



Islamabad POST

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Sweden's PM condemns call to tear down mosques

Detailed News On Page-08

No room for Palestinians' displacement

Detailed News On Page-08

Bellingham beats Cristiano Ronaldo's record

Detailed News On Page-06



Afghan hand unearthed 2 civilians killed, soldiers injured in suicide attack

Out of the injured, the ISPR said, seven were civilians while three were soldiers. It added that the sanitisation operation was being carried out in the area to eliminate any other terrorists found in the area

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

RAWALPINDI: At least two civilians were martyred while 10, including three soldiers, sustained injuries when an Afghan suicide bomber, affiliated with Hafiz Gul Bahadur Group, attacked a security forces' convoy in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa's Bannu District, said the military's media wing on Monday. The Inter-Services Public Relations (ISPR), shared that the unfortunate incident occurred on Sunday in the Bakka Khel area when a motorcycle-borne suicide bomber exploded himself. Out of the injured, the ISPR said, seven were civilians while three were soldiers. It added that the sanitisation operation was being carried out in the area to eliminate any other terrorists found in the area. "Security forces of Pakistan are determined to eliminate the menace of terrorism and such sacrifices of our brave civilians and soldiers further strengthen our resolve," said the ISPR. The group behind the bombing is a faction of the outlawed Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP). Pakistan has faced a surge in terrorism in recent months, with the TTP and other militant outfits intensifying their actions against security forces. In response, the state has also launched operations to curb terrorism.

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No Afghan allowed to support any candidate

FAISAL SHEIKH

ISLAMABAD: The Ministry of Interior on Monday cautioned the illegal and legal Afghan migrants to avoid supporting or providing funding to any candidate for political and electoral activities in Pakistan whereas violations would lead to deportation despite the latter's legal status. According to the Ministry of Interior statement, Afghan nationals residing in Pakistan were cautioned that it was illegal to support or provide funding to any candidate for political and electoral activities in Pakistan. "Any Afghan citizen involved in such activities will be deported regardless of his or her legal status in Pakistan." It said that Pakistani masses were cautioned not to provide employment to illegal

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ABU DHABI: The Caretaker Prime Minister Anwaar-ul-Haq Kakar meets the President of the United Arab Emirates His Highness Sheikh Mohamed bin Zayed Al Nahyan. - DNA

Meets UAE President Prime Minister's Visit to the State of Kuwait

The visit will include signing of various MoUs in various fields

ANSAR BHATTI

ISLAMABAD: Following his visit to the United Arab Emirates, Prime Minister Anwaar ul Haq Kakar will embark on a bilateral visit to the State of Kuwait on 28-29 November 2023. During the visit, the Prime Minister will meet Sheikh Meshal Al Jaber Al Sabah, Crown Prince of State of Kuwait and His Highness Sheikh Ahmed Nawaf Al Ahmed Al Sabah, Prime Minister of the State of Kuwait. The visit will include signing of various

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IMF tax experts' team reaches Pakistan

KHAYAM ABBASI

ISLAMABAD: A team of the International Monetary Fund (IMF) on Monday reached Pakistan to consult over tax net and to enhance tax revenue. Sources said that the technical experts' delegation will hold consultations with the Federal Board of Revenue (FBR) over the taxation policy for about one week. The delegation will suggest measures to the FBR for

Continued on Page 06

Nawaz Sharif's appeals IH CJ links 'unexplained assets' with corruption

IHC adjourns hearing of Avenfield and Al-Azizia references till November 29

COURT REPORTER

ISLAMABAD: Islamabad High Court (IHC) Chief Justice Aamer Farooq on Monday wondered how can a person amass assets beyond his known sources of income without indulging in corruption. The remarks came during the hearing of Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) supreme Nawaz Sharif's petition challenging his conviction in Al Azizia and Avenfield references. A two-member division bench headed by the IHC chief justice and comprising Justice Miangul Hassan Aurangzeb heard the appeals. In July 2018, former prime minister Nawaz was sentenced to 10 years in jail in the Avenfield reference filed by the National Accountability Bureau (NAB) in the light of the Supreme Court order. The Al-Azizia Steel Mills corruption reference pertains to the case in which he was sentenced to seven years in jail on Dec 24, 2018. He was also fined Rs1.5 billion and US\$25 million. Nawaz was declared a proclaimed offender in both references in December 2020

Continued on Page 06

AC sends Imran on judicial remand

ABID RAZA

ISLAMABAD: An accountability court on Monday turned down the National Accountability Bureau's (NAB) request for an extension of PTI chief Imran Khan's physical remand, and instead sent him on judicial remand in the Al Qadir Trust case. Accountability Judge Mohammad Bashir issued the directives while conducting the hearing at Adiala Jail. The development comes a day after a NAB team visited Imran at the jail and interrogated him for a couple of hours in the case. The case alleges that the ex-premier and his wife, Bushra Bibi, obtained billions of rupees and land worth hundreds of kanals from Bahria Town Ltd for legalising Rs50 billion that was identified and

Continued on Page 06

Briefs

Sarwar wants to rejoin PTI

DNA

LONDON: Senior politician Chaudhry Muhammad Sarwar is yet again looking to switch his loyalties towards the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf but is struggling to get any attention so far. Former Punjab governor Sarwar, who is currently associated with the PML-Q as its chief organiser, quit the Imran Khan-led party around the no-confidence motion time in April last year during which the PTI chief was ousted from the prime minister's office. Sarwar, at the time, refused to act on Khan's orders and began deliberations to join the Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz, an idea turned down by the PML-N supreme Nawaz Sharif, who cited the politician's defection to the PTI after Khan and Pakistan Awami Tehreek head Dr Tahir-ul-Qadri's failed 2014 sit-in.

ATC directs to arrest Marriyum

BUREAU REPORT

LAHORE: An Anti-Terrorism Court (ATC) in Lahore on Monday directed the police to arrest PML-N leader Marriyum Aurangzeb in a hate speech case and produce her in court on December 9. The orders were issued by ATC Judge Abher Gul Khan who directed SHO concerned to execute the arrest warrants of Aurangzeb. The non-bailable arrest warrant was issued against the former information minister for not appearing before the court. A terrorism case has been registered against Aurangzeb, Mian Javed Latif, state-run Pakistan Television's Managing Director Sohail Khan and others for allegedly trying to incite hatred by using the religion card against PTI Chairman Imran Khan.

Hamas-Israel truce extended by 2 days

The experts have called for "prompt, transparent and independent" probes into events in Israel and the occupied Palestinian territories

NEWS DESK

DOHA: Majed Al-Ansari confirms in a statement that "an agreement has been reached to extend the humanitarian truce for an additional two days in the Gaza Strip." In a statement, the Palestinian resistance movement HAMAS says that the temporary truce was extended in agreement with Qatar and Egypt and in accordance with the same conditions. State Information Service (SIS), has said. The two-day extension would include the release of 20 Israeli hostages and 60 Palestinian detainees, he said. With the release of 11 Israeli hostages expected on Monday, negotiations continue for the release of 33 Palestinians, Rashwan added. Germany says it supports the extension of the truce, adding it should be used as "a bridge to a political process" for a lasting solution. Deputy foreign ministry spokesperson Kathrin Deschauer told reporters that Foreign Minister Annalena Baerbock stressed to attendees at

Continued on Page 06

Iran warns of plot to stoke tension in West Asia

AGENCIES

TEHRAN: Iran has warned against Israel's plots to stoke tension and promote warmongering in the West Asia region, saying Tel Aviv is responsible for any possible consequences. Iranian Foreign Ministry spokesman Nasser Kan'ani made the remark in a post on his X account on Monday in reaction to the continuation of Israel's attacks on Syria simultaneous with its large-scale war on Palestinians in the Gaza Strip.

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Gaza war in focus as Saudi commander meets COAS

Visiting dignitary appreciated Pakistan Army's role in fighting the menace of terrorism

STAFF REPORT

RAWALPINDI: Lieutenant General Fahd bin Abdullah Al-Mutair, Commander of the Royal Saudi Land Forces (RSLF) called on General Syed Asim Munir, NI (M), Chief of Army Staff (COAS) at GHQ. During the meeting, both sides discussed various areas of mutual interest including cooperation in the fields of defence, security, military train-

ing as well as regional situation and the ongoing conflict in Middle East. Visiting dignitary appreciated Pakistan Army's role in fighting the menace of terrorism and paid rich tribute to the sacrifices made in bringing peace to the region. COAS thanked the dignitary and said that, "Pakistan deeply values its strategic and brotherly ties with the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia." Earlier on arrival at GHQ, a smartly turned out contingent of Pakistan Army presented the guard of honour to the visiting dignitary.



RAWALPINDI: Lieutenant General Fahd bin Abdullah Al-Mutair, Commander of the Royal Saudi Land Forces (RSLF) called on General Syed Asim Munir, NI (M), Chief of Army Staff (COAS) at GHQ. - DNA

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Minister assures ample wheat stocks; No shortage

Solangi said that Pakistan currently had ample wheat stocks and concrete measures would be initiated to address any flour shortage due to supply chain problems

ADIL SHAHEEN

ISLAMABAD : Minister for Parliamentary Affairs and Information, Murtaza Solangi on Monday said Pakistan currently had ample wheat stocks and concrete measures would be initiated to address any flour shortage due to supply chain problems. Responding to a motion under Rule 218 by Senator Sania Nishtar, focused on addressing gaps in the wheat supply chain that may lead to flour shortage, the minister stated that currently there was no wheat shortage in the country. Senator Nishtar had pointed out the specific lacuna in wheat policy, citing the conversion of green bags to white bags at the retail level. She also hinted at the smuggling as a factor, contributing to wheat shortages in addition to

creation of systematic artificial shortages and hoarding. The minister emphasized that there was an adequate stock of wheat in the country as public wheat stock included 39,24,367 metric tons in Punjab, 8,17,394 metric tons in Sindh, 2,15,082 metric tons in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, and 89,354 metric tons in Balochistan. Pakistan Agricultural Storage & Services Corporation Ltd (PASSCO) accounted for 17,18,177 metric tons, he added. Private wheat stock comprises 3,37,270 metric tons in Punjab, 93,165 metric tons in Sindh, 14,918 metric tons in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, and 4,157 metric tons in Balochistan. The Minister for Parliamentary Affairs said that Pakistan had over seven million (7,213,884) metric tons of wheat, with an additional imported stock of 10,33,845 metric tons, ensuring there was

no shortage. He said the support price for provinces differed, being Rs 4600 in Punjab and Rs 4700 in Sindh. During discussions on the motion, Senator Dilawar Khan said that Pakistan should export wheat rather than its import and called for concessions to the agriculture sector. Maulana Abdul Ghafoor Haidri highlighted Balochistan's agricultural challenges, emphasizing the lack of canal systems. He expressed concern about the removal of subsidies for poor farmers on electricity. Senators Dr. Zarqa Suharwardy Taimur and Rukhsana Zuberi stressed the need for a concrete solution to address the issue. The minister acknowledged the collective wisdom of the Senate which ultimately provided guidance to the government. He said that discussions on the topic would be tabled before the Cabinet and Prime Minister for positive consideration.

KP govt posting of 41 officers of BS-17 to 19

PESHAWAR : The Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Establishment Department on Monday notified posting and transfers of 41 officers of BS17 to 19 in the public interest with immediate effect. According to the notification five officers of BS 19 including Additional Secretary Home and Tribal Affairs Nasir Khan was posted and transferred as Director General Sports, Deputy Commissioner Karak Ahmad Zeb to the establishment department, Additional Secretary HRD Establishment Division Shah Saud was posted as Deputy Commissioner Banu, Additional Secretary Elementary and Secondary Education Fazal Hussain as Deputy Commissioner Kolai Palas and Deputy Commissioner Lower Kohistan Rafiq Khan Mohmand as Director Excise and Taxation. Similarly, 32 officers of BS-18 including several deputy commissioners and four officers of BS-17 were posted and transferred.—APP

Commissioner visits polio fixed point

HYDERABAD : In order to watch the progress of 7-day anti Polio Campaign commenced from Monday throughout the District Shaheed Benazirabad, Commissioner Syed Muhammad Sajjad Haider visited Polio Fixed Point at Taluka Hospital sakrand and other sites of the tehsil and inspected the working of fix, mobile and transit Polio teams. During the visit, the Commissioner instructed Polio teams to utilize all available resources for achieving the target of preventing children from lifelong disability in the district by administering them polio drops. He also instructed to figure and house marking and compile the campaign data correctly. He warned that no negligence during the campaign would be tolerated.—APP

Action against underage, unlicensed drivers going on

SARGODHA :Sargodha Police launched a comprehensive campaign against underage and unlicensed drivers in the district. According to a press release issued by DPO office here on Monday, a total of 181 cases were registered while 1149 challans were also issued against underage drivers and 1077 challans issued against those driving without a license during last ten days.

A spokesman for Traffic police said that vehicles and motorcycles were also being impounded over violation in the district. In addition, some parents were also called on the spot and given a warning in which they were asked to give a surety bond (afidavit) to not let their underage children drive in the future. The purpose of the campaign was to discourage underage and inexpe-

rienced drivers so that the accidents that occur every day can be reduced, he said. The District Police Officer Muhammad Faisal Kamran said that parents and teachers should play their key role in eliminating the driving craze among young people. In the next phase, the police would also file cases against the parents of underage drivers along with them, DPO added.—APP

DG PHA visits city parks to review beautification work

The PHA was planting maximum saplings and enhancing greenery, particularly in parks and green belts of the city, he added

RAWALPINDI : Director General (DG), Parks and Horticulture Authority (PHA) Rawalpindi, Ahmad Hassan Ranjha here on Monday visited different city parks and reviewed the ongoing beautification work. The DG directed the authorities concerned to complete the beautification work as soon as possible. Ahmed Hassan Ranjha also inspected cleanliness arrangements and instructed the officials concerned to provide all basic facilities in the parks. He informed that the authority was utilizing all available resources to make the city clean and green and uplift the parks. The authorities concerned had been directed to complete ongoing renovation and beautification work of all the parks within the shortest possible time frame, he said adding, that efforts were also being made to repair faulty lights, swings and walking tracks besides improving the security of the parks. The PHA officers had also been instructed to utilize all available resources to ensure the provision of the best recreational facilities to the public in all the parks of the town, he added. The PHA was planting maximum saplings and enhancing greenery, particularly in parks and green belts of the city, he added. During the visit, the officers concerned of PHA were also present.



