



Islamabad POST

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Turkiye's President Erdogan calls Israel 'terrorist state'

Detailed News On Page-08

Stop this horror, UNICEF chief on visit to Gaza

Detailed News On Page-08



Kohli breaks Sachin record with 50th ton

Detailed News On Page-06



Briefs

Imran realised 'Buzdar mistake'

DNA

LONDON: Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) Chairman Imran Khan's close aide Sayed Zulfi Bukhari has said that making Usman Buzdar chief minister of Punjab was a mistake of the party and that the former prime minister realised the mistake soon but had limited options to replace him. Bukhari was speaking at the SOAS University of London on the topic of "Democracy in Crisis", organised by SOAS Pakistan Discussion Forum. He spoke frankly for over two hours about the blunders made by the PTI during their nearly four-year stint in government and took critical questions from the students. He claimed that when Imran Khan reflected on his time in power he realised that Usman Buzdar was not the right choice as Punjab chief minister but things got complicated politically as there were many groups of the party in Punjab who wanted to replace Buzdar. There was Aleem Khan group and other power groups.

Ahsan calls for embracing technology

STAFF REPORT

NAROWAL: Pakistan Muslim League Nawaz (PML-N) leader and former member National Assembly Ahsan Iqbal said on Wednesday tanks and arms could not defend a country with a weak economic condition of a country and the example of the fact was former Soviet Union. He was addressing the First National Dr Allama Iqbal Conference at the University of Narwhal. He said that Israel had committed all access to the innocent people of Palestine and in Gaza the images were heart rendering. However, the US and the west was supporting the oppression. "This was just because we are inferior to the west and the US in the field of science and technology," he believed, adding that the Muslim world was lagging behind the west, the US and even the India. "They are making headways in the field of science and technology but we stand nowhere. None of the Muslim country has even landed on the moon," he said.

Kakar: West defending Israeli forces atrocities

PM reprimands "bizarre" justifications, narrative on killing of Gaza children by Israel

ANSAR M BHATTI/DNA

ISLAMABAD: Caretaker Prime Minister Anwaar-ul-Haq Kakar on Wednesday calling Israeli barbarism in Palestine unparalleled even in the medieval era, reprimanded the world's double standards on war ethos and its "bizarre and surreal" rationalization of the killing of children in Gaza. The prime minister, addressing the annual Margalla Dialogue 2023 conference held by Islamabad Policy Research Institute on "Evolving World Environment: Charting the Course for Our Future," said Israeli forces were targeting vulnerable people in hospitals and eliminating children. Referring to his discussions with some diplomats who defended Israeli actions by citing Israeli children's deaths, he expressed his surprise at the argument. However, he reiterated that the killing of any child, regardless of faith or origin, is condemnable. "So how many Palestinian children have to be killed to appease and address the Israeli anger? One, five, ten, 500, 1000, 4,700? Can they give us a number so that we can satisfy those parents to wait as some 10,000 children needed to be killed to address the Israeli anger," he remarked. He said those claiming to be the followers of Prophet Moses,

Continued on Page 06

Israel raids Al Shifa Hospital

DNA

GAZA: The Israeli military said it was carrying out a 'raid' on Wednesday against Hamas fighters in Al Shifa Hospital, having urged them to surrender with thousands of Palestinian civilians still sheltering inside Gaza Strip's biggest hospital. Medical officials in Gaza say more than 11,000 people are confirmed dead from Israeli strikes, around 40% of them children, and countless others were trapped under rubble. Dr. Munir al-Bursh, director-general of the Gaza health ministry, told Arab news channel that Israeli forces had raided the western side of the medical complex. "There are big explosions and dust entered the areas where we are. We believe an explosion occurred inside the hospital," Bursh said. Hours later, Gaza health ministry

Continued on Page 06

Shehbaz asks Bilawal to be politically mature

The former premier urged politicians to reflect on their own actions and analyse where mistakes were made

ABBAS HASHMI

LAHORE: Shehbaz Sharif, Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) president and former prime minister, termed Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) Chairman Bilawal Bhutto-Zardari a "young brother", a day after the young politicians advised his party's supremo to "focus on Lahore". "Bilawal Bhutto is like a younger brother. [We have] worked together for 16 months," he said, citing their collaboration under the Pakistan Democratic Movement (PDM) coalition government. The senior politician's comment came during a press conference in Quetta, where PML-N leaders, including Nawaz, gathered to meet with Balochistan-based political parties ahead of the elections in February 2024. The former prime minister's statement was made in response to his ex-foreign minister's comment advising Nawaz to

Continued on Page 06



'Pirates' taken to Quetta in state patronage: PTI

KHAYAM ABBASI

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) spokesperson lashed out at the shameful practice in the country of switching political loyalties by non-political and non-democratic forces, saying that after turning Sindh House into a center of horse trading, now the Jati umra pirates were taken to Quetta under the state patronage for the wholesale auction of the political orphans of Balochistan. PTI spokesperson said that earlier, Sindh House had been converted into centre of horse trading for the sale-purchase of loyalties and now Jati umra's pirates arrived in Balochistan to take part in the state-sponsored wholesale auction of political orphans in the province. He called converting Balochistan into the center of sale-purchase of political loyalties after the shameful Sindh House saga as a hateful example of

Continued on Page 06

PROCLAMATION OF TRNC



ISLAMABAD: Chairman Senate Defence Committee Senator Mushahid Hussain Sayed, Senator Shahzad Waseem, Maulana Tahir Ashrafi, Ambassador of Turkiye Mehmet Plicaci, Director General Ministry of Foreign Affairs Imran Haider, Representative of TRNC Dilsad Senol and others cutting cake to celebrate the 40th Anniversary of the proclamation of the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus, at Islamabad Serena Hotel. - DNA

TRNC envoy thanks Pakistan for support

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Representative of TRNC Dilsad Senol has thanked Pakistan for its whole-hearted support on the issue of Cyprus. She expressed these views on the occasion of the 40th Anniversary of the proclamation of the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus. Chairman Senate Defence Committee Senator Mushahid Hussain Sayed, Senator Shahzad Waseem, Maulana Tahir Ashrafi, Ambassador of Turkiye Mehmet Plicaci, Director General Ministry of Foreign Affairs Imran Haider, Representative of TRNC Dilsad Senol and others attended the reception. Dilsad Senol further hoped relations between TRNC and Pakistan would grow further even in the

Continued on Page 06

IMF Mission Chief calls on PM Pakistan, IMF reach staff level accord

PM Kakar reaffirmed the government's enduring commitment to the reform efforts agreed with the IMF

MONITORING DESK

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan reached a staff-level agreement with the International Monetary Fund (IMF) on the first review of a \$3 billion bailout, wherein the country will receive \$700 million after approval from the lender's Executive Board. Upon approval, Pakistan will have access to around \$700 million, bringing total disbursements under the programme to almost \$1.9 billion, the IMF announced in a statement on Wednesday. In conversation with meida, Ministry of Finance's former adviser Dr Khaqan Hassan Najeeb said the board's approval will help Pakistan unlock more funding from other multilateral and bilateral donors. "That is a good development and a satisfying one for Pakistan indeed,"

Continued on Page 06

SC adjourns Faizabad sit-in case

COURT REPORTER

ISLAMABAD: The Supreme Court Wednesday adjourned the hearing of the Faizabad sit-in review case till January 22, 2024, after the top court was told that a new inquiry commission has been formed to probe the Faizabad sit-in. A three-member bench, headed by Chief Justice Qazi Faez Isa, and comprising Justice Aminuddin

Continued on Page 06

PCB announces new captains for T20I, Test



Babar steps down as captain

SPORTS DESK

LAHORE: The Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) has appointed Shan Masood as Test captain, while Shaheen Afridi has been tasked with leading the T20 format of the national team. The development comes shortly after Babar Azam Wednesday announced stepping

Continued on Page 06

Former minister boycotts British King's Day event over Gaza situation

Imran Nazir says all big advocates for human rights including UK are silent on Gaza issue

DNA

ISLAMABAD: To protest the silence of the world



community over the Gaza situation where the Israeli forces have let the hell loose on the innocent children, men and women, the former Punjab health minister Khawja Imran Nazeer has boycotted the British King Charles birthday ceremony. I a letter written to Jane Marriott the British High Commissioner to Pakistan dated November 14, 2023, Imran Nazeer said "I regret to inform you that I will not be able to attend the ceremony due to the ongoing situation in Gaza, More than 8,000 children besides

thousands of innocent Palestinians have been killed so far. Even the hospitals and refugee camps are being targeted, brutally". He further wrote, a round a hundred of innocent protesters against the Israelis atrocities were arrested in London last week. Strangely all the big advocates for human rights including Great Britain are completely quiet over the issue. "Therefore I feel it inappropriate to participate in a celebration while the people of Gaza are suffering. I hope you understand my decision", he ad ed.

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'Let power of intellect overrule military might'

"Power of intellect should be the world order taking precedence over the violent forces which quash the spirit of humanity and justice," he said at the Annual Margalla Dialogue 2023

ADIL SHAHEEN

ISLAMABAD : President Dr Arif Alvi on Wednesday said with wars and conflicts resulting in the massacre of innocent people, the world needed a unified approach to saving humanity from the violence of the powerful. "Power of intellect should be the world order taking precedence over the violent forces which quash the spirit of humanity and justice," he said at the Annual Margalla Dialogue 2023. The event themed 'Evolving world environment: Charting the course of our future' gathered diplomats, thinkers, and intellectuals from various countries. President Alvi said dehumanizing people had become a norm in the world where vested interests prevailed over humanity. War, he said, was not a solution to resolve any conflict and

always resulted in a never-ending vicious cycle of violence. He pointed out that using the right of veto against the cessation of war questioned the ethical standards of the countries concerned. In Gaza, he said the massive killings of Palestinians committed by Israel needed urgent attention by the international community to act and play its role in stopping the bloodshed. He said Israel, in its justification to eliminate Hamas was "killing the Palestinians like savages" and calling the colossal deaths as collateral damage". The president mentioned that the world after several war-related deaths in Europe arrived at the culmination of peace treaties and bodies like the League of the Nations and the United Nations (UN). He emphasized the role of the UN in waging peace initiatives to prevent disputes from escalating into conflicts and an effective

mechanism to stop wars. Besides conflicts, he said, the world faced several threats affiliated with climate change, artificial intelligence, negative social narratives, unequal wealth distribution, and dissatisfied mankind. "The realistic solutions to these challenges need international cooperation requiring the adoption of viable systems and also embedding ethical morality into approach," he said. President of IPRI Dr Raza Muhammad said as the world grappled with both natural and man-made disasters, it was time for a collective approach to save humanity from emanating the risks involved. He highlighted the need for a global focus on conflict resolution, the economy, and climate change. Earlier, President Dr Arif Alvi and the guests in attendance observed a one-minute silence for the innocent people of Palestine who faced the barbaric acts of Israel.



ISLAMABAD: The IMF Mission Chief for Pakistan Nathan Porter and IMF Resident Representative for Pakistan Esther Perez Tuiz call on the Caretaker Prime Minister Anwaar-ul-Haq Kakar. - DNA

Commissioner Kohat visits KMU Institute Kohat

KOHAT: Commissioner Kohat Division Muhammad Abid Khan along with Regional Police Officer Sher Akbar Khan, Deputy Commissioner Kohat Dr. Azmatullah Wazir and District Police Officer Farhan Khan Wednesday visited KMU Institute of Medical Sciences Kohat and inspected the preparation there for the conduct of MD CAT Test. He thoroughly discussed ways and means for the smooth, transparent and peaceful conduct of the MD CAT test. The officials of the MD CAT Test, KMU Institute of Medical Sciences Kohat were also present. On this occasion, they reviewed the preparations for conducting the MD CAT test and issued instructions to the concerned authorities to follow the proposed action plan. - DNA

National seminar focuses on Hong Kong convention

DNA

KARACHI : The Ministry of Maritime Affairs under the leadership of the hosts, including the Minister of Maritime Affairs, Railway, and Communications, and Special Assistant to the Prime Minister, V. Admiral (R) Ittikhar Ahmad Rao, is excited to announce the successful conclusion of the "IMO National Seminar on the Ratification and Implementation of the Hong Kong Convention in Pakistan 2023." Held in Karachi from 13th to 15th November, this event marked a defining moment for Pakistan's maritime and environmental sectors. Esteemed Chief Guests, including H.E. Mr. Per Albert Ilsaas, Ambassador of Norway to Pakistan, and Mr. Jun Sun from the In-

ternational Maritime Organization (IMO), graced the event with their presence. Their opening remarks underscored the seminar's significance and the shared commitment of Pakistan and Norway to advance sustainable ship recycling practices. Mr. Ilsaas shared insights from Norway's maritime heritage, emphasizing the importance of international collaboration in enhancing ship recycling practices. Meanwhile, Mr. Jun Sun, representing the IMO, reaffirmed the organization's global efforts to promote safe and environmentally sound ship recycling, highlighting its dedication to a sustainable future for the industry. The seminar also featured the invaluable contributions of prominent IMO consultants, Mrs. Gudrun Janssens and Mr. Takeshi Naruse. They presented on the current treatment, storage, and disposal facilities and ship landing activities in compliance with the European Union Ship Recycling Regulation (EU SSR). Mrs. Janssens and Mr. Naruse played a pivotal role in drafting a resolution, fostering international collaboration and the adoption of sustainable ship recycling practices. In his closing remarks, Mr. Jun Sun, the IMO representative, acknowledged the significance of the discussions and resolutions made during the seminar. He emphasized the IMO's essential role in supporting and guiding nations in their implementation of the Hong Kong Convention for the Safe and Environmentally Sound Recycling of Ships.

RCCI President Calls on ambassador of Czech Republic

RCCI President Saqib Rafiq gave a short briefing on chamber current activities and future programs. He said that the Czech Republic had a very vast scope for Pakistani goods

DNA

RAWALPINDI: The Rawalpindi Chamber of Commerce and Industry (RCCI) President Saqib Rafiq called on H.E. Ladislav Steinhübel, ambassador of the Czech Republic in Islamabad. Senior Vice President Muhammad Hamza Sarosh was also present in the meeting. RCCI President Saqib Rafiq gave a short briefing on chamber current activities and future programs. He said that the Czech Republic had a very vast scope for Pakistani goods. The existing trade volume between the two countries was low and needed to be raised through frequent exchange of delegations. RCCI President who also has the portfolio of Chairman Rawalpindi Waste Management Company (RWMC) discussed scope and opportunities in waste management, recycling the waste and energy from the waste.

