



Islamabad POST

Saturday, November 25, 2023

Pakistan's Credible Daily Newspaper

Price Rs. 30

UAE envoy honored with honorary doctorate degree

Detailed News On Page-08

Haniyeh hails 'political and military victory'

Detailed News On Page-08



Imad Wasim retires from int'l cricket

Detailed News On Page-06



Truce takes effect Hamas releases 12 Thai, 13 Israelis

Israeli troops fire at Gazans returning north

DNA

GAZA CITY: Thailand Prime Minister Srettha Thavisin has said that 12 Thai nationals – being held hostage in Gaza – have been released by Hamas. In a post on X, formerly Twitter, the prime minister said embassy officials were “on the way to pick them up”. However, he did not specify where the hostages were. It follows the Egyptian State Information Service saying: “Intensive Egyptian efforts resulted in the release of 12 Thai nationals.” It is important to note that, the release of Thai hostages was not part of Israel and Hamas deal. While, Israeli forces open “intense shooting” in east of Khan Younis and Rafah after a four-day ceasefire went into effect on Friday morning. Arab media reported that two Palestinians were killed and another was wounded by Israeli soldiers shooting at hundreds of people who tried to return to the north of the besieged Gaza Strip. Some of those wounded have been evacuated to a hospital in Deir al-Balah, central Gaza, according to Palestinian media. The Israeli military also warned Palestinians that the “war is not over”, telling them not to try to return to homes in the northern part of Gaza, which it described as a “dangerous war zone”. Gaza residents said the Israelis had dropped leaflets warning people not to travel north and have fired over the heads of some people who were trying to get back into Gaza City. Israeli attacks had raged in the hours leading up to the truce, with officials inside the enclave saying a hospital in Gaza City was among the targets bombed. Sirens sounded in two Israeli villages outside the southern Gaza Strip, warning of possible incoming Palestinian rockets. The Israeli military also said fighting would resume soon. “This will be a short pause, at the conclusion of which the war and fighting will continue with great might and will generate pressure for the return of more hostages,” Israeli minister of military affairs Yoav Gallant said. Meanwhile, the International Committee of

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Pakistan ready to airlift injured Palestinians: FM

KHAYAM ABBASI

ISLAMABAD: Caretaker Foreign Minister Jaiil Abbas Jilani Friday said that Pakistan is ready to airlift the injured Palestinians and bring them for treatment, adding this has been conveyed to Jordan and Egypt as well. The top Pakistani diplomat made the revelation while responding to a calling attention notice in the Senate. The notice had sought the foreign minister's briefing on what efforts Pakistan was doing related to Gaza to end the atrocities against the Palestinian people. The comments from the minister came as the Israel-Hamas truce came into effect today after more than a month of bombing in Gaza that killed over 14,000 people including children and women. The first pause in the 48-day-old war began at 10am PST, involving a comprehensive ceasefire in north and south Gaza, the release of 13 Israeli women and child hostages by the Hamas later in the day and aid to flow into the devastated Palestinian enclave. Israel had launched its devastating invasion of Gaza after gunmen from Hamas burst across the border fence on October 7, killing 1,200 people and seizing about 240 hostages, according to Israeli tallies. Hundreds of thousands of

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ISLAMABAD: Caretaker Prime Minister Anwaar-ul-Haq Kakar chairs meeting of the Cabinet. – DNA

Afghan embassy in India shuts down

Afghan diplomats seek asylum abroad

NEWS DESK

NEW DELHI: Afghanistan's embassy in New Delhi has closed as diplomats appointed by the Afghan government ousted by the Taliban two years ago failed to secure visa extensions from their Indian hosts, the outgoing ambassador said in a statement on Friday. India does not recognise the Taliban government which seized power in 2021, and had allowed Ambassador Farid Mamundzay and mission staff to stay in place, issuing visas and handling trade matters. In September, however, the ambassador and senior staff left for

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Transition to weekly petroleum price

FAISAL SHEIKH

ISLAMABAD: The caretaker government has devised a fresh strategy for the pricing of petroleum products, aiming to shift from a 15-day interval to a 7-day determination period. The Oil and Gas Regulatory Authority (OGRA) has initiated consultations with petroleum dealers and companies to gather input on this proposed change. Policy-level discussions are currently underway to finalize the decision-making process, considering

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Pak values ties with KSA Joint efforts a must to address Islamophobia

PM Kakar strongly condemns the atrocities committed against Palestinians and the massacre of the children in Gaza

ANSAR M BHATTI

ISLAMABAD: Caretaker Prime Minister Anwaar-ul-Haq Kakar on Friday said Saudi Arabia always stood with Pakistan in difficult times and extended support to it in diverse fields. Talking to Imam-e-Kaaba Dr Sheikh Saleh bin Abdullah bin Humaid, the prime minister said Pakistan and Saudi Arabia were tied in the strong historical relationship, based on commonalities of religion, values, and traditions. PM Kakar expressed gratitude to Saudi Arabia for providing development assistance to Pakistan in the fields of education and health. He said that the Saudi government was extending exemplary support to the Pakistani manpower working in Kingdom. The prime minister highlighted that recently, the Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques and the Crown Prince expressed unconditional support for the Palestinians by convening

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Pakistan debt at 'unsustainable' levels

Govt in talks with Provinces: Shamshad

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Caretaker Minister for Finance Dr Shamshad Akhtar while admitting debt had reached “unsustainable” levels shared that the government is in talks with the provinces to shift responsibility for Benazir Income Support Programme (BISP), hand over provincial PSDP projects and close down

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Briefs

Plea against Imran's nikah dismissed

ADIL SHAHEEN

ISLAMABAD: A local court in Islamabad dismissed a petition challenging the nikah – which was “solemnised against Sharia” – between PTI Chairman Imran Khan and Bushra Bibi on Friday. Muhammad Hanif – the petitioner – had moved the court seeking legal action against the former prime minister for marrying his present wife while she was reportedly on iddat, but he withdrew his case, leading to its dismissal. In his recent application submitted in the court, the petitioner said: “For the time being, the applicant wants to withdraw the above said complaint due to technical reasons.”

Shehbaz vows to foster country's economy

ABID RAZA

LAHORE: PML-N President Shehbaz Sharif expressed on Friday his resolve to foster the country's economy under the leadership of former prime minister Nawaz Sharif. PML-N senior leaders, Khawaja Saad Rafique, Rana Sanuallah, Raja Riaz, and Sardar Awais Leghari, called on Shehbaz Sharif. On occasion, matters pertaining to the party's organisational affairs and preparations for general elections.

Holiday Notice

The offices of daily Islamabad POST shall remain closed on Saturday on account of weekly off therefore there will be no newspaper on Sunday. – Editor

Who heads the PPP? PPP rules out father-son rifts

Bilawal Bhutto rushes to Dubai; Zardari also in Dubai to woo him



NAZIR SIYAL

KARACHI: The Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) Friday quashed the rumours of differences between the party's top brass and father-son duo – Asif Ali Zardari and Bilawal Bhutto-Zardari – after the former foreign minister left for Dubai. The development came after Zardari's interview, wherein he called Bilawal “inexperienced”, “not fully trained” in politics, and would “take time” getting up to speed – fuelling rumours of rifts between them – as Bilawal had been

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Bugti highlights Khan's 'jail facilities

Judge orders Imran to be presented in court on Nov 27 in £190 million case

FAISAL SHEIKH

ISLAMABAD: Caretaker Interior Minister Sarfraz Bugti took a jibe at Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) Chairman Imran Khan, calling him the “ladla” of the courts who is availing “unimaginable” facilities in jail. “The facilities he receives in jail are extraordinary as compared to a common prisoner or

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Imam-e-Kaaba calls on COAS Asim Munir at GHQ

COAS and Imam-e-Kaaba solidify support for Palestine and Kashmir amid ongoing atrocities

STAFF REPORT

RAWALPINDI: Chief of Army Staff (COAS) General Syed Asim Munir and his Excellency Sheikh Saleh bin Abdullah bin Muhammad Humaid discussed on Friday the matters of mutual interest. The Imam-e-Kaaba,

paid a visit to COAS General Syed Asim Munir at GHQ. During their meeting, COAS General Syed Asim Munir extended a warm welcome to the distinguished guest, emphasising that the visit of H.E. Imam-e-Kaaba to Pakistan is a source of great honor for the people of Pakistan. General Asim highlighted the profound reverence

Muslims worldwide hold for Haramain Shareefain and their custodian. Imam-e-Kaaba emphasised the peaceful nature of Islam, asserting that there is no room for misconstrued interpretations of the religion. Both dignitaries expressed condemnation for

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RAWALPINDI: Imam-e-Kaaba Sheikh Saleh bin Abdullah bin Muhammad Humaid met with COAS General Asim Munir. Saudi Ambassador Nawaf Saeed Al Maliki also seen in the picture. – DNA

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Iranian Ambassador visits FPCCI

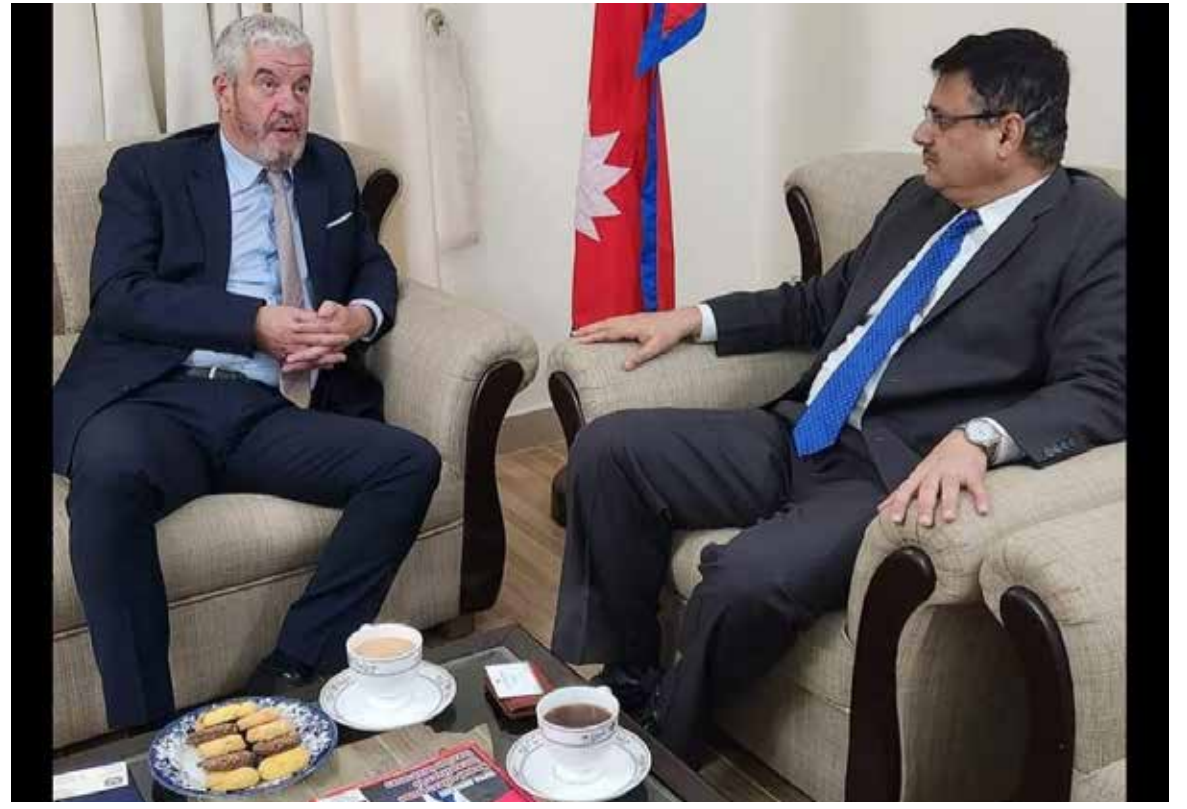
Iran's Ambassador proposes border markets for trade

NAZIR SIYAL

KARACHI: Mr. Irfan Iqbal Sheikh, President FPCCI, has apprised that, in a high-profile visit to FPCCI Head Office, H. E. Mr. Reza Amiri Moghadam, Ambassador of Iran in Pakistan, has proposed to set up border markets with Pakistan to enhance trade between the two countries. Mr. Sheikh added that enhancing trade with Iran can help resolve Pakistan's chronic trade deficit issues as Iran is our next door neighbor and exporting to Iran will be price-competitive due to negligible shipping & logistics costs due to land-based route. Mr. Irfan Iqbal Sheikh reiterated his stance that the lack of banking channels between the two countries is the top most impediment in increasing Pakistani exports to Iran – and, an effective and functional currency swap mechanism can help re-

solve the issue. Mr. Shaukat Omerson, VP FPCCI, highlighted that there are a number of products and services that Pakistan can export to Iran in large numbers; and, rice, fruits, vegetables, value-added textiles, sports goods, surgical instruments, pharmaceuticals and IT services of Pakistan have great potential in Iran. Mr. Shaukat Omerson also stressed that bilateral trade of \$2.4 billion, as per latest statistics, is way below the potential for the combined population of well over 300 million for the two countries. He also called upon capitalizing on land-based transportation opportunities unleashed by Pakistan's inclusion into TIR convention. We can also utilize land-based routes through transit trade from Central Asian Countries, Turkiye and beyond, he added. H. E. Mr. Reza Amiri Moghadam, Ambassador of Iran in Pakistan, proposed that Iran is one of the

world's top producers of petrochemical and energy sources – and, Pakistan is mostly dependent on imported oil and other energy sources. This phenomenon makes Iran a very important country for Pakistan to bridge its energy deficiencies through reliable and inexpensive supplies from Iran. Mr. Moghadam also highlighted that Pakistani rice is popular in Iran due to its good taste and Pakistani textiles are world-famous. The two countries also enjoy cultural and religious bonds. He expressed his desire to enhance people-to-people; business-to-business and chamber-to-chamber contacts with Pakistan. We need to increase business tourism between the two countries and Iranian embassy is all-willing to facilitate the Pakistani business community in visas and participation into trade exhibitions and fairs in Iran.



