack the collective will to cut the apron strings with Washington.



Our planet and its inhabitants have endured a grim time over the past 10 months. According to climate scientists' latest figures, 2023 will almost certainly prove to have been the hottest year ever recorded. Global temperatures are destined to reach 1.43C above those experienced before the Industrial Revolution. The consequences have been striking. Glaciers are disappearing, ice caps melting and deserts spreading at an accelerating rate. On top of these climatic blights, intense rainfall, droughts and wildfires are happening more frequently and violently than have ever been experienced, with disturbing consequences. Around 2 billion people, almost a quarter of the world's population, endured at least five consecutive days of extreme heat in 2023, an unprecedented level of meteorological misery that claimed thousands of lives. And forecasters say there is more to come. Next year, temperatures are likely to rise even further thanks to El Niño, a periodic appearance of sea-surface warming in the Pacific, which heats the atmosphere across the planet. The world is burning, an observation that should generate ringing calls for action at the forthcoming Cop28 climate change conference, which begins this month in the United Arab Emirates. This is virtually the last chance humanity has to mend its ways and for delegates to agree how to bring an end to our addiction to fossil fuels. As activists point out, coal, gas and oil combustion is still filling the atmosphere with emissions of heat-trapping greenhouse gases, in particular carbon dioxide, and these are spawning global mayhem. Sadly, omens for such a change of heart look poor. The world has fallen so far behind in its attempts to tackle global warming, and to mend its gas-guzzling ways, that only the deepest, most comprehensive programme of measures can keep global heating below 1.5C, a point that will be underlined starkly at Cop28. Limiting global warming to 1.5C was first agreed at the Paris climate meeting in 2015 as a target which, if achieved, would curtail the worst impacts of global warming. Crucially, it was also decided by delegates in Paris to set up a regular global stocktake of the effectiveness of the actions that would be taken across the planet and to analyse their likely effectiveness. There is not so much a gap between reality and our climate aspirations as a near unbridgeable gulf. Results of the first of these stocktakes will be presented at Cop28, and they will make for disturbing reading – for they will show that humanity is wildly off course in its attempts to limit global warming to that 1.5C target. Indeed, it is likely to be belching out about 22bn tonnes more carbon dioxide in 2030 than the maximum level needed to keep global temperatures below that 1.5C limit. In other words, to reach our climate aspirations we must find a last-minute way to eradicate 22bn tonnes – the equivalent of the combined emissions of the world's worst five carbon polluters: China, US, India, Russia and Japan – from the emissions of cars, transport and factories within the next few years. There is not so much a gap between reality and our climate aspirations as a near unbridgeable gulf. The sad truth is that virtually every nation on Earth has turned its back on an impending calamity that will displace billions and kill thousands, if not millions, and has instead focused attention on local problems.

Arab and Muslim leaders put limited influence

James Dorsey

The joint summit of the Arab League and the 57-member Organisation of Islamic Cooperation (OIC), which includes all Arab states, was dominated by obligatory calls for an immediate ceasefire, unrestricted provision of humanitarian aid, the release by Hamas of 240, mostly civilian, hostages, and a resolution of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, as well as condemnation of Israel's conduct in the Gaza war. Hypocritically, Syrian President Bashar al-Assad, who waged a decade-long Russian and Iranian-backed war against rebels opposed to his regime in much the same way that Israel

It took Arab and Muslim leaders 35 days of war to call an 'emergency' meeting to discuss Israel's assault on Gaza. Their limited ability to influence developments was on public display when they finally gathered this weekend in the Saudi capital Riyadh. So were the differences that raised questions about efforts in recent years to sustainably reduce regional tensions without resolving fundamental disputes and conflicts. The joint summit of the Arab League and the 57-member Organisation of Islamic Cooperation (OIC), which includes all Arab states, was dominated by obligatory calls for an immediate ceasefire, unrestricted provision of humanitarian aid, the release by Hamas of 240, mostly civilian, hostages, and a resolution of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, as well as condemnation of Israel's conduct in the Gaza war. Hypocritically, Syrian President Bashar al-Assad, who waged a decade-long Russian and Iranian-backed war against rebels opposed to his regime in much the same way that Israel attacked Gaza, attended the Riyadh summit. Arab states returned Mr. Al-Assad to the Arab fold as part of their effort to reduce regional tensions and ensure they don't spin out of control. The Arab League suspended Syria in 2011 at the beginning of the civil war. In his address to the summit, Iranian President Ebrahim Raisi made clear that the Chinese-mediated restoration earlier this year of diplomatic relations between the Islamic republic and Saudi Arabia as part of the regional de-escalation effort had done nothing to change policies that are at the root of many regional issues. To be sure, most Islamic and Arab leaders will have taken heart from Mr. Raisi's support of an immediate ceasefire in Gaza and his expressed desire to prevent the war from expanding regionally. But that is where the sighs of relief may have stopped. Much of Mr. Raisi's speech emphasized what countries like Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates worry most about and highlighted fundamental policy differences. Mr. Raisi celebrated Hamas and Lebanese Shiite militia Hezbollah, non-state actors viewed in Riyadh and Abu Dhabi as Iranian proxies designed to interfere in Arab domestic affairs. "We kiss the hands of Hamas for its resistance against Israel," Mr. Raisi said. In addition, Saudi Arabia and the UAE, despite being

shocked by the indiscriminate and relentless Israeli bombing of Gaza, do not want Hamas, a group they view as affiliated with the Muslim Brotherhood, survive the war. Hamas' brutal October 7 attack, in which at least 1,200, mostly civilian, Israelis were wantonly slaughtered, raised the spectre of other militant groups, foremost Yemen's Iranian-backed Houthis, learning from the Palestinians' ability to breach Israeli defenses. Moreover, Mr. Raisi was out of step with much of the Arab world by calling for a Palestinian state from "the river to the sea" that would replace the State of Israel rather than a two-state resolution, involving an independent Palestinian state alongside the Jewish state. Notwithstanding Mr. Raisi's remarks, the summit's majority view prevailed with the final communiqué calling for a two-state solution. Furthermore Mr. Raisi put Arab and Muslim-majority states that have recognized Israel on the spot by calling on them to break off their diplomatic relations. Of the five Arab states that have formal relations with Israel, only Jordan has withdrawn its ambassador and asked Israel not to return its envoy to Amman. Mr. Raisi also called for an economic and commercial boycott of Israel. Iranian officials, backed by Libya, Algeria and Lebanon, demanded in preliminary talks in advance of the summit that Arab states close their airspace to Israel, halt the transfer of weapons from US bases in the region to Israel, and stop oil exports to Israel, according to diplomatic sources. Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan, who spoke immediately before Mr. Raisi, did not include Iran's positions in his remarks. However, Turkish steps come closest to addressing the Iranian leader's demands. Turkey has withdrawn its ambassador to Israel and, earlier this week, suspended energy talks with the Jewish state. Mr. Raisi had barely spoken when Beirut-based Hamas Political Bureau member Osama Hamdan echoed his words in an Al Jazeera interview. "We are talking about actions, we don't need speeches," Mr. Hamdan said. At the same time, Mr. Hamdan echoed a broader sentiment in the Arab and Muslim world, by adding, "if (Arab and Muslim leaders) act, I am sure there will be a response from the United States. Any action will have