Matters related to enhancing bilateral trade, investment opportunities, sector specific information sharing, waste management and recycling, green energy, networking and chamber to chamber connectivity, exploring non-conventional sectors Gem Stone, IT Tourism, Pharma, visit of trade delegation and facilities for investors and Ease of Doing Business (EODB) under Special Investment Facilitation Council (SIFC) came under discussion. Ladislav Steinhübel welcomed the delegation and appreciated RCCI efforts in promoting trade activities in the region. The envoy expressed that Pakistan and Czech Republic enjoys a friendly and cordial relationship and a lot of potential exists to enhance the relationship between both countries. He assured full support and assistance from his office for information sharing, chamber to chamber connectivity and possible joint ventures in various sectors.



ISLAMABAD : A group of the British Band are performing in Islamabad college for girls (ICG) F-6/2 in connection with King Charles birthday.- ONLINE

GCU organized anti-drugs awareness seminar

APP

HYDERABAD: Government College University (GCU) organized a seminar titled 'Anti-Drug Awareness' to educate the students about drugs abuse, the harmful effects under auspices of Anti drug and tobacco committee, the other day. Speakers while addressing said that majority of population was based on youth who were facing so many problems including increasing trend of consuming narcotics however collective efforts were needed to eliminate the menace.

Committee convener Dr Makhdoom Roshan Siddiqui, members Dr Sheeba and Dr Adnan Malik also spoke on the occasion. Dr Roshan Siddiqui said, "Small evil always breeds big evil and drug abuse was also an evil however, it can be controlled through collective efforts." He said that use of narcotics was prohibited all religions including Islam and ethics. He said that anti drug and tobacco committee was working amicably under the leadership of Vice Chancellor (VC) Professor Dr Tayabba Zareef and also creating awareness in University against consuming drugs. He said that all Students were ambassadors of University in this awareness campaign who were not only protect themselves from such menace but also educate others for avoiding this practice. Representatives of students pledged to work collectively for eradication of social evils from University.

Turkiye keen to boost bilateral trade with Pakistan

DNA

LAHORE : Consul General of Turkiye Durmus Bastug said that Pakistan and Turkiye are brother countries and all possible measures are being taken to promote mutual trade and in this regard setting up of Special Investment Facilitation Council by Pakistan is timely step to attract foreign investment. He said that Turkish investors and various companies are making progress to invest in various sectors in Pakistan and especially in Punjab and efforts will be made to resolve the identified problems, including the heavy duties imposed on the import of Pakistani hand-made carpets in Turkiye. He expressed these views while addressing the cake cutting ceremony organized

by Pakistan Carpet Manufacturers and Exporters Association (PCMEA) in connection with the 100th National Day of Turkiye. On this occasion, Senior Vice Chairman of the Association Usman Ashraf, Chairperson of Carpet Training Institute (CTI) Ejazur Rehman, Senior Central Leader Abdul Latif Malik, Senior Member Riaz Ahmed, Shahid Hasan Sheikh, Major (Rtd) Akhtar Nazir, Saeed Khan, Faisal Saeed Khan and others were also present. Turkiye's Consul General Durmus Bastug said that Pakistan and Turkiye relation is amicable and his government is sincerely interested to expand trade with Pakistan. "The current volume of mutual trade between the two countries can be increased several times," he added. He said that Turkish investors

going to Pakistan are also facing other problems including foreign exchange, red-tapism, however, the establishment of the Special Investment Facilitation Council for their solution is very welcome. Setting up of Facilitation Center on the same pattern in Punjab will reduce the difficulties too," adding he said Turkiye has appointed a special officer in the consulate for the purpose of promoting commercial relations and in this regard the setting up of a commercial office is also going to be materialized here. Usman Ashraf, Senior Vice Chairman of the Association while welcoming the Consul General of Turkiye said that Pakistan and Turkiye are brother countries and there is a long and historical relationship between them.

IG Punjab awarded cash prizes to the officers

Dr. Usman Anwar said that encouraging officers and officials with excellent performance is a good tradition of Punjab Police, which will be continued, at all levels

LAHORE : Inspector General Police Punjab Dr. Usman Anwar awarded cash prizes and certificates of appreciation to the officers and officials of Lahore and Gujranwala region for their excellent performance during duty. IG Punjab directed the officers and officials who received the awards to speed up operations against tyrants, dacoits, miscreants, drug dealers and other criminals. IG Punjab said that intelligence-based operations against criminals should

be continued on a daily basis to eradicate organized crime. He stressed that modern policing and information technology should be fully utilized to protect the life and property of the citizens. IG Punjab further said that all possible relief should be given to the citizens under anti-crime operations as well as community policing measures. IG Punjab Dr. Usman Anwar congratulated the officers and officials who received rewards and directed them for better performance.

A special ceremony held at the CPO in honor of the officers and officials with the best performance in the field, in which IG Punjab Dr. Usman Anwar encouraged the officers and officials of Lahore and Gujranwala region with cash prizes and certificates of appreciation. The recipients of the awards included 69 officers and officials from the rank of constables to inspectors, district police and elite force. IG Punjab awarded all officers and officials 20,000 cash and certificates of appreciation. - APP

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National Days and Armed Forces Days

NOVEMBER

Nov 01/Algeria National Day

Nov 04/Italy Armed Forces Day

Nov 07/Russian Federation Socialist Revolution

Nov 09/Cambodia National Day

Nov 11/Poland Independence Day

Nov 14/Jordan Birthday of King Hussein

Nov 15/Belgium Kings Day

Nov 15/Brazil Republic Day

Nov 15/Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus National Day

Nov 18/Oman National Day

Nov 18/Morocco Independence Day

Nov 21/Bangladesh Armed Forces Day

Nov 22/Lebanon Independence Day

Nov 25/Suriname National Day

Nov 28/Mauritania National Day

Nov 28/Albania Flags Day

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Emergency Ambulance.....1122 & Rescue Services.4451122
Motorway Police.....9266044
Motorway Police.....9270601-20
Women Police Stations Islamabad.....9222596
Rawalpindi.....9270601-20



Enquiry

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



Hospitals

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



Departments

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

Water Tank

Islamabad.....0321-5744480

UK Marks Charles III's birthday with climate themed event

Jane Marriott also used the occasion to announce the start of two new climate related initiatives

DNA

ISLAMABAD: The British High Commission in Islamabad hosted the first 'King's Birthday Party' since 1951, marking His Majesty, King Charles III's 75th birthday. Utilised as a 'national day' by the UK, the event had an environment and climate change theme. This was reflective of both the King's interests and the high priority given to this work by the UK.

Speaking to an audience of over 700 high profile attendees, including the Chief Guest Foreign Minister, Jalil Abbas Jilani, the British High Commissioner to Pakistan, Jane Marriott CMG OBE, outlined the depth of UK-Pakistani cooperation on the environment and climate change. Noting that since the 2022 floods, the UK has more than doubled investment in climate finance, and climate resilience and adaptation in Pakistan. Jane Marriott also used the occasion to announce the start



of two new climate related initiatives. This included the start of phase two of the UK's Climate Finance Accelerator Programme, which will see eight innovative Pakistani-based projects receive

technical support to help them find private investment to tackle climate-related issues. As well as a new programme to expand a piloted AI-based 'Early Warning Forest Fire Detection System' to cover more forested areas of Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa as well as the Federal Capital Territory, which will help protect lives, jobs, livelihoods and Pakistan's biodiversity. UK High Commissioner to Pakistan Jane Marriott CMG OBE said the following:

"With terrible conflicts occurring around the world, international focus on climate change is being tested. However, with COP28 just round the corner, and with time not on our side, it is essential that conversations and actions on climate change continue. We are utilising our King's Birthday Party - the UK's National Day - events to do just this, with conversations ranging from how to build on Pakistan's negotiating success on a Loss and Damage Fund at COP27, to how Pakistan can safeguard its marine economy via the Commonwealth's Blue Charter.

Caretaker CM, CEC collaborate for impartial elections

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Caretaker Chief Minister of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Justice (Retd) Syed Arshad Hussain Shah briefed Chief Election Commissioner Sikandar Sultan Raja on Wednesday about election preparations, emphasizing their joint

commitment to ensuring free, fair, and impartial elections in the province. During a meeting at the Election Commission Secretariat, the Chief Minister pledged that the provincial government of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, working collaboratively with the Election Commission, is devoted to ensuring the elections in the province are conducted with a strong emphasis on freedom, fairness, and impartiality. The Chief Election Commissioner congratulated the caretaker Chief Minister on assuming office and emphasized the ongoing efforts to ensure the peaceful conduct of general elections, taking into account the current security situation in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.

The Chief Minister pledged to prioritize the protection of voters as the government's foremost concern. Sikandar Sultan Raja informed the caretaker Chief Minister that the Election Commission will visit the province shortly to assess the election preparations in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, scrutinizing all arrangements thoroughly.

President PMDC attends medical regulation conference

ISLAMABAD: The President of the Pakistan Medical and Dental Council (PMDC) Dr. Rizwan Taj has attended the 15th annual conference on medical regulation held in Bali. The esteemed gathering, a premier event in the medical community, brought together regulatory leaders, healthcare professionals, and experts to deliberate on critical issues shaping the landscape of medical regulation. The conference, a pivotal platform for sharing insights and fostering collaboration, featured a diverse range of discussions, workshops, and presentations. President PMDC Dr. Rizwan Taj actively participated in various sessions, contributing valuable perspectives on the challenges and opportunities facing medical regulation in Pakistan. President PMDC, in his discussion, emphasized on the importance of effective regulation in ensuring the highest standards of healthcare delivery. He emphasized the need for continuous advancements in regulatory frameworks to keep pace with the evolving landscape of medical science and technology. The President PMDC engaged in dialogues with international counterparts, fostering global cooperation in addressing shared regulatory challenges. —APP

Sports Gala kicks-off at IIUI female campus

ISLAMABAD: The Sports Gala 2023 kicked off at the Female Campus of International Islamic University Islamabad (IIUI) kicked-off on Wednesday. In the opening ceremony, students demonstrated a colorful flag march at courtyard ground of the Female campus. On the occasion, a number of events such as spoon race, sack race and E-gaming competitions were held in which the Pakistani and international students of more than 30 countries participated. It was inaugurated by Vice President Academics IIUI Prof. Dr. Abul Raheman. The opening ceremony was also attended by Incharge Female Campus Dr. Sumayya Chughtai, Students Advisor female Dr. Sadia Saleem, Deans, DGs, Sports Incharge Nadia Mukhtar, senior faculty members and a large number of students. Organized by the Directorate of Students' Affairs Female campus, this gala is witnessing the talent of thousands of female students who are participating from 11 faculties of the university. The event includes competitions of tug of war, table tennis, badminton, volleyball, basketball, cricket, football, indoor games, E-gaming, and competitions of athletics. Speaking on the occasion, Dr. Abul Raheman said that the participation of female students in the sports gala was appreciable adding that sports are an integral part of learning at the higher education level. He lauded the efforts of the Directorate of Student Affairs. He added that involving youth in constructive activities is a prerequisite to building a healthy society. He said academic excellence goals can be reached by involving youth in study, sports and co-curricular activities equally. He reiterated his resolve that students of IIUI will be provided the best possible sports facilities. On the Occasion, Dr. Sumayya Chughtai said that the colorful event of the sports gala is a true picture of cultural diversification and representation of a number of countries at IIUI. She said it is a true example of the international stature of the university. —APP

Swiss investors keen to tie up with Pakistan

Zafar Bakhtawari, former President and Secretary General UBG said that Pakistan and Switzerland should organize single country exhibitions in each other country to introduce their products and promote business collaborations

DNA

ISLAMABAD: A delegation of Switzerland's herbal medicines company Heramed AG led by its Managing Director Christoph Züllig visited Islamabad Chamber of Commerce & Industry and showed keen interest to tap the Pakistani market for business collaboration in herbal medicines. Addressing the delegation, Ahsan Zafar Bakhtawari, President, Islamabad Chamber of Commerce & Industry said that the herbal medicines is a booming industry around the world while its global market is set to reach US\$ 107 billion by the year 2024, therefore, he stressed that Pakistan and Switzerland should develop strong collaboration to share expertise and technology for the manufacturing of herbal medicines to export them around the world. He said that Pakistan has established SIFC to facilitate the foreign investors in Pakistan and stressed that this is the

right time for Swiss investors to explore Pakistan for JVs and investment. He assured that ICCI would cooperate in connecting the Swiss investors with right partners in Pakistan. Speaking on the occasion, Managing Director Christoph Züllig, Heramed AG of Switzerland said that his company is manufacturing herbal medicines for the treatment of various diseases including hypertension, diabetes, liver problems, stomach problems, fever & common cold, prostate and many others with no side effects and they want to penetrate the Pakistani market to address the health issues of patients with quality products with no side effects. He also gave a detailed presentation on his company and products and hoped that ICCI would help them in exploring business partnerships in the Pakistani market. Faad Waheed, Senior Vice President ICCI stressed for close cooperation between Islamabad and Swiss Chambers of Commerce to bring private sectors of Pakistan and Switzerland closer in order to explore new areas of mutual cooperation. Engr. Azhar ul Islam Zafar, Vice President ICCI emphasized that both countries should encourage regular exchange of trade delegations to explore new business opportunities available in each country. Khalid Iqbal Malik, Group Leader ICCI said that Pakistan has great potential for tourism and Switzerland should cooperate with its expertise and technology to improve tourism infrastructure in Pakistan. Zafar Bakhtawari, former President and Secretary General UBG said that Pakistan and Switzerland should organize single country exhibitions in each other country to introduce their products and promote business collaborations. Nasir Qureshi Senior Member ICCI also highlighted the potential of mutual cooperation in the pharmaceutical sector between the two countries.