ISLAMABAD: A lady health Worker administer Polio Drops to a child at Christen Colony of Sector G-7 during Polio eradication campaign in Federal Capital.—ONLINE

Media urged: Highlight flood-affected communities at COP28

COP28 presents an exceptional opportunity for Pakistani media to amplify the miseries of the climate victims

PESHAWAR : National media should amplify the sufferings of flood-affected communities during the upcoming International Climate Conference (COP28) in Dubai, from 30th November to 12 December 2023. This was discussed in an online training session on COP28 and the Role of National Media, organized by Resilient Future International—a research and training company. Journalists and university students participated in the training session. Aftab Alam Khan, the lead trainer, pointed out that while more than 5000 journalists are expected to attend COP28, many journalists from economi-

cally developing countries may not be able to attend due to financial constraints. He has emphasized the need for media houses and donors to support Pakistani journalists in attending such climate conferences. Aftab noted that national media can play three roles during COP28, reminding the world about the continuous sufferings of flood-affected people, especially women, children, transgenders, the elderly and the disabled. The national media should support demands for meaningful Loss and Damage Fund and drastic cuts in greenhouse gases (GHGs) and lastly keep the nation aware of

the proceedings of the climate conference. The International Conference of Parties (COP28) on climate change was scheduled in Dubai, but the sufferings of climate justice were evident in the flood-affected communities in Pakistan, he commented. COP28 presents an exceptional opportunity for Pakistani media to amplify the miseries of the climate victims. By playing such a role the media would complement the efforts of Pakistan and other countries in COP28 towards a meaningful agreement on the Loss and Damage Fund, Aftab continued. Last year, during COP27, Pakistan's leadership in G77+China

and a vigorous presentation of climate vulnerabilities brought the Loss and Damage Fund to the negotiation table, he recalled. Aftab added that the media should highlight the issue of the continuous rise in greenhouse gases (GHGs) generated from fossil fuels, which is the primary cause of climate change. The UN's Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change's (IPCC) 2018 report stated that GHG emissions needed to be reduced by 45% by 2030. However, the current plans of top-emitting countries would lead to an increase in GHG emissions by 10.6%, which is insufficient to stop climate change. Those



ISLAMABAD: Students of model college G10/4 presenting tableau to mark Israel attacks on Palestinians held on Monday.—DNA

Educational institutions reopen after 3-day smart lockdown

DNA

LAHORE : After three-day closure to curb smog in 10 districts of Punjab, educational institutions reopened on Monday, bringing back the hustle and bustle of life. Moreover, business activities also came back to the pre-lockdown routine. Though all curbs have gone, the condition of wearing masks continues. Roadside eateries were seen in the morning packed to their capacities and public transport also saw rush of travellers. The caretaker Punjab government had taken a bold decision to opt for a smart lockdown as the menace of smog persisted, causing respiratory ailments to the dwellers of cities. The step brought some relief but the air pollution seemed persisting as with 353 air quality index (AQI) Lahore remained at the top of the list of the most polluted cities of the world. India's capital New Delhi is the second most polluted city and Karachi is at the third spot. According to health officials, more than 7,000 people were brought to five big hospitals of Lahore with breathing problems. It may be recalled that last week the Lahore High Court (LHC) ordered to keep all educational institutions closed on Saturdays until the end of January to curb smog. The court directed the deputy commissioner.

IGP directs tightened security measures for anti-polio drive

KARACHI : The Inspector General of Police in Sindh, Riffat Mukhtar Raja, has issued crucial directives to bolster security measures within the province for a week long anti-polio campaign that commenced on Monday. The IGP ordered that it is imperative that all security protocols for the polio drive are rigorously implemented, particularly at the grassroots level within police stations. Efforts must be made to establish a comprehensive security cover,

employing inner and outer cordons to safeguard the polio teams operating in potentially sensitive union councils. Special responsibilities should be entrusted to police commandos across all identified sensitive union councils, complemented by the deployment of plainclothes personnel alongside relevant law enforcement units. A stringent watch through random checks, picketing, and patrolling is essential to vigilantly monitor suspi-

cious activities and ensure the safety of the anti-polio efforts. Effective communication and information-sharing mechanisms must be established across all tiers of security to fortify the anti-polio campaign. District Senior Superintendents of Police (SSPs) should oversee the implementation of these security measures and ensure the presence of concerned Station House Officers (SHOs) in their respective areas.—APP

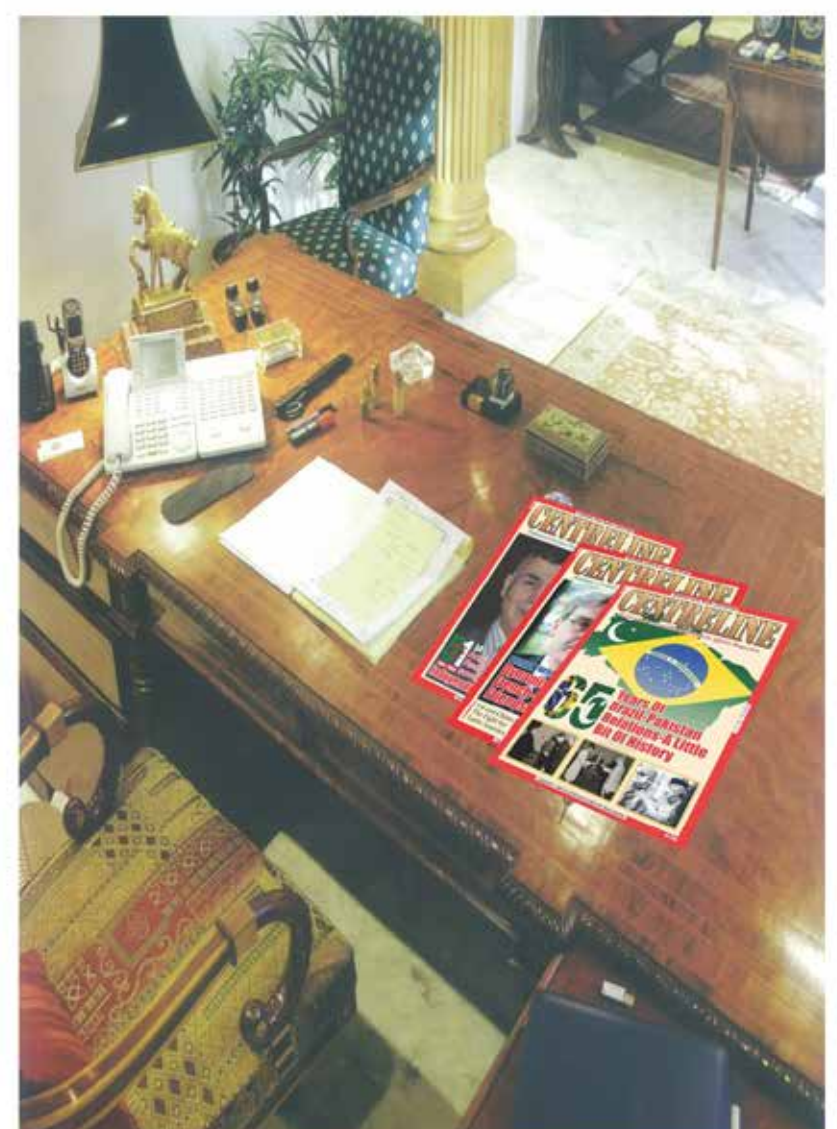
Hard work imperative for attaining glory in education: Governor

DNA

PESHAWAR : Governor Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Haji Ghulam Ali on Monday said that hard work and professional dedication were imperative to achieve glory in all sectors including education. Despite payment of about Rs 97 Billion to government schools under the head of salaries in the last four months, he said the children did not achieve the desired education results and many failed. He was addressing students and teachers at University of Chitral. "It was very heartening for me when an M.Phil passed student asked for

a Class-IV job," he said, adding every effort including the construction of universities and investment in the education sector would be a futile exercise if quality education was not provided to students. The governor said there was no dearth in talent in our students and we need to focus on their professional education training and career counseling. He questioned the reasons behind 100 per cent results of private educational institutions and poor results of public sector schools. The Governor said funds for educational institutions showing poor results would be stopped. He said funds of univer-

sities with no ranking would also be stopped. Haji Ghulam Ali said the education standard of Govt College Peshawar was very low in Peshawar in the past. The Governor said when he took over as district Nazim Peshawar, he was surprised after seeing in the newspaper that three students of Government College Peshawar had topped the examination in the province and became very pleased. The governor said the students were the future of Pakistan and great responsibility rested on their teachers and parents to focus on their studies so that they could effectively shoulder the future responsibilities.



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National Days and Armed Forces Days

NOVEMBER

Nov 01/Algeria National Day

Nov 04/Italy Armed Forces Day

Nov 07/Russian Federation Socialist Revolution

Nov 09/Cambodia National Day

Nov 11/Poland Independence Day

Nov 14/Jordan Birthday of King Hussein

Nov 15/Belgium Kings Day

Nov 15/Brazil Republic Day

Nov 15/Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus National Day

Nov 18/Oman National Day

Nov 18/Morocco Independence Day

Nov 21/Bangladesh Armed Forces Day

Nov 22/Lebanon Independence Day

Nov 25/Suriname National Day

Nov 28/Mauritania National Day

Nov 28/Albania Flags Day

Hotels & Restaurants



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



Turkish Airlines.....8494949



Emergency

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



Enquiry

Edhi Ambulance.....115
PIA Flight Info.....114
PIA Cargo.....9280979
Railway Inquiry.....117
Railway Exchange.....9270831-7
WASA Rawalpindi.....5555489
CAA.....9281092

Hospitals

CMH.....5611111
MH.....561116
Cantt Hospital.....9270907-11
DHQ.....5556311-4
RGH.....9290301-7
Holy Family.....9290322-7
PIMS.....9261170-79
Polyclinic.....9218300-09
Shifa International 4603666

Alvi for enhanced trade, cultural ties with Nigeria

The President expressed these views while talking to Pakistan's High Commissioner-designate to Nigeria, Major General (ret'd) Sohail Ahmad Khan, who called on him, at Aiwan-e-Sadr

DNA

ISLAMABAD: President Dr Arif Alvi has called for further improving trade, economic and cultural cooperation with Nigeria, besides increasing the bilateral trade volume for the mutual benefit of the two countries. The President expressed these views while talking to Pakistan's High Commissioner-designate to Nigeria, Major General (ret'd) Sohail Ahmad Khan, who called on him, at Aiwan-e-Sadr. Talking to the High-Commissioner designate, the President said that Nigeria was the largest economy in Africa, and Pakistan should explore opportunities for advancing trade



and economic relations with Nigeria. He stated that economic diplomacy was the cornerstone of Pakistan's foreign policy and Pakistan attached great importance to its relations with Nigeria, especially in the field of economy. The President also asked the newly appointed High Commissioner to work for promoting cultural linkages and people-to-people contacts to strengthen the bonds of friendship between the two countries. The President congratulated Major General (ret'd) Sohail Ahmad Khan on his appointment and expressed the hope that he would work to further enhance bilateral ties with Nigeria in all domains of mutual interest.

PRMI for modernization of local business to enhance FDI

FAISAL SHEIKH

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan Regulatory Modernization Initiatives (PRMI) was a major plan of the Board of investment (BOI) for the modernization and regulation of local business to enhance the foreign direct investment in the country. Implementation of these reforms, initiated by BOI, was part of the broader strategy of the government aimed at improving productivity and enhancing exports to achieve the objective of sustainable economic growth in the country. Federal Secretary, Board of Investment (BOI), Muhammad Sohail Rajput told APP here. The Secretary BOI said the main objective of PRMI reforms strategy was to improve the entry and operation environment for business, focusing on the simplification and automation of the regulatory framework at all three government levels including federal, provincial

and district level. He said the vital success indicator of the initiative would be increase in the overall private sector and foreign direct investment level without compromising the effectiveness of the various regulatory regimes.

Sohail Rajput said enabling a business environment played a pivotal role in attracting domestic and foreign investment. He said all over the world, the emphasis was on improving the business climate. Replying to a question, he said the World Bank's coming, Ease of Doing Business (EODB) report 2021-22 to be issued in December this year, which was expected to further improve Pakistan's ranking below 100. "Improving Pakistan's 'Ease of Doing Business Ranking' will boost foreign investment in the country", he said. The Secretary said higher rankings in the World Bank Ease of Doing Business (EODB) index indicated

better regulations for businesses and stronger protections of their rights.

An environment where new entrants with drive and innovative ideas could get started in business, she said adding, areas where productive firms could invest, expand, and create new jobs was our prime focus. He stated that the principles of the policy include reducing processes and the cost of doing business, facilitating ease of doing business through the creation of industrial clusters and Special Economic Zones, establishing linkages between trades, industrial, and monetary policies for greater convergence. Foreign investments are protected under the Foreign Investment (Promotion and Protection) Act, 2022," he added. The Secretary BOI emphasized on the importance of open dialogue, and assured the government of its dedication to listening to the recommendations provided by the business

Media urged to amplify suffering of flood affected communities

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Death anniversary of Maulana Zafar Ali Khan observed

DNA

ISLAMABAD: The 67th death anniversary of renowned journalist, writer, poet and leader of Pakistan movement Maulana Zafar Ali Khan was observed Monday. Born Wazirabad in 1873, he rendered exemplary services in the Pakistan Movement and was imprisoned due to his stiff resistance against the British Raj. In 1945-46, Zafar Ali Khan was elected to the Central Legislative Assembly as a Muslim League nominee. He was Editor of Urdu Newspaper 'Zamindar' which became one of the most influential newspapers of the sub-continent. He died on November 27, 1956 in Lahore and was buried in Wazirabad.

Four more diagnosed with dengue virus in RWP

DNA

RAWALPINDI: As many as four more dengue cases were reported in Rawalpindi during the last 24 hours, raising the tally of confirmed cases to 2,668 in the district. District Coordinator Epidemics Prevention and Control (DCEPC), Dr Sajjad Mehmood, Monday said that, among the new cases, two of each case had arrived from Municipal Corporation Rawalpindi and Potohar town urban area. He added that presently 22 patients were admitted to district hospitals of which 12 were confirmed cases while 2,654 were discharged after treatment. The health officer added that though dengue cases were decreasing sharply with changing weather, there was a need to remain vigilant as mosquito was taking place indoors due to favourable environment.