impact." What Mr. Hamdan suggested was that by speaking out forcefully, and taking some sort of action, no matter how minor, Arab and Muslim leaders could move the needle in Washington that has so far supported Israel's right to wage war against Hamas, even if US officials increasingly criticize the human cost of Israel's campaign. That didn't prevent the differences from forcing the Arab and Muslim leaders to issue a statement that echoed the leaders' obligatory demands but contained no suggestion of how they could be achieved. At a news conference after the summit, Saudi Foreign Minister Faisal bin Farhan sought to give the statement some heft by asserting that without concerted international action to reign in Israel, the world's international security architecture, including the United Nations Security Council, would need to be reformed. All eyes in the coming days will be on the Council's next meeting slated to discuss yet another draft resolution initiated by Malta and the UAE. The draft is believed to focus on the plight of children that reportedly account for half of all casualties in Gaza. Another focal point is US President Joe Biden's meeting on Monday with his Indonesian counterpart, Joko Widodo. Mr. Widodo travelled from the Riyadh summit to Washington in advance of this week's Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) summit in San Francisco. For Arab and Muslim leaders, increasingly squeezed between mounting public anger at the Israeli assault, limited options, and a struggle to prevent Gaza from shifting the paradigm on which they have built their survival strategies, pushing the US to forcefully call a halt to Israel's indiscriminate bombing, ensuring access to humanitarian personnel and goods, and achieving a release of hostages is a sine qua non. Ironically, Israel's relentless military campaign, including the stepped up targeting of hospitals, may achieve what Arab and Muslim leaders can't as US and European officials, amid widespread protests, increasingly take Israel publicly to task. In the latest shift, French President Emmanuel Macron told the BBC on Saturday: "De facto - today, civilians are bombed - de facto. These babies, these ladies, these old people are bombed and killed. So, there is no reason for that and no legitimacy.

Muted OIC-Arab league and dying Palestinians...

Qamar Bashir



The call further resonated with the imperative of severing diplomatic ties with Israel and its supporters, deploying all available tools and pressures to enforce a two-state solution. This envisioned solution aimed to grant Palestinians the freedom to live in accordance with their religious beliefs, customs, and social values, free from any form of intimidation, coercion, or humiliation. However, the conference's impact was diminished by evident divisions among member countries, stemming from concerns about potential repercussions from the United States. The fear of facing the wrath of the USA led to a visible hesitancy among nations, tempering their collective stance against

In a pivotal diplomatic move, the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) and the Arab League initially were scheduled to hold separate sessions, but the gravity of the situation prompted a joint gathering hosted by Crown Prince Mohammad Bin Salman of Saudi Arabia. This unified front aimed to showcase solidarity on a pressing issue: punitive actions against Israel. The collective anticipation of the entire Muslim Ummah rested on the hope for a unified stance against Israel's egregious actions. The expectation was for a resolute declaration labeling Israel as a terrorist state, holding it accountable for the ruthless and cold-blooded killing of over 11,000 civilians, perpetrated with total impunity. The desire extended to leveraging oil as a powerful weapon, intended to compel the United States and its ally Israel to yield, humbled at the feet of justice. The fervent aspiration included a call to deny airspace to Israel and its allies across Muslim nations and among those who champion humanitarian values. It sought to cut off all air, land, and sea routes to Israel, implementing a comprehensive boycott of Israeli products and those supporting its cause. The call further resonated with the imperative of severing diplomatic ties with Israel and its supporters, deploying all available tools and pressures to enforce a two-state solution. This envisioned solution aimed to grant Palestinians the freedom to live in accordance with their religious beliefs, customs, and social values, free from any form of intimidation, coercion, or humiliation. However, the conference's impact was diminished by evident divisions among member countries, stemming from concerns about potential repercussions from the United States. The fear of facing the wrath of the USA led to a visible hesitancy among nations, tempering their collective stance against Israel. Within this divide, opinions diverged on the status of Hamas. While some countries voiced support, viewing it as a legitimate entity spearheading the Palestinian struggle, others, considering it an extension of Iran's influence, hesitated to endorse its legitimacy. This internal discord weakened the OIC and Arab League's joint message, hindering the efficacy of their collective diplomatic efforts. Regrettably, the joint meeting faced dismissive reactions from both Israel and the United States. Instead of heeding its call for restraint, the relentless attacks on innocent civilians escalated. Hospitals, ambulances, and mosques bore the brunt of the aggression, emphasizing the dire humanitarian consequences of the conflict. Regrettably, the desired unity and resolute action faced stark challenges on the international stage. While the aspirations were noble and the expectations high, the reality reflected the intricate geopolitical complexities and the formidable obstacles posed by global power dynamics. The gap between hope and reality serves as a poignant reminder of the profound challenges in achieving a unified response against the injustices faced by the Palestinian people. As anticipated, the joint statement fell short of endorsing the comprehensive measures sought by many, culminating instead in a declaration of relatively toothless actions. These included an appeal for immediate ceasefire, a halt to the forced exodus of Palestinians to Egypt or other locations, the establishment of open corridors for the delivery of essential humanitarian aid, and an appeal to the

United Nations Security Council for the passage of a binding resolution on Israel knowing that this would once again be vetoed by USA. The primary objective of this resolution was to call upon Israel to cease its ongoing killing spree and the alarming acts of genocide against innocent women, children, and civilians—actions that have brazenly surpassed all recognized redlines. In the process of normalizing relations with Arab states, Iran's presence in the meeting signaled a noteworthy rapprochement towards the Arab world. Acknowledging its delicate position within the predominantly Arab conference, the Iranian President strategically praised Hamas, the leading resistance movement against Zionist forces in the ongoing 35-day war. Emphasizing that the Palestinian issue transcends simple human rights concerns, the Iranian President framed it as a matter of human dignity. He condemned the Zionist regime of Israel, alleging that it, with the support of the USA and the West, has consistently denied the Palestinian people their fundamental dignity. The Iranian President underscores the urgency of meaningful, result-oriented, and time-bound dialogues among Muslim countries to enforce a two-state solution for the Palestine issue. While echoing the call for a ceasefire and the restoration of humanitarian aid corridors, he vehemently opposes allowing the Zionist regime to continue its killing spree with impunity. In contrast to other nations, Iran openly supports and admires the Palestinian resistance movement led by Hamas. The President warns that if Israel, backed by the USA, persists in killing innocent civilians, the conflict could escalate to engulf other regions like Lebanon, Yemen, Iraq and Syria. He calls for a unified Muslim voice to compel Israel to leave Gaza and restore the dignity and honor of Palestinians. Advocating for impactful measures, he urges the use of oil as a tool to humble Israel, the USA, and their supporters. The President calls for the severance of diplomatic relations with Israel, declaring it a terrorist country with a terrorist regime. Additionally, he advocates for a global boycott of Israeli products as a means to exert collective pressure on the nation. In his impassioned address, the Iranian President stressed that the lasting solution to the Palestinian issue lies in restoring the rightful ownership of the land to the Palestinians, which has been denied for 70 long years through the construction of Zionist settlements. The Turkish President, Erdogan Tayyip, delivered a carefully crafted speech, urging the holding of an international conference for a lasting solution based on a two-state framework. He proposed the establishment of an international fund for the reconstruction of Gaza and the rehabilitation of those physically and psychologically affected by the conflict. He also advocated taking Israel to the International Court of Justice for alleged war crimes. In a brief yet carefully worded address, the Qatari representative called for the release of captives by both Hamas and Israel. He condemned the displacement of Palestinians from North to South and towards Egypt. The leaders, in their respective addresses, largely focused on condemning the indiscriminate killing of civilians and urging the restoration of humanitarian aid. They characterized Israel's retaliation for the events of 9 October as inhumane and unacceptable, expressing dismay at the international community's silence in the face of Isra-