8 more dengue cases reported in 24 hours

RAWALPINDI: As many as eight more dengue cases were reported in Rawalpindi during the last 24 hours, raising the tally of confirmed cases to 2,578 in the district. District Coordinator Epidemics Prevention and Control (DCEPC), Dr Sajjad Mehmood, Wednesday said among the new cases, five cases had arrived from the Municipal Corporation Rawalpindi area, two from the Potohar town urban, and one from Chaklala Cantonment area. He said that 44 patients were admitted to district hospitals of which 29 were confirmed cases while 2,548 were discharged after treatment. Dr Sajjad informed that the district administration had registered five FIRs, issued tickets to seven and a fine of Rs 124,000 was imposed against the violations of dengue SOPs during the last 24 hours. During indoor surveillance, in the last 24 hours, the teams checked 1,882 houses and larvae were found in 26 homes. Similarly, he added that while checking 1,770 places, the teams found larvae at ten sites during outdoor surveillance. The health officer added that though dengue cases were decreasing sharply with changing weather, there was a need to remain vigilant as mosquito was taking place. —APP

Belgian stage play at PNCA on Oc 24

The embassy is also organizing the "Belgian Food Festival" from 18 until 20 November 2023 at Jason's Restaurant in the Marriott Hotel, Islamabad

DNA

ISLAMABAD: The Belgian Embassy in collaboration with the Pakistan National Council of Arts (PNCA) is organizing staging of two short theater plays by famous Belgian author and Nobel Prize Winner Maurice Maeterlinck on 24th November 2023 at 6.30 pm at PNCA, Islamabad. The event is part of the "Belgian Week" celebrations organized to commemorate 75 years of Diplomatic Relations between Belgium and Pakistan. Maurice Maeterlinck's plays "The Interior" (1895) and "The Blind" (1890) epitomize his symbolist style. Exploring the depths of human consciousness and fate, these enigmatic dramas immerse audiences in surreal atmospheres, unraveling



the mysteries of existence. The embassy is also organizing the "Belgian Food Festival" from 18 until 20 November 2023 at Jason's Restaurant in the Marriott Hotel, Islamabad. The event is part of the "Belgian Week" celebrations organized to commemorate 75 years of Diplomatic Relations between Belgium and Pakistan. The Belgian Food Festival brings to you a 5 course Belgian gastronomic dining experience to showcase the best of our haute cuisine. Two Belgian Chefs have specially flown in from the famous Bruges based Ter Groene Poorte Hotel School to give you the most authentic Belgian dining experience. Moreover, as part of the ambiance, guests will also have the opportunity to enjoy live Belgian music with an intimate performance of singer Stan Pollet.

Burning Gaza

Can you see the Burning Gaza? Reduced to rubble; the houses, the hospitals, the plazas The incessant screams of mothers echoing through the city An enemy with no mercy, no pity Seeing their infants crushed to bones Due to splintering bombs and lethal airstrikes of drones Contaminate their water, cut off their supplies Are they made of iron, why don't they simply die?! Blaming Hamas they vow for its clean sweep Amidst this Gaza burns, the Palestinians weep Oh the resilient Gaza! We are ashamed For the Muslim Ummah is in vain And not rising against the Israel, the inhuman!

—Myrah Zafar

Dr Nadeem visits Community Health Center

ISLAMABAD: Caretaker Federal Minister for Health Dr. Nadeem Jan on Wednesday visited the Community Health Centre at Shah Alah Ditta. During the visit, the minister reviewed the facilities being provided in the centre. He also inquired about the treatment of the patients coming to the centre. Dr. Nadeem Jan said that the ministry has formed a comprehensive strategy for strengthening the primary health system. He said that without strengthening the primary healthcare system, the health system cannot be strengthened. The minister said that strengthening the primary health care system will reduce the burden of patients on big hospitals. He said that the ministry is working to boost the mechanism of the referral system. Dr. Nadeem said that he is personally monitoring the facilities of the primary health care centre. He said all necessary steps are being taken to ensure the facilities of the Primary Health Care Center. He said that universal health coverage is our priority agenda. —APP

PTCL colony, cantt areas searched during operation

RAWALPINDI: Police have conducted search and combing operations in R.A Bazaar, PTCL Colony and Cantt areas to ensure law and order in the district. According to a police spokesman, the operation was carried out at the direction of City Police Officer (CPO) Khalid Mehmood Hamdani. He informed that a heavy police contingent, Elite Force, Special Branch, and Ladies Police carried out the operations. A total of 75 houses, 66 shops, 12 hotels and 222 suspects were questioned during operations. The spokesman said search operations to net criminals and proclaimed offenders were regularly being conducted under the National Action Plan in different areas of the district particularly to ensure law and order. —APP

Five drug peddlers netted with over 10 kg charras

RAWALPINDI: Rawalpindi police in an action against suspected drug peddlers conducted raids in different areas and rounded up five accused on recovery of over 10 kg charras. According to a police spokesman, Rattaamral police managed to net a drug peddler namely Murad Khan and recovered 4400 grams charras and also arrested Asad for having 1400 grams charras. Saddar Wah police rounded up Saif for possessing 1650 grams charras while Gujar Khan police netted an accused namely Shah Zaib and seized 1500 grams charras. R.A.Bazar police nabbed a drug peddler, Atif for carrying 1300 grams charras. Separate cases have been registered against all accused while further investigations were underway. —APP

Briefs

ANF foils eight bids to smuggle drugs; arrests five

RAWALPINDI: Anti-Narcotics Force (ANF) managed to foil eight bids to smuggle drugs and recovered 29 kgs of narcotics besides arresting five accused, said an ANF Headquarters spokesman here on Wednesday. He told that on information from intelligence sources about drugs smuggling, ANF personnel started special surveillance and managed to recover total 29 kgs drugs in eight operations. Five drug smugglers were also sent behind the bars, he added. About 400 grams Ice drug concealed in two shampoo bottles was recovered from a courier office in Rawalpindi. The parcel was booked from Rawalpindi to Bahrain. In another operation at Allama Iqbal International Airport, 79 heroin-filled capsules were recovered from the possession of a passenger. An accused, resident of Sahiwal, was leaving for Bahrain by flight number GF-676.—APP

Islamabad police disseminate public awareness messages

ISLAMABAD: During the preceding month, the Islamabad Capital Police effectively delivered 130 awareness messages via its FM Radio 92.4, primarily focusing on enhancing awareness of traffic regulations. The disseminated messages covered a spectrum of subjects, including pedestrian safety, zebra crossings, traffic signals, types of road signs, distinctions in lanes, and instructional videos elucidating parking laws, according to police sources. Moreover, timely updates on traffic laws and road conditions are regularly communicated to citizens through FM radio channels. Dr Akbar Nasir Khan, the Islamabad Capital City Police Officer (ICCP), affirmed the police's commitment to taking all necessary measures to safeguard the lives and property of citizens.—APP

Planning minister highlights importance of education sector reforms

ISLAMABAD: Caretaker Minister for Planning, Development and Special Initiatives Muhammad Sami Saeed on Wednesday highlighted the importance of education reforms keeping in view the emerging challenges in this sector. He also shared several initiatives taken by the ministry for improvement in the education sector with Bahria University Rector Vice Admiral (R) Asif Khaliq, who called on him here.—APP

Sufi Opera Singer Saira Peter calls on Jamal Shah

The minister also presented her a shield on the occasion. Saira Peter is currently working with a team of British artists to develop the world's first full-scale "Sufi Opera", a musical stage drama based on the story of Umar Marvi, one of Latif's "seven heroines" of Sindh

FAISAL SHEIKH

ISLAMABAD: Saira Peter, a British-Pakistani soprano and Sufi Opera Singer called on Jamal Shah, Interim Federal Minister for National Heritage and Culture Jamal Shah here at Division on Wednesday. Saira Peter was also accompanied by her official Manager Zafar Francis and husband Stephen Smith who is also the Ethnomusicologist and pianist/ Harmonium player. Director General Pakistan National Council of the Arts (PNCA) Muhammad Ayub Jamali was also present in the meeting. During meeting, they discussed mutual interest issues pertaining to music industry and proposed Solo-concert of Saira Peter being organized at PNCA. The minister also presented her a shield on the occasion. Saira Peter is currently working with a team



of British artists to develop the world's first full-scale "Sufi Opera", a musical stage drama based on the story of Umar Marvi, one of Latif's "seven heroines" of Sindh. It is set to be staged in London upon completion and Peter will take the role of "Marvi".

A nationwide gas crisis began

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Former President of the Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry (ICCI) Dr. Shahid Rasheed Butt said on Wednesday that after the sharp increase in gas prices, a gas crisis has started across the country, which will intensify next month. Steps should be taken to deal with it, as the crisis will hurt the masses and hit the economy, he said. The price of LPG is also skyrocketing, which should be re-

duced to save people from the annoyance of a harsh winter, he added. Shahid Rashid Butt, while talking to the businessperson, said that the government should not delay the necessary steps to deal with the natural gas and LPG crises. He informed that many foreign gas exploration companies have left the country due to discouragement, while the performance of local companies is unsatisfactory, due to which LNG is being imported by spending substantial foreign ex-

change. LNG imports are a drain on scarce resources, but at the same time, they provide some relief to people and industries dependent on gas. He said that advance agreements are made with international gas supply companies in which the interests of the country are not taken into account. Cancellation of gas supply contracts with international suppliers has become the norm, and a proper mechanism has yet to be put in place to enforce the contract. Sha-

hid Rashid Butt said that the previous government had signed a contract for gas supply with a company from Azerbaijan. Still, this company is more interested in the EU market, which will make the crisis worse in the winter. Failure by that company to provide LNG will affect not only the people but also the economy, he observed. The absence of the expected cargo could compel the government to slash the gas supply to the domestic sector, leaving Pakistan at the mercy of the spot market to fill the gap. The missing cargo translates into a deficit of approximately 100 million cubic feet per day, which will spell a doomsday scenario for some sectors.

Pak exports to Turkiye dip 4.97% in 3 months

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan's export of goods and services to Turkiye witnessed a decrease of 4.97 per cent during the first three months of the current fiscal year (2023-24) as compared to the exports of the corresponding period of last year, State Bank of Pakistan (SBP) reported. The overall exports to Turkiye were recorded at US \$90.272 million during July-September (2023-24) against exports of US \$94.998 million during July-September (2022-23), SBP data revealed. On a year-to-year basis, the exports to Turkiye also dipped by 9.70 per cent from \$32.026 million in September 2022, against the exports of \$28.917 million in September 2023. Meanwhile, on a month-on-month basis, the exports to Turkiye decreased by 3.16 per cent during September 2023 as compared to the exports of \$29.863 million in August 2023, the SBP data revealed. Overall Pakistan's exports to other countries witnessed a decrease of 4.96 per cent in the first three months, from US \$ 7.385 billion to US \$ 7.018 billion, the SBP data revealed. On the other hand, the imports from Turkiye into the country during the months under review were recorded at US \$ 105.157 million against US \$108.622 million last year, showing a decline of 3.18 per cent in July-September (2023-24). On a year-on-year basis, the imports for Turkiye.—APP

Commissioner visits Asghar Mall road to review construction work

RAWALPINDI: Commissioner Rawalpindi Division Liaquat Ali Chatta here Wednesday visited Asghar Mall Road and reviewed construction work of the road being constructed from Murree Road to Chungi No 4. The Commissioner on the occasion said that after completion of the construction work, smooth flow of traffic could be ensured in this area. Liaquat Ali Chatta said, the road construction work should be completed within shortest possible time frame after the sewerage lines on the side of the road are completed. "If the sewer lines are not properly constructed, the road would be destroyed after a few months," he added. Sub-standard work would not be tolerated under any circumstances, he warned. He directed the relevant authorities to complete the road project as soon as possible to facilitate the citizens.

Railways Police arrest around 3,843 accused over violations

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan Railways Police claimed to have arrested a total of 3,843 accused due to their involvement in violations of rules and laws and also registered some 3,563 cases against them in eight Railways divisions over one year. "Around 641 cases were registered in Peshawar Division, 561 in Rawalpindi, 1,037 in Lahore, 321 in Mughalpurah workshops, 389 in Multan, 206 in Sukkur, 343 in Karachi, and 65 in Quetta Division," official sources in the Ministry told APP. They said the Railways Police Help Desks had been established at all the major railway stations across the country and the performance of Railways Police is quite satisfactory during the last year.—APP

Media awareness drive for 'Asthma attacks' in winter

ISLAMABAD: Health expert Wednesday suggested a media awareness drive and timely precautions for 'Asthma patients' to avoid travel during thick smog at the hospital in the wake of the rising number of patients with a history of 'asthma attacks' at the peak. A Pulmonologist and lungs Specialist Prof. Dr. Javaid A. Khan talking to a private news channel said that about seven percent of Pakistan's population is suffering from asthma and there might be an increase of about 20 to 25 percent within the next few weeks. He further said rapid changes in the weather, especially the rapid onset of cold weather, are directly responsible for decreased lung function in asthmatics. He advised citizens to adopt a proper diet and wear face masks to reduce the risk of asthma attacks and

other allergies during winter as asthmatics need to be very careful about the type of fats they are consuming. He informed that a permanent cure for asthma is not currently available, but with proper medication usage patients can live a normal life. Dr Javaid urged doctors to educate their respective patients in order to provide maximum awareness of asthma and its management, adding that the patients to keep the windows of their vehicles shut during the journey and clean the inside of the vehicle thoroughly, removing dust with a vacuum cleaner before embarking on the journey. He said according to the World Health Organisation (WHO), currently around 300m people worldwide are suffering from asthma, adding, cold wind, air pollution, increase in urban population, obesity, lack of movement as some

of the reasons for increasing asthma attacks. Experts said asthma could be controlled and patients could lead a normal life by making positive lifestyle changes, taking proper precautions, and having timely treatment. People with asthma and their families need education to understand more about their asthma. This includes their treatment options, triggers to avoid, and how to manage their symptoms at home, he said, adding, that it is important for people with asthma to know how to increase their treatment when their symptoms are worsening to avoid a serious attack. Healthcare providers may give an asthma action plan to help people with asthma to take greater control of their treatment, he added. Dr mentioned that the children whose diets were low in vegetables and vitamin E were two to three times more likely to develop asthmatic symptoms than other children irrespective of other factors such as family size, affluence, and parental smoking.—APP