HEC calls for applications from private sector institutions

MEHTAB PIRZADA

ISLAMABAD: The Higher Education Commission (HEC) has called for application for recognition of Business Incubation Centers (BICs) aims to facilitate young and budding entrepreneurs through administrative, consulting, and networking services with provision of in-expensive start-up spaces. According to HEC official sources, the applications are invited from higher education institutions (private sector) to recognise their BICs. As per details, the institution should have an operational BIC in line with the minimum requirements as per HEC BIC Policy 2021. They also have an HEC-rec-

ognised/funded BIC under the consortia model. Furthermore, the institutions must have proven and tangible research commercialization and entrepreneurial ecosystem. It is worth mention here that recognition of BICs does not involve any funding and financial commitment from the commission. The official sources added that HEC encouraged development of innovative companies, startups, and spin-offs to stimulate and support economic growth through rigorous incubation process. The BICs are active players for creation of new jobs, and revival of innovative communities. The commission is offering two routes for interested universities to establish their BICs. The proposals

for establishment of BIC at Public Sector HEIs are invited through Call for proposals. The public sector HEIs having HEC recognized and fully functional ORIC interested in establishment of Business Incubation Center can apply for establishment of BIC. The private sector universities which have established the incubation facility through their own resources, and are not part of the HEC led entrepreneurial initiatives and programs can apply for recognition of their BIC to HEC. The recognition of BIC is open for application submissions throughout the year. For further details, the HEC asked the candidates to visit useful resources section or write to us at bic@hec.gov.pk.

ICCI calls for supportive industrial policy for SMEs

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Ahsan Zafar Bakhtawari, President, Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry welcomed the constitution of an Industry Advisory Council led by Dr. Gohar Ejaz, Federal Minister for Commerce to formulate the country's industrial policy and stressed that the new industrial policy should be supportive of the SMEs. Ahsan Bakhtawari said that SMEs are the backbone of our economy as besides promoting the economic activities and exports, they play a vital role in job creation, poverty reduction, and innovation. Therefore, it is very important that the new industrial policy should focus on supporting the SMEs so that these businesses could play a more effective role in reviving the economy. He said



that the new industrial policy should ensure easier access to finance for SMEs for expansion and growth and help in their capacity building. He said that the new industrial policy should offer good incentives for SMEs to adopt

modern technologies and digital solutions in order to improve their productivity and competitiveness. He said that market access is a major issue for SMEs in Pakistan and the new industrial policy should

envisage measures to connect SMEs with domestic and international markets, simplify export procedures for these businesses and provide SMEs support in meeting the quality and compliance standards.

IWMB imposes heavy fees on awareness activities at Trails

ISLAMABAD: Devcom-Pakistan Executive Director Munir Ahmed has condemned the Islamabad Wildlife Management Board (IWMB) on Monday for imposing heavy fees on the awareness and environmental engage-

ments in groups at the Trail-5 and 6 of the Margalla Hills National Park (MHNP). In a press statement, he said the Assistant Director IWMB Information and Outreach Omar Bilal wrote him an email on Monday stating "We would like to inform you about an update in the fee structure for activities on [the] Trail-5 of MHNP as well as at [the] Trail 6, in accordance with Rule 6 of the Islamabad Wildlife (Protection, Preservation, Conservation, and Management) Rules 1983. The Islamabad Wildlife Management Board (IWMB) has implemented a fee for every activity on [the] Trail 5. In order to obtain the necessary No Objection Certificate (NOC) for your upcoming activity, we kindly request you to submit a fee of Rs. 1000 per participant. This fee is required to be submitted along

with the completed Event Form, which is attached to this email." The email states that the fees include, "awareness & education session about biodiversity and ecosystem of MHNP, a showcase of documentaries and a guided hike". The IWMB AD further wrote: "If you exclusively utilize our Visitor Information Center (VIC) space for a closing ceremony at [the] Trail 5, the fee is Rs. 25,000". This is in addition to the awareness and education session about the Margalla Hills National Park (MHNP) biodiversity talk, showing the documentaries and a guided hike. Munir Ahmed said "it is a shameful policy of the IWMB that is said to be imposed to support the ongoing conservation of the MHNP, a federal government organization under the ministry of climate change. – DNA

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Briefs

Pakistan secures LNG shipment for January delivery

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan has purchased a liquefied natural gas shipment for January delivery to address fuel deficit this winter, Bloomberg has reported. Pakistan LNG Limited (PLL) has awarded tender to Oman's OQ Trading for a spot LNG cargo to be delivered in January. State-run PLL has secured the shipment at a price premium to the spot market due in part to Pakistan's credit risk, sources said. Pakistan has struggled to procure spot cargoes of LNG after global prices spiked last year following Russia's invasion of Ukraine, leaving it to face widespread power outages. The PLL had earlier invited from international suppliers for the supply of one LNG cargo on a Delivered Ex-Ship (DES) basis at Port Qasim, Karachi. PLL has been mandated by the government to import and sell natural gas, LNG and re-gasified LNG. It procures LNG from international markets and enters into on-ward arrangements for the supply of gas to end users, managing the whole supply chain of LNG. — DNA

Oil marketing association rejects weekly review of fuel prices

ISLAMABAD: The Oil marketing association has rejected the caretaker government's move to review the fuel prices on a weekly basis. The chairman oil marketing association in a letter penned to the Ministry of Petroleum and the chairman Oil and Gas Regulatory Authority (OGRA) has rejected the weekly fuel prices review. The OMA stated that weekly fuel price reviews will cost them and add to their misery. The move will create problems for consumers, transport and other sectors, the letter stated. Earlier, All Pakistan Petroleum Dealers Association rejected the plan and said the prices of petroleum products cannot be determined every week. On November 24, the Government of Pakistan decided to revise the prices of petroleum products weekly and sought recommendations from stakeholders and Petroleum Dealers Association regarding its decision to switch the revising of petroleum products pricing from fortnightly to weekly. In a letter, the government asked the stakeholders to submit "meaningful views/comments, including pros and cons, of switching from fortnightly to weekly pricing, if any, within five working days". It is pertinent to mention here that the PTed government in 2020 established a fortnightly pricing mechanism for petroleum products and shift from the price benchmark based on Pakistan State Oil (PSO) oil imports to Platts indexes. — DNA

Shahnawaz Amir acquitted of illegally possessing Kalashnikov

ISLAMABAD: In the Sarah Inam murder case, the main accused, Shahnawaz Amir, was acquitted of illegally possessing a Kalashnikov by the city's Judicial Magistrate Umar Shabbir. The decision was based on the benefit of the doubt and highlighted dissatisfaction with the police's flawed investigation. The court also ordered the release of the accused in the Kalashnikov recovery case, citing numerous loopholes in the presented evidence. The judgment was pronounced after the prosecution failed to prove its case, with the court noting the absence of a key witness. Shahnawaz Amir was arrested by Islamabad Police on September 23, the previous year, for allegedly killing his Canadian wife, Sarah Inam, at an Islamabad farmhouse. Sarah, a 37-year-old Canadian economist with a master's degree from the University of Waterloo, had worked with Deloitte and USAID during her career. She was married to Shahnawaz only three months before her tragic murder. — DNA

PNCA hosts inspiring artist talk featuring Geytee Ara, others

FAISAL SHEIKH

ISLAMABAD: The Pakistan National Council of the Arts (PNCA) proudly showcased an enlightening artist talk featuring esteemed artists Geytee Ara, Sidra Ashraf, and Akhtar Iqbal. This special event served as a continuation of the groundbreaking exhibition, "Off-Grid Goes On-Grid," which mesmerized audiences with its profound exploration of the intersection between humanity and nature through artistic expression.

Initiated by the acclaimed art educationist, Ms. Geytee Ara, the "Off-Grid Goes On-Grid" exhibition represented a transformative culmination of the Offgrid residency program. Ms. Ara's visionary leadership fostered an exceptional platform for artists to bridge the realms of nature and human experience, elevating artistic expressions beyond the superficial. During the artist talk, Sidra Ashraf, Geytee Ara, and Akhtar Iqbal captivated attendees with in-depth explanations of their art practices. Each artist provided unique insights into their creative processes, inspirations, and the profound philosophies that shaped the thought-provoking artworks on display. Ms. Geytee Ara's remarkable journey after dedicating over three decades to teaching, encompassing various educational levels, Ms. Geytee Ara found herself at a unique juncture upon retirement. Embracing the



gift of 'ME time,' she reignited her artistic passion, initially delving into ceramics. However, she soon found painting to be a more accessible avenue for unfiltered self-expression—a sanctuary where emotions flowed freely onto the canvas. Her unconventional compositions, characterized by bold palettes and expressive strokes, eschew realism. Instead, they serve as reflections of how her surroundings resonate within her—a mosaic of images and metaphors, forming a larger narrative that delves into the evolving relationship between humanity and the

natural world. = Artistic Empowerment: Sidra Ashraf's Vision in Fostering Creative Inquiry Sidra Ashraf is a dynamic and passionate artist whose teaching philosophy revolves around fostering student-led learning environments. Her approach places a strong emphasis on nurturing discussions and debates, aiming to empower students by encouraging them to question and explore novel concepts. She firmly believes that by granting students the freedom to inquire, they can evolve into innovative and confident individuals prepared to shape the future. In her

artistic pursuits, Sidra's work embodies a fusion of creativity, technical prowess, and a profound understanding of cultural nuances. Her dedication to education, coupled with a diverse range of professional experiences, serves as a continued source of inspiration for both her students and the broader artistic community. Crafting Creativity: Akhtar's Journey of Artistic Evolution Akhtar holds a Fine Arts degree from Hunerkada Islamabad, offering a strong foundation in diverse artistic techniques and art history. With over 6.5 years of experience in Art and

Design, they've taught Drawing, Painting, and Sculpture across various settings. Known for tailored lesson plans and mentoring aspiring artists, Akhtar advocates for inclusive and innovative learning environments. Their teaching blends traditional and contemporary methods, covering mediums from pencil and watercolors to sculpting in clay, metal, and wood. Driven by a deep passion for creativity, Akhtar continues evolving artistically while nurturing the next generation of artists.

Participants were immersed in an exploration of the artists' perspectives as they intricately detailed their artistic journeys, methodologies, and the significant relevance of their work in relation to broader themes of humanity and the natural world. The Pakistan National Council of the Arts (PNCA), known for its dedication to preserving and promoting Pakistan's rich artistic heritage, remains committed to nurturing artistic brilliance and fostering cross-cultural understanding. Serving as a thriving center for creativity and innovation in the country, PNCA continually pushes the boundaries of artistic expression and collaboration.

The Pakistan National Council of the Arts (PNCA) stands as a premier cultural institution dedicated to promoting and preserving Pakistan's diverse artistic heritage. With an unwavering commitment to fostering artistic excellence and cross-cultural understanding, PNCA serves as a vibrant hub for creativity and innovation in the country.

BISP opens portal for applications of "BISP Savings Scheme"

ISLAMABAD: Benazir Income Support Program (BISP) has started receiving applications for its recently launched initiative of "BISP Savings Scheme" to make people self-reliant. According to the BISP, the scheme is currently being launched in Islamabad, Muzaffarabad, Neelum, Peshawar, Lucky Marwat, Quetta, Qila Saifullah, Lahore, Multan, Karachi, Sukkur, Gilgit and Astore. The applicants, having PMT score below 40, are required to apply through a web portal: savings.bisp.gov.pk for becoming a part of this scheme without paying any fee. The applicants will open a saving account in the bank to participate in the scheme.

Those who will participate in the scheme will deposit money from 500 to 1000 rupees monthly in their bank account. The beneficiaries will get an additional 40 percent of their savings from the BISP. The duration of the scheme is two years at the end of which the beneficiaries will be able to withdraw their entire amount. The beneficiaries will not be able to withdraw their principal amount during this two-year period. However, the share given by BISP and the profit given by the bank will be able to be withdrawn. The beneficiary can withdraw from the scheme at any time but rejoining will not be possible until the end of the scheme.

Chairperson BISP, Dr. Muhammad Amjad Saqib said that BISP is an important initiative of the government to stand with the deserving women and their families in their difficult times to reduce the intensity of their poverty level by providing them financial relief. "We have taken a step towards ensuring self-sufficiency through this programme by enabling those families having their poverty score below PMT 40 to open their accounts for saving some amount for their future", he said. "BISP will not only help them open accounts but also add 40 percent of the total amount into their bank accounts", he said. The chairperson said that the purpose of this scheme is to motivate the people towards saving. "The amount they save will become an asset for the beneficiary families in the future", the chairperson said.—APP

ICT and green energy offer huge prospects under CPEC

DNA

ISLAMABAD: "The next decade of China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) presents a unique opportunity for China and Pakistan to further deepen their economic partnership. Information and Communication Technology (ICT) and green energy, in particular, offer tremendous growth prospects, not only in terms of economic returns but also environmental sustainability and technological advancement," stated Hussain Haider, Pakistani Consul General in Shanghai, Gwadar Pro reported on Monday. The remarks were made during the "Ten Years of CPEC:

Retrospect and Prospects" Roundtable at the 7th International Forum on the Belt and Road Initiative & Global Governance on November 26, hosted by Fudan University and the Silk Road Think Tank Association. The Consul General spotlighted the potential in Pakistan's diverse industries, such as textiles, food processing, automotive, ICT, and renewable energy. He underscored that Chinese expertise and investment are key to Pakistan's economic transformation. The ICT sector, backed by governmental encouragement, is poised for opportunities, he said. Recent forecasts by government officials, including the interim Minister of Information

Technology Dr. Umar Saif, project IT exports to grow exponentially. Pakistan's IT sector has seen a 178% increase over the past five years, boasting a CAGR of 30%. Pakistan's burgeoning ICT industry, supported by a favorable regulatory landscape and robust infrastructure, presents numerous opportunities for Chinese investors, added the CG. In light of the global emphasis on sustainable development, green energy has been earmarked as an essential investment area. Pakistan offers a promising market for renewable energy investment, particularly in solar and wind power, with the renewable energy percentage in power

generation expected to reach 20% by 2030, up from 6.8% in 2023. Pakistan, which imports \$600 million worth of solar panels from China annually, is open to Chinese FDI to foster local production aimed at domestic sales and duty-free exports to China and the EU, conveyed the CG. The roundtable, attended by diplomats, industry experts, and business leaders from both countries, included a panel discussing Pakistan's investment landscape and collaborative avenues under CPEC. The focus on ICT and green energy underscores a significant shift in economic relations as CPEC advances into its next operation phase.