el's brutality. The leaders criticized the paradox of the West claiming to champion human rights while simultaneously vetoing a UNSC resolution calling for the cessation of Israeli bombardment. They underscored the necessity of forcing Israel to compensate for the lives lost and the destruction inflicted upon Gaza and urging Muslim countries to utilize every available tool to achieve a lasting solution to the Palestine conflict. As anticipated, Mr. Osama Hamdan, a spokesperson of Hamas in an interview while reflecting on the outcome of the OIC-Arab League joint sitting, deemed the results as falling short and arriving too late. He emphasized that the ongoing Israeli assault on Gaza, now in its 35th day of relentless and unceasing bombing equivalent to seven nuclear bombs, blatantly violates international laws and human rights. Hamdan called for an immediate halt to the attacks and the swift restoration of supplies for fuel, electricity, water, and food to address the dire humanitarian situation. Mr. Hamdan urged Muslim countries to isolate Israel and stressed the need for concrete actions to pave the way for the establishment of an independent and sovereign state of Palestine. The urgency of these measures, he emphasized, is paramount in light of the ongoing crisis and the escalating human toll in Gaza. The Arab and Muslim countries are confronted with a looming dilemma, caught in a complex web of dependence on the USA and the West for their security needs. Many have granted bases to the USA, facilitating the maintenance of its formidable war machine within their borders. However, the stark reality is that none of these nations possess the economic, financial, or military strength to pose a credible threat to the USA, the West, or Israel. The strategic use of oil as a weapon in the 1970s, which once had a significant impact, has now become toothless. Lessons learned from the past have led Western countries to minimize their reliance on oil imports, either through developing alternative energy sources or innovative means of energy generation. Even when combined, all Muslim countries collectively lack the capacity to rival Israel's economic, financial, technological, and innovative prowess. Attempting to sever diplomatic ties or downgrade economic relations poses a considerable risk, as it could adversely impact the economic and financial well-being of these countries both collectively and individually. The harsh reality is that none of these nations is prepared to face a potential counter offensive launched by the USA and the West. Their dependencies on satellite systems, global internet infrastructure, reliance on exports to developed nations, and their ties to international financial institutions largely funded by the USA, the West, and Israel leave them vulnerable and comparatively powerless. In this precarious scenario, the toothless declaration of the OIC-Arab League is somewhat encouraging, signifying a collective understanding of the limitations and potential repercussions of more assertive measures. It reflects a pragmatic acknowledgment of the existing power dynamics and the challenges faced by these nations in navigating a delicate geopolitical landscape.

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

Briefs

IOF cripples Al-Shifa...

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major hospitals, and Al Shati camp in Gaza. The Palestinian Red Crescent (PRCS) announced on Sunday that the Al-Quds Hospital is out of service due to a lack of fuel and a power outage. The Palestinian Red Crescent said in a statement that "Al Quds Hospital is out of service and no longer operational." "The cessation of services is due to the depletion of available fuel and power outage," the statement added. The Palestinian Red Crescent said it "holds the international community and signatories of the Fourth Geneva Convention accountable for the complete breakdown of the health system and the resulting dire humanitarian conditions." Separately, the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC) also said Sunday that it has lost communication with its contacts in Al Quds Hospital in Gaza.

Act as a president...

FROM PAGE 01
address their concerns through appropriate channels, adding that the caretaker government would respond to the PTI's letter in writing. Regarding concerns about a level playing field for upcoming elections, Solangi encouraged parties or individuals with complaints to approach the Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP). He pledged the caretaker government's support for the ECP under the constitution and law, adding that it would address complaints within its jurisdiction and in accordance with the constitution and law. The minister also reiterated the ECP's responsibility for conducting free, fair, transparent and impartial elections. Responding to another question, Solangi emphasised the democratic nature of negotiations and reservations, affirming everyone's right to complain.

Nawaz all set to...

FROM PAGE 01
PML-N President Shehbaz Sharif and Maryam Nawaz - the party's chief organiser - will accompany him for his three-day visit to Balochistan where he is expected to close a seat-adjustment deal with the Balochistan Awami Party (BAP) which is now led by Khalid Magsi. The Balochistan-based party had parted ways with the PTI-led ruling alliance, paving the way for the success of a no-confidence motion which propelled Shehbaz to the prime minister's office for a 16-month-long stint. The planned agreement with the BAP comes after the PML-N last week secured a similar deal with the MQM-P in Sindh where discussions are on for extending the electoral collaboration to other parties like Pir Pagara's PML-F and JUI-F.

'PML-N's entire...

FROM PAGE 01
Commenting on improving the state and infrastructure in Karachi during their meeting with MQM-P, Rafique said that the city has not received attention for decades. "Karachi and the local government system will be discussed in the meeting. We will also have a discussion on how to make local governments effective," he said, lamenting that the city was "ruined" under a "well-thought-out plan". "It was already decided with JUI-F and MQM-P that we will fight the election together," Rafique added. The former federal minister also said his party, under the leadership of supreme Nawaz Sharif, will keep political differences aside and encourage talks. "Social relationships should not be broken, relationships should be maintained," he said criticising the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) for "dirtying politics". The politician said that the atmosphere after February 8 would be encouraging towards talks. "Maligning anyone is not included in the PML-N's agenda."



ISLAMABAD: Players of Rising Stars Girls Hockey Academy posing for a picture with the Ambassadors / High Commissioners of Australia, Brunei and Romania during the practice session. The diplomats encouraged the girls players and exhorted them to continue exhibiting their hockey skills to be able to represent their country at the higher level. - DNA

Irtaza wins 16th Serena Hotels-CNS amateur golf title

In the Lady Amateurs gross category which was played over 36 holes won by Ami Qin (GCGCC) with score of 162 while Zaib u Nisa was the runners-up with score of 166

AFZAL JAVED

ISLAMABAD: Young Irtaza Hussain of the Margalla Greens Golf Club (MGGC) won the amateur net category along with championship title with a score of 208 (-5) in the 16th edition of the Serene Hotels-CNS amateur golf cup 2023 at Margalla Greens Golf Club Islamabad on Sunday. Chief of the Naval Staff Admiral Naveed Ashraf graced the occasion as Chief Guest at the closing ceremony and distributed prizes among the winners along with CEO Serena Hotels Aziz Boolani, Pakistan Navy Commander North and Patron Pakistan Navy Golf (North) Commodore Khan Mahmood Asif.

While addressing the ceremony, Chief of the Naval Staff Admiral Naveed Ashraf congratulated the winners for their remarkable success and appreciated their skills. Naval Chief lauded the high standards of the game that provided exciting and quality entertainment to the participants. Naval Chief commended



the untiring efforts of MGGC staff and organizers for seamless conduct of the championship. He also appreciated the consistent and generous support from sponsors, management of MGGC Islamabad and media fraternity, without which the event would not

Mbappe hat-trick sends PSG soaring

PARIS: Kylian Mbappe scored a hat-trick as Paris Saint-Germain (PSG) won 3-0 away at high-flying Reims on Saturday to move to the top of the Ligue 1 table, although coach Luis Enrique was still not satisfied with the France captain's performance.