IRSA releases 94,900 cusecs water

ISLAMABAD: Indus River System Authority (IRSA) on Wednesday released 94,900 cusecs water from various rim stations with inflow of 50,700 cusecs. According to the data released by IRSA, water level in River Indus at Tarbela Dam was 1510.69 feet and was 110.69 feet higher than its dead level of 1,398 feet. Water inflow and outflow in the dam was recorded as 25,800 cusecs and 45,000 cusecs respectively. The water level in River Jhelum at Mangla Dam was 1189.70 feet, which was 139.70 feet higher than its dead level of 1,050 feet. The inflow and outflow of water was recorded 7,000 cusecs and 32,000 cusecs respectively. The release of water at Kalabagh, Taunsa, Guddu and Sukkur was recorded as 63,900, 48,700, 41,500 and 7,000 cusecs respectively. Similarly, from River Kabul, a total of 8,300 cusecs of water released at Nowshera and 4,600 cusecs released from River Chenab at Marala.—APP

Awareness among the parents may help to resolve refusal: Expert

He also lauded the services of frontline polio workers that we as a nation should acknowledge their untiring efforts, selfless services, sacrifices for the national cause of polio eradication, securing the future of our children

ISLAMABAD: A health expert on Wednesday called upon people from different walks of life to hold more awareness drives that can overcome the challenges of 'refusal of parents' during polio drives to make the country free of the polio virus. Dr Iqbal Memon talking to a private news channel said that the polio virus has been eradicated from different countries but unfortunately, Pakistan was still fighting against it due to the refusal of guardians. He said although there has been significant progress towards the eradication of the disease, there is a need for collaborative efforts to get rid of polio. "Parents in Karachi and other far-flung areas of the country must understand the huge risk polio poses to their children's well-being and ensure that they receive multiple doses of the oral polio vaccine and are up to date on their routine immunizations," he added. Ulama should play a pivotal role in polio eradication, while a focus on removing misconceptions against the vaccine was needed, he mentioned. He also lauded the efforts of the government and appreciated the decrease in number of polio cases. He suggested that educational institutes should be involved in arranging awareness campaigns and polio eradication policies while adding that conferences on the issue would be helpful. Replying to a question, he said that the management of polio survivors is not only a medical and rehabilitation problem involving accessibility, and accommodations, but also a public health issue, and most importantly, an ethical concern. While referring to the role of youth on social platforms, he pointed out that their voice was very significant not only in creating awareness about polio eradication but in each and every walk of life and emphasized extending their support in removing the misconceptions about polio vaccines and countering negative propaganda in this regard. He also lauded the services of frontline polio workers that we as a nation should acknowledge their untiring efforts, selfless services, and sacrifices for the national cause of polio eradication and securing the future of our children.—DNA



ISLAMABAD: Ambassador Imran Siddiqui Additional Secretary Ministry of Foreign Affairs presenting a book to the outgoing Ambassador of Indonesia Adam Tugio.—DNA

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Asia-Pacific should join hands to promote inclusive growth

The attendance of President Xi Jinping at the 30th APEC Economic Leaders' Meeting that is being held in San Francisco on Thursday and Friday demonstrates the great importance China attaches to Asia-Pacific economic cooperation. The Asia-Pacific is the most dynamic regional economy. Home to one-third of the world's population, it accounts for over 60 percent of the global economy and nearly half of international trade. As an important platform for economic cooperation in the Asia-Pacific region, APEC has made continuous progress in promoting regional trade and investment liberalization and facilitation, and played a positive role in promoting global and regional economic growth. At present, the situation in the Asia-Pacific region is generally stable, regional cooperation has made continuous progress, and peaceful development and win-win cooperation are still the mainstream trend. But the world has entered a new period of turbulence and change, and geopolitical tensions are overlapping with the evolving economic landscape. The development environment and cooperation architecture of the Asia-Pacific region have not been immune to the impacts. In the speech he will deliver at the 30th APEC Economic Leaders' Meeting, China's top leader will comprehensively expound on China's proposals for deepening Asia-Pacific cooperation and promoting regional economic growth. He will call on all parties to join hands with China to promote prosperity and development in the Asia-Pacific. China is one of the most important economies in the Asia-Pacific region, and it has made important contributions to regional economic growth. According to the Asian Economic Integration Report 2023 released by the Asian Development Bank, China contributed 64.2 percent of the economic growth in the Asia-Pacific region, and 37.6 percent of the growth of trade in goods and 44.6 percent of the growth of trade in services. Greater trust, inclusiveness, cooperation and mutual benefit will deepen the Asia-Pacific partnership. That in turn will produce new opportunities and impetus for the development and prosperity of the Asia-Pacific region and the world at large. China on its part is committed to building an Asia-Pacific that is peaceful, stable, prosperous, clean, beautiful and mutually supportive. China's development has benefited from that of the Asia-Pacific, and the world's second-largest economy has also contributed to and benefited the Asia-Pacific with its own development. It will continue to share its development opportunities with the region as it opens up on a wider scale at a higher level and with higher standards. Peace, stability and prosperity in the Asia-Pacific belong to all the people in the region, and the future of the Asia-Pacific depends on people in the region working together to build an Asia-Pacific community with a shared future. It should be recognized that a prosperous and strong China not only serves the fundamental interests of the Chinese people, but also benefits the people of the Asia-Pacific and the world at large.



Escalation of Middle East crisis must be checked

Geng Shuang, China's deputy ambassador to the United Nations, once again expressed China's grave concerns about the continuing crisis in the Palestinian enclave of Gaza. "Violence cannot bring true security. The use of force will not create lasting peace," he said. Geng made the remarks at a United Nations conference whose major focus was on the establishment of a zone in the Middle East free of nuclear arms and other weapons of mass destruction. China fully supports this move as it believes that it will not only provide an "important mechanism for the maintenance of long-term regional peace and security" but also help safeguard the authority and effectiveness of international nonproliferation regimes and reduce the risk of an arms race. The Organisation of Islamic Cooperation and the Arab League on Saturday called for the creation of a nuclear-free zone in the Middle East and effective action against war crimes perpetrated by Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's government in the besieged Palestinian enclave of Gaza. Such a call became an exigency after Israeli Heritage Minister Amichai Eliyahu said last week that dropping a nuclear bomb on Gaza Strip was an option. Despite the fact that this reckless remark was criticized even by Netanyahu and the minister himself was suspended from Israeli Cabinet meetings, it nonetheless reminds the world of the reality that the sinister shadow of nuclear arms and other weapons of mass destruction should not be ignored. The relations between different parties in the Middle East are extremely complicated. It is unrealistic to expect that the tensions between Israel and Palestine and other Arab countries, as well as those among other countries in the region, can be resolved through negotiations in a short period of time. The worsening situation in Gaza only does a disservice to the moves that have been underway to secure lasting peace in the region. It is essential that the United Nations demand strict adherence to relevant treaties to try and prohibit countries or forces in this region from acquiring nuclear weapons or other weapons of mass destruction. The continuation of the conflict will only lead to its escalation, increasing the possibility of nuclear weapons or other weapons of mass destruction being used. Major countries should concentrate on leveraging their influence to bring about a cease-fire. The intertwined historical and practical contradictions in the Middle East make the situation extremely precarious. All countries should abandon their narrow geopolitical interests and political manipulation, stop deliberately provoking confrontation in the region, and make practical contributions to securing peace and stability.

The Turks of Cyprus deserve to live in peace

Ishfaq Ahmad



The internationally recognized Republic of Cyprus, represented only by the Greek Cypriot side, has monopolized the island's representation in global forums, leaving Turkish Cypriots without a direct voice in diplomatic affairs. Disputes over power-sharing, property rights, and the nature of a federal state have hindered progress. According to the founding international agreement of the Republic

The Cyprus dispute has positioned the Turkish Cypriot people as significant victims, entangled in a conflict rooted in historical tensions. The island's division has exposed them to multifaceted challenges, including political marginalization and economic hardships.

The lack of international recognition for the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus has isolated Turkish Cypriots, impeding economic opportunities and global interactions. Economic struggles are evident in limited trade and investment, contributing to a lower standard of living compared to their southern counterparts. Political dynamics in Cyprus have likewise exacerbated Turkish Cypriot marginalization. The internationally recognized Republic of Cyprus, represented only by the Greek Cypriot side, has monopolized the island's representation in global forums, leaving Turkish Cypriots without a direct voice in diplomatic affairs. Disputes over power-sharing, property rights, and the nature of a federal state have hindered progress. According to the founding international agreement of the Republic of Cyprus, the legitimacy of the bi-communal, bi-zonal state was based on the continuation of the partnership. But if the partnership failed, the international agreement outlined, neither Greek Cypriots nor Turkish Cypriots would have the right to claim the island's entire territory. Since 1974, however, Greek Cypriots have pretended to have sovereignty over the whole island while Turkish Cypriots rule Northern Cyprus. In contrast to the 1960 international agreement, the international community recognises Greek Cypriots as having a legal sovereign right to rule over the entire island – a critical violation of the founding document of the island state. The Greek Cypriots have been rewarded by the international community, despite being the intransigent party all along in the conflict resolution process. The failure of the 2004 Annan Plan, influenced by Cyprus's EU accession, further deepened the decades-long divide on the island, with Greek Cypriots perceiving EU membership as strengthening their position, while Turkish Cypriots saw it as an avenue for increased recognition. The international community's attention must acknowledge the unique struggles of Turkish Cypriots

to foster an environment conducive to lasting peace. Turkey's support for a two-state solution, proposed by the Turkish Cypriot leadership in the 2021 5+UN informal talks in Geneva, reflects a culmination of failed negotiations and changing geopolitical dynamics in the Eastern Mediterranean. Both Türkiye and TRNC have concluded that the decades-long UN-led process to reach a federal solution in Cyprus was a waste of time. The reason being that the Greek Cypriots never had an incentive to reach such a settlement, and the US, EU as well as Greece and the United Kingdom as two guarantor powers have been complicit in the Greek obduracy on the matter. For argument's sake, a true federation in a sociological as well as a legal sense can only come about as a result of free self-determination of two partners, who hold an equal status at least as far as this freedom and power of self-determination is concerned. A federation, as a form of contact, cannot be otherwise envisaged than as a consent of partners who are considered able and entitled to decide and speak freely for themselves. Two parties, one of which is oppressed and governed by the other, cannot validly conclude a federation. Therefore, the TRNC provides a decisive prerequisite for what is considered by both parties as the solution to the Cyprus problem. It should be welcomed and recognized by everyone interested in such a solution. The core issue remains the international community's silence on Greek Cypriots' refusal to recognize the Turkish community as equal partners. The recognition of Greek Cypriot sovereignty over the entire island exacerbates tensions, violating the founding principles. The UN's misdiagnosis of the conflict and failure to address Greek Cypriot intransigence has further complicated the path to resolution. Therefore, the two-state solution, proposed by Turkish Cypriot leadership and supported by Türkiye, is the only option on the table now. Trying anything else under the old framework would amount to perpetuating the economic misery and political marginalisation of the Turkish Cypriot people. The UN shall still lead the conflict resolution process for being the largest international body for peace and security, but its previous framework for the purpose has become

null and void under the current circumstances. In recent years, the discovery of natural gas reserves has intensified the Cyprus dispute, adding economic and geopolitical dimensions. Competing claims over resource ownership, competition for exploitation, and the impact on regional alliances create a complex web of challenges. The management of these resources has become a contentious issue in reunification talks, involving international actors and energy companies. Turkish Cypriots and Greek Cypriots, as the two co-owners of the island of Cyprus, are also the co-owners of the hydrocarbon resources around the island. By virtue of this fact, the two sides should be jointly involved in every decision-making process regarding this issue, spanning from the initial exploratory phases, to holding discussions on how these resources will be monetized, shared, and transferred to world markets in the future. In this regard, the Turkish Cypriot leadership has offered the Greek side to either suspend all actions pertaining to hydrocarbons until a negotiated settlement to the Cyprus issue is reached; or to establish a joint committee where the two sides would jointly conduct all activities including the planning, decision-making and implementation of the project together and where the revenue obtained from hydrocarbons activities would be used first and foremost to finance a negotiated settlement. Despite this, the Greek Cypriot side has been engaging in unilateral activities regarding the hydrocarbon resources around the island with neither the consent nor participation of the Turkish Cypriot side, in total disregard for their legitimate rights and interests. Ultimately, recognizing the historical context, addressing economic disparities, and fostering political equality are crucial steps toward a comprehensive and just resolution in Cyprus. The international community's commitment to a fair and inclusive approach is paramount for overcoming the hurdles and achieving lasting peace on the island. Clearly, the establishment of two states in Cyprus, living side by side, will establish a lasting peace in the island.

Concluded.

The author is an international relations expert.