ISLAMABAD: Ambassador of Nepal Tapas Adhikari welcomed HE Mr. Manuel Frederico Pinheiro da Silva, Ambassador of Portugal to Pakistan in the Embassy. During his visit to the Embassy, they discussed the Nepal-Portugal bilateral relations and ways to enhance it. Moreover, Ambassador da Silva acknowledged the contribution of Nepali people for social and economic development of Portugal and shared that they are the second largest community from South Asia region in Portugal. He expressed his happiness on the Government of Nepal decision to open Nepali Embassy in Lisbon which could further develop bilateral relations between our two friendly countries.—DNA



Federal Ombudsman reviews progress on prison reforms

KARACHI: Federal Ombudsman, Ejaz Ahmad Qureshi, Friday, said that prison reforms initiated under directives of the Supreme Court was continued and bio-metric system was installed in 14 prisons of Sindh while a facility of online meeting was made available to inmates. The Federal Ombudsman, while chairing a meeting held here to review progress on prison reforms in Sindh, said that the online meeting facility would enable the relatives who otherwise could not afford to travel to meet the prisoners could get in contact with the inmates through computers and mobile phones at home. Additional Chief Secretary Home, Secretaries of Local Government and Health departments, IG Prisons Sindh, head of Wafaqi Mohtasib Regional Office Karachi Syed Anwar Hyder and senior officers of other relevant departments attended the meeting. Ejaz Qureshi informed the meeting that up till now 15 implementation reports on prison reforms have been submitted to the Supreme Court while the 16th Report will be presented soon. He directed IG Prison Sindh to expedite work on installation of a bio-metric system in all prisons in Sindh and construction work on Thatta.—APP

IG Punjab met With the martyrs families

LAHORE: According to the sources of Daily Notable, Inspector General Police Punjab Dr. Usman Anwar met the families of 03 martyrs of Lahore Police at the Central Police Office. The families members of Constable Muhammad Qaiser Shaheed, Naveed Hanif Shaheed and Muhammad Irfan Shaheed were among those who met. IG Punjab expressed compassion to the children of the martyrs, inquired about the problems from the families, IG Punjab Dr. Usman Anwar also gave keys of new houses to the families of 02 police martyrs in housing soci-

eties equipped with modern living facilities. The family members of Constable Muhammad Qaiser shaheed and Naveed Hanif Shaheed were given the keys of new houses. With the effective follow-up of the Punjab Police, the Punjab government released funds for the purchase of houses for the families of the two martyrs a few days ago. IG Punjab Dr. Usman Anwar assured the families of the martyrs of full cooperation in all matters including education, health. IG Punjab while meeting the families of the martyrs said that the families of the Pun-

jab police martyrs are very respectful and doors of my office are always open for them. Dr. Usman Anwar said that MOUs are being signed with renowned educational institutions for free education of martyrs' children. The department will not leave the families of its brave martyrs alone at any point of life. In the ceremony, gifts and souvenirs were also given to the children of the martyrs by the Punjab Police. SSP Admin Lahore Atif Nazir, AIG welfare Naveed Ajmal and other officers were present in the ceremony.—APP

Smart lockdown continues to contain smog

SIALKOT: The first day of a smart lockdown to contain smog was observed across the district on Friday. Action was also taken against industrial units, brick kilns, vehicle owners and farmers who caused air pollution and smog. Since April 1, Rs. 11.9 million fines and 61 cases have been registered. These details were given by Deputy Commissioner Captain (Rtd) Shah Mir Iqbal about the implementation of smart lockdown orders to control smog and the steps taken by the district administration. The DC said that on the first day of the lockdown on the orders of the Punjab government, educational institutions remained completely closed in all the four tehsils, while shops, shopping centers, hotels, restaurants were allowed to open after 3:00 o'clock. He appreciated how the business community in Sialkot had fully cooperated with the district administration. However, Assistant Commissioner Sialkot Gulam Sarwar and his team sealed 17 shops during checking in different areas for violating the lockdown. The deputy commissioner said that the teams under the leadership of AC Anwar Ali in tehsil Daska, Ahsan Mumtaz in tehsil Sambrial and AC Qamar Mehmood in tehsil Pasrur remained in the field.—APP

Minister stresses awareness about family planning in rural areas

ABID RAZA

LAHORE: Punjab Minister for Population Welfare Dr. Jamal Nasir emphasized the necessity of raising awareness about family planning among the rural population and ensuring easy access to necessary facilities. He addressed the closing session of the 24th annual conference organized by the Population Association of Pakistan as the chief guest on Friday. Dr. Nasir stressed the importance of gaining support from religious scholars to dispel misconceptions about population planning, highlighting a consensus among them regarding the need for appropriate intervals between children to enhance the health of both mother and child. Expressing concern about

Pakistan's rapidly growing population, the minister cited the alarming implications on poverty, unemployment, and social issues resulting from the imbalance of population and resources. He pointed out the challenges posed by climate change and population growth, noting the adverse effects on agriculture, forests, biodiversity, and food cultivation in the country. Dr. Nasir warned that failure to control population growth would lead to severe impacts on food production, water scarcity, and overall environmental sustainability. Highlighting the need for collective efforts from all societal stakeholders, the minister emphasized the importance of implementing effective population management policies

and programs. He lamented the historical neglect of population welfare and environmental sectors, asserting that these areas cannot be overlooked when planning future development projects. Dr. Nasir stressed the significance of financial resources, effective planning, and a clear roadmap to achieve population management objectives. He assured that the Population Welfare department would allocate necessary resources to empower people to actively engage in family planning. The event was also attended by Director General of the Population Welfare department, Punjab, Ms. Saman Rai and addressed by President of the association Dr. Nasira Shah, Rector of FCC University Dr. Jonathan, Minhaj-ul-Haq, Dr. Zahir Gul, and others.

Govt to support implementation of UNDP's programs

QUETTA: A delegation headed by Dr. Samuel Rizk, a Pakistani based representative of the United Nations Development Program (UNDP) called on Balochistan Caretaker Chief Minister Mir Ali Mardan Khan Domki here Friday. During the meeting, they discussed the ongoing and proposed projects supported by

UNDP in Balochistan. Speaking to the delegation, the chief minister said that the ongoing programs in Balochistan were important for the improvement of governance, especially constant projects in the fields of planning and plan, policy, law, education and health were the guarantors of sustainable development He said that this

year, the UNDP had allocated one-third of the resources for Balochistan in the national program of Pakistan which was a positive move. The CM said that he was committed to achieving the global goals of sustainable development and would ensure the attainment of SDGs by improving governance.—APP

RCC President visited the national police academy

DNA

RAWALPINDI: Rawalpindi Chamber of Commerce President Saqib Rafiq has said that Pakistan Customs has an important role in domestic exports, while addressing the officers under training of Pakistan Customs at the National Police Academy Islamabad, he said that I hope that you officers When you go on posting tomorrow, you will provide all possible facilities to exporters and importers, dry port,



border or any place when you are posted, you have to give priority to the interest of Pa-

kistan, you are the protector of the economic borders. Stay in touch with stakeholders,

consult as much as possible and make the documentation process simple and easy.

Let's foster a culture of reading in our society

BUSHRA PARVEEN



In a modern world of today, connection of human beings with written words is need of the hour. If we are to cultivate our society towards a culture of reading and writing, we have to revolutionise our society with the modern tendencies of readings. We definitely need a culture of books and library, a culture that fits in the modern age reading methodologies that suits to IT prone kids, adolescents and youth. Fondness of reading for members of all age groups can bring about

a wholesome change in a mediocre society because difference between a developed and backward society is that of knowledgeable and semi-knowledgeable members of a society. The importance of books as a supportive role, knowledge and information through cyber tools cannot be ignored for present and coming times. Therefore, all that is printed as reading material should also be available on the net for ready reference. The written expression, is unique and even advanced technological developments cannot rule out its importance. In modern world, both books and newspapers are equally important to people of a society and development of information technology has not yet provided any alternate of books and other printed material. We need a comprehensive strategy for connecting all tiers of society with the love of written expression. Unless and until majority of a

society develops fondness for reading, no academic and cultural progress can be made in any sphere of life. In the present age of information technology, reading habits help in transcending individuals to equip themselves with latest knowledge to cope with ever new challenges in different fields of life. We need to evoke fondness of reading books as a strategy in academic institutions and society alike. In a developed world reading habits are much more stronger as compare to developing nations and enrichment in readings makes the difference between developed and underdeveloped nations. We need to see why our education system has not yet been able to foster reading habits and what role our educational institutions need to play to instill a genuine love for reading books on culture, literature, history etc. In this century of diverse knowledge, we need reading materials that give the readers diversity of choice and ignite curiosity

and passion among them for more readings. Teachers, as a role model, can play an important role in shaping and showcasing the relevance between reading habits and success in present day life. We also need to take steps for an active policy to engage our society in the process of developing proneness to reading and this policy should also focus on establishing public libraries, free distribution of reading material, establishing book clubs, book reading competitions, cultural and literary events and discussion forums. Reading habit should be a common activity and not an isolated activity as this age of digital developments has made us prone to commonalities rather than individualities. This way, we can make books and other reading material more accessible to people of a society as per their taste and cultural values. The aim and purpose of a modern day writer is to create love for reading and this can only be done through reshaping the literary, cultural, social

and scientific perceptions in a simple and attractive manner. Reading is an esteemed activity beyond any material gain and this is what we need to infuse in the minds of our rising generation. It's a success beyond material success and it's an elevation beyond worldly loftiness. This is what parents and teachers need to tell their children and engage them in reading habits as a lifelong habit. By integrating such reading strategies and approaches in educational and family systems, communities, cultural and social forums, we can create an environment to make reading habits a part of personal pride, to which a society can cherish as individual and collective pride. As we know, pursuit of knowledge through art, literature, culture, history and science enriches and elevates a society in modern world, where knowledge is power in its true sense and sensibility.

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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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Monal.....0334-5421812



Turkish Airlines.....8494949



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



Enquiry

Edhi Ambulance.....115
PIA Flight Info.....114
PIA Cargo.....9280979
Railway Inquiry.....117
Railway Exchange9270831-5
WASA Rawalpindi..5555489
CAA.....9281092



Hospitals

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



Departments

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

Water Tank

Islamabad.....0321-5744480

Bugti welcomes Imam Kaaba at his residence

He urged for respect each other's opinions and promote mutual harmony and win each other's hearts and not impose your opinion

FAISAL SHEIKH

ISLAMABAD: Imam Kaaba Dr Saleh bin Abdullah bin Hameed Friday visited Interior Minister Sarfraz Bugti on his special invitation at his residence. Interior Minister organized breakfast in honour of Imam Kaaba. Interior Minister's warmly welcome to Imam Kaaba and said, "The Imam Kaaba's visit to his home is a blessing for him and his entire family." He said, "The people of Pakistan love the land of Hijaz immensely and the servants have immense devotion to the Haram Sharif." The minister said, "Pak-Saudi relations encompass shared faith, history and people-to-people ties and Pakistan highly values brotherly relations with Saudi Arabia." Muslims fully believe in Tawheed, minor differences should not be allowed to lead to hypocrisy, said Imam Kaaba. "There is a need to promote unity among the Ummah," he said. "The main reason for the problems facing the Muslim Ummah is sectarianism and unnecessary differences," Imam Kaaba said. He urged for respect each other's opinions and promote mutual harmony and win each other's hearts and not impose your opinion.



High cost of production depressing investment, growth

DNA

ISLAMABAD: The Ferozpur Road Industrial Association (FRIA) Lahore Senior Vice Chairman Shehbaz Aslam has said that the high cost of production in the country has proved to be dangerous for economic growth, discouraging investment both in capacity and capability, calling for lessening the burden of heavy taxes on the business community. Shehbaz Aslam, who is also the EC member of PIAF, said that the industry has been overburdened due to continuous increase in electricity tariffs which is aggravated by the extraordinary upsurge in petroleum prices, triggering severe anxiety not only amongst the masses but also the business and industrial community. The FRIA Senior Vice Chairman urged the government to shut down all costly oil-fired power plants in order to ensure consumers had access to cheaper en-

ergy. He lamented that the previous administrations did not prioritize the rehabilitation and maintenance of older power plants, resulting in multiple system constraints and significant losses. He observed that the government's inability, ill planning and financial woes had multiplied the miseries of businesses. At the same time, the industry was already paying heavy electricity bills, including surcharges and other taxes, he added. He said the move would worsen the economic crisis, multiplying cost of production and intensifying miseries for the trade and industry. The PIAF leader said that it has become almost impossible to run the industries at such a high cost. He said that high cost was going to create a lot of problems for the already ailing economy as the production has been curtailed by many industrial units to a great extent due to high cost. Shehbaz Aslam said that it is fact that the given economic crisis being

faced by the country, the government has to take harsh steps to generate the required revenue for overcoming expenditures and fulfilling international commitments. However, instead of taking these steps back-to-back, the government should devise some kind of an effective strategy to ensure some sigh of relief to the masses and the industry who will not be able to bear the brunt caused by consecutive price hikes. He stressed that the emerging situation has to be efficiently addressed and handled very carefully otherwise, the rising petroleum prices and electricity tariffs would continue to increase the cost of doing business, which would terribly affect the industrial performance, raise unemployment and open the floodgates of inflation, particularly for the middle and lower segments of the society, besides making the poor poorer due to unbearable inflation.