Mbappe opened the scoring in the third minute in Champagne country and then netted twice more in the second half to give PSG a win which moved the reigning champions to the summit a point above Nice, who drew

at Montpellier on Friday. PSG were also grateful to goalkeeper Gianluigi Donnarumma who denied Reims a route back into the game with a string of superb saves, as Luis Enrique's team recovered from their midweek Champions League loss away to AC Milan. Mbappe is Ligue 1's leading scorer with 13 goals in 11 appearances this season, with the France captain also having netted twice in European competition. Yet his coach was not entirely delighted with his superstar's

display. "We know Kylian Mbappe's worth, but he can do better. I want even more from him," the Spaniard said. "He is one of the world's best players, but he still has a lot of room to get better. I don't want him to rest on his laurels." Mbappe had earlier indicated that he was not completely pleased with his own game as he spoke to broadcaster Amazon Prime. "In all modesty I don't need to be playing well to score goals, but I want to do both, score goals and play well. That is my objective, to always help the team as well as I can," Mbappe said. Asked about bouncing back from the setback in Milan, Mbappe added: "It is a different competition and all we wanted to do was win. Nice drew and we wanted to take top spot. It's job done and we are happy with that. - Agencies

Canada to meet Italy in historic final

OTTAWA: Canada will take on Italy in their maiden Billie Jean King Cup final following victory against the Czech Republic in the deciding doubles match. Canada's Leylah Fernandez and Gabriela Dabrowski beat Barbara Krejckikova and Katerina Siniakova 7-5 7-6 (7-3) to win the tie 2-1 in Seville. Krejckikova had won her singles match in straight sets before Wimbledon champion Marketa Vondrousova lost to Fernandez. In Saturday's other semi-final, Italy secured a 2-0 victory against Slovenia. Martina Trevisan and Jasmine Paolini both won in straight sets as Italy continue their bid for a fifth title and first since 2013. The Czech Republic have won the tournament 11 times - including six of the past 11 editions - but seven-time Grand Slam champions Krejckikova and Siniakova were stunned in the doubles match as Fernandez won both her singles and doubles matches. World number 10 Krejckikova comfortably beat Canadian teenager Marina Stakusic 6-2 6-1 but Fernandez, ranked 20th in the world, fended off a comeback from world number eight Vondrousova to win 6-2 2-6 6-3. For the second time in as many days the Czech Republic had to turn to Krejckikova and Siniakova to rescue the tie, with the duo sealing a deciding doubles win over the USA on Friday to top Group A and clinch a place in the semi-final. But the Canadian pair kept their composure, completing a hard-fought victory in a second-set tie-break to make history. "It's been a great day for us, for Team Canada," 2021 US Open runner-up Fernandez said. "Gaby was always there to attack and take it to them. I'm just happy I have a great partner out there who can show me how to do it." "Dream come true" Italy last reached the final of the Billie Jean King cup in 2013, beating Russia to win a fourth title and Trevisan got the nation off to a strong start in Saturday's first semi-final. The world number 43 beat Slovenia's Kaja Juvan 7-6 6-3 in a gruelling two hour and 20 minute contest which saw the two register 110 unforced errors between them. "It was my first semi-final here in this competition, and when you are on court and you are not playing just for you but you are playing for an entire country, for all the team, for my teammates, it's not easy to manage the emotions," said Trevisan. - Agencies



LAHORE: The women cricket team of Thailand posing for a picture with Ambassador of Thailand to Pakistan. This is for the first time that the Thai women cricket team visited Pakistan. - DNA

Aspinall claims UFC interim title with swift knockout

"If you ever get the chance to do something and you're scared to do it, you should just do it"

SPORTS DESK

NEW YORK: Tom Aspinall superbly stopped Sergei Pavlovich in the first round to win the interim heavyweight title at UFC 295 at Madison Square Garden in New York. The Briton, 30, landed two quick left-right combinations to finish the Russian inside 69 seconds. Aspinall took the fight on 17 days' notice after an injury to champion Jon Jones forced him off the card. "If you ever get the chance to do something and you're scared to do it, you should just do it," Aspinall said. "It has been a crazy two and a half weeks." In victory, Aspinall becomes only the third British UFC title holder in history, after Michael Bisping (middleweight) and Leon Edwards (welterweight). The

win also caps a triumphant turnaround for Aspinall, who made a winning return to action in July after a year out with a serious knee injury. In the main event, Brazil's Alex Pereira stopped the Czech Republic's Jiri Prochazka in the second round to win the vacant light-heavyweight title. Former middleweight title holder Pereira, 36, becomes a two-division champion in just his seventh UFC fight to set the record for the shortest time to achieve the feat. Aspinall seizes golden opportunity in style Pavlovich, 31, was the back-up fighter for Jones' title defence against Stipe Miocic so had been training for a potential opponent, while Aspinall said he only had around 10 days to train for the bout because of travel and media commitments. Aspinall has enjoyed a remarkable start to his UFC

career since making his debut in 2020, finishing six of his seven fights with the only blemish on his record coming against Curtis Blaydes last year, in which Aspinall sustained a serious knee injury in the opening seconds. The Briton entered the fight with the shortest average fight time in UFC history (minimum of five fights) at one minute 36 seconds, but was facing a knockout artist holding

the current second-shortest at two minutes 22 seconds, with Russian's Pavlovich finishing his past six opponents in the first round. Aspinall had admitted he was "scared" of Pavlovich in his walkout, smiling and singing his entrance song, before embracing his father and long-time coach Andy and entering the octagon. Pavlovich also appeared relaxed but displayed little emotion as he briskly walked out for the bout, before embracing Aspinall as the referee started the bout. Tom Aspinall punches Sergei Pavlovich Aspinall (right) extended his record to 14 wins and just three losses in MMA Aspinall struck first, landing a leg kick, before Pavlovich responded, momentarily stunning Aspinall with a right hand. But Aspinall recovered, using his speed to deliver more leg kicks before finishing the contest with two brisk left-right combinations. Following the win, Aspinall immediately collapsed to the canvas with emotion and was in tears as UFC

president Dana White wrapped the title around him. "He's a scary guy. I've never been so scared in my life but I have power too and I believed in myself," said Aspinall. "I've worked so hard over the years and no one has worked harder than my father so this belt is dedicated to him. "I was struggling with the distance a little bit but we got there in the end." In becoming interim champion, Aspinall realises the potential many fans, including Bisping, believed he always had. In a remarkable twist of fate, Aspinall's win after a 17-day call-up was the same amount of time Bisping had to prepare for his title win over Luke Rockhold in 2016, and Bisping was one of the first people to embrace Aspinall as he left the octagon in tears with his new belt.

in the pre-fight build-up, but compared himself to a honey badger, saying he would fight with fearless aggression once the octagon door closed. Like his demeanour in the pre-fight build-up, Aspinall appeared relaxed dur-

Siraj meets Ismail...

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The purpose of the visit is the joint action plan of the Muslim Ummah on the situation in Palestine. The struggle of Jamaat-e-Islami for the unity of the Ummah on the basis of common values and common feelings. Leader of Jamaat-e-Islami met with Ayatollah Agha Qomi, adviser on foreign affairs and other leaders in Tehran. Emir Jamaat-e-Islami Siraj-ul-Haq also met with the Speaker of the Turkish Parliament Noman Kurtulmosh and discussed situation in Gaza. Siraj-ul-Haq emphasized the joint role of the governments of Muslim countries, including Turkey, to save Gaza. Siraj-ul-Haq also addressed the Palestine March in Istanbul. The Jamaat-e-Islami leader Siraj-ul-Haq met with leaders of global Islamic movements and met with the heads of political parties in Turkey.

EU 'appalled' by reports...

FROM PAGE 01

UN refugee agency UNHCR, which said 100 shelters in a displaced persons' camp in Ardamta were razed. "What is happening is verging on pure evil," the UN humanitarian coordinator for Sudan, Clementine Nkweta-Salami, said on Friday, citing reports of young girls being raped in front of their mothers. She voiced fears of a repeat of the genocide campaign that gripped Darfur in the early 2000s. The EU stressed that Sudan's warring sides "have a duty to protect citizens". It said it was working with the International Criminal Court to document violations "to ensure accountability".