Joe Biden and Xi-JinPing's duel on semiconductors

Qamar Bashir



He particularly highlighted the significance of the anticipated summit between US President Mr. Biden and Chinese President Mr. Xi Jinping, slated to occur during the Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation meetings (APEC) in San Francisco, California, on Wednesday, November 15th, 2023. This summit holds immense importance as it marks a pivotal moment where key discussions between the two nations' leaders are expected to transpire. The upcoming meeting of these influential leaders won't solely revolve around specific contentious

During an interactive session hosted by the Chinese embassy, Mr. Victor Zhikai Gao, Vice President of the Centre for China and Globalization (CCG), covered several significant Chinese initiatives and projects. He discussed the Belt and Road initiative's impact on partner countries, emphasizing its benefits. Additionally, he highlighted China's rapid progress and development, particularly focusing on the crucial role of the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) in infrastructure, energy, fiber optics, Gwadar port, and airport development. Moreover, Mr. Gao emphasized the futility of traditional warfare between China and the USA. He underscored that despite both countries' military strengths, the crucial battlefronts of this post-modern era would likely unfold in economic domains. He particularly highlighted the significance of the anticipated summit between US President Mr. Biden and Chinese President Mr. Xi Jinping, slated to occur during the Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation meetings (APEC) in San Francisco, California, on Wednesday, November 15th, 2023. This summit holds immense importance as it marks a pivotal moment where key discussions between the two nations' leaders are expected to transpire. The upcoming meeting of these influential leaders won't solely revolve around specific contentious issues such as the Taiwan matter, substantial military hardware sales to Taiwan, recent incidents like the downing of a Chinese balloon by US forces, or the efforts to avert potential military confrontations. Instead, the discussions are expected to encompass broader and critical topics, notably the trade embargo imposed by the US on Chinese companies and the limitations on semiconductor sales to China. Mr. Xi Ping may try to alleviate the concerns with regards US's suspicion that Chinese companies might engage in espionage, potentially spying on American citizens or businesses and apprehensions, about intellectual property theft from American and European companies which are however seen by China as an attempt to impede China's ascent. During his hour-long address, Mr. Victor Gao primarily emphasized that Mr. Xi has in his pocket a lot of bargaining chips; the Chinese supremacy in ideology, economics, trade, and military prowess and its commitment to global peace and development through capital-intensive initiatives launched in collaboration with partner countries worldwide. Gao noted that undeterred by the embargoes and combined USA, Europe opposition China has embarked on a mission to reduce its dependence on critical and sensitive technologies, notably semiconductor chips. He added that the US's actions, using its influence to block approximately \$30 billion worth of semiconductor chip exports to China annually, aimed to hinder China's advancements in high-tech domains such as space and military technologies, artificial intelligence, big data management, and quantum computing will eventually fail and underscored the need for collaboration and partnerships in these emerging fields which could potentially propel the world into an unprecedented era of rapid de-

velopment and prosperity unmatched in history. Mr. Gao highlighted China's resilience against embargoes, citing the development of their own versions of cell phones and iPhones capable of satellite communication in the highest orbits. He emphasized the revolutionary potential of this technology, envisioning a transformation in global communication and information access. If fully realized, this innovation could expand cell phone coverage to unreachable areas, enhance reliability in emergencies, boost internet speeds, and introduce new services like global roaming and direct device-to-device communication. This advancement promises increased accessibility, reliability, and speed in communication, significantly impacting both lives and the global economy. As of now, according to Mr. Gao, only Huawei, a Chinese company, has achieved direct communication capability with high-orbit satellites. In contrast, the US and Russia, despite heavy investments in research and development, have focused on different satellite technologies. The US is directing efforts towards "non-geostationary satellites" (NGS), closer to Earth than traditional geostationary ones, while Russia concentrates on "medium Earth orbit" (MEO) satellites, positioned between NGS and low Earth orbits (LEO). Mr. Gao argued that these approaches are inferior to the Chinese strategy on several fronts. China's cell phone market already holds the global top spot, and the capacity to communicate with high-orbit satellites would provide Chinese cell phone companies a significant edge. This advantage lies in their ability to offer services worldwide, irrespective of existing cellular networks. Satellites boast higher resilience than cellular towers, ensuring more dependable services, particularly in remote or disaster-prone areas. Moreover, this technology promises faster internet speeds, enabling Chinese cell phone companies to deliver swifter data rates and improved access to online content. Additionally, it opens avenues for novel services like global roaming and direct device-to-device communication, granting these companies a competitive edge over their rivals. Beyond the economic advantages, advancing cell phone technology for direct satellite communication would significantly decrease China's reliance on foreign tech, fostering greater self-sufficiency. It offers a new avenue for communication within China's military and security apparatus, amplifying its global influence and providing an alternative method to assert power and influence worldwide, yielding numerous economic, strategic, and security benefits. Moreover, China's mesmerizing strides in research and development transcend conventional boundaries. Their pursuit is poised to revolutionize human endeavors, catapulting humanity into an era of unimaginable progress and development. These efforts hold the potential to entirely transform current practices and methodologies. In particular, China's substantial investment in quantum computing, leveraging semiconductor technology, is noteworthy. Their focus spans from creating qubits (the fundamental units of information for quantum computers) to developing the in-

tricate circuits linking these qubits and the software essential for quantum computer operations. This commitment signifies an acceleration toward a technological frontier that could redefine the very fabric of human innovation and achievement. China's robust investment in quantum computing is driven by the belief that it will revolutionize diverse industries like medicine, finance, and artificial intelligence. The potential applications span from developing groundbreaking drugs to refining financial algorithms and enhancing AI systems. Despite the complexity and challenges inherent in developing quantum computers, China's heavy investment stems from the immense rewards it foresees, positioning itself to lead in this realm for years to come. Semiconductors and quantum computing stand as pivotal technologies crucial for the future global economy and military capabilities. As a result, both the US and China are significantly investing in their development, leading to strained relations between the two nations. The US expresses concerns about China's alleged intellectual property theft and potential military utilization of these technologies. Conversely, China is apprehensive about the US's attempts to constrain its ascendancy and maintain its technological edge. China perceives these actions as hindrances to its economic growth and aspirations of becoming a global technology leader. This mutual unease has contributed to strained relations between the two countries in these critical technological domains. To reconcile their disparities in semiconductors and quantum computers, the US and China could initiate collaborative measures. Establishing a joint working group to define shared standards and regulations is a key starting point. Transparency in research and development is vital, necessitating enhanced public disclosure of programs. Implementing a hotline to report intellectual property theft and agreeing on a moratorium for military use of these technologies could mitigate conflicts. Cooperation requires joint efforts despite challenges, offering substantial benefits compelling both nations to pursue collaboration. Resolving differences and moving away from antagonistic stances between the US and China holds immense global significance. Their partnership has the potential to drive innovation, propel technological advancements, and foster progress across industries, benefiting not just their populations but also advancing global development. Collaboration could effectively address critical global challenges like climate change, public health crises, and sustainable development. Moreover, a cooperative stance could ease geopolitical tensions, reducing broader repercussions across regions. This collaboration will also set a precedent for other countries which will help in promoting a more unified global community founded on shared interests and mutual respect.

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

Briefs

Kakar: West defending...

FROM PAGE 01
were actually following the footsteps of Pharaoh by killing the children which was "utterly unacceptable." The prime minister, who had also been the IPRI's board member, highlighted the potential for connectivity with the countries in the region including India, and said Pakistan never shied away from establishing trade links with India but it could not beg that as trade should be for mutual benefits. However, he said before such links, it was essential to speak out on the Kashmir conflict as without addressing that issue, it was challenging to have normal relations with the current Indian regime. He told the gathering that the Kashmir issue demanded attention aligned with the aspirations of its people as despite promises and UN guarantees, the Kashmiris could not be given their right to self-determination. Postponing the issue is not a solution as the historical resilience against colonization is evident, he added. Referring to the Hindutva ideology infesting Indian society, he said such policies were a recipe for disaster. He said contrary to the ongoing persecution in India, the minorities in Pakistan were sharing their destinies with Pakistan having deep entrenched roots in business as well as society.

Israel raids Al Shifa...

FROM PAGE 01
spokesperson Ashraf al-Qidra to media: "The occupation army is now in the basement, and searching the basement. They are inside the complex, shooting and carrying out bombings". Israeli forces first raided the surgery and emergency departments, Mohammed Zaout, the Gaza health ministry's director of hospitals, told Al media. Hamas said in a statement on Wednesday it "holds the occupation (Israel) and President Biden fully responsible for (the) occupation army's raid of Al Shifa medical complex". Hamas said a US intelligence statement on Tuesday that the US supported Israel's conclusion that the militants had operations at Al Shifa "was a green light" for the raid. "The White House and the Pentagon's adoption of the false (Israeli) narrative, claiming that the resistance is using Al Shifa medical complex for military purposes, was a green light for the occupation to commit more massacres against civilians," Hamas said.

Shehbaz asks Bilawal...

FROM PAGE 01
"focus on Lahore", instead of looking towards other provinces in the country, particularly pointing at his interest in Sindh in the run-up to the upcoming general polls on February 8 next year. "Mian sahib has been suggested to go to other provinces. I suggest he should stay in Lahore," said the former foreign minister while addressing a presser in Mithi, Bilawal said, addressing a presser in Mithi a day ago. He added that the PML-N supremo should address issues that exist in Punjab instead of going towards other provinces. The PPP chief urged PML-N to do politics on its own instead of relying on others. The party has begun swift efforts towards seat adjustment in the country's southern province, as it eyes to form a coalition government in Sindh if it manages to secure majority votes. A PML-N delegation comprising its leadership visited Karachi last Sunday and shared their intention regarding seat adjustment.

TRNC envoy thanks...

FROM PAGE 01
days to come. She also thanked motherland Türkiye for its support. She gave a historical perspective of the Cyprus issue and the way the international community acted partially in support of the Greek side. (More coverage of the event in the coming issue of Centreline magazine)

India one step away from World Cup glory

Shami continued to strike and removed the new batter Tom Latham as well. Wickets continued to fall for Williamson-led unit and soon they were all-out for 327 runs

SPORTS DESK

MUMBAI: India finally broke the "New Zealand Jinx" and defeated the Black Caps by 70 runs in the first semi-final of the ICC World Cup 2023 at the Wankhede Stadium, Mumbai, on Wednesday. The Blues will now lock horns with the winner of the second semi-final between South Africa and Australia on November 19 in Ahmedabad. Mohammad Shami has taken the World Cup by storm ever since he was included in the playing XI and took a seven-wicket haul today that helped his side break the crucial partnership that was taking the Kiwis to victory. India started off brilliantly as they began their defence of a 398-run target with Shami removing both the openers in his first two overs. However, after losing two early wickets skipper Kane Williamson and Daryl Mitchell formed a 184-run partnership and brought the 2019 World Cup runner-ups back in the game and were looking all set to stay at the crease for long. Williamson was dropped on 52 by



Shami in the 29th over but the right-handed pacer covered up for his mistake and removed the Kiwis' skipper just after he was given the ball in the 33rd over. Shami continued to strike and removed the new batter Tom Latham as well. The wickets continued to fall for the Williamson-led unit and soon they were

all-out for 327 runs. Mitchell top-scored for the losing side with a valiant knock of 134 off 119 deliveries that included nine fours and seven sixes. Batting first, India were off to a powerful start, as usual, courtesy of Rohit Sharma's power-hitting in the powerplay as The Hitman scored 47 off 29 deliveries with

eight boundaries which included four maximums. Shubman Gill capitalized on the rapid start provided by the 36-year-old as he continued the charge against New Zealand pacers. The youngster built a formidable partnership with Virat Kohli as he was on his to completing a century but he

had to walk back to the pavilion due to cramps leaving India 164-1 in 22.4 overs. The Blues had no intention to stop and it looked like they came with the mindset of scoring almost 400 runs and that is exactly what they did. Kohli and Shreyas Iyer formed a 163-run partnership and crisscrossed their side to a dominant position in the game. The Wankhede Stadium roared with fans screaming at the top of their lungs in the 42nd when Kohli played a shot towards the deep back square leg and ran twice between the wicket creating history. The 35-year-old scored his 50th ODI century, overtaking the legendary Sachin Tendulkar for most centuries scored in 50-over cricket. Kohli departed after scoring 117 off 113 but Iyer continued to score big and eventually ended up scoring his successive ton in the World Cup, he contributed 105 runs off just 70 balls. KL Rahul played a rapid knock scoring 39 off 29 with seven boundaries at the end and took his side's total to 397 in the allocated overs.

Babar mulls 'legal action' over leaked whatsapp chat

SPORTS DESK

LAHORE: Pakistan captain Babar Azam has sought legal opinions over his leaked WhatsApp chat with a senior cricket board official, reported private news channel on Wednesday. Last month, a controversy arose after an alleged "private" WhatsApp chat between Pakistan skipper Babar Azam and a senior Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) official was aired live on local TV. The chat showed text messages exchanged between the duo where the skipper denied calling PCB Management Committee Chairman Zaka Ashraf when asked about the rumours that he was trying to call the board's chief with the latter answering his calls. The leaked conversation – between Babar and PCB's Chief Operating Officer (COO) Salman Naseer – lent credence to the rumours that senior management of the PCB was ignoring the skipper's messages. The sources said that the



Green Shirts skipper intends to take relevant legal action over his private chat being leaked on TV and weighing his options in this regard. The right-hand batter indulged in consultations – over taking legal action – prior to his meet-

ing with the PCB head at Lahore's National Cricket Academy (NCA), sources added. Furthermore, the 29-year-old has completed his consultations with his inner circle regarding captaincy of the national side. According to the sources,

Retired UFC fighter to donate brain for research

LONDON: Julie Kedzie has suffered with depression, anxiety, hyperactivity, impulsiveness and lack of sleep since retiring from mixed martial arts in 2013. All are symptoms of chronic traumatic encephalopathy (CTE). CTE is a brain condition linked to repeated blows to the head and concussion. The condition, which gradually gets worse over time and leads to dementia, can only be diagnosed post-mortem. Kedzie competed 29 times as a professional, winning 16 and losing 13, until she retired on the back of four successive defeats, including two in the UFC. The 42-year-old is still counting the cost of that career and has pledged her brain for post-mortem research. "It seems a very normal thing to do," Kedzie tells BBC Sport. "I've been hit in the head a lot so we might as well see what is in there and get some good out of it for data. "If there is a way that I can still keep pushing in this field [of mixed martial arts] and advancing the cause of women, then yeah." Athletes, across a wide variety of contact sports, are more aware of the risks involved, leading to an increase in brain donations to the Concussion Legacy Foundation (CLF). Just 45 cases of CTE were confirmed worldwide when the CLF began investigating in 2007, and now more than 10,000 people, including Kedzie, have taken part in studies. Dr Chris Nowinski, who has a PhD in neuroscience and is a former WWE wrestler, co-founded the CLF after "suffering chronic symptoms" during his own sporting career. "Most professional MMA fighters that we've studied have had CTE and will continue to have CTE," Dr Nowinski says. "We don't have 70-year-old former UFC fighters yet, so we haven't fully seen what we've created here." Top-level MMA is in its infancy, especially when compared with boxing, and the small pool of subjects available for research has made it difficult for medical professionals to assess the long-term effects of repeated blows to the head. Of the first 1,000 brains studied by the CLF, just 10 were from a martial arts background, and the majority of those were male. – Agencies

Maharaj claims top spot in ICC ODI rankings

DUBAI: South Africa's left-arm spinner Keshav Maharaj overtook Indian pace bowler Mohammed Siraj to claim the top spot in the International Cricket Council (ICC) Men's ODI Bowling Rankings. Maharaj is the fourth bowler to claim the coveted top spot in the ICC Men's ODI Bowling Rankings during the ongoing ICC World Cup 2023, exhibiting the fierce competition between the bowlers which has made it difficult to hold on to the position. Keshav Maharaj was placed at second position in last week's ICC Men's ODI Bowling Rankings, he then picked up seven wickets in three games, extending his wickets tally to 14 during ICC World Cup 2023. He is averaging 24.71 in the tournament with a good economy rate of 4.37. Meanwhile, Mohammed Siraj is only three rating points behind Keshav Maharaj, having picked six wickets in the last three games for India. Siraj has picked up a total of 12 wickets in 10 games during the ICC World Cup 2023 at 28.83. – Agencies

Lahore to host National Basketball Championship for Men

AFZAL JAVED

ISLAMABAD: The National Basketball Championship for Men 2023 is slated to be held from November 20th to 24 at the Government College University Lahore under the umbrella of Pakistan Basketball Federation (PBBF). According to the Pakistan Basketball Federation (PBBF) Secretary General Khalid Bashir, top eight teams from around the country will be in action in the national men's basketball championship organised by Punjab Basketball Association and all arrangements have been completed for the successful five-day championship. He said top eight teams are divided into two groups as Pool "A" comprises defending champi-

on Pakistan Army, Pakistan Ordnance Factories (POF), Pakistan Air Force (PAF), Faisalabad while Wapda, Lahore, Navy and Islamabad are included in Pool "B". Khalid Bashir said that four matches will be played every day during pool round matches in the championship as well as the top two teams of each group will qualify for the knockout round. The semi-finals will be held on November 23rd while the final of the championship will be played on November 24th. The opening match of the championship starting from November 20th will be played between the defending champion Pakistan Army and Faisalabad, while Wapda and Islamabad, POF and PAF, Lahore and Navy will compete on the first day of the event.