HEC team discusses measures for teachers capacity building

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Islamabad, November 24, 2023: The Higher Education Development in Pakistan (HEDP) project team of the Higher Education Commission (HEC) met with Secretary Higher Education Department, Government of Balochistan, Mr. Zafar Buledi to discuss the way forward in building the professional capacity of teachers and student assessment for implementing the revised Undergraduate Education Policy (UEP) 2020.

The officials explored opportunities for collaboration in uplifting the standard of higher education in affiliated colleges in Balochistan, ensuring their on-ground support to the HEDP team in reaching out to the far-flung areas of the province to equip teachers with new methodologies and technologies. All affiliated colleges, constituting the tertiary education system of Pakistan, are under the administrative control of provinces, and the project is rolling out its activities in close collaboration

with all provincial departments nationwide. Consultant HEC Dr. Syed Afaq Husain introduced the salient features of the revised UEP by emphasizing that the successful implementation of the policy depends on the preparedness of teachers, who constitute the foundation of an education system. It is imperative that the faculty of higher education institutes can use new teaching methodologies and technologies to manage this paradigm shift from earlier 2-year degrees to new associate degree and bachelor's degree programmes. Principals were also briefed on the new Learning Skills Assessment Test (LSAT) developed with the support of HEDP, which will be conducted throughout the country for a large sample of undergraduate students. This test will help compare the learning skills of students and gauge the learning achievements through revised UEP. The meeting was followed by an orientation session at the Government Post Graduate College Quetta Cantt, jointly organized by the Director of Colleges and Higher Education, Dr. Kaleem Ullah

Zahid, and the Office of the Deputy Director of Admin Colleges, HED Balochistan. Thirty principals of colleges from Quetta and its suburbs attended the orientation session, including sixteen of whom were female. The revised UEP 2020 was approved by the HEC and is being implemented from Fall 2023; however, the success of a policy depends on the preparedness of teachers who constitute the foundation of an education system. For the successful implementation of the UEP, the faculty of higher education institutes must understand it well and be prepared to implement it in letter and spirit. The affiliated colleges are undergoing a transition from an annual system to a semester system under the education policy 2020. The introduction of associate degree programmes and bachelor's degree programmes requires significant procedural and regulation changes in student admission, enrolment, registration, advisement system, internship, capstone project, assessment methods.

Edible oil imports reduces 33.08% in four months

ISLAMABAD: Imports of edible oil including soybean and palm into the country during the first four months

of the current financial year decreased by 33.08 per cent and 31.45 per cent respectively as compared to the imports of the corresponding period of last year. During the period from July-October, 2023 about 86,335 metric tons of soya bean oil valued at \$74.766 million were imported as compared to the imports of 77,905 metric tons costing \$111.732 million of the same period last year, according to the data of Pakistan Bureau of Statistics. During the period under re-

view, over 1.016 million tons of palm oil valued at 964.292 million were imported as compared to the imports of 948,457 metric tons costing \$1.406 billion in the same period of last year, it added. On month on month basis, the import of soya bean oil into the country reduced by 49.49 per cent in October 2023 as about 16,510 metric tons of the above-mentioned commodity were imported as against the imports of 20,959 metric tons worth \$33.987 million. - DNA

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Briefs

Sharmila for providing level playing field to all political parties

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan People's Party leader Sharmila Farooqi Friday said that the PPP truly believes in serving of common people and emphasized the need of providing a level playing field to all political parties including PTI ahead of the polls 2024.

"PPP is the only party which has the ability to fight elections in all kinds of environment", she said while talking to PTV news channel. Sharmila added that PPP had no enmity with any political party, adding, election will be acceptable if all political parties should be treated equally. "For free, fair, and credible elections, all political parties and leaders of all should have the right to contest with the ultimate decision resting with the people," she reiterated. While commenting PTI participation in upcoming election, she said, "PTI has demanded permission to hold rallies, election campaigns place banners, and conduct free election campaigns where they should provided equal opportunities."—APP

8th martyrdom anniversary of Mariam Mukhtiar

ISLAMABAD: The 8th martyrdom anniversary of Pakistan's first female fighter pilot, Mariam Mukhtiar was observed on Friday. Mariam Mukhtiar was born on 18th May 1992 in Karachi. She joined the Pakistan Air Force in 2011 and completed her graduation in 2014. On 24th November 2015, she was on a routine training flight with her instructor Saqib Abbasi when her jet developed a fault and crashed at Kundian area in Bhakra near Mianwali. The Government of Pakistan posthumously honored Mariam Mukhtiar with Tamgha-e-Basalat on 23rd March 2016. —APP

Workshop in domains of Astronomy

ISLAMABAD: Space and Astrophysics Research Lab (SARL) of National Center of GIS and Space Applications, Institute of Space Technology (IST) has planned to organize a one-day workshop in the domain of Astronomy and Astrophysics on Tuesday. The workshop titled "General Relativity, Cosmology, Astrophysics and Particle Physics" will be held at IST. The experts including Dr. Asghar Qadir from Pakistan Academy of Sciences (General Relativity), Dr. Azad Akhter Siddiqui from National University of Science and Technology (General Relativity), Dr. Mansoor Ur Rehman from Quaid-i-Azam University (Cosmology), Dr. Muhammad Jamil Aslam from Quaid-i-Azam University (Particle Physics), Dr. Muhammad Rehman from COMSATS (Particle Physics) and Dr. Noraiz Tahir from Italy (Astrophysics) will be resource persons of the workshop.—APP

58 students of Air University visit Senate

ISLAMABAD: A delegation of 58 students from Air University Islamabad, accompanied by faculty members on Friday visited the Parliament House. The high-ranked officials of the Upper House welcomed the delegation, said a news release issued by the Senate Secretariat. The delegation visited the Senate Museum, where the students were shown a documentary highlighting the history of the Upper House. The Senate officials briefed the delegation on the functioning, legislative process, and the importance of factions in the Upper House. The delegation expressed interest in the sculptures and historical images of the country's prominent politicians in the Senate Museum. Later, the delegation observed the proceedings of the Senate.—APP

WPRC providing early response to victims of violence: Mushal

By advocating for self-reliance through trade and industry, the PBF is paving the way for a future where Pakistan stands as a resilient and financially independent nation

ADIL SHAHEEN

ISLAMABAD: Special Assistant to Prime Minister on Human Rights and Women Empowerment, Mushal Hussein Mullik, on Friday said the Women Protection and Rehabilitation Centers (WPRC) were providing early and prompt response to the victims of violence at all levels. Mushal Mullik said WPRC working at the Federal, Provincial and District levels, had been providing early response to the victims of violence by extending medical, legal, psychological support and rehabilitation services.

She was addressing the launch of 16-day Awareness Campaign "Activism Against Gender-Based Violence" including a Transit Advertising Campaign, organized by the Ministry of Human Rights.



The advertising campaign will kick start by November 25 in collaboration with the Ministry of Human Rights.

of Railways and with the support of UN Women Pakistan. Highlighting the importance of the promotion and protection of women rights, the Special Assistant to Prime

Minister said that the Ministry of Human Rights was reviewing laws and policies with regard to women protection. She informed that Zainab Alert Response and Recovery Act, 2020; Enforcement of Women Property Rights Act 2020; The Anti Rape (Investigation and Trial) Act 2021; and the Protection against Harassment of Women at Workplace (Amendment) Act, 2022 were the significant legislations, aimed at protecting women. Mushal said the Federal Government had enacted the Legal Aid and Justice Authority Act, 2020 to provide legal, financial and other forms of assistance to vulnerable groups, including women, in criminal cases. Human Rights Relief and Revolving Funds have been established in order to provide financial assistance to the victims of human rights violations, she

added. She informed the forum that the Ministry of Human Rights had also initiated a National Policy on Ending Violence against Women. The Special Assistant to Prime Minister stressed the importance of the collection of quantitative and qualitative data on the status of women, building partnerships with key line departments and civil society organizations to facilitate women's access to legal and justice systems. Mushal said that being a strong advocate of gender equality, she had initiated a 100-day Action Plan to support human rights and women empowerment in the country. The Special Assistant to Prime Minister further added that she was focused on highlighting human right violations in Indian Occupied Kashmir and Palestine on national and international forums.

Biochar influence on soil

AQSA KHAN

Biochar can be defined as the carbonaceous product that is obtained when biomass is subjected to heat treatment in an oxygen-limited environment (pyrolysis) and the charred product when applied to soil as an amendment.

The end products of pyrolysis are syngas, bio-oil, and char. The char can be used as an energy source, and acts as a soil amendment which is called biochar. It can be produced from a wide variety of organic materials including paper mill sludge, forestry and crop residues, and poultry waste.

Biochar applications is gaining growing interest as a sustainable technology that helps in improving the weathered and degraded soils. It enhances the

soil's physical characteristics such as water holding capacity, permeability and chemical characteristics that is nutrient retention, nutrient availability and biological characteristics such as microbial population, earthworm, enzyme activities which there improve plant growth and development.

The high porosity of biochar tends to improve a wide range of soil physical properties such as total porosity, soil density, soil moisture content, water holding capacity, and hydraulic conductivity. Improvement in water retention capacity of the soil is mainly attributed to improved soil texture and aggregation posed by higher surface area and porosity of biochar. Biochar applications at higher rates significantly increase the field capacity of the soil.

The effects can be more pronounced in non-irrigated regions with an increase in available water for crop growth as well as reducing the occurrence of water stress in between the events of rainfall. Addition of biochar decreases soil bulk density which affects the infiltration rate in soil. Improved bulk density due to increased soil porosity will have a positive impact on soil aeration which is desirable for root and microbial respiration.

Higher organic carbon content, as well as surface charge in biochar, is another aspect that plays a crucial role in enhancing soil aggregation and its stability. The stable soil aggregates change the structure of soil and thus improve soil moisture retaining capacity, infiltration, run-off reduction, and erosion. Biochar plays a significant

role in improving soil's chemical properties which includes raising pH, organic carbon, and exchangeable cations. Biochar is the rich source of carbon and it is the big technique to sequester the atmospheric carbon in soil. It reduces the nutrient losses in any form it may be like leaching or volatilization of nitrogen. Organic matter and WHC of soil, pH and CEC of soil can also be enhanced by the use of biochar as an organic fertilizer.

The amendment of biochar in soil are beneficial for the growth and survival of microbes (fungi, bacteria, earthworms, they provides the host and nutrition for growth and complete their life cycle which increases the microbial biomass in the soil. So, all these things highly contributes to improve the health or fertility of soil.

Business Community celebrates successful IMF review

ISLAMABAD: In a testament to the resilience of Pakistan's Business Community, the Pakistan Business Forum (PBF) has applauded the successful completion of the first review under the International Monetary Fund's (IMF) Staff-Level Agreement (SLA). Talking to APP on Friday, PBF Chairman (Capital Area), Atif Ikram Sheikh said, "This achievement, secured amidst a challenging economic climate and stringent IMF conditions, underscores the unwavering commitment of Pakistani businesses to contribute to the nation's economic well-being." While recognizing the significance of the IMF review, the PBF has also emphasized the need for Pakistan to chart a course towards self-reliance, breaking free from the cycle of external financial dependence. Atif Ikram Sheikh, Chairman (Capital Area) of the PBF, has eloquently articulated this vision, advocating for a focus on trade and industry as catalysts for economic growth and internal resource generation. Sheikh's call for a strategic shift away from IMF reliance aligns with his proposal to levy a 40% tax on windfall profits earned by commercial banks during 2021-2022. This measure, coupled with stricter controls over speculative dollar trading, is seen as crucial for stabilizing Pakistan's financial landscape. Echoing Sheikh's sentiments, PBF Vice Chairperson Balochistan, Zubaida Jalal, has stressed the importance of confidence-building measures to foster a vibrant business ecosystem. She has advocated for rationalized utility prices, lending rates, and a reduction in the State Bank of Pakistan's key policy rate, all of which are deemed essential for spurring economic activity. Moreover, the PBF has called for rationalizing Export Finance Scheme (EFS) and Long Term Financing Facility (LTFF) rates to improve businesses' access to finance. This enhanced financial accessibility is seen as a critical enabler for businesses to boost their competitiveness and contribute more significantly to the national economy.—APP

'Pak population growth is higher than population of many nations'

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Chairman of National Business Group Pakistan, President Pakistan Businessmen and Intellectuals Forum, All Karachi Industrial Alliance, and former provincial minister Mian Zahid Hussain said on Friday that the number of children born in Pakistan yearly is more than the total population of many developed countries. He added that the country's economy and resources cannot bear the burden of an increase in population of six million people per year. Mian Zahid Hussain said that the population growth rate in Pakistan is the highest in the world. In contrast, the growth rate is lower than that of African countries, which shows the deterioration of the situation. Talking to the business community, the veteran business leader said that Pakistan's population

growth rate is 2.55%, India's 0.7%, China's 0.1% and Bangladesh's 1.1%.