Hindus attribute...

FROM PAGE 01

He said all minorities have full religious freedom in Pakistan. Deputy Chairman Senate Mirza Muhammad Afridi, Leader of the House Muhammad Ishaq Dar, and Leader of the Opposition Dr Shahzad Waseem have also congratulated the Hindu community on the occasion of Diwali. Speaker National Assembly Raja Pervez Ashraf has felicitated the Hindu Community of Pakistan on the eve of Diwali. In his post on X today, he said minorities' contribution in country's development and progress is commendable. He said the Constitution of Pakistan guarantees rights of minorities living in Pak.

PDM reversed...

FROM PAGE 01

(2013-18) and PDM government imposed on the nation after toppling the PTI's well performing government under the visionary leadership of Prime Minister Imran Khan. The economic indicators clearly showed that when PTI took over the government in August 2018, the economy was on the brink of collapse, as current account deficit (CAD) for FY 2018 stood at \$19.2 billion, SBP reserves were recorded at \$9.4 billion and \$32 billion loan payments were needed immediate funding.

Briefs

Mali army advances, clashes erupt in tuareg town

BAMAKO : Mali's army drove closer to the town of Kidal clashing with Tuareg separatist and rebel groups in what could signal the start of fighting for the strategically important northern crossroads. Since seizing power in a coup in 2020 the African country's military rulers have made a priority of re-establishing sovereignty over all regions and Kidal could become a key battleground. Military, political and rebel sources all reported the clashes. But details such as a casualty toll or tactics involved could not be confirmed independently in the remote region. The rebels in Kidal cut telephone links on Friday in anticipation of an army offensive following several days of airstrikes. The Permanent Strategic Framework (CSP), an alliance of predominantly Tuareg armed groups said it had been involved in "vigorous combat" against a convoy of army soldiers and mercenaries from Russia's Wagner group. The CSP post on social media said "considerable losses" had been inflicted on the convoy which had retreated. However, an army officer told AFP: "We are a few dozen kilometres (miles) from Kidal. We are continuing our progress to secure the whole territory," he said, on condition of anonymity. Two local elected representatives, also speaking anonymously because of the sensitivity of the topic, said there was fighting near Kidal. —APP

BD garment worker dies after protests

DHAKA : Hundreds of Bangladeshi garment workers rallied Sunday demanding fair wages after dismissing a pay offer as too small, as the death toll from the violent protests that erupted last month rose to four. Bangladesh has been rocked by the worst labour unrest in a decade with tens of thousands of workers clashing with police, demanding a near-tripling of the minimum wage to 23,000 taka (\$208). Scores of factories have been damaged. Bangladesh's 3,500 garment factories account for around 85 percent of its \$55 billion in annual exports, supplying many of the world's top brands including Levi's, Zara and H&M. But conditions are dire for many of the sector's four million workers, the vast majority of whom are women whose monthly pay, until recently, started at 8,300 taka (\$75). A government-appointed panel raised the sector's wage by 56.25 percent on Tuesday to 12,500 taka, but garment workers have rejected the hike. Since the pay offer, their protests escalated with at least 70 factories ransacked. Police said Jalal Uddin, 42, a garment worker who was injured in clashes with officers earlier this month in Gazipur, north of the capital Dhaka, died from his injuries on Saturday. —Agencies

Vietnam sentences 18, 2 S.Koreans, to death

HANOI : Two South Koreans were among 18 people sentenced to death on drug smuggling and trafficking charges in Vietnam, state media said. The communist country has some of the toughest drug laws in the world, and is notoriously secretive about its executions. South Korean expolice officer Kim Soon-sik, 63, and compatriot Kang Seon-hok, 30, were sentenced to death following a four-day trial in Ho Chi Minh City, state media said late Saturday. Chinese citizen Li Tian Guan, 58, and alleged Vietnamese ringleader Le Ho Vu, 36, were also handed death sentences in connection with the case, following the trial in the Family and Juvenile Court, under Ho Chi Minh City People's Court. The group "illegally stored, trafficked and traded more than 216kg of drugs" between May and June 2020, state media news site Cong An Nhan dan reported. —APP



ISLAMABAD:—A family enjoy with Zebra during Sunday Holiday alongside Faisal Avenue in Federal Capital. —ONLINE

Country faces debt risks, costs rise: BMP

Mian Anjum Nisar says high cost of doing business dangerous for trade and industry

MEHTAB PIERZADA

ISLAMABAD : The Federation of Pakistan Chambers of Commerce and Industry's Businessmen Panel (BMP) has said that the growing debt stock carries significant fiscal costs and exposes the country to debt vulnerabilities, as highlighted in the Pakistan Development Updates various reports.

FPCCI former president and Businessmen Panel Chairman Mian Anjum Nisar emphasized that persistent fiscal deficits and debt repayments have resulted in consistently high annual gross financing needs, averaging 27% of GDP over the past decade. This level is notably higher than the emerging market threshold of 15%. The leader of the BMP said that in the past two decades, Pakistan has witnessed two consecutive years of the highest budget deficits in 2022 and 2023. He pointed out that for the current fiscal year, a budget

deficit of 7.7% of the GDP is anticipated, a staggering Rs1.3 trillion above the government's target. He expressed concerns over these persistent large budget shortfalls, which have led to the rapid accumulation of public debt. This, in turn, has crowded out private investment and contributed to macroeconomic volatility.

Referring to the SBP data, he unveiled an alarming 39% increase in the external debt of the federal government, reaching Rs24.2 trillion within a year. A substantial Rs6.7 trillion increase in external debt was primarily attributed to currency depreciation. As of Sept 2023, external debt stood at Rs17.4 trillion, excluding the International Monetary Fund (IMF)'s liabilities.

Out of the total external public debt of \$85.18bn, the government owed \$64bn to multilateral and bilateral development partners including IMF which meant more than two-thirds (i.e. 75pc) of the total ex-

ternal public debt was on concessional terms with a longer maturity, 16pc (i.e. \$13.5bn) from international capital markets and foreign commercial banks, and 7pc (i.e. \$7bn) of the total external public debt constitutes deposits from friendly countries like China and Saudi Arabia.

Mian Anjum Nisar said that this unsettling trend has raised concerns about fiscal sustainability and the adverse impacts of steep currency devaluation come at a time when the World Bank has cautioned Pakistan about the growing risks of its macroeconomic framework.

For the past one and half year, the country is facing a serious financial crunch and continually relying on borrowing to meet its financial needs.

FPCCI former president and Businessmen Panel Chairman said that high cost of doing business has proved to be dangerous for businesses, as ever-increasing cost of production is the real threat to the economy

amidst frequent upward revisions in policy rate and continuous fluctuations in rupee against dollar.

Mian Anjum Nisar said that the government liquidity and external vulnerability risks are elevated and there remain considerable risks around to secure required financing to fully meet its needs for the next few years. He said that constant hike in power tariff has pushed the electricity prices higher and added to the already soaring cost of trade and industry. He asked the government to shut down all expensive oil-based power plants to ensure availability of cheaper energy for consumers. He condemned the government for shifting power distribution companies' inefficiencies' burden to the consumers by jacking up the tariff under the guise of Fuel Charges Adjustment. He observed that the aggressive economic measures, high borrowing rates, inflation, oppressive taxation and unstable currency have been negatively affect-

ing running businesses.