Khalid Bashir said that four matches will be played every day during pool round matches in the championship as well as the top two teams of each group will qualify for the knockout round

SCHEDULE:

Nov 20 (Day-1): Army vs Faisalabad; Wapda vs Islamabad; POF vs PAF; Lahore vs Navy.
Nov 21 (Day-2): Army vs PAF; Navy vs Wapda; Faisalabad vs POF, Islamabad vs Lahore.
Nov 22 (Day-3): POF vs Army; Faisalabad vs PAF; Wapda vs Lahore, Navy vs Islamabad.
Nov 23 (Day-4): Semi Finals
Nov 24 (Day-5): Final

'Pirates' taken to Quetta...

FROM PAGE 01
the occupation of the non-political and non-democratic forces on the politics of the country. PTI spokesperson contended that the scandalous and brazen game of bringing back a national criminal convicted by the court into to the politics under the state patronage was exposing with each passing day. He asserted that the nation wanted to get back its plundered and looted wealth from the criminal and his burglar family, but ironically, he was being prepared under the umbrella of the state for a new era of loot and plunder of the national resources. PTI spokesperson made it clear that the nation was seeing and recognizing those who brought him back to country, took him to Quetta and drove away the herd of political orphans who were always looking for a "BSP" and gathered in front of him for auction.

Pakistan, IMF reach staff level...

FROM PAGE 01
he said, noting that inflation should steadily decline "is the thought process moving forward". The IMF said the agreement supports the Pakistani authorities' commitment to advance the planned fiscal consolidation and accelerate cost-reducing reforms in the energy sector. The short-term deal also envisages a complete return to a market-determined exchange rate, and pursues state-owned enterprise and governance reforms to attract investment and support job creation while continuing to strengthen social assistance. "Anchored by the stabilisation policies under the SBA, a nascent recovery is underway, buoyed by international partners' support and signs of improved confidence," the statement added. The Washington-based lender said steadfast execution of the FY24 budget, continued adjustment of energy prices, and renewed flows into the foreign exchange market have lessened fiscal and external pressures.

SC adjourns Faizabad sit-in case

FROM PAGE 01
Khan and Justice Athar Minallah conducted the hearing on the matter. During the hearing of the case, CJP Isa expressed hope that the newly formed commission will live up to the expectations of the nation. "The commission will either throw dust in [our] eyes or it will write a new history; we hope the inquiry commission will conduct an independent and transparent investigation," the CJP remarked. During the last hearing of the case on November 1, the CJP-led bench rejected the government's initial fact-finding committee, ordering the AGP Mansoor Usman Awan to form a new inquiry commission to ensure the implementation of the apex court verdict in the Faizabad sit-in case.

PCB announces...

FROM PAGE 01
down as the skipper of the national side from all formats, ending his years-long stint in the leading position, following a humiliating World Cup campaign. The now-former skipper was under fire for several months after Pakistan failed to perform in the Asia Cup and continued the same momentum into the World Cup – where they crashed out before reaching the semis. "Today, I am stepping down as the captain of Pakistan in all formats. It's a difficult decision but I feel it is [the] right time for this call," Babar said in a statement on X, formerly Twitter. Babar made the major announcement just moments after he met PCB Management Committee Chairman Zaka Ashraf at Lahore's Gaddafi Stadium, where, sources told Geo News, he was offered to remain the team's skipper in Tests, but he refused. An official statement issued following the meeting said the PCB chief and Babar met to discuss various aspects and the World Cup performance.

Emine Erdogan calls on first ladies to be 'voice of Gaza'

First ladies unite in Istanbul, urging global solidarity and condemning Israeli attacks on Gaza at the 'One Heart for Palestine' summit hosted by Emine Erdogan of Türkiye

ANKARA: In a show of global solidarity for Palestinians, first ladies from different countries gathered in Istanbul Wednesday for a summit hosted by Emine Erdogan, where the Turkish first lady called on all the first ladies in the world to be "a voice of Gaza," and to stop Israeli attacks that killed thousands of Palestinians so far. The "One Heart for Palestine" summit, held at the presidential office in Istanbul's Dolmabahçe, a diplomatic hub used by Turkish officials to address world crises, delivered a powerful message for the civilians caught in the Gaza Strip, specifically considering vicious Israeli attacks that have escalated since Oct. 7, signifying a new phase in the Palestine-Israel conflict. Giving the open-

ing speech at the summit, the Turkish first lady condemned Tel Aviv for atrocities in the region and its recently escalated threats to drop a bomb upon Palestinians. Already, Israel has claimed over 11,000 lives, including those of children. Erdogan called for "global consciousness," saying: "The ground in the region

has turned to be a hell, while the underground has turned into a necropolis of children; it is never possible for any promised future to materialize there." "Who can ever feel really safe in an order that has been built upon such destruction," she asked in the key gathering, where noteworthy attendees included first

ladies from Palestine, Qatar, Senegal, Malaysia, Uzbekistan, the Republic of Congo, Bangladesh, Bosnia Herzegovina, Lebanon, Scotland, Pakistan, Libya, the United Arab Emirates (UAE), Egypt and Turkmenistan. First ladies from Azerbaijan, Brazil, and Venezuela sent video messages to the significant gathering. "Era of shame":

The Turkish First Lady described what has been happening in Gaza for the last 40 days as "the era of shame." Erdogan has been outspoken in her criticism of Israel and has consistently advocated for aid to Palestinians who lack basic necessities in the besieged Gaza Strip. "We will never surrender to this darkness that discriminates

a life from another, that devalues everyone who is not like it," she underlined. "For this reason, I invite the spouses of all heads of state to be the voice of those killed in Gaza and those whose voices are being suppressed and silenced while a mass slaughter continues," she added. She reiterated the call for "cease-fire, peace and humanitarian aid," adding that all first ladies should unite their words for an immediate cease-fire: "What you see is not a war, it is strong exploiting weak." "Let us make this summit a concrete initiative taken for peace in Palestine," she emphasized. "We owe a future for Gazan youth that is suitable for human dignity other than either to kill or being killed," the first lady underscored. – Agencies



Briefs

Japan, China to hold regular talks on trade

TOKYO : Japanese and Chinese trade ministers have agreed to establish a framework to discuss export controls, Japanese media reported on Wednesday, indicating steps on economic cooperation after a period of strained ties between the neighbours. Japanese Trade Minister Yasutoshi Nishimura said the talks could help stabilise relations. "We will hold firm discussions with Chinese officials to build constructive and stable Japan-China relations," Nishimura was quoted as saying after talks with his counterpart, Wang Wentao, on the sidelines of an Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation meeting in San Francisco. The dialogue is expected to be held by officials at the level of director-general and section chief, who are in charge of export controls, the Yomiuri newspaper reported. China has recently imposed curbs on the exports of some materials, including chipmaking metals like gallium, and is expected to restrict exports of graphite, used in batteries, in December. The talks are aimed at preventing an escalation of retaliatory trade disputes with China, the Yomiuri reported. Before heading to the U.S. to attend the APEC meeting, Kishida told reporters nothing has been decided regarding a meeting with China's leader Xi Jinping on the sidelines.—APP

EU probes consumer protection center

BRUSSELS : The European Commission on Wednesday announced a probe into online retail giant Amazon to see how its consumer protection measures stack up against a new EU internet regulation law. The request for information focuses on Amazon's risk assessment and mitigation measures required under the EU's Digital Services Act (DSA), "in particular with regard to the dissemination of illegal products and the protection of fundamental rights," said a commission statement. It also looks at Amazon's system of making personalised product recommendations based on a user's data — and what options users have to refuse them. Amazon has until December 6 to respond. The investigation is only an initial step permitted under the DSA, which came into force in August for the biggest platforms and does not itself constitute an indication of legal violations or a move toward punishment. The commission has already launched a raft of other probes against big online platforms seeking information about how they are complying with the DSA. An investigation similar to the one into US giant Amazon has already been started into Chinese rival AliExpress, also looking at what it is doing to protect consumers from the sale of illegal products. Other probes, more focused on measures to curb online misinformation and illegal content have been launched into X (formerly Twitter), TikTok, Meta.—APP

Malaysian HC commends PRCS' efforts during disasters

High Commissioner Mohammad Azhar Mazlan commended PRCS for its praiseworthy efforts during emergencies and disasters

Mehtab Pirzada

ISLAMABAD : Chairman of Pakistan Red Crescent Society (PRCS), Sardar Shahid Ahmed Laghari, paid a visit to the Malaysian Embassy in Islamabad, engaging in a substantial meeting with Mohammad Azhar Mazlan, the High Commissioner of Malaysia to Pakistan. The focal point of the discussions centered on the robust relationship between Pakistan and Malaysia, characterized by mutual affection and shared commitment. High Commissioner Mohammad Azhar Mazlan commended PRCS for its praiseworthy efforts during emergencies and disasters. Acknowledging the Pakistan Red Crescent Society's proactive involvement in addressing natural disasters, Malaysian High Commissioner Mohammad Azhar Mazlan expressed gratitude for the organization's initiatives during the devastating floods in Pakistan the previous year. He mentioned the collaborative efforts between Malaysia and Malaysian non-governmental organizations (NGOs) like Mercy Malaysia and Yayasan Taqwa Malaysia to aid families affected by the monsoon floods in Pakistan during that period. While recognizing the dire situation,



Chairman Laghari underscored the importance of collaboration, emphasizing its necessity not only during disasters but also in peacetime to alleviate the suffering of vulnerable communities in the country. PRCS Chairman

briefed the Malaysian High Commissioner about his interactions with Malaysian delegates during the Movement Induction Course organized by the International Federation of the Red Cross Red Crescent Societies (IFRC)

in Malaysia last year. During the course, he emphasized the need to strengthen relations between both National Societies for future joint humanitarian collaborations and ventures. Chairman Laghari highlighted PRCS's rehabilitation

efforts, including the construction of permanent shelter houses and the installation of solarized water filtration plants in the affected areas of the country following last year's devastating floods. He proposed collaboration between PRCS and Malaysia on various healthcare and community-based initiatives. The Malaysian High Commissioner conveyed his intention to engage with the Malaysian government to explore humanitarian endeavors through strengthening collaboration and coordination among the Pakistan Red Crescent Society, the Malaysian Red Crescent Society, and the mentioned non-governmental organizations. The PRCS Chairman extended an invitation to the High Commissioner of Malaysia to visit field areas in Sindh and Balochistan, offering an opportunity to witness PRCS programs and projects, and invited him to visit the PRCS National Headquarters. As the meeting concluded, Chairman Sardar Shahid Ahmed Laghari presented a memento to High Commissioner Mohammad Azhar Mazlan, symbolizing the enduring partnership between the Pakistan Red Crescent Society and the Malaysian Embassy. Both dignitaries expressed their dedication to further strengthening the bonds that unite the two nations.