Due to the weak economy and growing population, forty percent of children in the country lack adequate nutrition; the maternal and child mortality rate is the highest in the world, he said. He business leader said that apart from Afghanistan, only Pakistan has the honor that polio disease has not been eradicated here. Much of the population lacks clean drinking water, jaundice and tuberculosis are common, and one in four adults has diabetes. Mian Zahid Hussain further said that nearly two and a half million children in Pakistan are deprived of schooling, and a few percent of those who have access to schools are forced to seek substandard education. Pakistan is also at the top in terms of environmental pollution, and its cities are often ranked among the most polluted cities in the world. In these circumstances, the

influential groups of the society have devised their systems for managing health, education, security, housing, water employment etc. Mian Zahid Hussain further said that some economic stability has come from the IMF standby agreement, along with the recent successful review of the IMF, investors' confidence has also increased, due to which the stock exchange rose by 58,000 points. Exports and remittances have also seen an increase in the last month. The value of the rupee has stabilized. Due to SIFC's initiatives, people's confidence in the country's economic future has increased. More political and economic stability is expected in case of an election. Despite all these positive signs, the country's long-standing problems are still in place, for the solution of which the whole nation will have to unite, and there is no chance for chaos and politics of vandalism.



ISLAMABAD: Education Minister Madad Ali Sindhi attended the celebration of UNESCO prize for girls' and women's education 2023 received by Pakistan alliance for girls education today. —DNA

Youth delegation visits OGDCL headquarters

FAISAL SHEIKH

ISLAMABAD: A delegation from Balochistan, comprising 50 accomplished youth representatives from diverse fields, including education, social sector, sports, art and culture, and entrepreneurship, on Thursday visited the Oil and Gas Development Company Limited (OGDCL) Head Office in Islamabad. The visit, organized under the leadership of Senator Prince Ahmed Umer Ahmedzai, Chairman Senate Standing Committee on Communications, aimed to facilitate a constructive dialogue and foster connections between the youth of Balochistan and OGDCL. Senator Prince Ahmed Umer Ahmedzai expressed his admiration for the outstanding work and contributions of OGDCL, stating, "We are impressed by the remarkable work and contributions of OGDCL. The purpose of this visit was to provide the youth delegation from Balochistan with an opportunity to learn more about the energy sector, share ideas, and foster meaningful connections." Chairman of OGDCL Zafar Masud was also present on the occasion. Ahmed Hayat Lak, Managing Director/ CEO of OGDCL, hosted a dinner for the delegation, providing an informal setting for engaging discussions and networking opportunities. The delegation gained insights into OGDCL's operations, learned about the energy sector, and shared their ideas and aspirations. OGDCL, as a leading entity in the energy sector, welcomed the opportunity to engage with the youth representatives, recognizing the importance of nurturing future leaders and fostering a deeper understanding of the industry. OGDCL remains dedicated to contributing to the socio-economic progress of the nation and building bridges with diverse communities.

NOVEMBER 2023

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Far-Right Surge: Netherlands faces unsettling shift

Until this week, no Dutch party associated with the far right had ever won more than 20% of the vote in a national election. In Europe's most fragmented political landscape, it is an achievement for any party to cross that threshold. Yet Geert Wilders' Freedom Party (PVV) did it with ease in Wednesday's snap poll, which was precipitated by the resignation of the outgoing prime minister, Mark Rutte, in the summer. This was a victory that threatens to take the normalisation of nativist populist politics in Europe to a dangerous new level. Campaigning on a nakedly Islamophobic manifesto, which called for bans on mosques and the Qur'an, Mr Wilders won a quarter of the vote. His party has won 37 seats in the 150-seat house of representatives, 12 more than its closest rival and double its tally in the last election. The PVV's other policies include rejecting all asylum claims, drastically reducing overall levels of immigration, rolling back climate legislation and holding a referendum on leaving the European Union. The party is also opposed to sending more arms to Ukraine. A veteran provocateur on the European stage, Mr Wilders is on the right of the radical right; the dial of Dutch politics has just shifted radically in his favour. As he attempts to construct a majority in a parliament, it is very likely that many of the PVV's most extreme policies will be sacrificed as the price of any coalition agreement. An alternative centrist coalition could even exclude the PVV from power altogether. However, it appears that the two main centre-right parties, including Mr Rutte's VVD, are willing to at least contemplate a deal. How, then, did the Netherlands reach the point at which a former political pariah finds himself on the threshold of formal power? Mainstream parties on the right, including the VVD, appear to have played into Mr Wilders' hands by endorsing and attempting to co-opt his anti-migrant agenda. One in four voters ended up choosing the PVV's full-fat version. A high-profile scandal – relating to false allegations of benefit fraud – also played a part in eroding faith in established institutions. More generally, as the recent success of protest parties such as the Dutch Farmer-Citizen movement illustrates, Mr Wilders profited from an acute crisis of trust in traditional politics. In one survey this autumn, 72% of respondents said that they believed the country was on the wrong path. Another poll found a "worrysome" level of dissatisfaction on the right with the functioning of democracy. In an age of anxiety and insecurity, large numbers of voters are reeling from the cost of living crisis, worrying about how the green transition will affect one of the world's agricultural powerhouses, and concerned about a chronic housing crisis. Many had clearly become more open to Mr Wilders' dark mood music as a result, and the hateful xenophobia that he promotes. For Dutch Moroccans, Surinamese and other minority ethnic groups, this is a deeply frightening development. Following the election of Giorgia Meloni as Italy's prime minister last year, and radical right successes in countries such as Sweden and Finland, it also represents an urgent challenge for progressive parties across Europe. In meeting the formidable economic challenges of an increasingly volatile age, mainstream politics must provide better reassurance to vulnerable constituencies that they will not be left behind. Hopefully, Mr Wilders can be kept out of power, or politically neutered once he achieves it. But the trends that have put him within touching distance of high office need to be addressed.



UK general election date

On 17 December 2024, it will be five years since parliament convened after the last UK general election in 2019. If this parliament has not been formally dissolved by then, dissolution would at that point become automatic. A general election would follow after 25 working days. Strictly speaking, the last possible date for the next UK general election is therefore Tuesday 28 January 2025. In practice, the next election is unlikely to take place then. For one thing, UK elections traditionally occur on Thursdays, though this is only a convention observed since 1935. (Five of the six elections immediately before 1935 took place on other days; so, in principle, could the next one.) Nevertheless, the fact remains that the next general election may well be as much as 14 months away. No one who watched the chancellor's autumn statement on the economy this week could doubt that the two major parties are now in full general election mode. Jeremy Hunt's announcements were a classic pre-election "live now, pay later" package aimed at seducing voters and embarrassing the opposition. There is likely to be more in the budget next March. There were big upfront tax cuts for businesses and workers. But these are a deliberate hospital pass to a potential Labour government, since the tax cuts would be financed by post-election spending cuts wholly unmentioned by the chancellor. Yet Labour is now in an election battle formation of its own too. The shadow chancellor, Rachel Reeves, signalled a broader charge this week, based less on Mr Hunt's announcements than 13 years of Conservative economic management. The questions that people will ask at the next election are simple, she concluded. Do they feel better off after 13 years? Do health, education and policing work better? Amid the shoutiness of the Commons, the rival pitches were familiar. Better the devil you know from Mr Hunt. Time for a change with Ms Reeves. Giveaways from the Tories. The long, long night is over from Labour. The election battleground is getting more traditional too: a Conservative party that aims to shrink the state and cut taxes against a Labour party that will hopefully prioritise the protection and strengthening of the public services. The choice is extremely clear. But do we need another 14 months of this argument conducted in these terms? Absolutely not. Politics is already in low enough repute without a year or more of the parties endlessly trading attack lines in this way. This would do nothing to repair a lack of trust that will haunt and hobble every future government until the problem is properly addressed. Britain should have an early general election, not a late one. We do not need an election in 2023. But we should not be forced to wait until 2025 either. The 2024 election should be in spring, not autumn. This is not just because Britain needs a new government, although it does, but because voters should not be condemned to the year-long election campaign that the events of this week have so obviously signalled. The country seems to know its own mind. It will soon be time to bring it on, for all our sakes.

Trial and retribution of PTI chairman

Qamar Bashir



The PTI chairman faced relentless trials and retribution, enduring a staggering number of approximately 200 cases and imprisonment since August 2023. Isolated from the world, denied adequate treatment befitting a former prime minister, and continuously shifted between prisons, his plight seemed unending. The party he painstakingly built crumbled like straw in a tempest, with close associates forcibly distanced from him. His philanthropic endeavors, including the Shaukat Khan Cancer Hospitals, which he passionately initiated and nurtured to deliver invaluable services, were turned against him. Allegations of corruption and misappropriation of donations struck at the core of his efforts, tarnishing his reputation. Even projects like the Al-Qadir Trust, established solely for noble purposes, teaching Islamic values and nurturing future leaders regardless of background, were used to intensify the scrutiny against him. Accusations, like the Cypher received from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, were manipulated to threaten him, despite lacking lawful substance or contradicting national interests, serving as tools to suffocate his standing. The chain of trials and retribution for the PTI chairman began long ago with the heart-wrenching separation from his beloved wife, the daughter of one of the wealthiest individuals globally. Their parting wasn't due to a loss of affection but stemmed from the relentless pursuit by fanatics targeting Jemima. Before their marriage, Jemima, who converted to Islam and took the name Haiqa, faced persecution due to her Jewish background. Despite her unwavering support for her husband, the looming threat to her life led her to urge Imran Khan to migrate to England, offering a life of luxury unbound by financial worries, given her substantial wealth amounting to 22 million pounds. At one point, she was recognized as the 20th richest young woman globally in 2002. Resolute and steadfast in his convictions, he declined the offer to migrate, driven by his profound love for the country and an unwavering aspiration to lift his fellow citizens from dire poverty. His refusal stemmed from a

deep-seated desire to grant the unfortunate people of this country a life of dignity, honor, and prosperity. His vision was to mold Pakistan into a modern-day embodiment of the Riasat Madina, inspired by the principles established centuries ago by our revered Prophet (Peace Be Upon Him). This envisioned state would be founded on principles of unity, justice, and the rule of law, fostering a culture of meritocracy, fortified by robust moral and ethical values. It would embrace all humanity in progress and prosperity while nurturing a relentless pursuit of knowledge. Similar to his first wife, it now was the turn of his third wife to face a similar fate. Initially lauded as the epitome of piety by her former husband extolling Imran Khan as a gentleman, the same narrative took a drastic turn. In orchestrated interviews, her ex-husband resorted to hurling accusations against her and Imran Khan across all media channels, shattering norms of decency and ethical values. She stands accused of various allegations, including embezzlement from Toosha Khana, accepting bribes on behalf of Imran Khan, and implication in the Al-Qadir Trust case as a trustee. Facing relentless interrogation by entities like the NAB, Special Courts, or regular courts, it appears to be an unending punishment simply for being the wife of the PTI Chairman. Even in the world of politics, it's not right to drag a politician's family into accusations. It's like barging into someone's private life, which isn't fair or respectful. Instead of talking about important matters like policies and how to run the country, bringing in personal matters just distracts everyone. It's not fair to blame a politician's family for their actions either. Doing that doesn't help real political talks; it just makes things messy. Politics should be about ideas and actions, not gossip or personal matters, to keep things fair and respectful. That's how we should keep political discussions honest and worthwhile but these noble principles are long forgotten by us as a nation. The PTI Chairman had a choice, like many other politicians, to flee to a foreign country when faced with trials and retribution. However, he chose differently. He stayed firm, expressing that this country is his home, where all his assets, past, present, and future are tied. He vowed not to flee, no matter how tough things got. Consequently, he has been in jail since August 5, 2023, after being arrested at his Lahore residence, sentenced to three years' imprisonment. Despite the Islamabad High Court's order for him to serve his term in Rawalpindi, he was taken first to the notorious Attock Jail and later transferred to Adiala Jail in Rawalpindi, where he has remained since then. Remarkably, eyewitnesses describe him as an embodiment of composure, exhibiting an unparalleled sense of calmness even in the most challenging jail conditions. Notably, he refrained from voicing any grievances about the harsh treatment he endured behind bars. He remained silent when denied the basic right to speak with his sons in