With a view to deal with fiscal challenges he asked the economic managers to work on the three-way strategy by implementing short-term goals that will help to keep generating resources for smooth fiscal operations, medium-term goals where they should focus on financial inclusion, documenting the economy by designing a system where all businesses can be registered and properly document their income including collection of sales tax, initiating the process of privatization as well as improving governance by introducing reforms in each sector. As a long-term goal, the country must focus on improving its human capital, and revamping IT sectors by extending facilities and providing all the requisite supports. In the same way, we also need to work on designing a comprehensive and proactive strategy to tackle challenges related to strengthening border security and implementing effective and

comprehensive Anti-Money Laundering and Terrorist Financing measures holding accountable and taking to task all those who are involved in illegitimate activities, undermining both our economy and national interests.

He stated that the significant jump in electricity prices and hike in gas tariffs to meet the IMF condition will put additional burden of billions of rupee on consumers. He observed that it is unfortunate that the authorities in all governments continued to approve billions of rupees' additional burden on consumers through a direct tariff increase and an indirect increase through the withdrawal of subsidies given to exporters and farmers earlier. In its monthly report on Foreign Economic Assistance (FEA), the Economic Affairs Division (EAD) said against its annual target of \$17.6bn, total FEA in the July-September quarter amounted to \$3.527bn when compared to just \$2.234bn of the same .

Japanese island conducts drill amid Taiwan tensions

YONAGUNI : Japan on Sunday conducted a tsunami evacuation drill on its westernmost island, an exercise that could also help residents respond to an emergency arising from any attempt by China to take control of nearby self-ruled Taiwan, an official said. Nintendo has filed a patent for a gaming device that has two screens that can be split in half about 200 island officials and members of Japan's military, known as the Self-Defence Force (SDF), took part in the exercise on Yonaguni, Japan's westernmost island, 2,000 km (1,240 miles) southwest of the capital, Tokyo. But SDF helicopters and landing craft from ships that had sailed more than 1,000 km (620 miles) from the main Japanese islands were unable to join the exercise because of strong winds. "We can't choose the time when we will face a disaster. We have to think about the worst thing that can happen and plan for that," the mayor of Yonaguni, Kenichi Ito-kazu, told officials at the island's town hall at the start of the drill. Japan is prone to earthquake-triggered tsunami. Nearly 20,000 people were killed by one on the northeast coast of its main island of Honshu in 2011.—APP

SA boosts investment ties in Africa

RIYADH : Saudi Arabia's trade relations with Africa have strengthened, marked by the Kingdom's investment ministry hosting a series of roundtable talks. Minister of Investment Khalid Al-Falih and Abdulrahman bin Abdulmohsen Al-Fadhli, the minister of environment, water and agriculture, held meetings with several heads of state on the sidelines of the inaugural Saudi-African Summit in Riyadh, according to the Saudi Press Agency. Presidents from the Republics of Chad, Somalia, and Nigeria attended the talks along with representatives from both sides' private sectors, the Saudi Press Agency reported. The roundtable meetings addressed practices to improve investment relations between the countries and enhance efforts to develop economic ties, investments, and bilateral trade. Discussions also focused on devising strategies to stimulate quality investments and enable the private sector to benefit from business opportunities in both countries. During Thursday's Saudi-Arab-African Economic Conference, Al-Falih said: "We see economic potential in Africa that is unmatched... We want our investments to draw more investments, in order for that to happen we need to de-risk for the investor." Saudi Arabia and the Ivory Coast expressed their intent to establish the Saudi-Ivorian Business Council to enhance trade and investment between the two countries.—DNA

German surfer masters waves through science

MUNICH : Sebastian Steudtner already holds the world record for the largest wave ever surfed, but as the giant wave season begins, the German is looking to science and technology to chase a new high. Harnessing the technical prowess of racecar maker Porsche and autoparts specialist Schaeffler, Steudtner is seeking to dwarf his record 26.21-metre (86-foot) wave set at the Portuguese surfers' Mecca of Nazare three years ago.

"With the world record wave I realised I've reached a limit for how fast my board can go," Steudtner told AFP of his last run, involving the wave reaching the equivalent of around eight storeys. "Together with Porsche, we asked ourselves how we could make the board faster and more stable," said the 38-year-old Bavarian. Surfers who increase their speed can take on bigger swells — although it's not just a question of a "need for speed" but a question of safety as well "Speed is so important to us because the bigger the wave, the more speed I have to have to get away from it," said Steudtner.—APP

Violence in Sudan 'verging on pure evil', UN warns

NEWS DESK

KHARTOUM : Violence against civilians in Sudan is "verging on pure evil", a senior United Nations official has warned, after nearly seven months of war has left a wave of destruction with at least half the population in need of humanitarian aid. "We continue to receive unrelenting and appalling reports of sexual and gender-based violence and forced disappearance, arbitrary detentions and grave violations of human and children's rights," Clementine Nkweta-Salami, the UN humanitarian coordinator for Sudan, told a news conference on Friday. Since the civil war escalated between the Sudanese army and paramilitary Rapid Support Forces (RSF) in April, nearly six million people have been uprooted from their country or have been internally displaced. Nkweta-Salami added that some 25 million people need humanitarian help and said that more than 70 percent of health facilities in the conflict areas were now out of service, resulting in outbreaks of cholera, dengue, malaria and measles, and high levels of malnutrition among children. The UN is targeting about 12 million people for aid and has appealed for another \$2.6bn. Within Sudan, fears are also mounting that the horrors of Darfur 20 years ago are returning, with reports of widespread killings, rapes and destruction of villages in the region. Nkweta-Salami noted that people fleeing to neighbouring Chad had also reported cases of ethnically driven killings taking place in Sudan's West Darfur with the RSF taking over the main army base in the state capital, el-Geneina.

Sporadic violence as Nigerian states vote for governors

WEB DESK

ABUJA : Violence and vote-rigging claims marred elections for governors in three Nigerian states on despite a heavy security presence. State elections are fiercely contested in Nigeria where governors are powerful figures and clashes, killings and voter intimidation are common. Tense political rivalries played out in Bayelsa state in the south, Imo in the southeast, and Kogi in the centre of the country. The electoral commission said one of its officials was abducted, while monitoring groups said at least two people were shot, including a man allegedly running off with a ballot box. Counting began in the afternoon and results were expected to start coming in overnight on Saturday. The voting took place amid sweeping travel restrictions

and police deployed helicopters and gunboats, while the army sent troops to "reinforce security". The civil society Transition Monitoring Group said a man was shot in Anyigba, Kogi state, after allegedly trying to "disrupt the election by snatching the ballot box." It shared footage of a bloodied body on social media. In a separate statement, it said "political thugs were reportedly killed by the military in Anyigba and Idah town" in Kogi. The army and police did not respond to a request for confirmation. The Centre for Democracy and Development (CDD), which observed the polls, also said a person trying to flee with a ballot box in Anyigba was "shot and killed by military officials". It said another person was shot in Fagbe, near Bayelsa's state capital Yenagoa, without providing further details. The CDD warned of low turnout at certain polling

stations, saying some people were "scared of coming out to vote due to fear of violence". It described widespread vote-buying, with some people exchanging their ballots for handouts of rice. The Economic and Financial Crimes Commission said it had arrested 14 people over suspected vote-buying across the three states. Observers were watching the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) closely after the presidential election earlier this year, when critics and the opposition said delays uploading results and technical problems created opportunities for rigging votes. On Friday INEC said an official was "abducted while waiting to board a boat" in Bayelsa, adding on Saturday that they had been released. Another boat carrying election documents capsized, it said, affecting more than 5,000 voters. The commission also announced it was

suspending the election in parts of Kogi state over reports of electoral malpractice. INEC said it had "done everything possible to guarantee that the weekend's election was "free, fair, and credible." In Imo state, local media reported scuffles as votes were collected. Kogi state, led by the APC, was seeking to avoid a repeat of 2019 polls, which saw deadly violence and electoral malpractice. The 2019 vote in Bayelsa was also blighted by violence and abuses including killings, abductions and intimidation. Gift Meeting, a caterer in Yenagoa, told AFP the election was "not worth anyone dying for." She believes the Peoples Democratic Party (PDP), in power in the state, but in opposition nationally, will win comfortably in Bayelsa.