ANF recovers 420 kg drugs in seven operations

RAWALPIND: Anti-Narcotics Force (ANF) while conducting seven operations across the country managed to recover over 420 kg of drugs and arrested five accused, said an ANF Headquarters spokesman here on Monday. He informed that in an operation, ANF recovered 800 grams of Ice drug from a parcel booked for Bahrain at a courier office in Rawalpindi. 100 intoxicated tablets (ecstasy) were recovered from an accused netted from Bhara Khau in Islamabad. In the third operation, 24 kg hashish was recovered from a vehicle intercepted near Sher Shah Toll Plaza, Multan while an accused was arrested. 25.2 kg of hashish was recovered from a vehicle stopped on Super Highway Karachi. An accused was also sent behind the bars. 15.6 kg hashish was recovered from secret cavities of a vehicle near PDA Motorway Peshawar. ANF also netted an accused. 75 kg Ice drug was recovered from an abandoned vehicle in the Bonstan area of Panjgur. In the seventh operation, 279.2 kg of hashish was recovered from a house near the Habib Zai area of Qila Abdullah. The recovered drugs were stored for smuggling. Separate cases under the Anti-Narcotics Act have been registered against the arrested accused while further investigations are under process.—APP

Pak-China sugarcane coop edges ahead for bright future

FAISAL SHEIKH

ISLAMABAD: Pak-China sugarcane cooperation edges ahead for bright future despite challenges, according to a report published by Gwadar Pro on Monday. The surge in sugar prices in Pakistan reflects a series of deep-rooted elements. Key factors contributing to this situation includes the increase in sugarcane production costs manipulation by domestic sugar "mafia" and a flawed subsidy system.

Moreover, our entire sugarcane industry needs technological changes to bring about industrial upgrading and help reduce related costs. Dr. Fahd Rasul, Associate Professor of Agronomy, University of Agriculture Faisalabad (UAF) told Gwadar Pro that the highly volatile sugar price has jumped from 85 rupees/kg to 160-170 rupees/kg ahead of the crushing season start. Sugarcane production in 2021-22 based on official plantation areas of about 1.25 million hectares

was about 88.6 million tons, a certain growth from the same period of last year (1.16 million ha/80.9 million tons). The unit output in 2021-22 (70.35 Tons/Ha) is almost the same as the previous year (69.55 Tons/Ha), according to Annual Report 2022 published by Pakistan Sugar Mills Association (PSMA). However, Pakistan's sugarcane yield per hectare is much lower than that of other major producers. In 2018 alone, the yield was 62 tons, far below the world average of

73 tons as well as India's 80 tons. Sikandar Khan, a PSMA senior official, noted that in addition to artificial factors such as monopoly and market manipulation, the increase in sugarcane production costs such as fertilizers, pesticides and transportation is the main reasons for the soaring sugar prices. Sugarcane uses more subsidized agricultural inputs than other cash crops, especially fertilizers and water. In highly water-stressed countries, including Pakistan, sugarcane consumes much more water than any other cash crop. It is urgent to cultivate high-quality sugarcane varieties that consume less water, have higher sugar extraction efficiency, and are more resistant to pests and diseases. "The sugarcane industry in Pakistan is characterized by the cultivation of several key varieties, particularly in the Punjab region.

Pak regional exports increase 14.21% in 4 months

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan's exports to the seven regional countries witnessed an increase of 14.21 percent in the first four months of the fiscal year (2023-24) as compared to the corresponding months of last year. The country's exports to the regional countries including Afghanistan, China, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, India, Nepal, and the Maldives account for a small amount of \$1443.868 million, which is 14.76 percent of Pakistan's overall exports of \$9776.912 million during July-October (2023-24), State Bank of Pakistan (SBP) reported. China tops the list of countries in terms of Pakistan's exports to its neighbouring, leaving behind other countries such as Bangladesh and Afghanistan. Pakistan carried out its border trade with the farther neighbour Sri Lanka, India, Nepal, and Maldives. Pakistan's exports to China witnessed an increase of 40.36 percent to \$952.216 million in four months of this year from \$678.386 million during last year while exports to Afghanistan also surged to \$180.686 million from \$176.019 million. The country's exports to Bangladesh however decreased by 34.73 percent to \$192.193 million this year from \$294.499 million whereas exports to Sri Lanka rose by 2.68 percent to \$114.473 million from \$111.489. The exports to India decreased to \$0.069 million from \$0.110 million in the previous year. Exports to Nepal increased by 10.91 percent to \$1.138 million from 1.026 million while to Maldives increased by 17.87 percent to \$3.093 million from 2.624 million, it added. On the other hand, the imports from seven regional countries were recorded at \$3855.354 million during the period under review as compared to \$4259.578 million during last year, showing a decline of 9.48 percent. The imports from China during July-October 2023-24 were recorded at \$3737.818 million against the \$4139.263 million during July-October 2022-23, showing a decrease of 9.69 percent during the period. Among other countries, imports from India are worth \$73.575 million against the imports of \$62.603 million, an increase of 17.52 percent while imports from Afghanistan decreased by 81.30 percent from \$10.151 million to \$1.898 million.—DNA

US Withdrawal from Afghanistan and Its Impact on Pakistan

AFNAN WASIF



Afghanistan is situated at the crossroads of Central Asia and South Asia. It shares 2640 kilometers of its eastern border with Pakistan. Afghanistan gained peculiar importance for Pakistan after the Soviet invasion in 1979. Constantly, for the last 40 years, it has been involved in three wars including Soviet Invasion, Afghan Civil War, and Global War on Terror (US Invasion). Taliban takeover and constant precariousness in Afghanistan have energized terrorist groups - ideologically aligned with the Afghan Taliban - which in turn posed a grave impact on the National Security

of Pakistan. After the US invasion of Afghanistan in 2001 following the 9/11 incident, a Peace Agreement in 2020 was signed between the Taliban and the US in Doha, Qatar ending the 20 years of war. Consequently, the Taliban retook control of Kabul on August 15, 2021. Tehrik-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP) is an alliance of militant networks formed in 2007 to muster armed opposition against Pakistan and its military. It is a predominantly Pashtun group operating against the state of Pakistan. The main goals of TTP are given below: 1. To enforce Shariah law in Pakistan by use of force 2. To conduct Jihad against Pakistani security forces These goals share similarities with the goals of the Afghan Taliban when they were dueling against US and its allied forces. The US withdrawal and the Afghan Taliban takeover encouraged and inspired the Pakistani Taliban. Because it is believed that the Taliban defeated the US a global superpower. Both Pakistani and Afghan Taliban believe in the armed struggle to establish the supremacy of Islam. This belief provides a shared ideology to both TTP and Afghan Taliban.

They both consider every system, order, and ism which is in conflict with Islam and Islamic Caliphate (Khalifat) as disbelief (Kufr). As the Afghan Taliban defeated the Afghan National Security Forces after the US withdrawal from Afghanistan, TTP started attacking Pakistani Forces. Because TTP and the Afghan Taliban both claim that they will retaliate against anyone who protects, defends, or supports any foreign invasion, troop, and puppet government. Ideological similarities could be seen in the flags of both TTP and the Afghan Taliban. White background and an imprint of Kalma constitute the flag of both the Afghan Taliban and TTP. TTP is now enjoying free operational movement in the Taliban regime. The Taliban also has released TTP prisoners in Afghanistan including Deputy Ameer Maulvi Faqir Mohammad. TTP celebrated the said move with full zeal and zest and videos went viral on social media. Hussain Haqqani stated in his article published in Foreign Policy on March 03, 2023, that, Pakistan is confronted by violence from Tehrik-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP), a derivative of the Afghan Taliban movement that is culturally and

ideologically aligned with them. After the US withdrawal from Afghanistan, the Taliban were glimpsed as heroes in Pakistan. Social media outlets were overflowed with video clips of the Taliban roaming in the presidential palace in Kabul and celebrating the triumph. They emerged victorious in the eyes of their ideological allies in Pakistan. As a result, the scourge of terrorism has resurfaced again. About 31 terrorist groups have joined hands with TTP since July 2020 and started to revolt against the writ of the state and intensified the armed struggle inspired by the so-called Taliban victory. TTP and other terrorist organizations are bouncing back with more energy and motivation after the US withdrawal from Afghanistan. The Afghan Taliban and TTP both hold strong beliefs in employing violence to mold the world according to their own definition. According to the data revealed by the Security Report 2022 of Pakistan Institute of Peace Studies, Pakistan faced a 27% increase in terror attacks from the year before. During August and September 2022, TTP started gathering in the

mountainous areas of Swat and Dir, but ISPR rubbished the exaggerated presence of TTP and issued a statement that Pakistan Army is observing their presence and movement. On November 28, 2022, TTP terminated the ceasefire agreement concluded during Bajwa's regime, and on November 30, a TTP suicide bomber blasted himself in the vicinity of a Police truck in Balochistan. In the first 4 months of 2023, 265 attacks were conducted by TTP against law enforcement agencies which resulted in 234 casualties and 282 soldiers sustained injuries, according to the media wing of TTP. The immediate meltdown of the Ghani regime and abrupt Taliban control over Afghanistan without the political settlement of the Afghan conundrum has left issues threatening the national security of Pakistan. Terrorist activities increase in Pakistan after the US withdrawal from Afghanistan. The main goals of TTP are not aligned with the true essence of the Constitution of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan. Because they challenge the writ of the state and deny to abide by the existing laws. If they want

to establish a system purely in accordance with their own radical interpretation of Islam, they can choose the prevailing mechanism democracy to implement their system of government. It is a peaceful way to propagate their views and beliefs. Pakistan cannot allow someone to create chaos and disturb the peace and sanctity of the state and to impose its will by the use of force. Pakistan as a state should negotiate with, aimed to maintain peace and establish its writ, TTP if they surrender themselves before the Constitution of Pakistan. If they do not do the same then the government should use force against rebellious activities of TTP and other terrorist organizations inspired by the Afghan Taliban, to maintain and protect the peace and sovereignty of the state. On the other hand, Pakistan should stress the implementation of the commitments made by the Afghan Taliban to resolve the issue of cross-border terrorism and safe sanctuaries for terrorists.

—The writer is a student of Strategic Studies at NDU

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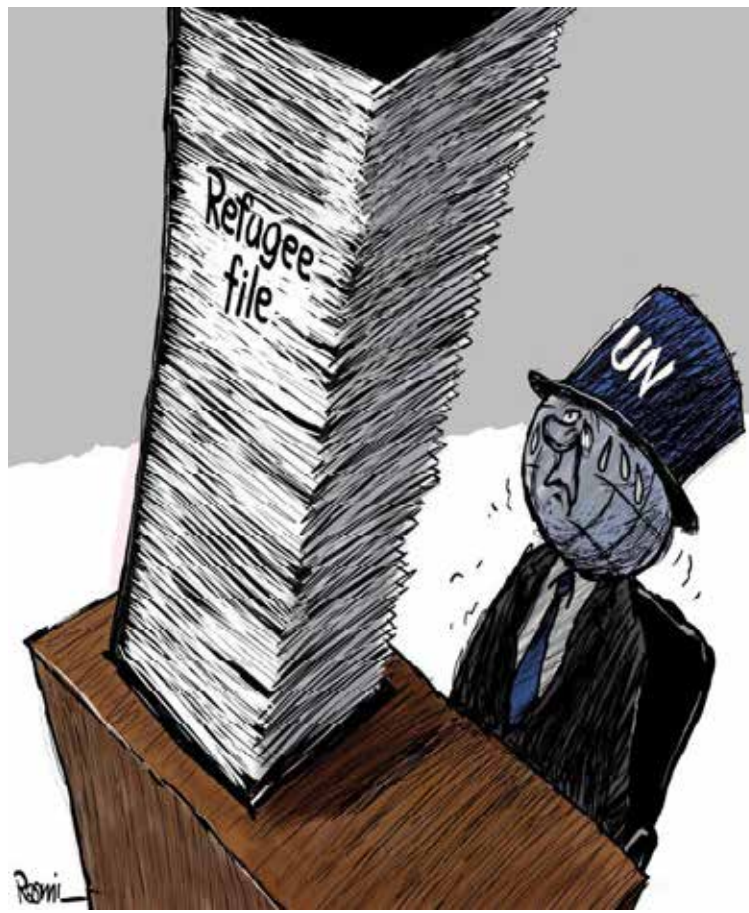
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Argentina would benefit from joining BRICS

Argentinian president-elect Javier Milei's team in charge of international relations is reportedly weighing up whether Argentina should proceed with joining BRICS or not. This, according to experts the team has consulted, represents "an opportunity rather than a risk" for the country. While a final official decision has yet to be made, whichever side the coin lands on will have a significant impact on Argentina's economic future. That the right-wing libertarian president-elect is mulling the merits of joining may be indicative of a softening of his hard-line campaign stance. That stance included a number of provocative claims in addition to the suggestion that the South American country would not be one of the new members joining the BRICS grouping of the world's five largest emerging markets. Having secured victory in the election, that he is apparently willing to adopt a more pragmatic change in attitude comes as no surprise. Given that Milei is no longer in the opposition, he is now tasked with the seemingly impossible mission of navigating Argentina out of unprecedented economic woes marked by a triple-digit inflation, depleted foreign reserves and a poverty rate of more than 40 percent. Against this backdrop, good relations with the major emerging markets of BRICS are just too important for Argentina. It would be akin to cutting off one's nose to spite one's face to distance Argentina from other emerging economy markets. As outgoing president Alberto Fernandez said, joining BRICS would help Argentina "open up possibilities of joining new markets, of consolidating existing markets, of raising investment coming in, of creating jobs and raising imports", all of which Argentina desperately needs. Membership of the enlarged BRICS would definitely align the country with the economic dynamics of the BRICS member states, which combined already account for 42 percent of the world's population and more than one-fourth of the global GDP. The new BRICS with the addition of six countries would represent 46 percent of the world population and around 37 percent of global GDP when measured at purchasing power parity. The BRICS grouping has become an important platform for emerging markets and developing countries to strengthen solidarity and cooperation. The New Development Bank the group established in 2014, as well as the BRICS nations' trillions of dollars in reserves, would be able to provide enough liquidity to help Argentina refinance its mounting debts. Indeed, Argentina would have nothing to lose, but everything to gain, from its joining of BRICS. Not to do so would prove to be extremely costly for the country.