London, and even in the face of the strict prohibition on visits from close relatives, friends, and family members, he chose not to protest. His resilience and quiet strength under such circumstances are nothing short of extraordinary. The burning question plaguing millions, including myself, is the why behind his renunciation of a life of luxury. Why would he relinquish a wife considered one of the wealthiest globally? Why sever ties with his beloved sons, denying himself the joy of witnessing their growth as a caring father? Why dedicate himself to philanthropy, benefitting countless destitute souls? What motivated the establishment of Numl University in an impoverished region? Why delve into founding the Al-Qadir Trust, focusing on the life of the Prophet (Peace Be Upon Him)? Above all, why forsake comfort, family, and freedom to step into the perilous, murky, and vicious realm of Pakistani politics, sacrificing everything he held dear? The depth of these choices and the driving force behind his sacrifices is a profound enigma. In the religious perspective, his steadfastness stems from the belief that he's enduring a trial and retribution sanctioned by the Almighty. His conviction lies in the faith that once this trial concludes, he'll emerge vindicated and triumphant. Anchored in Islamic examples, he may be drawing strength from revered personalities who, facing trials, never wavered in their belief in Allah despite enduring pain, indignity, insults, and banishment. He might have been inspired by their unwavering faith which ultimately led to their victory. Ethically, this viewpoint nurtures resilience, patience, and purpose in facing challenges, fostering fortitude, integrity, kindness, and compassion even amidst adversity. This dual perspective, religious and ethical, might have shaped his enduring commitment and resilience throughout his trials. His past speeches on a number of occasions referred to inspiration drawn from historical and modern exemplars who faced adversity with unwavering courage. He frequently cites the example of Prophet Ayub (Peace Be Upon Him), enduring severe illness, loss of wealth, and family yet remaining resolute in faith, showcasing patience and trust in God's mercy, eventually leading to restoration and healing. Likewise, he had been referring to the example of Prophet Muhammad (Peace Be Upon Him) Who (PBUH) faced immense opposition, ridicule, and persecution during his mission. Enduring boycotts, loss of loved ones, and threats on his life, his unwavering faith and perseverance stand even today as a testament to patience and resilience amid trials. He had been referring to modern day figures like Mother Teresa exemplifying unwavering dedication despite inner struggles, showcasing commitment to faith amid trials. Similarly, Nelson Mandela's steadfast commitment to justice during imprisonment and the struggle against apartheid demonstrated resilience in the face of adversity, viewing challenges as opportunities to showcase faith, ded-

ication, and resilience. These diverse examples may have served as a guiding light in his messages, inspiring steadfastness and resilience in confronting trials. Certainly! The PTI Chairman's composed demeanor in challenging times might also stem from worldly reasons beyond religious beliefs. His resilience and calmness could be attributed to a blend of emotional intelligence and learned strategies for handling adversity. Such individuals often possess a deep understanding of their emotions, allowing them to effectively manage their feelings and prioritize problem-solving over emotional reactions. Drawing from past experiences, they cultivate resilience, learning from hardships and building confidence in their ability to navigate tough situations, which acts as a stabilizing force against panic and anxiety. Moreover, having a robust support network and practicing intentional techniques like mindfulness or stress management exercises are pivotal. These deliberate practices train the mind to maintain composure, while a solid support system provides reassurance. Additionally, their focus on finding solutions rather than dwelling on problems significantly contributes to their ability to remain calm even amidst substantial adversity. This blend of emotional intelligence, learned resilience, deliberate practices, and a solution-focused mindset contributes to their remarkable composure in challenging situations. The PTI Chairman has been a successful person throughout his life. Winning the only world cricket cup for Pakistan, received the Hilal-e-Imtiaz and President's Pride of Performance award in 1982. He was named one of Time magazine's 100 Most Influential People in the World 2019 and 16th most influential Muslim in their 2020 version. In the 2022 version he is in the top ten, at number 10. His tenure as Pakistan's Prime Minister for three and a half years capped a career defined by excellence both in sports and humanitarian endeavors. The life of the PTI Chairman is a tapestry woven with threads of resilience, sacrifice, and unwavering dedication. His journey, marked by triumphs in sports, recognition in humanitarian endeavors, and navigating the tumultuous corridors of politics, mirrors a spirit that remains unbroken in the face of adversity. His steadfast commitment to principles, whether grounded in religious beliefs or ethical values, echoes the courage of historical figures who endured trials with unwavering resolve. Amidst challenges, he draws strength from both faith and worldly wisdom, embodying a rare fusion of emotional intelligence and learned resilience. The choice ahead is stark: to dismantle a man of immense caliber, character, and strength in adversity or to preserve and harness his remarkable capability and resolve for the greater good.

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

A thin line between migration and exile

Muhammad Abdullah



In the dance of life, nature used to guard its treasures distributing resources like a skilled conductor leading a symphony. Every species with its abilities moved to the beat of existence claiming their fair share of the plentiful blessings. Everything changed when Homo sapiens arrived on the scene unexpectedly and swiftly leaving the most experienced observers astonished

Millions of years ago, living species travelled from one place to another for the search of food and other necessities of life. This took a lot of struggle, patience and power to survive. Scientists call it migration, which looks an essential part of their survival. The question about the dispersal of human beings is still on the table. Currently, "out of Africa theory, and "multiregional theory" are combating with each other. May be in future a new theory would turn everything upside down, but every study will confirm this statement that, "almost all species keep migrating from one place to another". Fossils of early Eurasian Homo sapiens, dating to between 194,000 and 177,000 years old have been discovered in Greece and Israel, respectively. These fossils appear to be the result of early Homo sapiens' unsuccessful attempts at migration, after which local Neanderthal populations most likely took their place. What was the underlying motive of all that migration? A surface study will answer it simply like, they were going for the search of food. But what if we consider it a type of exile! In the dance of life, nature used to guard its treasures distributing resources like a skilled conductor leading a symphony. Every species with its abilities moved to the beat of existence claiming their fair share of the plentiful blessings. Everything changed when Homo sapiens arrived on the scene unexpectedly and swiftly leaving the most experienced observers astonished. In their relentless pursuit of progress, humans harnessed the forces of nature, steering rivers, cultivating lands, and subjugating ecosystems to their will. The harmonious interaction, between species became a display of human creativity and flexibility. However, it also served as a reminder of the repercussions that come with ambition. Shifting our viewpoint slightly reveals a different interpretation of situations. The significance of circumstances alters when considering that these unfortunate living beings were compelled to leave their original habitats due to limited resources. When someone monopolizes all available resources, leaving nothing for others, migration becomes the only option for those who are left with no

choice. Such migration can be seen as a form of involuntary "exile." Exile, as defined by Merriam-Webster, is "the state or a period of forced absence from one's country or home." Cambridge Dictionary expands on this, describing it as "the condition of someone being sent or kept away from their own country, village, etc., especially for political reasons." Additionally, exile can be viewed as a state of separation from one's familiar surroundings due to compelling circumstances. Another perspective, as stated by Oxford Languages, characterizes exile as "the state of being barred from one's native country, typically for political or punitive reasons." This multifaceted concept encompasses forced absence and separation, often involving political or punitive motivations. However, these instances of displacement go beyond conventional exiles, as the root cause lies in the scarcity of resources. Termed as "Economic Exile," this phenomenon unfolds when individuals are compelled to relocate from their native lands due to deficiencies in essential resources such as food and security. The fundamental right of every living being to access basic necessities is overshadowed by the prevailing imbalance, where a select group of individuals wield power over all resources, resulting in a severe economic crisis. This power dynamic not only tilts the balance in favour of nature but also forces entire communities to abandon their homelands in pursuit of survival. In 2019, the International Labour Organization (ILO) reported that there were 169 million international migrant workers worldwide, constituting 4.9 percent of the global labour force in destination countries (ILO, 2021). Notably, the emigration trends from specific countries underscore the impact of economic challenges. The number of Pakistanis leaving their homeland in 2022 tripled compared to 2021, reaching 2.25 lakh, while 2.8 lakh departed in 2020 (source: data on Pakistani emigration). Furthermore, in 2020, approximately 41 million people emigrated from Africa, marking a significant increase from around 22 million in 2000. The migration surge in 2020, particularly from Eastern and Northern Africa, reflects the

economic challenges faced by these regions (source: statista.com). In past, the conditions were not much absurd as are today. The narrative remains consistent with the past—the central storyline revolves around what is commonly known as migration, a phenomenon characterized as economic exile. This perpetual movement is not merely a geographical shift but a catalyst for a cultural amalgamation, transforming the post-colonial era into an unprecedented and unfamiliar period. Formerly colonized nations now express a strong desire to visit the countries that once colonized them. This shift is marked by an active embrace and adoption of the colonizers' culture, with a sense of pride accompanying this cultural assimilation. Historically, when a species migrated to a new location, it involved a reciprocal exchange. However, in contemporary times, the process has shifted towards a dynamic of imposition, where the act of migration is both enforced upon and accepted by the entities involved. Our ancestors engaged in migration, a nomadic lifestyle, but as their self-awareness developed, they transitioned to settling in specific locations and pioneered agriculture. This shift marked a significant turning point in human history, reflecting a conscious decision to establish permanent settlements and cultivate the land. It seems that nature is once again asserting its influence and maintaining control over humans. The perpetual competition among humans for resources echoes the historical struggle of Homo sapiens striving to secure their position at the peak of the food chain. "Now it is not for the food chain but to keep less powerful, and dominated in chain". The illusion of human triumph over nature becomes apparent – we haven't conquered nature; rather, nature has woven an illusion of victory around us. Hegel said, "we learn from history that we learn nothing from history". The pattern of migration, a practice dating back to our early hominid ancestors, persists among sapiens, who continue this trend with a sense of being superiors. But now again people are force to move from their own homeland. Now should it consider migration or exile?

Briefs

Hamas releases 12 Thai...

FROM PAGE 01
The Red Cross in Israel and the Occupied Territories confirmed the death of one of its aid workers who had worked for more than 20 years for them. "We are devastated by the killing of our valued colleague Abdellatif Ali Moussa, along with several of his family, in northern Gaza," they said in a post on X, formerly known as Twitter. Israel launched the war on Gaza after Hamas launched Operation al-Aqsa Storm inside the occupied territories on Oct. 7. At least 14,854 Palestinians, including more than 6,150 children and 4,000 women, have been killed and over 36,000 others injured in the Israeli strikes. Some 207 health workers and 65 Palestinians are among those killed, while 7,000 Palestinians are still missing. According to the report, 60 percent of homes in Gaza have either been destroyed or damaged due to the aggression.

Pakistan ready to airlift...

FROM PAGE 01
Gaza's 2.3 million people have fled their homes to escape the violence, but conditions are becoming more desperate. "We are already in contact with Jordan and Egypt. We have offered them that Pakistan will be happy to treat these injured Palestinians in Pakistan," foreign minister Bilal told the upper house. However, he pointed out that they were encountering some problems and working to resolve them as soon as possible.

Imam-e-Kaaba calls on COAS...

FROM PAGE 01
The ongoing atrocities in the Gaza conflict and the oppression faced by Muslims in IOJK. They solidified their support for the people of Palestine and Kashmir. General Syed Asim Munir underscored the robust strategic relations between Pakistan and the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, rooted in exemplary historic religious and cultural ties. He acknowledged the unique reverence that the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia holds in the hearts of Pakistanis, emphasising the unanimity of views between the two brotherly countries. Imam-e-Kaaba offered prayers for the peace, stability, and unity of the Ummah.

Joint efforts a must to...

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The emergency session of the Organization of the Islamic Cooperation (OIC). PM Kakar, during the meeting, strongly condemned the atrocities committed against Palestinians and the massacre of the children in Gaza. He emphasized the opening of a corridor for uninterrupted supply of humanitarian assistance to the people in Gaza. On Islamophobia, the prime minister stressed the need to educate the young generation through documentaries on Islamic teachings, history, and culture. He said the translation of these documentaries into different languages and their broadcast across the world, could help project the true essence of Islam.

Pakistan debt at...

FROM PAGE 01
devolved departments for rationalising expenditures. "Pakistan's public debt breached the limits of Fiscal Responsibility and Debt Limitation Act since 2013-14 and it has reached unsustainable levels. There is no good news on the debt burden as multilateral institutions did not permit the restructuring of external debt. The G-20 had granted Debt Service Suspension Initiative (DSSI) during the Covid-19 pandemic. So far Pakistan has undertaken a debt arrangement with China of \$2.4 billion till 2024-25," she said while addressing an SDPI conference in Islamabad on Thursday.

Zaka rallies players with confidence ahead of Aus tour

The PCB chief played a pivotal role in boosting the morale of the players, setting an optimistic tone for the challenges that lie ahead

OUR CORRESPONDENTS

LAHORE: The Chairman of the Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) Management Committee, Zaka Ashraf, has paid a visit to the training camp in Pindi where the national team is practicing for the upcoming three-match Test series against Australia. Upon his arrival, Ashraf wasted no time and engaged with the team players, holding crucial talks with prominent players and also including Test captain Shan Masood, T20I captain Shaheen Shah Afridi, Team director and head coach Mohammad Hafeez, and Chief Selector Wahab Riaz. Expressing his unwavering confidence in the team's new management, the PCB chief played a pivotal role in boosting the morale of the players, setting an optimistic tone for the challenges that lie ahead. He also underscored



the contribution of players such as Babar Azam and Shaheen in bringing pride to the nation." Babar Azam is making the country proud as the number one player," said Zaka Ashraf. "What Shaheen has done for the country can never be forgotten," he added. "We are proud of

Shaheen Shah Afridi," said Mohammad Hafeez. "Our support is always with you, Shaheen; you are an important part of the team," Ashraf concluded. Pakistan squad for Australia Tests: Shan Masood (captain), Aamir Jamal, Abdullah Shafique, Abrar Ahmed, Babar Azam, Faheem Ashraf, Hasan Ali, Imam-ul-Haq, Khurram Shahzad, Mir Hamza, Mohammad Rizwan (wk), Mohammad Wasim Jnr, No-man Ali, Saim Ayub, Salman Ali Agha, Sarfaraz Ahmed (wk), Saud Shakeel and Shaheen Shah Afridi
Australia tour schedule:
Four-day match: PM's XI vs Pakistan – December 6-9: Manuka Oval, Canberra
1st Test – Australia vs Pakistan – December 14-18: Perth Stadium
2nd Test – Australia vs Pakistan – December 26-30: Melbourne Cricket Ground
3rd Test – Australia vs Pakistan – January 3-7: Sydney Cricket Ground (SCG).