Nigeria has a long history of electoral violence since the country emerged from military rule in 1999 and many vote results end up challenged in the courts.

PIAF urges admin action, boosts exports

DNA

Lahore: Pakistan Industrial and Traders Associations Front (PIAF) has said that beside increasing exports and controlling imports the government will have to take administrative measures, as a large demand of cash dollars are seen in the market. PIAF Chairman Faheemur Rehman Saigol said that massive fall of rupee value continued to damage the economy, as the Pakistani currency continued its slide, reaching more than one month low above Rs286 against the US dollar in the inter-bank market this week. In a statement issued here today, he observed that the rupee's slide is attributed to the increased demand for foreign currency in the domestic economy, primarily driven by higher sales of automobiles, cement, petroleum oil products, and the repatriation of profits by foreign companies operating in the country.

He urged the government to control volatility of rupee against the US dollar, as the industrial revival and economic growth is not possible without stability of local currency. He said that the massive devaluation of currency fuelled inflationary pressures, adding that two major factors contributed to the price hike. First, the prices of food and commodities as well as fuel prices skyrocketed in the international market, and second, the depreciation of the exchange rate by 30 percent also led to higher inflation, he added. Faheem Saigol argued that this devaluation of the currency was dictated by the IMF through prior actions and it has nothing to do with macroeconomic fundamentals. He said that there was a complete breakdown of economic policy making, as the country's fiscal policy had become subservient to monetary and exchange rate policies. PIAF Chairman said that the US dollar continued to rise against the rupee,

reaching a record high amidst growing current account deficit. The government needs to devise a strategy on war-footing to increase foreign investment in Pakistan so as to stop the upward trajectory of the dollar, he added. He said that the monetary tightening and exchange rate depreciation resulted in higher inflation, public debt and debt servicing. The empirical evidence showed that the one percent monetary tightening hiked the inflationary pressure by 1.3 percent in the case of Pakistan, he added. He said that 10 percent devaluation of the currency raised the Consumer Price Index (CPI)-based inflation by 0.6 percent. As a result, he said, the 30 percent depreciation resulted in increasing inflationary pressures by approximately two percent. This indicates that from the inflation standing at 11.5 percent on a monthly basis, nearly two percent comes through depreciation of the exchange rate, he pointed out.

Pakistan's central bank reported an improvement in the country's foreign exchange reserves (held by SBP), with an increase of \$14 million to reach \$7.50 billion in the week ending October 27. This suggests that the supply of foreign currency has been better than the demand for the US dollar in the market. Simultaneously, the IMF is conducting a relatively smooth review of Pakistan's domestic economy under its ongoing \$3 billion loan program. Pakistan has met nearly all the conditions required for the review. The market anticipates that the Fund will approve the second tranche of its loan, amounting to \$700 million, upon the completion of the economic review, which will further boost foreign exchange reserves. He suggested that the domestic currency may stabilize around its current fair value of approximately Rs285 per dollar soon due to fluctuations in the demand and supply of foreign currency.

Briefs

Amnesty petition demanding immediate ceasefire in Gaza

DNA
LONDON: More than a million signatures from people around the world have been gathered for an Amnesty International petition demanding an immediate ceasefire to end the ongoing Israeli aggression on the Gaza Strip. Erika Guevara-Rosas, Senior Director of Research, Advocacy, Policy and Campaigns at Amnesty International, said: "The world is watching in horror as more and more civilians lose their lives each day amid Israel's relentless bombardment and ground operations, and the unfolding of an unprecedented, man-made humanitarian catastrophe in the occupied Gaza Strip."
"Israel's further tightening of its illegal blockade of Gaza has left 2 million people without access to drinking water, food, medical supplies and fuel, leading to the collapse of the health system at a time when the number of those injured is over 25,000," she added. The Amnesty official continued, "Israeli authorities continue to dehumanize Palestinians in their rhetoric as Israeli forces bomb densely populated refugee camps, hospitals, UN-run schools, bakeries, mosques and churches, roads and civilian homes wiping out entire families."

Bank deposits up by 18% this year

DNA
KARACHI: Bank deposits increased to Rs26.398 trillion in October, up 18% from a year earlier, as savers flocked to take advantage of the highest interest rates in Asia, data from the State Bank of Pakistan (SBP) showed. However, deposits in the banking industry increased slightly by 0.3% from Rs26.318 trillion in September. Analysts attributed the increase in deposits to several factors, including higher interest rates that encouraged savers to keep their money in bank accounts, remittance growth from overseas workers, and rapid branch expansion of some banks. "The deposit growth is also due to the conversion of foreign currencies into rupees and holding them in banks rather than at home following the government's September crackdown on the illegal currency trade and dollar smuggling," an analyst said.

India outclass Netherlands to remain unbeaten

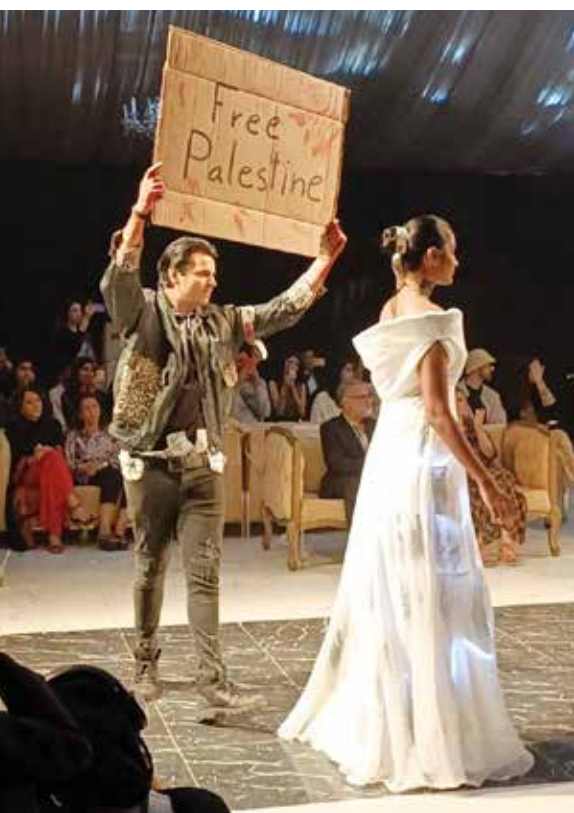
SPORTS DESK
BENGALURU: India defeated the Netherlands by 160 runs in the 45th match of the ICC World Cup 2023 at the M.Chinnaswamy Stadium, Bengaluru, on Sunday to give their inch-perfect group-stage run a flawless ending. India will now play New Zealand in the first semi-final of the World Cup at the Wankhede Stadium in Mumbai on November 15. Despite a bad start, losing their first wicket for five runs in the second over, the Dutch made a decent comeback in the game and avoided a collapse. Max O'Dowd (30) and Colin Ackermann (35) provided their side some stability but both the batters ended up losing their wickets before their side scored 100 runs. Taking advantage of the colossal total, Rohit Sharma used all the available bowlers at his disposal as eight different players bowled today including Virat Kohli, Shubman Gill, Suryakumar Yadav and himself. Kohli took a wicket in his second over, removing the Dutch's skipper Scott Edwards for 17 runs. The entire Dutch side was out for 250 runs in their chase of a 411-run target.