Doctor on trial for Rwanda genocide

PARIS : A Rwandan doctor went on trial in France on charges of committing genocide and crimes against humanity during Rwanda's 1994 massacres, after a three-decade investigation by French authorities. Sixty-eight-year-old Sosthène Munyemana appeared before the Assize Court in the French capital nearly 30 years after a complaint was filed against him in the southwestern French city of Bordeaux in 1995. The former gynaecologist, accused of organising torture and killings during the genocide of Tutsis in Rwanda, took to the stand and expressed his "compassion" for the families of the genocide victims. "This is the first time that I've had the opportunity to speak publicly since this affair began," he said, wearing a blue striped shirt and a grey jacket. "It's also the moment to think of these families." Munyemana, who denies the charges against him, faces life in prison if convicted. The trial, scheduled to last five weeks, will be recorded for historical archives. Nearly 70 witnesses are expected to testify. It is the sixth trial in France of an alleged participant in the massacres, in which around 800,000 people, most of them ethnic Tutsis, were slaughtered over 100 days by Hutu soldiers and extremist militias, according to UN figures.—APP

Sunak faces setback: Rwanda migrant scheme ruled unlawful

NEWS DESK

LONDON : Britain's Supreme Court ruled on Wednesday that the government's scheme to send asylum seekers to Rwanda was unlawful, dealing a crushing blow to Prime Minister Rishi Sunak before an election expected next year. Under the plan, Britain intended to send tens of thousands of asylum seekers who arrived on its shores without permission to the East African country in a bid to deter migrants crossing the Channel from Europe in small boats. But the top court on Wednesday unanimously rejected the government's appeal against an earlier ruling that migrants could not be sent to Rwanda because it could not be considered a

safe third country. President Robert Reed said the five judges involved agreed there were "substantial grounds for believing that asylum seekers sent to Rwanda would be at real risk of refoulement", meaning being sent back to their country of origin where they could be at risk of ill-treatment. The Rwanda scheme was the central plank of Sunak's immigration policy as he prepares to face an election next year, amid concern among some voters about the numbers of asylum seekers arriving in small boats. Sunak, whose Conservatives are trailing by about 20 points in opinion polls, had made a promise to "stop the boats", one of the five key pledges of his premiership. This year more than 27,000 people have arrived on the southern English coast without permission, after a re-

cord 45,755 were detected in 2022. Sunak said the government had been planning for all eventualities and would do whatever it took to stop illegal migration. The ruling had taken on even greater political significance in recent days after Sunak sacked Interior Minister Suella Braverman, a popular figure on his party's right-wing whose remit included dealing with immigration. She launched a scathing attack on Sunak on Tuesday, saying he had broken promises on tackling immigration and betrayed the British people. Critics, ranging from opposition lawmakers as well as some in his own Conservative Party to church leaders and the United Nations refugee agency, had argued the policy was flawed, immoral and simply would not work. "The Supreme Court's judgement is a victory for humanity," Steve Smith, chief

executive of refugee charity Care4Calais, said. "This grubby, cash-for-people deal was always cruel and immoral but, most importantly, it is unlawful." The Rwanda policy was originally drawn up by former Prime Minister Boris Johnson in an initial 140 million-pound (\$180 million) deal. Whilst the court said it was now unlawful, Reed left open the chance the scheme could be resurrected, saying "the changes needed to eliminate the risk of refoulement may be delivered in the future, but they have not been shown to be in place now". With many lawmakers in Sunak's Conservative Party saying Britain should consider leaving the European Convention on Human Rights over the issue, Reed said their decision was based on a number of laws and treaties, and not the convention alone.

US extends Iraq's waiver from Iranian electricity

WASHINGTON: The Biden administration has extended by four months a sanctions waiver that will allow Iraq to continue to purchase electricity from Iran and gives Iran limited access to the proceeds to buy humanitarian goods. Secretary of State Antony Blinken signed the 120-day waiver extension and it was transmitted to Congress on Tuesday, US officials said. The move is likely to draw criticism from Iran hawks on Capitol Hill and elsewhere who believe the extension will reward Iran at a time when it is coming under increasing pressure to end its support for proxy groups, including Hamas, that are destabilizing the Middle East. There is roughly \$10 billion in Iraqi payments for Iranian electricity currently being held in escrow accounts in Iraq, and the waiver will allow Baghdad to maintain its energy imports without fear of US penalties for violating sanctions on Iran. It will also keep in place a provision — included in the last 120-day waiver — under which portions of the electricity proceeds can be transferred to accounts in Oman and then converted to euros or other widely traded currencies for Iran to buy non-sanctioned products. The officials, who spoke on condition of anonymity to discuss the decision-making process, said Blinken signed the waiver mainly because the administration doesn't want to cut Iraq off from a critical source of energy. But, they said the administration is confident Iran will not be able to use any of the money for nefarious purposes.—APP

France still scarred by 'yellow vest' revolt

PARIS : Five years after hundreds of thousands of people swarmed through French cities in a show of rage against President Emmanuel Macron's policies, France still bears the scars of the revolt. The "yellow vest" movement was born on November 17, 2018 when people in small-town and rural France began blocking roads around the country over a planned increase in environmental fuel taxes that hit car-reliant citizens in the pocket. Named after the fluorescent jackets kept by French motorists and worn by the protesters, the revolt posed an abrupt challenge to Macron one-and-a-half years after he was elected as modern France's youngest head of state promising a new era of change. Within weeks, the protests had ballooned into a full-blown insurrection culminating in the sacking of the Arc de Triomphe war memorial in Paris and widespread rioting that was repressed by the police, leaving 23 protesters blind in one eye. The chief target of the protests was Macron, who had been labouring under the label of "president of the rich" since cutting taxes on the wealthy a year earlier. The ex-banker, who had never held elected office before winning the top job in 2017 with a resolutely upbeat campaign inspired by Barack Obama, was blindsided by the outpouring of anger. "He would never again feel that he had that golden touch and that nothing could get in his way," said Bruno Cautres, a researcher at Sciences Po University.—APP

UK Sikhs unsettled, overlooked amid Canada tragedy

SMETHWICK : Britain's Sikh population, whose ancestors first migrated from the Punjab more than a century ago, have long been admired as a model of integration and for maintaining a strong identity. Lauded in their country of origin and beyond for their valour, industriousness and charity, Sikhs took those values to Britain, which during the country's imperial past praised them as a martial race. They won accolades for standing up to rioters in London in 2011, for charity work during the coronavirus pandemic, and most recently for feeding the hungry during the cost-of-living crisis. "We don't often complain," Jas Singh, adviser to the Sikh Federation UK, which represents some 500,000 Sikhs in the UK, told AFP at the Guru Nanak Gurdwara in Smethwick, near Birmingham in central England. But the tight-knit community is now appealing for help to address long-term issues such as racism and a lack of representation in politics and culture. "We still need help just like everybody else," said Kulbinder Kaur Gakhal, an education administrator at the Smethwick gurdwara, one of the oldest and largest in Europe. "The fact that we only have two Sikh MPs. Given our numbers, we should have maybe six or seven. Across the civil service, there's very low Sikh representation — in the police, in education," added Jas Singh. "This is a wall of discrimination that we face," he added. Despite official figures showing a 169 percent rise in attacks on Sikhs in 2021/22, there is no approved definition for anti-Sikh hate crimes in the UK.—APP



SAN FRANCISCO: Chinese President Xi Jinping arrives at San Francisco International Airport and was received by California Governor Gavin Newsom, US Treasury Secretary Janet Yellen and other US representatives.—DNA

Chinese Recipe for Fast-track development of Pakistan

QAMAR BASHIR

In an interactive session organized by the Chinese embassy, Mr. Victor Zhikai Gao, Vice President of Centre for China and Globalization CCG today (13.11.2023), outlined a Chinese recipe for Pakistan's fast-track development. He advocated six factors which according to Chinese experience are pivotal for making fast track development for Pakistan. The first factor which he termed as a bedrock of fast track development was the stability which encompasses political, financial, economic, and social aspects. The stability he said was paramount for attracting investors and fostering economic growth. While highlighting, Mr. Gao cited his own experience of encountering numerous checkpoints from landing at Islamabad airport to the Chinese embassy, signaling instability. He urged Pakistani leadership to prioritize stability in all facets of national business, as it is a key indicator of a country's attractiveness to foreign investors and traders. Stability, characterized by calm, order, and security is an all encompassing word. It signifies political coherence, indicating an effective government and absence of major political crises, economic steadiness with low inflation and sustained growth, social harmony fostering cohesion among diverse populations, security maintained through the rule of law, and diplomatic stability in international relations.

Pakistan grapples with a myriad of challenges that impede its ability to enjoy stability. Persistent security threats, including terrorism and cross-border insurgencies, coupled with ongoing regional conflicts, particularly the Kashmir issue and the instability in Afghanistan, contribute to a fragile security environment. Economic disparities, high levels of poverty, unemployment, and corruption further strain social cohesion. Political instability, frequent changes in government, and governance issues disrupt policy continuity, fostering an atmosphere of uncertainty. Ethnic and sectarian tensions, along with historical and geopolitical rivalries, particularly with India, add complexity to the country's internal and regional dynamics. Environmental challenges, water scarcity, and the role of non-state actors further compound the multifaceted nature of Pakistan's stability issues. Addressing these interconnected factors necessitates a holistic approach, encompassing political stability, social and economic development, diplomatic resolutions to regional conflicts, and effective counter-terrorism measures. The next factor he outlined was peace, which was indeed very important. A country is at peace which it is "Peace, whether within a nation or in its interactions with the global community, embodies a state of tranquility and cooperation. Internally, it signifies the absence of civil unrest and conflicts, with effective governance, respect for human rights, and social harmony prevailing. Externally, a peace-

ful country engages in diplomatic and economic relations without resorting to military aggression, adhering to international laws and norms. It actively contributes to global cooperation, addressing issues through dialogue and negotiation rather than force. Pakistan faces persistent challenges in achieving peace, both internally and in its external relations. Domestically, the country grapples with internal security concerns, including terrorism and insurgencies. Regionally, the longstanding Kashmir conflict with India remains a source of tension and military confrontations. The situation in neighboring Afghanistan further complicates Pakistan's security landscape, with cross-border movements of militants and refugee issues. Water disputes, economic challenges, and geopolitical factors also contribute to the complexity of achieving peace. Addressing these multifaceted issues demands a holistic approach, encompassing effective governance, social harmony initiatives, and diplomatic efforts to resolve regional conflicts. It requires a concerted effort to foster stability, both domestically and internationally, for the collective well-being of Pakistan and its standing on the global stage. The third factor he outlined was development. Economic development serves as a key indicator of a nation's well-being, reflecting the improvement of living standards, poverty reduction, and increased access to essential services such as education and healthcare. The development fosters stability and security within

a nation, correlates with advancements in science, technology, and innovation. A developed country is better equipped to address environmental challenges and contribute to sustainable practices. Development enhances a country's soft power. A developed nation is more likely to be an active participant in international collaborations and organizations. Pakistan's struggle to achieve sustained development is rooted in a complex interplay of political, economic, and social challenges. Frequent political instability, governance issues marred by corruption, and security concerns, including terrorism and regional conflicts, have diverted resources away from development initiatives. Economic inequality, inadequate education, and infrastructure deficits further impede progress. The water scarcity crisis, rapid population growth, and dependence on agriculture exacerbate the strain on resources. Ongoing regional tensions and geopolitical factors add complexities to Pakistan's development landscape. Addressing these multifaceted challenges demands a comprehensive and sustained approach, encompassing political stability, anti-corruption measures, strategic investments in education and healthcare, infrastructure development, and regional diplomacy. The Fourth factor outlined by Mr. Gao was a Hard Work which is a foundational element for fostering the development of a robust nation. Serving as the engine of economic growth, it propels productivity and innovation, contributing to the

nation's economic strength. Beyond economic realms, hard work cultivates a culture of responsibility, discipline, and resilience, crucial for building a self-reliant society. This strong work ethic is indispensable for achieving long-term developmental goals in various fields, including science, technology, education, and infrastructure, ensuring the nation remains at the forefront of progress. Moreover, it plays a vital role in enhancing human capital, fostering adaptability and competitiveness globally. Pakistan grapples with a myriad of systematic, political, and governance challenges that hinder the cultivation of a culture of hard work and impede swift development. Persistent political instability, marked by frequent changes in government and military interventions, leads to policy discontinuity and obstructs the implementation of long-term development plans. Rampant corruption across various levels of society erodes trust in institutions, resulting in the misallocation of resources and hampering effective development initiatives. Ongoing security concerns, economic inequality, issues in the education system, infrastructure deficits, water scarcity, political patronage, and global economic challenges further contribute to the impediments.

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

Briefs

110JK: 30 people killed in bus crash

DNA

SRINAGAR: At least 30 people were killed in Indian-occupied Kashmir on Wednesday when a passenger bus skidded off a mountainous road and plunged into a deep gorge, police said. The accident took place on a remote road in the Doda area, about 200 kilometres (124 miles) southeast of the region's capital Srinagar. "Thirty passengers were killed in the accident, caused by the driver's negligence by hitting the crash bar of the road," senior police officer Sunil Gupta told AFP. "The bus tumbled down the mountain some 250 metres (800 feet)," he said, adding that more than 25 people were also injured in the crash. A video clip from the site showed a grisly scene of several dead bodies, as rescuers tried to help the injured. Police said they feared the death toll could rise, with many badly hurt. Prime Minister Narendra Modi said the accident was "distressing" and offered his "condolences to the families who have lost their near and dear ones." "I pray that the injured recover at the earliest," he said on social media, adding that government compensation of more than \$2,400 would be offered to the next of kin of those killed, and \$600 to those injured.

Xi arrives in US for talks with Biden

FOREIGN DESK

SAN FRANCISCO: Chinese President Xi Jinping has arrived in the US on his first visit to the country in six years during which he will hold a high-stake meeting with Joe Biden at an undisclosed location in the San Francisco Bay Area on Wednesday morning. After the Biden meeting, Xi will attend the annual summit of the Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) forum. Xi's summit with Biden will be the first face-to-face meeting between the US and Chinese leaders in a year and has been billed by US officials as an opportunity to reduce friction in what many see as the world's most dangerous rivalry. Xi waved from the steps of his Air China plane upon arrival and descended to meet US officials on the tarmac, including Treasury Secretary Janet Yellen and US Ambassador to China Nicholas Burns. He then got into his Chinese Hongqi, or "Red Flag," limousine and departed the airport into San Francisco, where demonstrations are expected both for and against his visit.

Naqvi visits NICVD Karachi

DNA

KARACHI: Caretaker Sindh Chief Minister Justice (Retd) Maqbool Baqar and Care Chief Minister Punjab Mohsin Naqvi visited the National Institute of Cardiovascular Diseases (NICVD) to witness its patient service, structure and performance so that a similar institute could be established in Punjab. During their visit both the chief ministers interacted with the patients in the Emergency and in the CCU and asked about the services and the care being provided to them. The patients and their attendants expressed their satisfaction and told the chief minister that they were being provided with free-of-cost treatment for the medicines. The Punjab chief minister was told that the NICVD has 10 Satellite centres in different districts of the province and 17 chest pain clinics established in the containers and have been parked at different areas of the city where the patients could reach early. The Punjab chief minister expressed his satisfaction in developing chest pain clinics along the main roads. To a question, the new Executive Director of NICVD Dr Tahir Saghir told the CM that all the treatments from emergency to open heart surgery.