China, Japan, ROK strengthen ties for common interests

That the foreign ministers of China, Japan and the Republic of Korea met for their first trilateral meeting after a hiatus of four years should be considered a positive development for the relations among the three major countries in East Asia. Given the fact that the GDP of the three economies put together makes up about 25 percent of the world's total and the trade volume among the three constitutes about 20 percent of the world's total, how their cooperation fares has a bearing on the economic development of the world. No wonder Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi told his Japanese and ROK counterparts that the three countries should play a more proactive role in promoting regional and global development in the face of the headwinds buffeting the global economy. To this end, Wang called on the three countries to restart negotiations on their trilateral free trade agreement as soon as possible, maintain the momentum of regional economic integration, improve the multi-channel and multi-level regional free trade arrangements, and contribute to the common goal of pushing for a Free Trade Area of the Asia-Pacific. Wang urged his Japanese and ROK counterparts to resist turning regional cooperation into camp politics. He also said in bilateral meetings with Japanese Foreign Minister Yoko Kamikawa and ROK Foreign Minister Park Jin that economic and technology issues should not be politicized, which is undoubtedly a prerequisite for Japan and the ROK to have good relations with China. For any sustained improvement in the relations among the three neighbors, it is vital that the three countries show respect for each other and pay due care and attention to each other's core concerns. It is natural for the three countries to have differences on a range of issues. But as close neighbors and important economic and trade partners to each other, continued communication is essential and they should establish a long-term mechanism to iron out or shelve their differences. It is also important for the three countries to promote cooperation and exchanges in a wide range of areas, which will hopefully increase political trust among them and thereby facilitate the improvement of bilateral and trilateral relations. That the three sides agreed to create the necessary conditions and make the relevant preparatory work for the leaders of the three countries to meet is a positive move in this respect. Seoul and Tokyo should be clear about why the annual meeting among the leaders of the three countries agreed upon in 2008 has been suspended since 2020. They both need to not let Washington guide their actions and they should refrain from following its lead in politicizing economic and technology cooperation and trying to put the brake on China's development. There is no reason for the three countries to let their differences, which can be peacefully resolved, prevail at the expense of the development of their ties.

Urgency unveiled: Propelling Pakistan into action amidst the climate emergency

Imran Ghaznavi



Regulatory Regime on Net Zero Transition: Pioneering Change - To spearhead the transition towards a net-zero future, the establishment of a robust regulatory regime is indispensable. It's not merely a policy shift; it's a fundamental restructuring. This entails the installation of a dedicated regulatory body, comprising seasoned professionals adept in regulatory affairs, environmental science

As the world hurtles toward the precipice of a climate catastrophe, the gravity of our situation cannot be overstated. It is a stark reality, a call to arms that echoes louder with each passing day. Pakistan, like many other nations, stands at the precipice of environmental upheaval, and the need for immediate, resolute action is not just a suggestion but a moral imperative. **Climate Emergency Declaration: A Call to Wakefulness - The first and foremost step in averting the impending crisis is the declaration of a climate emergency in Pakistan. This is not a hyperbolic plea; it is a recognition of the existential threat that looms over our nation. A climate emergency declaration would signal a collective acknowledgment of the urgency and commitment to transformative change.** **Regulatory Regime on Net Zero Transition: Pioneering Change - To spearhead the transition towards a net-zero future, the establishment of a robust regulatory regime is indispensable. It's not merely a policy shift; it's a fundamental restructuring. This entails the installation of a dedicated regulatory body, comprising seasoned professionals adept in regulatory affairs, environmental science, policy formulation, and sustainable development. This body would act as the vanguard, formulating and enforcing stringent measures**

to curtail carbon emissions across sectors. **Engaging Local Governments: The Cradle of Change - The locus of real change lies at the grassroots level. Engaging local governments and district administrations actively in the climate change battle is not just prudent; it's imperative. Collaboration with federal and provincial counterparts is key. Local entities must not only advocate for the elimination of carbon emissions but also play an active role in implementing strict measures. Through a bottom-up approach, we can forge a formidable alliance against the impending threats of climate change.** **Academia's Vital Role: Nurturing Solutions - The academic community, often an unsung hero, holds immense potential in discovering innovative, locally tailored solutions. Collaboration between academia and policymakers is not just beneficial; it is essential. Researchers must embark on a mission to identify cost-effective, sustainable practices that can be implemented at the community level. Fostering a culture of research and development will lead us to solutions that resonate with Pakistan's unique challenges and opportunities.** **Climate Change Risk Assessment: A Proactive Stance - A critical cornerstone in our climate resilience strategy is the initiation of a comprehensive Climate Change Risk Assessment for**

Pakistan. Urgency is not just desirable; it is non-negotiable. This assessment will be the bedrock for informed decision-making. Policymakers, armed with this assessment, can pinpoint vulnerable areas, prioritize interventions, and allocate resources strategically. This proactive stance is not just necessary; it is paramount for building resilience and adapting to the evolving climate landscape. **A Unified Call to Action - In conclusion, the urgency to address the impending climate crisis is not a hypothetical scenario; it is our reality. The proposed steps - declaring a climate emergency, establishing a regulatory regime, engaging local governments, involving academia, and initiating a climate change risk assessment - form a comprehensive strategy. This is not just a call to action for individuals, communities, and institutions; it is a unified call for Pakistan to rise and meet this global challenge head-on. It is time to put climate change and net zero transition on the agenda of the Special Investment Facilitation Council (SIFC).** The author, a regulatory professional, urges collective action and welcomes further discussion at ighaznavi@gmail.com. This is not just a plea; it is a summons to shape our collective destiny in the face of an impending climate emergency.

Stupendous economic development of China

Ghazala Anbreen

China's economy has grown faster than any other country in the world and this progress is unsurpassed. All these facts invite the need to analyze Chinese development scientifically and find the reasons for its progress. Deeper scrutiny will reveal that certain factors contributed to this tremendous success and they are enumerated below, "Sincere leadership, Self-reliance, and indefatigable work". Under Mao Zedong's leadership, China flourished without war, weapons, or the use of force through the army. An indication of this is the reality that you go anywhere in any part of the world and you will find things made in China. Simplicity was Mao's hallmark

The 1839-1949 period was called a century of humiliation in Chinese History. 40 years ago the poverty rate in this country was more than 90 percent. But now China has proved its mettle. In 2021 GDP of China was 17.73 trillion dollars. Today China is the world's second biggest industrial economy, and it has proved itself to be a country with the biggest foreign reserves in the whole world. In 2018 China's share in export of domestic products all over the world was 18.66 percent. China's economy has grown faster than any other country in the world and this progress is unsurpassed. All these facts invite the need to analyze Chinese development scientifically and find the reasons for its progress. Deeper scrutiny will reveal that certain factors contributed to this tremendous success and they are enumerated below, "Sincere leadership, Self-reliance, and indefatigable work". Under Mao Zedong's leadership, China flourished without war, weapons, or the use of force through the army. An indication of this is the reality that you go anywhere in any part of the world and you will find things made in China. Simplicity was Mao's hallmark. He used to wear simple clothes, lived in a humble house, and used a bicycle. He very rarely went on foreign visits to any other country in his life (only twice in fact for state visits to the Soviet Union). Mao declared capitalism as exploitative and decided that China would manufacture the products itself to avert dependence. The theory is termed as Mao's Great Leap Forward. The campaign was centered on a shift from an agrarian system towards an industrial society through the formation of people's communes. In 1966 Mao Zedong initiated a cultural revolution. As a result, China got isolated from the rest of the world. However, the Chinese now had realized that this had pushed China to the brink of destruction from economic point of view. Chinese leadership then

decided to adopt the capitalistic system for foreign investment. In 1972 the first step towards Chinese development started when USA President Richard Nixon visited China. In this way the relations of both the countries flourished. The next visionary leader was Deng Xiaoping. Under his rule, Chinese Textile Revolution saw its boom. TVEs (Township and Village Enterprises) flourished. These were used to produce toys, furniture farm tools and fertilizers and they became foundation of the Chinese economy in the 1990s along with the textile industry. These were a part of reforms introduced by Deng Xiaoping. The top-down policy had not addressed the local problems and failed because of state control. Deng introduced the private and joined stock ownership and he adopted the bottom-up approach instead. It is pertinent to mention here that cheap and skilled labour also enabled China to become the world's factory. Chinese economic policy evolved from time to time with changing and emerging technology. The echo system for special Economic zones was developed which included massive infrastructural investments. These investments included high-speed railways and electricity grids. Factories were built under private ownership with minimal taxes. Manufacturing, outsourcing, and conditional foreign investments were also introduced by China in the 1990s. Ali Baba, an e-commerce company incorporated elements of Google, eBay, and Amazon. Similarly, Baidu (a Chinese search engine) is referred to as a copycat of Google. Today its network has expanded to almost 80 countries. From 1990 till 2010 China grew rapidly. Xi Jing Ping adopted the go-global policy and through Belt and Road Initiative Chinese investments reached Asia, Europe, and Africa. The COVID-19 pandemic and the escalated policies as a nationwide lockdown

impacted its economy significantly. However, China has proved resurgent and fought the menace. China serves as a potent and worthwhile example to emulate and follow suit by all the developing and underdeveloped countries of the world. Xi Jinping's book, "The Governance of China" is a four volume collection of speeches and writings by Xi Jinping. This collection highlights the cultural and economic development, reforms, socialist rule of law etc. Following are some of the extracts from this book, enunciating the importance of youth in the nation-building process. Xi Jinping is trying to make this world realize the significance of education and he is also bringing home the idea how hard work can enable the educated Chinese youth play a pivotal role in the economic reform process of China and contribute to the national development: Hard work paints a bright backdrop for a young life, and action is the best way for young people to hone their skills". "For China's youth in the era, the timing is ideal to do great things since you have a vast stage to display your talents, and brighter prospects than ever before of realizing your dreams". "Young Chinese in the new era are more confident and capable of self-improvement, and think more critically. But when you come under the influence of diverse ideas, it is inevitable that you may become confused about matters such as ideals and reality, doctrines and practical issues, egoism and altruism, personal interests and the common good, and China and the world". "More pertinent, meticulous education and guidance are needed to help young people observe society with a keen eye, think about life with a sober mind, and create the future through your wisdom".

Briefs

PM Visit to the State of Kuwait

FROM PAGE 01
MoUs in the field of Manpower, Information Technology, Mineral exploration and Food Security, Energy and Defence. Pakistan and Kuwait enjoy deep rooted and historical ties spanning over six decades. The year 2023 marks the 60th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations. Meanwhile, Caretaker Prime Minister Anwaar-ul-Haq Kakar today held a bilateral meeting with Sheikh Mohamed bin Zayed Al Nahyan, President of the United Arab Emirates in Abu Dhabi. Chief of Army Staff General Syed Asim Munir, NI (M) was also present at the occasion. The leaders underlined that Pakistan and the UAE have historic and deep-rooted fraternal ties which have stood the test of time. They reaffirmed the resolve to further strengthen bilateral strategic cooperation and dialogue between Pakistan and the UAE. Prime Minister Kakar expressed profound gratitude for the UAE's firm support to Pakistan in economic and financial domain. The UAE is home to 1.8 million Pakistanis, contributing to the progress, prosperity and economic development of the two brotherly countries.

IMF tax experts' team reaches...

FROM PAGE 01
amendments in the tax policy, sources said. "Introducing amendments in the tax policy aimed at expanding the tax net and collecting maximum tax," sources said. According to sources, the FBR and the IMF experts will jointly prepare the basic structure for introducing the scheme to retailers. "One million more taxpayers will be added to the tax net to enhance the number of taxpayers to six million," sources said. "The IMF technical team and the FBR will jointly prepare amendments in the tax policy, which will come into force by the next budget," according to sources. It was further learnt that the talks on the tax net will not affect the transfer of the loan tranche. Earlier it emerged that the IMF executive board is likely to approve the staff-level agreement with Pakistan on December 07. The IMF executive board meeting will likely be held on December 7 and is expected to consider Pakistan's case in the meeting.

2 civilians killed, soldiers...

FROM PAGE 01
Centre for Research and Security Studies (CRSS), in a report released in October, noted that the security forces lost at least 386 personnel in the first nine months of 2023, marking an eight-year high. Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and Balochistan were the primary centres of violence, accounting for nearly 94% of all fatalities and 89% of attacks (including incidents of terrorism and security forces operations) recorded during this period. Furthermore, Pakistan has blamed Afghanistan for the rising terrorism and Islamabad has been consistently pointing out the use of US-made weapons by terrorists involved in attacks in the country. In September of this year, the Foreign Office had expressed concerns over the "advanced weapons" being used by the terrorists in Afghanistan to attack Pakistan and its security agencies.

No Afghan allowed to support...

FROM PAGE 01
aliens or assist such individuals in obtaining employment. "Information about any such illegal alien or the person providing employment to him should be provided to the Ministry of Interior for legal action on the helpline available on the website of the Ministry (UAN 051 111-367-226, HOTLINE 051-9211685)," the Ministry statement added.

Davis Cup final 2023

Italy beat Australia to win first title for 47 years

Sinner extended his record to 5-0 this week by defeating Alex de Minaur 6-3, 6-0 in the second singles match of final. He secured a 2-0 win over Australia for Italy's first Davis Cup title since 1976

SPORTS DESKS

MALAGA: Jannik Sinner concluded an impeccable week by guiding Italy to its first Davis Cup title in almost 50 years. Sinner extended his record to 5-0 this week by defeating Alex de Minaur 6-3, 6-0 in the second singles match of final. He secured a 2-0 win over Australia for Italy's first Davis Cup title since 1976. Matteo Araldi provided Italy with the initial point, securing a 7-5, 2-6, 6-4 victory over Alexei Popyrin. The No. 4 Sinner defeated top-ranked Novak Djokovic in both singles and doubles matches in Saturday's semifinal against Serbia. The 22-year-old Italian needed 1 hour and 21 minutes to seal Italy's victory against Australia. "We are all very young. We are really hungry to try to win it one more time for our life, but having this feeling at least once, it is a really special feeling," said Sinner, who has beaten nine top-10 players since September, although he lost to Djokovic in the ATP Tour Finals a week ago. Araldi saved eight break points before securing a break of his own to close out the first match in the decisive third set. "I think I won one of the most important matches of my life," the 44th-ranked Araldi said. The Italians, who had never won the title other than in 1976, had lost in the



three finals they played against Australia, which was last year's runner-up to Canada. Australia eliminated Finland in the last four this year. The Aussies are 28-time champions but haven't lifted the trophy at the men's tennis top team event since captain Lleyton Hewitt was on the winning squad as a player in 2003. "There hasn't been another nation

that's gone back-to-back in the last two years, so we are showing a pretty good effort collectively," De Minaur said. "We are very, very close. It stinks like hell. We'll be back. We'll get this. I mean, we've got a very strong future ahead of us." This year, Australia became just the second nation to win 200 Davis Cup ties, with the United States being the other.