DEEPAWALI CELEBRATIONS AT NEPAL RESIDENCE



ISLAMABAD: The Ambassador of Nepal to Pakistan Tapas Adhikari hosted Deepawali celebrations at his residence. The guests participated in the Diya lighting ritual. Ambassador of Pakistan to Nepal Abrar H Hashmi along with his spouse also attended the event. Deepawali is also known as Diwali however in Nepal it is called Deepawali. – DNA

American Diplomat faced embarrassment during fashion show



One Minute silence for Palestine" with another side mentioning "Free Palestine", model walked on the ramp at the beginning and the end of show, model stopped in front of US diplomat and his wife who were sitting at front row

NAZIR SIYAL

KARACHI: Mr. Ronald Rhinehart, Deputy Consul General, and Political Unit Chief U.S. Consulate Karachi caught in an embarrassing situation during the fashion show in DHA Area 51 hall, a male model entered on the ramp holding a play-card mentioning "One Minute silence for Palestine" with another side mentioning "Free Palestine", model walked on the ramp at the beginning and the end of the show, model stopped in front of the U.S diplomat and his wife who were sitting at the front row. The U.S diplomat changed his position a few times trying desperately to ignore the protestor. Later, Mr. Ronald Rhinehart, with his wife, went to the backstage after the event to avoid the filming audience and left immediately from the hall, avoiding to talk to anyone.

Israel delusional to think it can eliminate resistance

BEIRUT: A high-ranking official with the Lebanese Hezbollah resistance movement says the Tel Aviv regime is mistaken if it thinks it would be able to wipe out the Palestinian Hamas resistance group through its onslaught against defenseless Palestinians in the Gaza Strip. "The occupying regime is delusional and mistaken if it believes that it can eliminate the Hamas movement, or other resistance factions. The resistance front has developed both in terms of presence and strength, while the Occupation is repeating an obsolete experience in Gaza," Sayyed Hashem Safieddine, head of the Executive Council of Hezbollah, said at a ceremony in southern Beirut on Sunday. He added, "Hamas will remain, the Axis of Resistance will become stronger, and buildings and hospitals much better than previous ones will be constructed in their place." The high-ranking Hezbollah official stressed that resistance fighters will never lay down their arms as they are fighting off an enemy that cannot be trusted at all. "What is happening in the Gaza Strip confirms that it is impossible to rely on any force. We are facing an enemy that does not recognize any value. Security and safety are created by means of our weapons, blood, and capabilities," Safieddine said. – Agencies

Poliovirus cripples another child in Karachi

KARACHI: Another child has been crippled by poliovirus in Karachi's Gadap Town, increasing the number of cases this year to six in Pakistan. "A 31-month-old boy has been affected by Wild Poliovirus 1 in the notorious UC-4 Gujro, Gadap Town in District East Karachi. It is the 5th polio case of 2023 in Pakistan and the 2nd case in Karachi," an official of the Emergency Operation Centre (EOC) Sindh said. The official maintained that the latest polio case had been reported from the same area in Gadap Town where the fourth polio case of the year was reported last month. He added that the fifth child who has been affected by the polio is an Afghan national. "This child had received three doses of Oral Polio Vaccine (OPV) as per routine immunisation, two shots of intravenous polio vaccine (IPV) while the child has also received OPV doses on more than seven occasions," the official claimed citing the initial investigation of the case. He maintained that genetic sequencing of the isolated virus was under way but no travel history of the child had emerged. He added that an intensive investigation had been launched to ascertain the circumstances that led to a resurgence of poliovirus in Karachi. – DNA

Donald Trump: Legal experts see uphill battle in fraud case

WASHINGTON: This week marked the end of the most dramatic phase of Donald Trump's New York business fraud trial, which saw high-profile members of his family make the journey to Lower Manhattan one by one to answer probing questions from prosecutors. On Monday Mr Trump's defence team will begin presenting their side, calling the former president's oldest son back to the stand as their first witness. But legal analysts told the media that after two damaging weeks of testimony from members of the Trump family, salvaging their case now will be a herculean task. "It's been a disaster from a legal perspective," said Neema Rahmani, a former federal prosecutor and president of West Coast Trial Lawyers. He believes that Mr Trump is "going to lose this case, and lose badly". In a worst-case scenario for Mr Trump, Judge Arthur Engoron could bar him and his fellow defendants from doing business in New York, and issue fines of at least \$250m (£204m) in penalties. Perhaps the most harmful of all the testimony came from Mr Trump himself. When he took the stand on Monday, he called New York Attorney General Letitia James a "political hack", declared the case "a disgrace" and personally attacked Judge Engoron.

At several points, Judge Engoron demanded Mr Trump's lawyers rein in his behaviour, and answer the questions posed to him. If they did not, the judge pledged to "draw every negative inference that I can". "If Donald Trump was anybody other than a person with Secret Service protection, he would have been jailed for contempt of court," said Mitchell Epner, an attorney who handles commercial litigation. When he did directly respond to prosecutors' questions, Mr Trump did perhaps even more damage to his cause. At the heart of the attorney general's lawsuit are documents known as statements of financial condition, the balance sheets that the Trump Organization used to demonstrate the value of its properties and Mr Trump's net worth so they could obtain loans and insurance rates. The attorney general's office alleges those documents were fraudulently inflated to oblige deals they could not have received based on their true financials. The judge had already ruled those documents were false. He is now weighing whether there was an intent to defraud, whether the defendants did so for personal gain, and other charges. The judge will also determine whether to issue penalties and if so, how severe. – Agencies

Iceland volcano: Emergency declared

LONDON: The chance of a volcanic eruption in Iceland is rising, posing a threat to a now-evacuated town, experts say. Iceland has declared a state of emergency after a series of earthquakes. Authorities have ordered overnight thousands living in the southwestern town of Grindavik to leave as a precaution. The Icelandic Meteorological Office (IMO) said there was a considerable risk of an eruption. The probability of an eruption on or just off the Reykjanes peninsula has increased since the morning, IMO says. An eruption could start at any time in the next few days, according to the statement. Thor Thordason, professor of volcanology at the University of Iceland, said a 15km-long (nine mile) river of magma running under the peninsula was still active. "That's why we're talking about an imminent eruption unfortunately. The most likely eruption side appears to be within the boundary of the town of Grindavik," he told the BBC. Thousands of tremors have been recorded around the nearby Fagradalsfjall volcano in recent weeks. They have been concentrated in Iceland's Reykjanes Peninsula, which had remained dormant to volcanic activity for 800 years before a 2021 eruption. In a statement on Saturday agency said a tunnel of magma, or molten rock, that extends northeast across Grindavik and some 10km further inland, was estimated at a depth of less than 800 metres, compared with 1,500 metres earlier in the day. – Agencies

California school suspends student for saying 'Free Palestine'

CALIFORNIA: A US school has suspended a student for his pro-Palestine remarks amid the ongoing genocide in the Gaza Strip by Israeli occupant forces. The school in Newport Beach, southern California, which has a history of scandals, suspended the 7th-grade Palestinian student for his remarks to a schoolmate that included the words "Free Palestine." Corona del Mar High School (CdM) officials and social media posts cited by US media on Saturday reported that the student was suspended for allegedly violating school codes prohibiting students from harassing and threatening other students amid increasing hate crimes. A spokesperson for the Newport-Mesa Unified School District, which owns CdM, confirmed the suspension of the student but declined to provide any details. – Agencies

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