Wapda wins National men's Basketball Championship title

AFZAL JAVED

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan Wapda emerged victorious in a nail-biting showdown against Pakistan Army, clinching the National Men's Basketball Championship 2023 trophy in a riveting final at Govt College University Lahore on Friday. In a fiercely con-

tested match, both teams displayed exceptional skills and tenacity, battling until the final moments. Wapda, however, seized control in the last quarter, securing a thrilling 73-70 victory. Zainul Hassan of Wapda emerged as the hero of the day, contributing a stellar performance with 28 points, while teammates M Usman and M

Zahid Arif added 14 and 13 points, respectively. Despite a valiant effort from Army, Wapda's dominance in the closing stages proved decisive. Tughrab Ammar led the scoring for Army with 24 points, followed by Shoaib Aslam with 19 points and Sheraz Aslam with 12 points. The officiating team of Umer Mehmood, Syed Adnan Ali, and Saadat Jehangir ensured

a fair and competitive match. Director General Sports Board Punjab Dr. Asif Tufail was the chief guest of concluding ceremony who presenting the winning trophy to the captain of the Pakistan Wapda team. DIG Police Ghazi Muhammad Sallahuddin and GCU Lahore Vice Chancellor Dr. Ahmed Adnan were the guests of honor, awarding the runner-up and third-position trophies to Pakistan Army and PAF, respectively.

The event witnessed the presence of notable figures, including Pakistan Basketball Federation (PBBF) President Brig Muhammad Iftikhar Mansoor (R), Senior Vice President Intiaz Rafi Butt, Secretary Khalid Bashir, National Coach Malik Muhammad Riaz, Prof Sirag ul Haq Qureshi, Din Muhammad, Waseem Akhtar, Director Media Muhammad Azam Dar, Shahid Mirza, Tajamal Riaz, and players and students of the university. Earlier in the third position match, Pakistan Air Force secured a convincing 90-61 victory against Lahore, claiming the third position.



Imad Wasim retires from int'l cricket

ISLAMABAD: Pakistani all-rounder Imad Wasim Friday announced his retirement from international cricket, ending his over eight-year-long association with the national side. In his X, formerly Twitter, the 34-year-old stressed that it was the right time to end his stint as an international cricketer. "In recent days I have been doing a lot of thinking about my international career and I have come to the conclusion that now it's the right time for me to announce my retirement from international cricket." The all-rounder played for the Green Shirts in the some months, Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) for all its support provided to him over the years. "It has truly been an honour to represent Pakistan. Each of my 121 appearances across the ODI and T20I formats was a dream come true," Wasim noted. He said currently, it's an exciting time for Pakistan cricket going forward with new coaches and leadership incoming – referring to the major shake-up in the Pakistan camp. "I wish all involved every success and I look forward to watching the team excel," he said. He also thanked the Pakistan fans for always supporting him with "such passion". "A final thank you to my family and friends who have been so important in helping me achieve at the highest level," he said. – DNA



Haris Rauf upset over unwarranted criticism

ISLAMABAD: Following Chief Selector Wahab Raiz's comments on pacer Haris Rauf's decision to pull out of the Australia tour, the bowler is "upset over undue criticism" he has been receiving, reported The News on Friday. The pacer is currently in Karachi for the National T20 Championship but sources close to the fast bowler told the publication that he wanted to be in the best of shape, mentally, physically, and form-wise to restart playing Test cricket. "Look Haris is upset with those who have unleashed undue criticism on the pacers during the World Cup campaign. Even those who hardly know anything are criticising his form and raising questions about his not picking wickets regularly during World Cup matches. What a fast bowler requires is to get mentally fit and ready for big-time cricket. Haris believes that he is not in the right state of mind physically and mentally to play Test cricket where you have to stay alert all five days," a close family source said. The source shared that Haris was of the view that he should focus on the shorter version of the game to get physically and mentally ready for Tests and other international commitments. "It is just a matter of months before you see him playing all formats of the game. Currently, he wants to concentrate fully on T20 cricket." Earlier this week, Chief selector Wahab Riaz announced an 18-member Pakistan Test squad for the tour to Australia comprising three matches scheduled from December 14, 2023, to January 7, 2024. Riaz, in his maiden press conference as chief selector, said Haris had assured the cricket board that he would play Test cricket for the national side, but pulled out at the last minute making himself unavailable for the series. "It is important to inform you about this because people should have clarity about what's going on," Riaz told journalists, highlighting that Rauf had concerns about whether he would have fitness issues if he partook in the tour. "We have tried facilitating him in every way. Even if he failed in this tour, I was ready to accept it. Our fitness consultant told us that he [Rauf] would not have any issues moving forward." "We could have managed the issues [...] but he pulled out at the last moment. I believe this will be a set back to Pakistan," the chief selector explained. – DNA

Novak Djokovic sets up sinner clash in Davis Cup

World No. 1 Djokovic played with his typical relentless quality and then rebuked British fans at the end of the match as they tried to drown out his victory speech with drums

SPORTS DESKS

MALAGA: Novak Djokovic steered Serbia into the Davis Cup semifinals as he beat Cameron Norrie 6-4, 6-4 to secure a 2-0 triumph over Great Britain on Thursday, setting up a mouth-watering clash with Italy's Jannik Sinner. Italy defeated the Netherlands 2-1 and will face Serbia in the second semifinal on Saturday in Malaga, after last year's runners-up Australia face Finland Friday. World No. 1 Djokovic played with his typical relentless quality and then rebuked British fans at the end of the match as they tried to drown out his victory speech with drums. After Miomir Kecmanovic edged Jack Draper 7-6

(7/2), 7-6 (8/6) in the opening singles rubber, 24-time Grand Slam winner Djokovic outclassed the resilient Norrie. Djokovic, who beat Sinner to win the ATP Finals on Sunday in Turin before flying to the Costa del Sol, celebrated his landmark 400th week at No. 1 with a straight sets win – before the captains agreed not to play the redundant doubles rubber. Around 5,000 British fans outnumbered the Serbs at the sold out Martin Carpena arena but the relentless Djokovic silenced them with his 21st consecutive Davis Cup singles victory. "Learn how to respect people, learn how to respect players, learn how to behave yourselves," Djokovic told a group of fans with a drum after, who he said had



disrespected him the whole game. "The entire match pretty much, there was disrespect but it's something I have to be prepared for in the Davis Cup," Djokovic

told reporters. "It's normal that fans step over the line and in the heat of the moment you react too and in a way show that you don't allow this kind of

behavior." Djokovic's tennis did the talking as usual on the court, breaking to lead 3-2 in the first set and serving out, before doing so again in the first game of the second set, decisively. Djokovic said earlier this week winning the competition is one of his "greatest goals" in a year where he has lifted seven titles, including three Grand Slams. The veteran star was part of Serbia's only Davis Cup triumph in 2010 and his country eliminated 10-time champions Britain, who faced an uphill struggle after Kecmanovic defeated Draper in two tiebreaks. Britain, without the injured Andy Murray and Dan Evans, were hoping Draper could give them a cushion. Serbia captain Viktor Troicki selected Kecmanovic

over the higher ranked Laslo Djere and the world No. 55 raised his game in return. Draper staved off two set points to hold for 5-5 but unraveled in the first tie-break, double faulting twice and miscalculating a drop shot to hand the Serbian the set on a plate. The near-flawless Kecmanovic triumphed in the second set when Draper lashed a forehand wide and then pushed a return into the net. "It was definitely very close, and just the atmosphere made it, I think, even more tense than it probably would be if it was like an ATP match or something," said the Serb. Sinner drove Italy into the Davis Cup semifinals, the world No. 4 triumphing in both his singles rubber and in the decisive doubles.

PPP rules out father...

FROM PAGE 01
asking old politicians to rest and allow the new generation to take the lead. In a statement on X, formerly Twitter, PPP Central Secretary Information Faisal Karim Kundi said the party chairman's visit to Dubai, an emirate in the United Arab Emirates (UAE), was pre-planned. "Chairman PPP @BBhuttoZardari has left for Dubai yesterday afternoon according to his schedule after KP visit," Kundi noted, after media outlets reported that he had left the country "all of a sudden". "Rumours regarding differences between Chairman PPP & Zardari is baseless," he added. While talking to journalists moments after his statement, Murad Ali Shah – former Sindh chief minister and a top PPP leader – also said that the visit was routine. Talking to media, PPP Information Secretary Shazia Atta Marri said that Bilawal has left for Dubai on a "private visit" and noted that he routinely visits the Gulf nation. "There's no specific reason for this visit." She also added that Bilawal was scheduled to leave for Dubai after completing his Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP) election tour.

Bugti highlights Khan's...

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any prime minister who was imprisoned before him," Bugti told during an interview in an exclusive interview on Thursday. "A common citizen cannot even imagine the facilities Imran Khan is being provided in jail," he added. Bugti, while recalling Khan's appearance in the Supreme Court following his arrest on May 9, said that Khan was ordered to be taken to the Police Lines in Islamabad in a Mercedes. The minister said that comments like "nice, good to see you" by former chief minister Umar Ata Bandial have further strengthened his arguments, stressing that there was a dire need for judicial reforms in Pakistan as "there are issues with the judiciary".

Afghan embassy in India...

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Europe and the US to seek asylum, and the embassy said it was suspending operations. An embassy statement posted on X, formerly known as Twitter, on Friday said that period in limbo was over, and the embassy was shutting and the keys had been given to the host government. It also said that pressure from both the Indian government and the Taliban had forced the decision. "Unfortunately, despite an eight-week wait, the objectives of visa extension for diplomats and a shift in the Indian government's conduct were not realised," ambassador Mamundzay said in the statement.

Transition to weekly...

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the shift to a seven-day pricing mechanism. However, the proposal has faced resistance from the Petroleum Dealers Association, which rejected the idea of altering the pricing frequency. Expressing concerns, the association argued that determining petroleum product prices every week could lead to shortages at petrol pumps. They emphasized that such a frequent adjustment could result in pumps drying up, holding the government responsible for potential fuel shortages. Notably, the dealers had suggested fixing prices for a longer duration, proposing a 30-day interval instead of the current 15-day period. They highlighted that the rapid changes in pricing contribute to shortages and disrupt the supply chain, particularly affecting pumps in remote areas. The Pakistan Petroleum Dealers Association conveyed its stance on the matter through a reply letter to OGRA, emphasizing the potential challenges and market uncertainties that may arise from the proposed shift in the pricing mechanism.

Briefs

Philippines considers return to 'fold' of ICC

MANILA: The Philippines is considering resuming membership of the International Criminal Court (ICC) nearly five years after it withdrew over objections to a bid by the court to investigate a bloody anti-narcotics campaign, the president said on Friday. "There is also a question, should we return under the fold of the ICC, so that's again under study. So we'll just keep looking at it and see what our options are," President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. told reporters. The Philippines withdrew from the international tribunal in 2019 after then President Rodrigo Duterte questioned its authority to investigate the campaign against illegal drugs in which thousands of people were killed. Marcos said questions over jurisdiction and sovereignty were still "problems" for the Philippines. "Now if we can solve these problems, then that would be something else, but those questions are fundamental," Marcos said. The ICC this year rejected a Philippine appeal to stop investigating Duterte's drug war. Marcos said in March he would cut off contact with the court after the decision. In July, appeals judges at the ICC cleared the way for an investigation into the killings, a ruling that families of victims and right groups hailed as another step toward justice.—APP

Oscar granted parole a decade after killing girlfriend

CAPE TOWN: South African Paralympic star Oscar Pistorius, jailed in 2014 for killing his girlfriend Reeva Steenkamp, has been granted parole effective from January 5, the Department of Correctional Services says. Known as the "Blade Runner" for his carbon-fibre prosthetic legs, Pistorius went from a public hero as a Paralympic champion to a convicted killer in hearings that caught the world's attention a decade ago. He was initially jailed for five years in 2014 for culpable homicide by a high court, but the Supreme Court of Appeal in late 2015 found him guilty of murder after an appeal by prosecutors. He was sent back to jail for six years in 2016, less than half the 15-year minimum term sought by prosecutors. In 2017, the Supreme Court more than doubled his sentence to 13 years and five months, saying the six-year jail term was "shockingly lenient".—APP