Matteo Berrettini was not in the Italian team because of an injury but was in Malaga, supporting his fellow citizens. "Thanks to Matteo," Sinner said. "He has had a very tough year (with) a lot of injuries. For all of us, that he came here means a lot. He gave us a lot of positive energy." Malaga again The final eight of the Davis Cup Finals will stay in Malaga for another year. Spain was awarded a wild card Sunday for the group stage in Valencia. This year's finalists, Italy and Australia, also go straight through to the group stage in September. So does Great Britain, which lost to Serbia in the quarterfinals. The women's Billie Jean King Cup Finals will remain in the southern Spanish city of Seville next year. Ducati's maestro, Francesco Bagnaia, clinched his second consecutive MotoGP world championship crown at the season-ending Valencia Grand Prix on Sunday. The crescendo of the championship unfolded in a gripping narrative, marked by heart-stopping moments and unexpected twists. The tension was palpable as Jorge Martin of Pramac Racing, trailing Bagnaia by a mere 14 points before the final showdown, injected suspense into the title race with a stellar victory in Saturday's sprint. Yet, as fate would have it, Martin's ambitions crumbled in the face of Bagnaia's relentless prowess.

Bagnaia seals 2nd consecutive MotoGP crown in Valencia thriller



PARIS: Ducati's maestro, Francesco Bagnaia, clinched his second consecutive MotoGP world championship crown at the season-ending Valencia Grand Prix. The crescendo of the

championship unfolded in a gripping narrative, marked by heart-stopping moments and unexpected twists. The tension was palpable as Jorge Martin of Pramac Racing, trailing Bagnaia by

naia's relentless prowess. From the race's kick-off, Bagnaia, elevated to pole position due to Maverick Vinales' penalty, ignited the track with a stellar start. The first two laps witnessed a neck-and-neck battle with Martin, who charged from sixth to second by turn two, setting the stage for a nail-biting confrontation. Martin's eagerness to overtake Bagnaia, however, proved to be his undoing. A clash between the two on the third lap saw the Spaniard forced wide, plummeting to seventh. Undeterred, Martin embarked on a fearless resurgence, only to collide with Marc Marquez's rear on lap six, ending his championship dreams in the gravel. The crash marked a somber conclusion to Marquez's illustrious stint with Honda, with his final race for the Japanese giants culminating in a non-finish. Marquez is set to join Gresini Racing in 2024, closing a chapter in MotoGP history. - Agencies

Azam fined 50% match fees for displaying Palestinian flag

KARACHI: Middle-order batter Azam Khan was fined 50% of his match fees for breaching clothing and equipment regulations (displaying unapproved logo/political messaging) during the National T20 tournament in Karachi. Azam displayed Palestine's flag on his bat during the National T20 game. The flamboyant batter is playing for Karachi Whites and scored 35 against Lahore Blues on Sunday before being summoned by the match referee Mohammad Javed. A source privy to the matter confirmed to Geo News that the young batter was fined 50% of his match fees. The batter was earlier warned by the referee not to display the unapproved logo (Palestine's flag) on his bat as it would be a breach of the ICC code of conduct, of which the Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) is also a signatory. Azam had, according to sources, informed the referee that all of his bats have the same stickers. The ICC regulation for clothing and equipment states that players shall not be allowed to display messages that carry political, religious, or racial activities or causes. An official of the PCB confirmed to Geo News that Azam was charged for violating clothing and equipment regulations. The sources also confirmed that Azam had the same sticker on his bat during two previous games of the National T20 Cup. However, no one had warned him before today's game. In a similar move in October this year, Pakistan's cricket team during the ICC Men's Cricket World Cup showed their firm support and shared their prayers for all Palestinians suffering at the hands of Israel. Indian fans and cricket experts had raised questions on the players' constant support for Palestine asking ICC - the governing body of the game - whether such moves were allowed in the tournament. - DNA

Bellingham breaks Cristiano Ronaldo's record

LONDON: English midfielder Jude Bellingham has broken the club record for scoring the most goals in the first 15 matches at Real Madrid, surpassing Cristiano Ronaldo in his debut La Liga season. Bellingham contributed to Real Madrid's 3-0 win over Cadiz at the Estadio Nuevo Mirandilla, with a goal and an assist to extending his goal tally to 14 in the ongoing season. He left Real Madrid legends Cristiano Ronaldo, Alfredo Di Stefano and Pruden Sanchez behind to claim the record as they all scored 13 goals in their first 15 games. Bellingham's feat is even more impressive considering the fact that he plays in the midfield while the legends he surpassed are all strikers. Jude Bellingham has been in impressive form in the ongoing season since making his La Liga debut with a goal in Real Madrid's season opener against Athletic Club. Bellingham was signed by Real Madrid this summer from Borussia Dortmund at a base transfer fee of €103 million. He is currently the top-scorer in La Liga 2023-24 and a solid contender for Pichichi, an award for the top-scorer in the Spanish league with 14 goals, followed by Atletico Madrid's Antoine Griezmann with nine goals. - Agencies

Players unhappy with PCB over delay in NOCs

KARACHI: Several Pakistan cricketers are reportedly unhappy with chief selector Wahab Riaz for delaying the issuance of NOCs to players to compete in foreign leagues, such as the Big Bash League in Australia, leading to tension between the two sides the Press Trust of India (PTI) news agency reported on Sunday. Sources close to the players told PTI that all-rounder Imad Wasim had decided to end his international career because of the tension prevailing between the chief selector and the cricketers over the issuance of NOCs. Imad had announced his retirement on Friday, bringing down the curtain to his eight-year international career. "Wahab has made it clear to all centrally-contracted players that their first priority is to play for Pakistan and also insisted that anyone wanting to be considered for selection to national team has to make appearances in domestic cricket," said the source. He added that Imad decided to retire as he had con-

tracts lined up for lucrative T10 and T20 leagues in the UAE, Australia and South Africa. "Imad and some other players are yet to be issued NOCs for the T10 league in Abu Dhabi while the board has also not taken a decision on issuing NOCs for the Big Bash in Australia," he added. PCB chief Zaka Ashraf had recently told media that the board had decided as a policy that centrally-contracted players would be given permission to play in only one league apart from the Pakistan Super League. Zaka attributed Pakistan's poor performance in the recently-concluded World Cup in India to his predecessor's decision to issue NOCs to several members of the squad to play in different leagues before the Asia Cup. Pakistan failed to make it to the World Cup semi-finals after losing five of their nine matches. Wahab, who until recently was active on the franchise cricket circuit and had said he will play in next year's PSL as well, has made it clear that centrally-contracted players must find a balance between national duty and franchise-based leagues, as the PCB wants them fit for different assignments. Some of the players are not happy with the strong stand taken by Wahab and Zaka and are anxiously waiting for NOCs for the upcoming leagues. Haris Rauf, who pulled out of the race for selection for the three-Test series in Australia, and some other players have already entered into agreements to play in the T10 league and Big Bash. - DNA

Inter Milan keep Juventus at arm's length

Inzaghi's men maintain two-point lead over closest title rivals after scrappy 1-1 draw

OUR CORRESPONDENTS

MILAN: Lautaro Martinez ensured that Inter Milan kept hold of their two-point lead at the top of Serie A as he struck in scrappy 1-1 draw at closest rivals Juventus. Argentina forward Martinez swept home Marcus Thuram's low cross in the 33rd minute following fine play down the right flank from his strike partner, to keep second-placed Juve at arm's length in the title race. His 15th goal in all competitions brought Inter level six minutes after Dusan Vlahovic broke a two-month scoring duck with a similar first-time finish at the Allianz Stadium in Turin. The stalemate ended a six-match winning streak in all competitions for Inter, who are favourites to claim a 20th Scudetto ahead of AC Milan who have also won the league 19 times. "For how the match went we'll take the point," said coach Simone Inzaghi to DAZN. "We know it's not easy to score at Juventus but after going behind the team stayed in the match and we scored a great goal." Inzaghi's side have come through the first of a series of tough tests with a Champions League trip to Benfica next up on Wednesday before

they face Napoli in Naples next Sunday. They have already reached the last 16 of Europe's top competition but are battling with Real Sociedad for top spot in Group D with the Spanish outfit travelling to Milan next month. Inter's hierarchy have repeatedly said Juve are favourites for the title as they have no European commitments but beyond

Vlahovic's fifth goal of the season Massimiliano Allegri's side offered very little. The away side were missing starting defenders Benjamin Pavard and Alessandro Bastoni but had few problems dealing with Juve's predictable attacks as both teams seemed keener to not lose than to try to win. A lively opening period was followed up



by a miserable second half in which niggly fouls and protests to referee Marco Guida dominated, and a drab encounter petered out to a draw which seemed to satisfy both teams. "It's a good result. We wanted to win, obviously, but they are a very tough team to play against," said Adrien Rabiot. French international midfielder Rabiot admitted that Juve were aiming for the title despite Allegri repeatedly saying his objective was Champions League qualification. "Obviously we talk about winning the Scudetto in the dressing room," he added. "We're all great players, we have to realise that... I believe we can do it." Paulo Dybala felt the need to silence the haters after helping to fire Roma fifth with the decisive second goal in a 3-1 win over struggling Udinese. Dybala rolled Roma into a 2-1 lead with nine minutes remaining at the Stadio Olimpico after being brilliantly flicked through by Romeu Lukaku, with Stephan El Shaarawy then completing the scoring in the final minute. It was Dybala's third goal of the league campaign and his first since a brace against Empoli in mid-September, and he put his finger to his lips for people who "talk too much for no reason".

Hammas-Israel truce extended by 2 days

FROM PAGE 01
the meeting for foreign ministers in Spain that the truce must last "as long as possible" so that captives can be released and humanitarian aid can be sent to Gaza. "The central thing we are currently struggling to do is see each other's suffering. Because only if the suffering of others can be healed will your own suffering also end. Israelis can only live in security if Palestinians live in security," Baerbock reportedly said. The UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) says at least 215 Palestinians, including 55 children, have been killed by Israeli forces in the occupied West Bank since October 7. At least eight other people, including one child, were killed by Israeli settlers whose attacks have spiked since the Gaza assault began.

Iran warns of plot to stoke tension in...

FROM PAGE 01
"In parallel with committing war and inhuman crimes in the Gaza Strip, the Zionists seek to cause tension and promote warmongering in the West Asian region by increasing their attacks against Syria's territorial integrity and targeting civil infrastructure, including airports," he said. The Iranian spokesperson held the Zionist regime accountable for expansion of any crisis in the region. Israel frequently targets military positions inside Syria, especially those of the Lebanese resistance movement Hezbollah which has played a key role in helping the Syrian army in its fight against foreign-backed terrorists. In its latest act of aggression against Syria, Israel carried out airstrikes on Damascus International Airport, putting the facility out of service.

IH CJ links 'unexplained...'

FROM PAGE 01
after he left for London with the court's permission for medical treatment. Nawaz returned to the country last month after ending nearly four years in self-imposed exile in London. Soon after landing in Pakistan, Nawaz had filed two separate applications seeking the restoration of his appeals against his conviction in both references. He had contended that while he was abroad for medical treatment, the pending appeals were dismissed for non-prosecution. Nawaz has pleaded that the court hear his pleas on merit as his petitions against the convictions were dismissed for non-prosecution as he was abroad seeking medical treatment. Nawaz, accompanied by his legal team including former law minister Azam Nazir Tarar, appeared before the IH amid tight security. During the hearing of the case, PML-N's counsel Amjad Pervez told the bench that the Supreme Court had formed the joint investigation team (JIT) to probe the corruption allegations against Nawaz.

AC sends Imran on judicial...

FROM PAGE 01
returned to the country by the UK during the previous PTI government. Imran was initially arrested in the case earlier this year from the premises of the Islamabad High Court but was later released after the Supreme Court declared the arrest unlawful. On Nov 14, the PTI chief, who is already imprisoned in Adiala Jail in the cipher case, was again arrested by the National Accountability Bureau (NAB) in the Al-Qadir Trust case. He was then handed over to the watchdog on physical remand. During the hearing today, Imran's wife and legal team appeared before the court. A five-member NAB team was also present on the occasion. The officials from the accountability watchdog requested an extension for the former premier's physical remand. However, the court rejected the plea and placed the PTI chief on judicial remand.