Cabinet okays BIT talks with Saudi Arabia and Qatar

The condition would be inserted in the agreement for provision of services and its violation would lead to imposition of a fine and black listing of relevant Hajj group organizers



ISLAMABAD: The Caretaker PM Anwaar-ul-Haq Kakar chairs a meeting of Caretaker Federal Cabinet. — DNA

DNA

ISLAMABAD: The federal cabinet has approved holding the Bilateral Investment Treaty (BIT) negotiations with Saudi Arabia and Qatar. The cabinet, which met with Caretaker Prime Minister Anwarul Haq Kakar in the chair on Wednesday, gave its nod following the recommendation of the Investment Board. Upon the proposal of the Ministry of Trade, the cabinet sanctioned the constitution of a committee with regard to the hearing of appeals against orders of Trade Organizations Regulators, exemption and flexibility in the provisions of Import Policy Order 2022 and Export Policy Order 2022. The minister for

trade would act as convener of the committee whereas ministers for law and planning would be the other members. On the recommendation of the Federal Board of Revenue (FBR), the cabinet okayed a 40 per cent tax on windfall profit earned by banks on foreign exchange transactions during the calendar year of 2021-22. It approved amendments to Hajj Policy 2024 under which the government and private unutilized sponsorship schemes quota would be returned to the Saudi government. As per the Saudi laws, a foolproof monitoring system over the financial arrangements of Hajj group organizers would be enforced whereas under the new Hajj policy, the children below the age of 10 years would be able

to perform the rites. For the pilgrims above the age of 80 years, conditions for keeping an assistant/helper would be relaxed, however, Hajj group organizers would enter into agreements with the pilgrims in this regard, enabling them to enlist services of local supporters during their stay in Saudi Arabia. The condition would be inserted in the agreement for the provision of services and its violation would lead to the imposition of a fine and black listing of relevant Hajj group organizers. The meeting also sanctioned a reduction in the hardship Hajj quota. A total of 50 per cent quota of hiring local supporters would be dedicated to those Pakistani students who are studying in different universities in Saudi Arabia and their

deployment would be made as welfare staff. The federal cabinet, upon the recommendation of the interior ministry, also approved the inclusion of the Democratic Republic of Congo, Malawi, Zambia, Zimbabwe and Kyrgyz Democrat in the business visa list. It also allowed the removal of the names of 18 persons from the Exit Control List (ECL) placing 9 other names in the list on the advice of the interior ministry. On the recommendation of the Ministry of Kashmir Affairs and Gilgit Baltistan, it approved Jammu and Kashmir State Property Budget for the fiscal year 2023-24. For the current year, its budget is earmarked at Rs267.590 million. The meeting approved the signing of the Hong Kong International Convention 2009 for the safe and environmentally sound recycling of ships and the preparation of a draft Instrument of Accession in this regard on the suggestion of the Ministry of Maritime Affairs. Under the convention, Pakistan would legislate the recycling of ships and training would be imparted to the relevant staff, besides enhancing their capacity. Moreover, for the disposal of any hazardous wastes/materials in the recycling process, the availability of the relevant technological instruments would be ensured. The safety of labourers linked with the recycling industry would be ensured. It would hugely benefit the ship recycling industry in Pakistan. Upon the advice of the Cabinet Secretariat, the federal cabinet also granted an exemption to the Trading Corporation of Pakistan from the Rules 8, 13, 35, 38 and 40 of the Public Regulatory Authority Rules 2004, for the procurement of 200,000 metric tons of urea from international market.

KP CM's appointment challenged at PHC

PESHAWAR: A lawyer moved the Peshawar High Court (PHC) against Khyber Pakhtunkhwa's interim Chief Minister Justice (retd) Arshad Hussain Shah's appointment, saying it was "in violation of the provisions of the Constitution". The News reported Wednesday. The development came a day after Shah was sworn in as the caretaker chief minister after his predecessor Mohammad Azam Khan passed away after a brief illness. The petitioner, Advocate Tajammul Hussain Shah, filed the petition through his lawyers Wali Khan Afridi and Shah Faisal. The caretaker chief minister, his cabinet, law secretary, federal government and advocate general were made respondents in the plea. The petitioner told the court that Arshad was appointed as the caretaker chief minister on the second day of the death of Khan, requesting the court to declare the appointment null and void. — Agencies

Security forces kill 7 terrorists in KP's Tank

"Locals of the area appreciated the operation and extended their full support to the security forces in elimination of menace of terrorism"

STAFF REPORT

RAWALPINDI: Security forces killed seven terrorists during an intelligence-based operation (IBO) in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa's Tank district, the military's wing said on Wednesday. The Inter-Services Public Relations (ISPR), in a statement, said that on the night between November 14-15, the security forces conducted the IBO in the Kiri Machan Khel area of the district on the reported presence of terrorists. "During conduct of the operation, intense fire exchange took place between own troops and terrorists, as a result of which seven

terrorists were sent to hell," it added. The terrorists' hideouts were also busted during the operation, the ISPR said, adding that the weapons and ammunition were also recovered from the slain terrorists. According to the ISPR, the militants remained actively involved in numerous terrorist activities including recent target killings of police in Tank and surrounding areas. The statement said sanitisation operation is being carried out to eliminate any other terrorists found in the area. "Locals of the area appreciated the operation and extended their full support to the security forces in elimination of menace of terrorism," the statement added.

A day earlier, one soldier and two civilians were martyred after terrorists opened fire in the general area of Darazinda, Dera Ismail Khan, a statement by ISPR said.

According to the military's media wing, the militants fired upon vehicles of a private company working on a development project in the area. "Resultantly, two innocent civilian employees of the company, Muhammad Faisal, 35 and Asif Kamran, 29 who were residents of district Karak embraced shahadat," said the statement. The nation of 240 million has faced a surge in terrorism in recent months, with the Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP) and other militant outfits intensifying their actions against security forces. In response, the state has also launched operations to curb terrorism. Centre for Research and Security Studies (CRSS), in a report released in October, noted that the security forces lost at least 386 personnel in the first nine months of 2023, marking an eight-year high. In the third quarter of 2023, some 445 people lost their lives and 440 suffered injuries from as many as 190 terror attacks and counter-terror operations. Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and Balochistan were the primary centres of violence, accounting for nearly 94% of all fatalities and 89% of attacks (including incidents of terrorism and security forces operations) recorded during this period.



ISLAMABAD: Chief of Naval Staff, Admiral Naveed Ashraf exchanging views with, Dr. Reza Amiri Moghadam, ambassador of Iran to Pakistan at Naval Headquarters. — DNA

'Stop this horror', UNICEF chief says on visit to Gaza

GAZA CITY: The head of the UN children's agency decried Wednesday the "devastating" scenes she witnessed during a visit to war-ravaged Gaza, urging the parties to the conflict to "stop this horror." "What I saw and heard was devastating. They have endured repeated bombardment, loss and displacement. Inside the Strip, there is nowhere safe for Gaza's one million children to turn," UNICEF chief Catherine Russell said in a statement after visiting among other things a hospital in the south of the Palestinian territory. The United Nations and the Red Cross also voiced alarm, demanding that thousands of patients and civilians there be protected. "I'm appalled by reports of military raids in Al-Shifa hospital in Gaza," UN humanitarian chief Martin Griffiths said on X, formerly Twitter. "The protection of newborns, patients, medical staff and all civilians must override all other concerns," he said. "Hospitals are not battlegrounds." WHO chief Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus agreed. — Agencies

France issues arrest warrants against Syrian President

DNA

PARIS: French judges have issued arrest warrants for Syria's regime leader Bashar al Assad, his brother Maher al Assad, and two other senior officials over the use of banned chemical weapons against civilians in Syria, according to a judicial source. Wednesday's arrest warrants — which refer to charges of complicity in crimes against humanity and complicity in war crimes — follow a criminal investigation into chemical attacks in the town of Douma and the district of Eastern Ghouta in August 2013, attacks which killed more than 1,000 people. It is the first international arrest warrant that has been issued for the Syrian regime leader, whose forces responded to protests that began in 2011 with a brutal crackdown that UN experts have said amount to war crimes. It is the first time international arrest warrants have been issued over the chemical weapons attack in Ghouta in 2013, says Mazen Darwish, lawyer and founder of the Syrian Center for Media and Freedom of Expression (SCM), which filed the case in France.

Court extends interim bail of Bushra Bibi

DNA

ISLAMABAD: An accountability court on Wednesday extended the interim bail of PTI chairman's wife Bushra Bibi in Al-Qadir Trust and Toshakhana cases. Accountability court Judge Muhammad Bashir conducted hearing of Bushra Bibi's pleas seeking extension in her interim bails in the Toshakhana and Al-Qadir Trust cases. No lawyer appeared in court on behalf of Bushra Bibi. Special prosecutor Irfan Bhola and SohailArif attended court representing NAB along with investigation officers Mian Omer and Mohsin Haroon. As the proceedings started, judge inquired about lawyers from Bushra Bibi. The NAB prosecutor said he did not know where they were. He further said Latif Khosa was contesting the case. Accountability court judge Bashir said no lawyer from Bushra Bibi had attended court so hearing could be postponed till Friday. Later, the court, extended interim bail of PTI chairman's wife and deferred hearing till November 17.

'My father assassinated during Bhutto's 'dictatorship'

DNA

LAHORE: Senior PML-N leader Khawaja SaadRafique on Wednesday advised PPP Chairman Bilawal Bhutto Zardari to avoid provocations and said he was satisfied with his performance as a cabinet member. In a message posted on X, formerly known as Twitter, Saad said neither he nor his family had ever hide themselves [from others and realities] and neither served the British rulers nor Ayub Khan or Yahya Khan — the two former military dictators. The remarks were a clear reference to Zulfikar Ali Bhutto and his family, as he also recalled that they had been imprisoned by different governments during the past 80 years — from Khizar Hayat Tiwana to Gen (retd) QamarJavedBajwa. He also reminded Bilawal that his father [Khawaja Rafique] had assassinated during, what he called, as the "civilian dictator" of late [Zulfikar Ali] Bhutto. Saad said he was sent to jail thrice by the Zia regime and also served prison time while resisting Pervez Musharraf's dictatorship besides experiencing physical torture and losing his mother. Listing the sacrifices that he made, the PML-N leader noted that he was among those facing the wrath of disguised martial of the PTI chairman, Bajwa and SaqibNisar. The reaction comes after Bilawal accused PML-N of trying to get the "institution" involved for furthering the party's politics and said a particular "pitch" was being prepared.

Turkiye's Erdogan calls Israel 'terror state'

Erdogan accuses Tel Aviv of implementing a strategy of destroying all of Gaza along with its residents

NEWS DESK

Ankara: President Recep Tayyip Erdogan said Israel was committing "state terrorism" amid the Israeli-Palestinian conflict while addressing the ruling Justice and Development Party (AK Party) parliamentary group meeting in the capital of Ankara Wednesday. "I clearly say here: Israel is a terrorist state," Erdogan, a defender of Palestinians oppressed by Israel, said. Erdogan called upon Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu to declare Israel's nuclear arsenal. "Your end is night, anyway, whether you have nuclear weapons or not," Erdogan said, to the thundering applause of his supporters. Türkiye is spearheading efforts to alleviate the suffering of Palestinians trapped in besieged Gaza, where thousands have been killed since Oct. 7. Erdogan has been the most vocal critic of Israel, which Türkiye extended an olive branch to in an effort to mend shattered ties before this new conflict broke out. "We see Netanyahu flanked by ministers in his news conferences. He thinks these min-

isters will save him. Netanyahu is a goner," he said. Erdogan pointed out that Israel was pursuing a strategy of "destroying an entire city with its people" and was "a terrorist state." He lamented the fact that some members of the international community did not stand on the "right side" of the matter: "The West, particularly the United States, unfortunately, exhibits a different stance (than others criticizing Israel). For instance, France changed its stand. They act differently one day and backtrack the following day. Be honest. Be like Türkiye," he said, referring to President Macron's support for Israel mixed with his criticism of indiscriminate killings of Palestinians. The president said the Israeli government had the unwavering support of the U.S. and Western countries, and relentlessly continued its massacres for 40 days, deliberately targeting schools, places of worship, hospitals and marketplaces. He noted that it also deliberately bombed people it forced to leave their homes in its pursuit of "state terrorism." "They call Hamas a terrorist group. Hamas is a political party which won elections. You deprived them of their rights after they won the

elections. Israel and the United States did this together," he said. Erdogan has always been a champion of the Palestinian cause, but also adhered to Türkiye's good ties with Israel. Israel's attacks, which he earlier declared as war crimes, were the last straw for Erdogan, who recently shelved a visit to restore relations with Israel, just one month after he met Netanyahu in New York. Erdogan said two-thirds of about 12,000 Gazans massacred by Israel were women and children, and that Israel was carrying out the most heinous attacks against civilians. "War is not a word we can use to describe what is happening in Gaza. Even wars have ethics, laws and limits," he said. He said Israel was now talking about killing more than 2 million civilians with an atomic bomb. The Palestinian Authority has recently filed a complaint with the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) against Israel over its minister's threat to drop a nuclear bomb on Gaza. Last week, Israeli Heritage Minister Amichay Eliyahu, a member of the far-right Otzma Yehudit party, told Israeli media that dropping a "nuclear bomb" on Gaza is "an option." Eliyahu was later suspended from government

meetings "until further notice," Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's office said. Israel has long refused to publicly acknowledge whether it possesses nuclear weapons. "Do you have an atomic bomb or not? I challenge Netanyahu to declare it, but I don't think he can. You can threaten people any way you can, but the end is near for Netanyahu," he said. The president then screened a video about Israel's attacks on Gaza. "You see a genocide unfolding here. We will work to bring this case to the International Court of Justice," he said. He added that those remaining silent in the face of Israel's crimes against humanity are as "complicit in those crimes as the perpetrators." "The blood of the children killed in Gaza is now a stain of shame for those supplying weapons, munitions and intelligence to Israel. Every day, hundreds of children are killed by bombs, but no one, from the European Union to the United States, no one claiming to defend human rights says a single word. Israel slaughters journalists, along with their families, while they are covering Israel's massacres, but international media does not cover it," he said.