Drilling snag halts rescue for 41

SILKYARA: Hopes for the imminent rescue of 41 men trapped in a highway tunnel in the Indian Himalayas for nearly two weeks were foiled by a problem with the drilling equipment, an official said on Friday, but efforts to reach the workers should resume soon. The men, low-wage construction workers, have been confined in the 4.5-km (3-mile) tunnel in Uttarakhand state since it caved in early on Nov. 12. Authorities have said they are safe, with access to light, oxygen, food, water and medicines. Attempts to pull them out by drilling through the debris of rock, stones and metal and pushing through an evacuation pipe have been slowed by snags. Rescuers had hoped to finish the drilling late on Thursday but had to suspend it after the platform on which the auger drilling machine is fixed was damaged and needed to be repaired, Deepak Patil, who is heading the rescue operation, told Reuters. The last 10 meters (33 ft) of the 60-meter (197 ft) debris pile is left to be drilled through and work will resume once the platform is ready, he said. The collapsed tunnel is on the Char Dham pilgrimage route, one of the most ambitious projects of Prime Minister Narendra Modi's government.—APP

Turkey urges West: Distance from Israeli war crimes

'Any conditional or unconditional support to Israel is a blank check for killing of more Palestinians,' Foreign Minister Fidan says

NEWS DESKS

STANBUL: Turkish Foreign Minister Hakan Fidan on Friday called on the West to separate itself from Israeli "war crimes." "Western world should distance itself from Israel's war crimes. Any conditional or unconditional support to Israel is a blank check for the killing of more Palestinians," Fidan told the International Strategic Communication (Stratcom) Summit in Istanbul. "History will not forget the intolerance to the Palestinian flag and calls for peace in today's Europe, where attacks on the holy Quran are supposedly accepted as freedom of expression," he added. The genuine peace is only possible with justice, interna-

tional cooperation, and truth, the Turkish foreign minister stressed. Disinformation about Gaza Fidan said disinformation that had paved the way for interventions in Afghanistan and Iraq, and plunged the region into chaos is now surfacing in Gaza. He said there are two types of disinformation regarding "war crimes committed by Israel in Gaza and the West Bank" after the Oct. 7 Hamas attack on Israel. "The first is the biased attitude of many Western media outlets that ignore the human tragedy suffered by the Palestinians. The other is the institutionalized disinformation, which is not limited to the Oct. 7 events, that Israel is trying to convince the whole world by hiding the facts." Fidan further said that no one should legit-



imize "Israel's merciless killing of people

in Gaza" as a right to self-defense. "We should not allow Israel to cover one war crime with another. Therefore, we must reach a permanent solution through new discourses and methods," he asserted. Fidan said that Tel Aviv's aim is to render the two-state solution to the Israel-Palestine conflict ineffective with its actions in Jerusalem, West Bank and Gaza. He added: "It is widely accepted that the only viable solution to the Israel-Palestine issue is an independent, sovereign, and its geographically integrated Palestinian state with East Jerusalem as its capital." Fidan reiterated that Türkiye will never shy away from taking on its responsibilities and standing by Palestinians in their cause.

Pakistan HC presents his credentials to King Charles

Pakistan's high commissioner to UK presents his credentials to King Charles HC conveyed the greetings of the president and the prime minister of Pakistan to the king

FOREIGN DESK

LONDON: At a formal ceremony held at Buckingham Palace, High Commissioner for Pakistan to the UK, Dr Mohammad Faisal, presented his credentials to His Majesty, King Charles III. The high commissioner and his spouse Dr Sarah Naeem were escorted in a state carriage by the Vice Marshal of the Diplomatic Corps from the Pakistan High Commission, London. During the audience, the high commissioner presented his Letters of Credence to the king. He conveyed the greetings and best wishes of the president and the prime minister of Pakistan to the king. He said the people of Pakistan held His Majesty in high esteem and cherished the fond memories of his earlier visit to Pakistan. The high commissioner expressed his resolve to continue working



for further strengthening the relations between the two countries. His Majes-

ty, the king welcomed the high commissioner and his spouse to the Buckingham

Palace and extended good wishes to the leadership and people of Pakistan.

Pakistan-Sweden pledge to enhance mutual cooperation

NEWS DESK

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan and Sweden held their 17th round of Bilateral Political Consultations in Stockholm on Friday and reviewed the entire range of bilateral relations, including political, economic, trade, investment and education. Additional Foreign Secretary (Europe), Ambassador Shafiq Ali Khan, led the Pakistan delegation, while the Sweden side was co-lead by Director General and Head of Global Department Dag Juhlin-Dannfelt and Acting Head of Department for Asia and the Pacific Oscar Schlyte of the Swedish Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The two sides expressed confidence in the trajectory of bilateral cooperation noting that next year, Pakistan and Sweden would celebrate 75 years of the establishment of diplomatic relations. They also agreed to promote bilateral dialogue and mutually beneficial engagement and cooperation. The Additional Foreign Secretary congratulated Sweden on successfully completing the term of EU Presidency this year and expressed Pakistan's desire to further enhance cooperation in renewable energy, sustainable technologies, waste management, information communication technology, and rehabilitation and development. He welcomed more Swedish companies to take advantage of the business-friendly environment in Pakistan, the Foreign Office said in a statement issued here. The Swedish side reaffirmed its commitment to forge a broad-based bilateral relationship anchored in strong economic and political cooperation. The two sides also discussed important regional and global developments. Ambassador Shafiq Ali Khan briefed the Swedish side on the security situation in South Asia including Afghanistan and India, highlighting the gross human rights violation in Indian Illegally Occupied Jammu and Kashmir (IIOJK). The Swedish side briefed the Pakistan side on the EU Presidency, the Nordic region and steps taken to combat Islamophobia.

Muslims worried after Wilders' victory in Netherlands

AMSTERDAM: Far-right politician Geert Wilders' unprecedented victory in the Dutch general elections ignited concerns among Muslims and people of migrant background, including Turks in the Netherlands. Wilders and his Freedom Party (PVV) beat all predictions on Wednesday night by winning 37 seats out of 150 in the Dutch parliament, well ahead of a Labour/Green combination and the outgoing Prime Minister Mark Rutte's conservatives. Muhsin Köktaş, head of the Contact Body for Muslims and Government (CMO) association, told Anadolu Agency (AA) that Wilders has highlighted that mosques, Islamic schools and the Quran do not belong to the Netherlands, and his victory was a major disappointment for Muslims. "It is worrying for the future of Muslims," Köktaş said. "The Netherlands will not be livable for Muslims if Wilders implements his agenda and his views are accepted by his coalition partners," he said. Köktaş noted that Wilders' election promises were against the law. "He might not be able to carry out his promises but Wilders and far-right parties will do everything to make life hell for Muslims. They cannot ban everything, but they may enforce strict rules," he said. Throughout his political career, Wilders emphasized his opposition to Turks and Islam, claiming the Netherlands was under an "Islam threat." Wilders has long been an advocate of opposition to Türkiye's European Union membership. He urged the EU not to admit Türkiye because of "its backwards Muslim culture.—DNA



ISLAMABAD: A group of students and faculty members of Air University, Islamabad visiting Senate Museum at Parliament House.—DNA

China's respiratory illness surge; WHO rules out unusual

Cases among children appearing especially high in northern areas like Beijing and Liaoning province where hospitals are warning of long waits

FOREIGN DESKS

SHANGHAI: China called for vigilance on Friday as a surge of respiratory illness hit schools and hospitals and the World Health Organization, which has asked the government for disease data, said no unusual or novel pathogens had been detected. China is grappling with a spike in respiratory illnesses as it enters its first full winter season since it lifted strict COVID-19 restrictions in December, with cases among children appearing especially high in northern areas like Beijing and Liaoning province where hospi-

tals are warning of long waits. The State Council said influenza would peak this winter and spring and mycoplasma pneumoniae infection would continue to be high in some areas in future. It also warned of the risk of a rebound in COVID infections. "All localities should strengthen information reporting on infectious diseases to ensure information is reported in a timely and accurate manner," the State Council said in a statement. The situation came into the spotlight this week when the WHO asked China for more information, citing a report by the Program for Monitoring Emerging Diseases (ProMED) on clusters of undi-

agnosed pneumonia in children. Both China and the WHO have faced questions about the transparency of reporting on the earliest COVID-19 cases that emerged in the central city of Wuhan in late 2019. On Thursday, the WHO said China had responded to its request and the data it provided suggested the cases were linked to the lifting of COVID curbs along with the circulation of known pathogens like mycoplasma pneumoniae, a common bacterial infection that typically affects children, which has circulated since May. This month, authorities began issuing health advisories and warning the public of long waits

at crowded hospitals but they have not imposed measures like the ones during the COVID pandemic, such as masks or closing schools. There has been no indication of any undue public alarm. Bruce Thompson, head of the Melbourne School of Health Sciences at the University of Melbourne, said very preliminary data suggested there was nothing out of the ordinary. "At this stage, there is nothing to suggest that it may be a new variant of COVID," he said. "One thing to note is that we can be reassured that the surveillance processes are working, which is a very good thing." Parents in Shanghai on Fri-

day said they were not overly concerned about the wave of sickness, saying while it appeared to be more severe, they expected it to blow over soon. "Colds happen all over the world," said Emily Wu outside a children's hospital. "I hope that people will not be biased because of the pandemic ... but look at this from a scientific perspective." Another mother, Feng Xixun, said she was making her eight-year-old son wear a mask and wash his hands more often but nothing much more. "It's not that bad, there are more children falling sick now but it's mainly an issue of protection," she said.

16 Ukrainian drones downed in south: Russia

MOSCOW: Russia said Friday it had destroyed 16 Ukrainian drones in the south of the country and over the annexed Crimean peninsula. On Thursday night, "an attempt by the Kyiv regime to carry out a terrorist attack using aerial drones against sites on the territory of the Russian Federation was thwarted," Russia's defence ministry said. "Air defence systems destroyed 16 drones, including 13 over the Crimean peninsula and three over the territory of the Volgograd region." Ukraine has ramped up drone and missile attacks on Russian military installations in and around the peninsula in recent months. Crimea—annexed by Russia in 2014—serves as the rear base for the Black Sea Fleet and key supply route for Russian forces in southern and eastern Ukraine. Ukraine's military meanwhile said its air defence systems had downed three Iranian-designed attack drones launched by Russian forces overnight. They also said Russia had launched two guided air missiles but did not provide details.—DNA

Niagara border falls reopens after car blast

WASHINGTON: The US-Canada border crossing at Niagara Falls that was the scene of a deadly car explosion reopened Thursday, officials said. The day before, a car traveling at high speed crashed into a checkpoint barrier at Rainbow Bridge and exploded into flames—triggering border closures and sparking a massive security alert on the eve of a major holiday. The regional FBI field office concluded the blast, which occurred about 400 miles (640 kilometers) northwest of New York City, was not linked to terrorism. "Normal operations have now resumed for traveler traffic at the Niagara Falls Rainbow Bridge port of entry, which recently experienced a service disruption," the Canada Border Services Agency said. The incident came on the eve of the Thanksgiving holiday, one of the busiest US travel days, when millions of Americans take to the roads and skies. Rainbow Bridge—among the most heavily trafficked crossings between Canada and the United States—has 16 vehicle lanes and is normally open around the clock. New York Governor Kathy Hochul said that debris was spread across as many as 14 of the lanes following the incident.—DNA

Actors and academics criticize UK over climate

LONDON: Emma Thompson, Stephen Fry and Ben Okri have joined the former archbishop of Canterbury Rowan Williams and leading climate scientists to highlight what they describe as a "collective act of madness" that is driving "the destruction of life on Earth". A letter signed by more than 100 actors, authors, scientists and academics says the UK government is ignoring the scientific reality of the climate and ecological crisis, pushing ahead with new fossil fuel developments and criminalising peaceful protesters who raise the alarm. "Rather than listening to reason or scientific fact, the UK government continues to hand out contracts for oil exploration in the name of false 'energy security' while steering the UK towards authoritarianism," the letter states. "In Britain today, it is verging on illegal to urgently and effectively protest for the right of life to survive." The intervention, which is also signed by Sir David King, a former chief scientific adviser to the UK government, and Prof James Hansen, who alerted the world to the greenhouse effect in the 1980s, comes amid growing concern about the crackdown on peaceful protest in the UK. Michel Forst, the UN rapporteur on environmental defenders, last month described the situation in the UK as "terrifying", with protesters having to navigate a draconian new legal environment that includes significant limits on the right to protest.—Agencies

Briefs

Netanyahu should be thrown out now

AGENCIES

LONDON: A former prime minister of Israel said on Thursday that current premier Benjamin Netanyahu should be removed from power for being a "real danger" to the country, despite the ongoing conflict with Hamas in Gaza. Ehud Olmert told Sky News that Netanyahu and his administration were a "real danger" to Israel's stability and he should be "thrown out" of office during an interview with the channel's international affairs editor, Dominic Waghorn. Speaking ahead of a ceasefire coming into effect in Gaza alongside a hostage release brokered by Qatar, scheduled to start Friday morning, Olmert said a break in hostilities could inspire widespread protests within Israel against Netanyahu. "(The Israelis) can't stand him, if there will be a break of a couple of days, they will change direction and move out into his home or his office and, you know, there will be demonstrations the like of which we've never seen in our country," he said. "The amount of rage, which has been built up inside the people, is just unbelievable," he added. Olmert said Netanyahu would face serious pressure and should leave office immediately. "As far as I'm concerned, based on my judgement of what is good for Israel or not, he should go today. He should go this minute. He should be thrown out any minute," he said.