Briefs

Sierra Leone
govt regains
control after
attack

FREETOWN : Sierra Leone's government has said it was in full control after reporting a security breach by unidentified attackers at a military armoury in the capital Freetown that sparked armed clashes. Authorities in the English-speaking West African country - which has been going through a political crisis following elections in June this year - have declared a national curfew until further notice. The "government is in firm control of the security situation in Freetown, the attackers are retreating," information minister Chornor Bah told AFP. An AFP journalist said calm was slowly returning to the capital by Sunday evening, but checkpoints heavily guarded by security forces remained in place. "We are trying to collate the number of arrests and casualties," Bah said, adding that "those responsible for today's attack will be hunted down to face the full force of the law". Videos posted on social media appeared to show men in uniform under arrest in the back or beside a military pick-up truck.—APP

Teens in
court for
French
teacher's
beheading

PARIS: Six teenagers go on trial behind closed doors on Monday, accused of involvement in the beheading of French history teacher Samuel Paty by a suspected Islamist in 2020 in an attack that struck at the heart of the country's secular values. The teacher had shown his pupils cartoons of the Prophet Muhammad in a class on freedom of expression, angering a number of Muslim parents. Muslims believe that any depiction of the Prophet is blasphemous. One of the minors is a 15-year-old girl who allegedly told her parents that Paty had shown caricatures of the prophet in her class. She will be charged with false accusation after it was established that she was not in the class when it happened. Paty, 47, was killed outside his school in a Paris suburb by an 18-year-old assailant, born in Russia of Chechen origin, who was shot dead by police soon after the attack. The five other minors to be prosecuted, aged between 14 and 15 at the time of the attack, will be charged with premeditated criminal conspiracy, or ambush. They are suspected of having pointed out Paty to the murderer or helped monitor his exit from the school. All six minors were referred to the children's court and could face 2.5 years in prison.—APP

Philippines
promotes
southern
Muslim
region's cuisine
globally

MANILA: The Philippines wants to promote halal cuisine from Mindanao and put the island on the global culinary map, a tourism official said on Monday as efforts are underway to attract more Muslim travelers from around the globe to the region. Tourism is a key sector of the economy for the Philippines, an archipelagic country known for its white sand beaches and beautiful diving spots, with the sector contributing nearly 13 percent, or about \$44 billion, of the country's gross domestic product in 2019. After the global travel industry ground to a halt due to the COVID-19 pandemic, Manila expanded its tourism goals to revive the sector and began to position itself as a Muslim-friendly destination. "We are promoting Filipino halal food, specifically Muslim Mindanao food, because we want more people to go to Mindanao," Myra Paz Abubakar, the Department of Tourism undersecretary for Muslim affairs, told Arab News on Monday. The southern island of Mindanao is one of the few regions with a sizeable Muslim population in the Philippines, a minority group that makes up around 6 percent of the country.—APP

Luxon takes oath as
New Zealand's new PM

Luxon, 53, once chief executive of Air New Zealand, was sworn in as head of a new coalition government by New Zealand's governor-general in a ceremony in the capital Wellington

WELLINGTON : Former airline boss Christopher Luxon formally took office as New Zealand's prime minister, vowing to tame inflation and bring down interest rates. Luxon took over on Monday six weeks after his conservative National Party won national elections, ending a six-year Labour Party reign ushered in by Jacinda Ardern. Luxon, 53, once chief executive of Air New Zealand, was sworn in as head of a new coalition government by New Zealand's governor-general in a ceremony in the capital Wellington. "It is an honour and an awesome responsibility," Luxon told reporters. "The number one

job is to fix the economy. We have to reduce the cost of living and get inflation under control so we can lower interest rates and make food more affordable." Luxon said his new government would also focus in its first few months on restoring law and order and improving public services. "We need to go to work," he said. The former Labour government had struggled to control the rising cost of living, a global issue blamed in part on pandemic-related supply issues and Russia's attack on Ukraine. The previous prime minister, Labour Party leader Chris Hipkins, took over from Ardern in January. She had unexpectedly resigned,



calling an end to her five-year period in office because she no longer had "enough in the tank". Luxon said his cabinet would meet over the next two days with a focus on signing off their plans for the first 100 days in office.

National has promised to crack down on crime, ban cellphones in schools and scrap planned fuel tax hikes. "A lot of our focus is on tackling the underlying cause of inflation," Luxon said. "That means a series of things to make sure we generate savings out of the public service and that government spending is prudent." Luxon becomes the 42nd prime minister of New Zealand after protracted coalition talks came to an agreement on Friday. His National party has formed a three-party coalition with the conservative ACT and populist New Zealand First parties to govern in the

123-seat parliament. In a first for New Zealand, the deputy prime minister role will be shared in two 18-month stints. New Zealand First leader Winston Peters, 78, was sworn in alongside Luxon as deputy prime minister but will hand over the role at the end of May 2025. He will be replaced by ACT leader David Seymour for the remainder of the three-year parliamentary term. Luxon, a father of two, is a wealthy teetotaler and lover of country music who rose to prominence when he ran the national airline for seven years before entering politics.—Agencies

Australia allocates \$168m budget
for asylum seeker monitoring

Home Affairs Minister Clare O'Neil said the government's priority was protecting the safety of the Australian community within the limits of the law

WEB DESKS

SYDNEY : The Australian government has committed an additional \$168 million in funding for police and other law enforcement officials to monitor 141 refugees and migrants freed when a court ruled their indefinite detention was unconstitutional. The new funding over two years reflects an increase in the workload of law enforcement officials due to government concerns about a heightened community risk posed by those released following a landmark High Court decision on November 8. That ruling said the government could no longer indefinitely detain foreigners who had been refused Australian visas, but could not be deported to their homelands and no third country would accept them. The migrants

released due to the High Court ruling were mostly people with criminal records. The group also included people who failed visa character tests on other grounds and some who were challenging visa refusals through the courts, with some being refugees and stateless people. Home Affairs Minister Clare O'Neil said the government's priority was protecting the safety of the Australian community within the limits of the law. "This funding will ensure that our agencies are able to dedicate the time and resources that will be required to manage this cohort into the future," O'Neil said. The Parliament passed a raft of emergency laws on November 16 that imposed restrictions on the newly released migrants including curfews, police reporting conditions and

a requirement to wear an electronic ankle bracelet to track their movements at all times. Reasons behind test case decision Lawyers for a Chinese refugee last week lodged a High Court challenge to the new measures, arguing their client was being punished through his curfew and being forced to wear an electronic bracelet. The seven High Court judges will on Tuesday release the reasons for their test case decision made three weeks ago to free a stateless Rohingya man convicted of raping a 10-year-old boy. The reasons will shed light on the legality of the government's legislative responses and whether more migrants need to be released. Some recently freed migrants could potentially be detained again. Hannah Dickinson, the principal lawyer at the Melbourne-based

Asylum Seeker Resource Center, said the additional spending on law enforcement would result in increased policing that was "entirely unnecessary, unjustified and ... damaging to the community." O'Neil also announced she would soon introduce draft legislation in response to a recent High Court decision that found a government minister could not strip citizenship from a man convicted of terrorism. Under the proposed new laws, a judge rather than a minister would decide whether the Australian citizenship of a dual national would be stripped during a sentencing hearing. The crimes for which citizenship could be removed would be extended beyond terrorism to include espionage and covert foreign interference in Australian politics on behalf of a foreign government.

Ankara, Moscow
nearing gas hub
agreement

MOSCOW : Ankara and Moscow are nearing a consensus on establishing a gas hub in the Thrace region, aiming to position Türkiye as a pivotal gas supplier to Europe and facilitate energy exports for producing nations. The proposal to set up a hub in Türkiye was floated by President Vladimir Putin last year to replace Russia's lost sales to Europe. At the same time, Ankara has long desired to function as an exchange for energy-starved countries. The plan came shortly after explosions damaged the Nord Stream gas pipelines linking Russia to Germany across the Baltic Sea. It remains unclear who was responsible for the blasts. Ongoing efforts to identify suitable land in Thrace suggest that the hub could potentially be operational by 2024, according to a report in Sabah on Monday. Russian Deputy Prime Minister Alexander Novak arrived in Türkiye on Friday and discussed the project with his Turkish counterpart Alparslan Bayraktar on the sidelines of the Turkish-Russian Joint Economic Commission meeting. Novak expressed confidence in reaching an agreement on the hub's creation in the near future. He said Russia's Gazprom and Türkiye's BOTAS were cooperating closely and had been discussing the project road map. Discussions have not advanced much over recent months, as Türkiye suffered devastating earthquakes in February and focused on elections in May. Türkiye already boasts an extensive infrastructure featuring natural gas pipelines, liquefied natural gas (LNG) terminals, floating storage gasification units, natural gas storage facilities and a gas exchange market. Ankara believes it can leverage its existing and new trade relations to become a gas hub. Bayraktar, in mid-September, said Türkiye plans to expand its gas infrastructure further as it lays the groundwork to establish the gas exchange from which countries in southeast Europe can source gas. The expansion plans cover infrastructure in northwest Türkiye's Thrace region, connecting LNG gasification terminals and an upgraded storage facility in Silivri. Gas coming from Azerbaijan, Iran and Russia through pipelines could also feed into this hub and be priced in a local gas exchange, Bayraktar said.—DNA

US shoppers
set online
spending
record

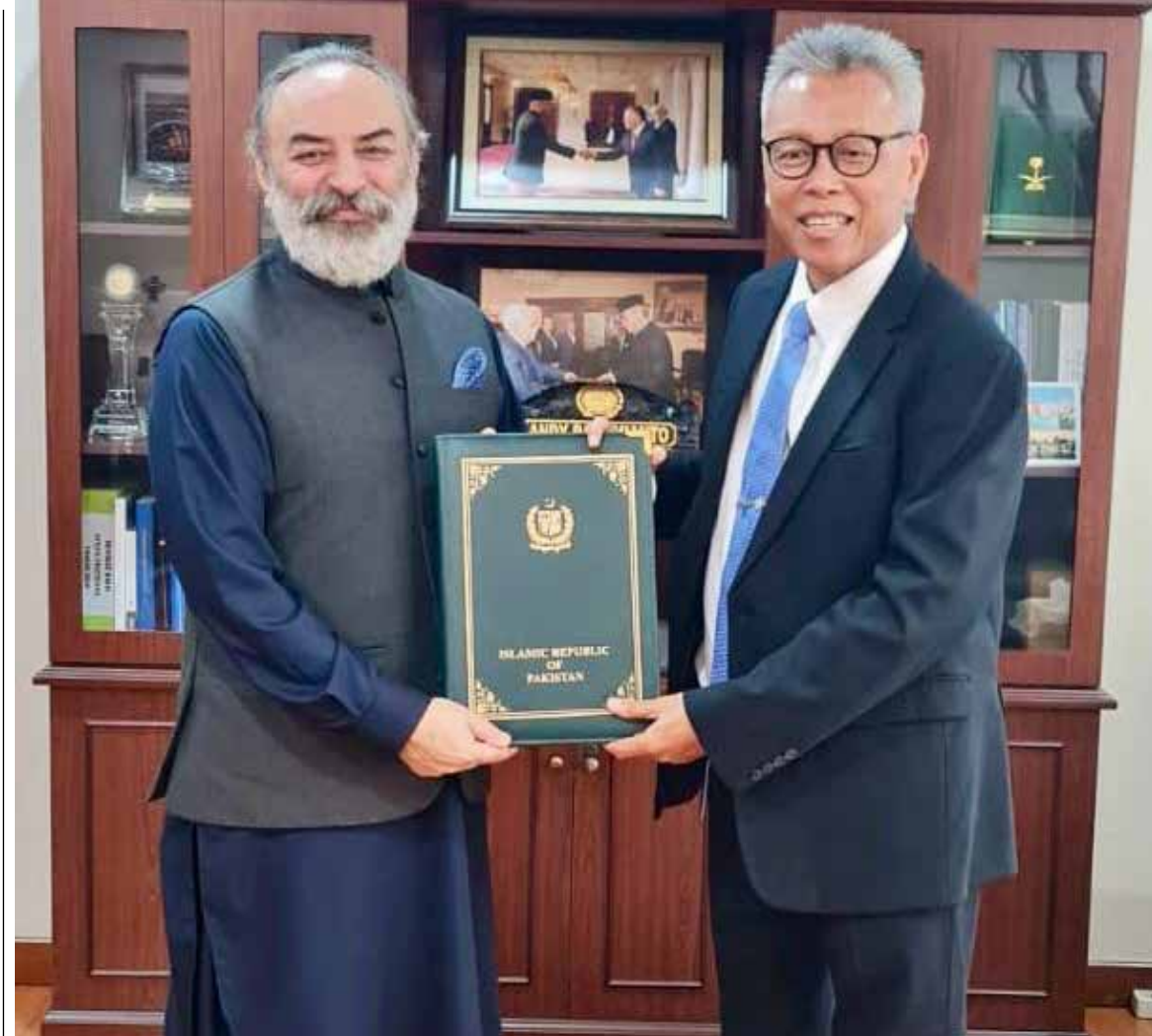
WASHINGTON : US consumers spent a record \$9.8 billion online on Black Friday, up 7.5% from the previous year, local media reported. "We've seen a very strategic consumer emerge over the past year, where they're really trying to take advantage of these marquee days so that they can maximize on discounts," Vivek Pandya, a lead analyst at Adobe Digital Insights, told CNBC on Saturday. According to the report, Black Friday's top-selling categories were smartwatches, televisions, toys and gaming. Earlier, Adobe Analytics, which covers most US online retailing sites, reported that Americans spent \$5.6 billion in online shopping on Thanksgiving Day, up 5.5% from last year. The retail sector in the US sees a pivotal period commencing with Thanksgiving Day, celebrated on the fourth Thursday of November each year, followed by the widespread discounted shopping frenzy of Black Friday. This holiday shopping season continues with Small Business Saturday, designed to boost sales for small businesses, and Cyber Monday, the Monday following Thanksgiving weekend and the second-biggest shopping day and biggest day for online sales. Important for the retail sector, the shopping season extends through Christmas and culminates with a grand finale on New Year's Eve.—APP

Russia downs
dozens
of drones
headed for
Moscow

MOSCOW: Ukraine overnight tried to attack Moscow with dozens of drones, Russian authorities said, just a day after Ukrainian officials reported that Russia had launched its most intense drone attack on Kyiv since the beginning of its full-scale war in 2022. Russian air defenses brought down at least 24 drones over the Moscow region - which surrounds but does not include the capital - and four other provinces to the south and west, the Russian Defense Ministry and Moscow Mayor Sergei Sobyannin reported in a series of Telegram updates. Neither referenced any casualties. Andrei Vorobyev, governor of the Moscow region, wrote on Telegram that the drone strikes damaged three unspecified buildings there, adding that no one was hurt. One drone crashed into a 12-story apartment block in the western Russian city of Tula, about 180 kilometers south of Moscow, lightly wounding one resident and causing limited damage, local Gov. Aleksei Dyumin wrote on Telegram on Sunday morning. Moscow's Vnukovo and Domodedovo airports also briefly shut down because of the drone attack, according to Russia's state-run news agency Tass. Both appeared to have resumed normal operation, according to data from international flight tracking portals. Russian Telegram channels speculated that Ukrainian forces had deployed a previously unseen type of drone in the purported strike, pointing out some similarities to the Iranian-made weapons Moscow routinely employs in its attacks on Ukraine.—APP