China trials visa-free travel for six countries

DNA

BEIJING: China is trialling visa-free travel for citizens from France, Germany, Italy, the Netherlands, Spain and Malaysia for a year, its foreign ministry said. From December to 30 November 2024, ordinary passport holders from these countries can do business or travel in China without a visa for up to 15 days. This is to help "promote China's high-quality development and opening up", spokeswoman Mao Ning said on Friday. Currently, most travellers need a visa to enter China. The rare examples of those exempt include citizens of Singapore and Brunei, who are entering China for business, tourism, family visits and transit for no more than 15 days. It was only in March that China began issuing all types of visas again. In March 2020, it had imposed strict travel restrictions in the wake of the coronavirus pandemic. For three years, China had some of the world's strictest Covid curbs, with travel restrictions, numerous lockdowns and frequent testing requirements. Its zero-Covid policy, which hit the economy hard, was only lifted last December.

Embassy celebrates German Unity Day with artistic splendor

The celebration showcased stalls from various German organizations, including economic development partners GIZ, KfW, BGR as well as academic exchange service DAAD

STAFF REPORT

ISLAMABAD: The Embassy of the Federal Republic of Germany in Islamabad joyously observed German Unity Day today in a garden reception. This auspicious occasion commemorates the formal reunification of East and West Germany on 3rd October 1990, culminating in the end of 41 years of separation and uniting Germans into one cohesive nation. In his address, His Excellency Alfred Grannas, the German Ambassador, underscored the historical significance of German reunification, highlighting the remarkable achievements and progress made since that pivotal moment. The event, graciously hosted by the German Embassy, welcomed distinguished guests from Pakistan and the international community. Among the participants were



representatives from German businesses, foundations, and organizations operating in Pakistan. Esteemed attendees included dignitaries and high officials from diplomatic, military, political, economic, and humanitarian sectors, reflecting the strong ties between Germany and Pakistan. The celebration showcased stalls from

various German organizations, including economic development partners GIZ, KfW, BGR as well as academic exchange service DAAD, Annemarie-Schimmel-Haus, and political foundations. These stalls provided a glimpse into Germany's multifaceted engagement in Pakistan, illustrating the diverse contributions of German entities across various sectors. A notable feature of the reception was the exhibition of two Buddy Bear Sculptures, intricately painted by the internationally renowned artist Ahmer Farooq. These sculptures creatively captured the exquisite designs and fusion of both cultures, adding a touch of artistry and symbolism to the festivities. The Embassy of the Federal Republic of Germany extends its heartfelt gratitude to all participants for their presence and contributions, which greatly enriched the German Unity Day celebration, making it a memorable experience.

PML-N begins scrutiny of candidates

DNA

LAHORE: Former prime minister Shehbaz Sharif presided over an informal consultative meeting of the Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz here on Friday. According to sources, the names of party candidates for the next elections were informally scrutinised during the meeting. Prominent among those attended the meeting were PML-N leaders Rana Sanaulah, Sardar Ayaz Sadiq, Khawaja Saad Rafique, Ata Tarrar and Awais Leghari. The meeting also reviewed the proposal of having the electables and party candidates surveyed in the run-up to next elections. According to sources in the PML-N, the meeting also discussed in detail the instructions given by PML-N supreme Nawaz Sharif concerning the scrutiny process. During the meeting, PML-N President Shehbaz Sharif expressed pleasure over the huge number of applications received for acquisition of party tickets. The PML-N president instructed PML-N leaders Rana Sanaulah and Khawaja Saad Rafique to complete the consultations and finalise the list of PML-N candidates from Punjab province. Similarly, PML-N leader Sardar Ayaz Sadiq was directed to finalise the list of PML-N candidates from Balochistan province.

SSP says, May 9 riots were 'mutiny'

DNA

LAHORE: Lahore SSP (Investigation) Anosh Masood addressing a press conference Friday claimed that after interviewing the May 9 riots accused persons, it was found out that it was mutiny and PTI Chairman Imran Khan have also been named in FIRs. "Whatever happened on May 9 is in front of everyone. At that time provisions were made accordingly, said Dr Anosh Masood. "Various revelations were made during the investigation and the whole matter started from 10th April 2022," she added. She claimed that there was no confusion in the investigation and new list of accused was just an extension of geo-fencing. SSP Investigation said Defense car accident was very unfortunate in which six people were killed and subsequently 7-ATA sections were imposed on the basis of fear and loss.

Hamas chief hails 'political and military victory'

FOREIGN DESK

DOHA: The head of the political bureau of Hamas has appreciated the Islamic Republic for its strong support for the Palestinian people and resistance during the recent Israeli attacks on the Gaza Strip, commending the latest ceasefire as a "political and military" victory for the resistance front. Ismail Haniyeh made the remarks in a meeting with Iran's Foreign Minister Hossein Amir-Abdollahian in the Qatari capital of Doha on Thursday, ahead of a landmark four-day truce that will see the exchange of captives and the delivery of relief aid to the Gaza Strip after Israel's brutal onslaught on the besieged territory. Haniyeh expressed his appreciation for the "firm support of the Iranian leadership, the president, the government and the people of Iran," as well as the "active diplomatic support of the Iranian minister of foreign affairs for the Palestinian issue and its people, especially during the ongoing Israeli war against Gaza." The Hamas chief hailed as "honorable" the support of the resistance movements in Lebanon, Yemen, Iraq and Syria to their brothers and sisters in Gaza, noting that it bears a "clear" message to the Zionist regime and the United

States. Pointing to various dimensions of the Israeli regime's war crimes against the people in Gaza, its hospitals and urban infrastructure, Haniyeh said the United States was the "main axis" of the Israeli war on Gaza. "Despite the initial opposition to the ceasefire, the United States, understanding the realities of the battlefield, was finally forced to surrender to the will of the Palestinian people and the will of the world nations and the positive vote of 120 countries to the resolution of the United Nations General Assembly for a ceasefire with Hamas, which shows the US dominance over the international order has diminished." The head of the political bureau of Hamas thanked the Islamic Republic of Iran for its special efforts and support in the realization of the temporary ceasefire, saying, "This is a political victory that was achieved based on the victory of the resistance in the field and the enemy failed in achieving its goals except for the killing of women and children and citizens and destroying their houses." Amir-Abdollahian, for his part, expressed his felicitations on the resistance, resilience and victory of the Palestinian people and the residents of Gaza during the Israeli aggression on Gaza. "The consequences of Operation al-Aqsa Storm shook the world," the top

Iranian diplomat said. "Although the human losses of the Palestinian people in the Gaza Strip were high, bitter and unfortunate, the dimensions of victory and achievement of the Palestinian nation were much bigger and tipped the strategic balance in different dimensions in favor of Palestine and the detriment of the usurping Zionist regime." Despite more than a month and a half of aggression and brutal war and killing and injuring tens of thousands of Palestinian citizens, the US and the Israeli regime failed to achieve the least in the military field and were forced to negotiate indirectly with Hamas for a ceasefire and the release of their prisoners," Amir-Abdollahian stressed. Praising the honorable and courageous resistance of the people in Gaza and its resistance groups against Israel's 47-day brutal aggression, Amir-Abdollahian underlined the Islamic Republic's absolute determination to continue supporting the Palestinian people and resistance in the political and international fields. The Israeli regime launched the war on Gaza on October 7 following the large-scale operation by the territory's resistance groups, which killed some 1,200 Israeli settlers and military forces and led to the captivity of hundreds more. Israel has killed more than 14,800 people, including over 6,150 children, in Gaza since October 7.

No eatery will be open after 10pm

LAHORE: The Lahore High Court (LHC) on Friday directed officials to close cafes by 10pm daily, except on Saturdays when one-hour extension is permitted. The directive is part of endeavours to fight smog in Lahore. The judge made a particular mention of Johar Town which has countless cafes. He warned that the cafes violating the orders would be sealed. Justice Shahid Karim also ordered the sealing of smoke-belching factories that were recently desealed. He lauded the initiative of organising a cycle rally in Lahore on Sunday (Nov 26). The Provincial Disaster Management Authority says in a notification there will be "restricted movement" in Lahore, Gujranwala, Faisalabad, Multan, Sahiwal and Sargodha divisions. "All markets, shops, and restaurants would open after 3pm on Fridays and Saturdays, and all offices would open after 3pm on Saturday. Schools would also remain closed on Friday (November 24) and Saturday (November 25)," says the notification. The provincial government has made face masks mandatory for people in 10 districts. Smart lockdown was clamped on Friday on 10 districts of the Punjab, including capital city Lahore, on the directive of the caretaker government as the smog situation worsened. Educational institutions – schools, colleges and universities – were closed in Lahore, Nankana Sahib, Sheikhupura, Kasur, Gujranwala, Gujrat, Sialkot, Narowal, Hafizabad and Mandi Bahauddin districts. The institutions will remain closed on Saturday also. The caretaker government had taken strong notice of the smog scourge and ordered earlier this month to wear face masks and closure of markets to curb the menace. But, public paid no heed to it. — DNA

Farhatullah Babar relinquishes position

ADIL SHAHEEN

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan Peoples Party secretary general Farhatullah Babar has tendered his resignation from the party post. He took PPP co-chairman Asif Ali Zardari into confidence regarding his decision. Despite stepping down from the party slot, Babar will keep working as the president of the human rights cell of the PPP. Addressing a convention in Chitral, PPP chairman Bilawal Bhutto-Zardari asked the senior leadership to quit their positions.

Asad Qaiser sent to jail

Today, the PTI leader was presented before a district and session court in Mardan. During the hearing, Charsadda police submitted a request seeking Qaiser's five-day physical remand

SHAMIM SHAHID

MARDAN: A district and sessions court in Mardan on Friday rejected the police's request for the physical remand of former National Assembly speaker Asad Qaiser and sent the PTI leader to jail on four-day judicial remand in a case pertaining to violent protests in the country on May 9. Qaiser was initially arrested on Nov 3 at his Banigala residence on charges of causing losses to the national ex-

chequer through procurement irregularities in the Gajju Khan Medical College. On Thursday, he was granted bail by an anti-corruption court in the case. But the PTI leader re-arrested from his Marghuz residence hours later in a case pertaining to ransacking of the Charsadda Toll Plaza on the Peshawar-Islamabad Motorway on May 9 – the day violent protests broke out across the country following ex-premier Imran Khan's arrest. Following Qaiser's release from Swabi prison, a joint team of Swabi and Charsadda police had arrested him. Qaiser's brother, Waheed Khan, had told Dawn that three cases were registered against his brother in connection with May 9 violence: one was in Swabi, another in Islamabad and the third in Charsadda. Today, the PTI leader was presented before a district and session court in Mardan. During the hearing, Charsadda police submitted a request seeking Qaiser's five-day physical remand. The court, however, rejected the request and sent the PTI leader to jail. It also directed police to present

Qaiser on Nov 29 (Wednesday) along with the case record. Qaiser urges party supporters to continue lawful struggle Following his arrest on Thursday, Qaiser had released a video message urging PTI supporters to continue their lawful struggle and aim for a two-thirds majority in the upcoming general election. "I tell my Pakistani brothers that you should not be afraid. We believe in the rule of law and supremacy of the Constitution," Qaiser had said in the video posted on X, formerly Twitter. "It's election time, and they (the establishment) are trying to take us to the other side, but we will continue our struggle within the limits of law. "We have only one demand: Pakistan should be governed according to the Constitution and the law. There should be a level playing field for all political parties," he had added. Referring to PML-N supreme Nawaz Sharif, Qaiser had implied that the former's appointment as prime minister had already been decided, but hoped that the public would defeat such a narrative and vote for the PTI.



UAE Ambassador honored with honorary doctorate degree

Chief guest Governor M Baligh-Ur Rehman commends IAC's educational services



ABID RAZA

LAHORE: In a grand ceremony held at the Governor House today in Lahore, the honorable Governor of Punjab Mr. Baligh Ur Rehman awarded the Honorary Doctorate Degree to the Guest of Honour, UAE Ambassador to Pakistan HE Hamad Obaid Ibrahim Salem Al-Zaabi on

behalf of the Institute for Art & Culture (IAC). Mr. Muhammad Faisal Janjua, Chancellor IAC was also present. The Chancellor IAC Mr. Janjua welcomed the guests and highlighted the salient success stories of the leading Institution IAC over the last few years. The audience lauded the informative IAC Documentary shown before his address. Another highlight of the event was the presence of Namira Salim, the 1st Pakistani

Astronaut to go to space on 6th October 2023. She thanked IAC & other esteemed guests for acknowledging her services to the country. In his address, HE Hamad Obaid Ibrahim Salem Al-Zaabi highlighted the UAE's contribution to higher education in Pakistan as UAE recognizes the importance of investing in education and supporting institutions like IAC as they believe in sharing experiences and expertise to strengthen education systems and empower the youth. He also expressed his gratitude to IAC for conferring the honorary doctorate degree in recognition of his services. In the concluding session, the Chief Guest, honorable Governor of Punjab Mr. Muhammad Baligh-Ur-Rehman congratulated HE Hamad Obaid Ibrahim Salem Al-Zaabi on being awarded the Doctorate Degree by IAC. He highlighted the significance of both Taleem & Tarbiyat for youth and acknowledged the commendable services being extended by IAC as a leading institution in the Higher Education Sector in Pakistan. He expressed that he enjoys the privilege of leading approval process of IAC in the past from Senate & NA as the former Federal Education Minister (2013-2018). Mr. Rehman wished the best of success to IAC.