N.Korea boosts
military amid
satellite plans

SEOUL: North Korea warned on Monday it would continue to exercise its sovereign rights, including through satellite launches, while its troops were reported to be restoring some demolished guard posts on the border with South Korea. North Korea's foreign ministry said the launch of a reconnaissance satellite last week was prompted by the need to monitor the United States and its allies, state media KCNA reported. "It is a legal and just way to exercise its right to defend itself and thoroughly respond to and precisely monitor the serious military action by the US and its followers," the KCNA report said. Nuclear-armed North Korea launched the satellite on Tuesday, saying it successfully entered orbit and was transmitting photographs, but South Korean defense officials and analysts said its capabilities have not been independently verified. The launch prompted South Korea to suspend a key clause in a 2018 inter-Korean military agreement and resume aerial surveillance near the border. North Korea in turn declared it was no longer bound by the agreement and would deploy weapons on the border with the South. Citing South Korean military officials, Yonhap news reported that North Korean soldiers had been observed bringing back heavy weapons into the Demilitarized Zone (DMZ) border and setting up guard posts that the two countries demolished in the wake of the de-escalation agreement. South Korea estimates the North had about 160 guard posts along the DMZ and the South had 60. Each side demolished 11 of them after the military deal signed in 2018. A South Korean defense ministry spokesperson declined to confirm the report. Yonhap reported heavily armed North Korean soldiers had been spotted restoring damaged guard posts in several locations since Friday, citing photographs from cameras in the DMZ. The United States had called an unscheduled meeting of the UN Security Council on Monday to discuss the North's satellite launch. On Nov. 22, nine members of the Security Council joined the United States in a statement condemning the North's satellite launch for using ballistic missile technology.—Agencies



JAKARTA: Pakistan's new Ambassador to Indonesia Ameer Khurram Rathore presented copy of his credentials to Amb Andy Rachmianto, DG Protocol & Cons. Affairs. Andy congratulated Ambassador Rathore on his new assignment.—DNA

Sinking exports: Textile sectors failure to compete

IMRAN ALI

The most important production sector of Pakistan in terms of industrial production, GDP and international trade is textile sector. Textile sector produces are the most exported items of Pakistan. Textile sector in Pakistan is the largest production of Pakistan, it is considered to be the 46% of the total manufacturing sector of Pakistan and generates more than 40% of the employment of the total labour force. However, for the last two decades the Textile Sector exports of Pakistan are exhibiting deteriorated performance, the decline in textile exports reveals the unsatisfactory competitive performance. 52% of the export of Pakistan are concentrated in a single value chain textile, apparel and cotton. Currently total exports of cotton, apparel and textile products values more than 18.12 billion. 18% of the total exports of Pakistan in 2022 comprises of textile products, more than 19% are apparel product and the share of cotton

export has shrunk to 10% only. Textile exports of Pakistan in 2003 were USD 2.3 billion, that have grown to USD 5.6 billion in 2023, however the share of Pakistan is shrinking in the global exports of textile sector. In 2003 around 10% of the total global exports were made by Pakistan which has shrink to 6.6% in 2023 with a persistent falling trend. Textile exports of Viet Nam were USD 0.13 billion in 2002 and with a persistent growth rate, Viet Nam's total textile exports have grown into USD 3.1 billion in 2021 and USD 2.1 billion in 2022. Viet Nam has successfully enhanced its share in the global textile exports, in 2003 the global share of Viet Nam's textile exports was mere 0.6% that has increased to 3.1% in 2022. As compared to the regional competitor, textile sector of Pakistan unfortunately couldn't sustain its growth due to incompetencies deep rooted in inefficiencies. Industrial growth in 1970s, 1990s and 2000 did not meaningfully translated into vertical and horizontal industrial intensification of the textile

sector of Pakistan. A few supply chain actors have been keeping themselves updated and this sector has failed to sustain its competitiveness; due to failure to develop a market-oriented research and development as compared to the regional competitors. The internal setbacks in the textile sector of Pakistan includes outdated technology, lack of automation and lack of rational standardization of the wool and threads. 33% of the machinery remains idle whole year. Innovation and diversification of the production is either not existent, outdated or not at par with the standard and requirement of the international market. Textile governing institution remains ineffective. Pakistani textile sector's market concentration remains majorly two large buyers i.e., the European Union and the United States of America. Shortages of raw cotton, scarcity and soaring prices of the fuels and electricity, depreciating exchange rate, inefficiency and non-availability of innovation centers and research insti-

tute, fluctuating raw material prices has further worsen the export performance of textile sector of Pakistan. Wages and production costs in China are increasing, hence there is ample scope for the Pakistani textile industry to regain its competitiveness and its share in the international market. As per an estimate by the international Growth Center around USD 1 million spent on financings on twisting and knitting raises export by USD 0.27 million, and in Pakistan approximately 50,000 kegs filament of cotton generates employment opportunities for 400 people. Pakistan's textile sector possesses immense export potential however it has failed to export even half of the total potential. Export potential of Bedlinen of Cotton (HS Code 630231) is USD 1.7 billion for Pakistan while Pakistan's total exports of the same produce are mere USD 982 million mere 53% of the total export's potential. The textile sector of Pakistan has been suffering primarily due to lack of serious efforts to enhance quality standards and diversifying the

export produces. Serious and targeted interventions are need to curb the high manufacturing costs due to high raw material prices and hefty levies on import of cotton fibers. The subsidies scheme administered are often ill planned and lacks a proper framework based on achievable milestones aimed at enhancing production, marketing and export efficiencies. Due to non-existence of a vibrant and robust supply value chain, adequate research and development center, and conducive environment, Pakistan has been unable to value add its cotton and untap the true export potential. Leveraging the China Pakistan Economic Corridor and entering into joint ventures and partnerships with Chinese counterparts may bring noticeable improvements. Human capacity development, enterprise capacity development should be prioritized to introduce new technologies, trend and evolution of new practices of processing, producing and exporting high-end products. —The writer is Director Research and Development at SAARC CCI.

Briefs

Court acquits Sara Inam's 'killer'

DNA

ISLAMABAD: A court has granted the benefit of the doubt to Shahnawaz Amir — the main suspect in the murder of Sarah Inam — in the case involving the possession of a Kalashnikov firearm that was obtained illegally. In its decision, the court highlighted the prosecution's failure to prove its charges against the accused, Sara's husband and son of prominent journalist Aya Amir, terming its evidence "doubtful".

Judicial Magistrate Umar Shabbir said that the benefit of the doubt is the right of the accused. "Complainant Constable Tariq was not produced as a witness," the court noted. It should be noted that the police had registered a separate case related to the recovery of a Kalashnikov from the suspect. Currently, the final arguments in the murder case against Shahnawaz are continuing at the session court. Last month, the prime suspect rejected all evidence submitted by the prosecution against him, terming it "baseless". Amir was presented before Additional District and Sessions Judge Nasir Javed Rana, where he told the court that on the night of the incident, his mother prepared dinner for them.

"We all ate together, chatted a lot and then went to sleep. Sarah went to the bathroom in the middle of the night. I was asleep at that time. I woke up at 7am and went to F-8 Market to get breakfast," he said.

Ahad Cheema gets clean chit

DNA

LAHORE: The National Accountability Bureau (NAB) has given a clean chit to caretaker prime minister's adviser Ahad Khan Cheema in the reference of assets beyond means on Monday. According to a report submitted by NAB, all the assets of Ahad Cheema match with his income and therefore, it doesn't require any reference against him.

The report says all the alleged 'benamidars' (individuals holding property on behalf of others) of Ahad Cheema made the properties from their personal income and it cannot be linked with Cheema.

The report claims that the accounts of Ahad Cheema's relatives including Sadia Mansoor, Mansoor Ahmed and Nazia Ashraf are not 'benami' accounts of Cheema. Ahad Cheema's total income is Rs213 million while his expenses are Rs131 million, the investigation reveals. It added that the former bureaucrat provided NAB with his income and profit records during the re-investigation. The submitted record was found correct after thorough verification.

Senate lauds global assistance during floods

DNA

ISLAMABAD: The Senate has appreciated the humanitarian assistance extended to Pakistan by the global community during last year's devastating floods. To this effect, the House passed a unanimous resolution moved by Senator Sania Nishtar. The House also commemorated World Humanitarian Day on August 19th and recognized the selfless efforts of humanitarian workers and organizations who strive to save and protect lives across globe and to reduce human suffering.

It honored the frontline humanitarian workers who have lost their lives in the line of duty. The House particularly showed appreciation for the humanitarian assistance extended to Pakistan by the global community during last year's devastating floods.

The Senate called upon the Government to enhance its support for humanitarian efforts, both within its borders and beyond, through diplomatic, financial, and logistical means, in partnership with other governments and multilateral organizations.

1.9 m in KP benefit from USAID-funded program

Thanks to the project, today hundreds of thousands of residents of KP have better more reliable access to safe, clean, drinking water, waste management, and improved sanitation

SHAMIM SHAHID

PESHAWAR: Today U.S. Ambassador to Pakistan Donald A. Blome visited the Water and Sanitation Services Peshawar (WSSP) office in Hayatabad, Peshawar, to celebrate the successful completion of the USAID-funded Municipal Services Program in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP), a 12-year, \$44.6 million effort. Thanks to the project, today hundreds of thousands of residents of KP have better more reliable access to safe, clean, drinking water, waste management, and improved sanitation.

The project's accomplishments include:

- The rehabilitation of 140 clean drinking water facilities serving 448,000 people.
- Replacement of 25,700 meters of old and rusted water mains, ensuring clean, reliable water supply in 21 Union Councils.
- Rehabilitated sewerage and drainage lines, which improve sanitation for 1.7 million people.
- More efficient solid waste collection and disposal.
- Improved municipal waste management services, including 575 vehicles and the establishment of a repair and maintenance workshop for waste management equipment.

"We should all be proud of the profound impact the Municipal Services Project has had on the lives of approximately 1.9 million residents in Peshawar's urban areas — improved hygiene conditions, reduced risk of urban flooding, and better environmental protection," Ambassador Blome said. "I'm grateful to the strong partnership between USAID and the Government of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa — notably the Local Government Elections, and Rural Development Department — that made this program possible," he added.

The Municipal Services Project in KP demonstrates the United States' strong and enduring commitment to the Pakistani people to support their welfare and wellbeing, broad-based, sustainable economic development, and a secure and prosperous Pakistan. Beyond the Municipal Services Project, the United States — through USAID — has partnered with the KP Government to reconstruct critical infrastructure damaged by natural and manmade disasters. USAID also supports initiatives focused on basic healthcare, women's education, and economic opportunities throughout the province.



RAWALPINDI: Lieutenant General Fahad Bin Abdullah Muhammad Al Mutairi, Commander of the Royal Saudi Land Forces calls on General Sahir Shamshad Mirza, Chairman Joint Chiefs of Staff Committee, at Joint Staff Headquarters. — DNA

Sweden's PM condemns call to tear down mosques

STOCKHOLM: Swedish Prime Minister Ulf Kristersson denounced the leader of the far-right party propping up his government on Monday after he called for some mosques to be torn down. Sweden Democrats (SD) leader Jimmie Akesson called for some mosques to be seized and levelled during a speech at his annual party conference on Saturday. "We need to start confiscating and tearing down mosques where anti-democratic, anti-Swedish, homophobic, anti-Semitic propaganda or general disinformation is being spread," Akesson said. Kristersson, whose coalition government does not include SD but relies on its support, condemned the statements as "disrespectful".

"I think it is a disrespectful way of expressing oneself, a polarising way of expressing oneself," Kristersson told broadcaster SVT. "This misrepresents what Sweden stands for internationally," he added. Akesson's speech sparked anger both in Sweden and abroad and forced Kristersson to issue a statement on X, formerly Twitter, reiterating Sweden's "constitutional right to freedom of religion".

"In Sweden, we do not demolish places of worship. As a society, we must fight back against violent extremism whatever its grounds — but we will do so within the framework of a

democratic state and the rule of law," he said.

Former Social Democrat prime minister Magdalena Andersson called for Kristersson to remove all SD officials working at the cabinet offices in Stockholm. "It worsens the image of Sweden, does not facilitate our Nato application and further increases polarisation in our country. This is not putting Sweden and the Swedish people's safety and security first," Andersson said on X. Sweden, whose Nato application still needs ratification from Hungary and Muslim-majority Turkey, has seen a slew of incidents spark tensions with countries around the Middle East. A series of incidents in which the Holy Quran was desecrated earlier this year led to protests and widespread condemnations of Sweden, with several Middle Eastern countries summoning Swedish envoys. Iraqi protesters stormed the Swedish embassy in Baghdad twice in July, starting fires within the compound during the second incident. Last year, Sweden was the target of a vast disinformation campaign claiming its social services were "kidnapping Muslim children" and placing them in Christian homes, forcing the authorities to publicly deny the allegations. — Agencies

Displacement of Palestinians 'red line' violating peace treaty

DUBAI: Jordan's Prime Minister Bisher Khasawneh called the displacement of Palestinians a "red line" that constitutes a fundamental violation of the peace treaty between his country and Israel. The Jordan Times reported on Monday. Khasawneh highlighted the treaty's key provision defending against forced population movements, stating that such displacement would dissolve the Palestinian issue and threaten Jordan's national security. Khasawneh warned that if displacement of Palestinians occurs, the peace treaty would become meaningless. He affirmed Jordan's support for Egypt's rejection of displacing Palestinians from the Gaza Strip, fearing a precedent of forced removal in the West Bank. Khasawneh stressed King Abdullah's longstanding support for a two-state solution and warned against neglecting it, foreseeing a region plunged into violence. Jordan considers any attempt to alter the status quo in Al-Aqsa Mosque as another "red line" with consequences for crossing it, the prime minister warned. Khasawneh said Jordan was exploring options to secure alternatives in the event that the supply of liquefied natural gas from Israel is halted. He said Jordan was talking with other Arab countries, while affirming Amman's commitment to contractual obligations with Israel. — Agencies

Lightning and rain kill 24 in western India

NEW DELHI: At least 24 people have been killed in lightning strikes and rain in India during intense storms, officials said. The rain damaged houses and killed livestock across western Gujarat state. Storms are unusual in Gujarat during winter, meteorologists said, and the fierce downpour caught many off guard. Flash floods and lightning strikes kill thousands of people in India each year. Scientists are warning that rising global temperatures are fuelling a surge in extreme weather events. Rising land and sea surface temperatures warm the air above and make more energy available to drive thunderstorms from where lightning emanates. Rain and hailstorms were expected to continue in western India on Monday. At least 18 of the 24 deaths were attributed to the lightning strikes, officials said in a statement late on Sunday. Gujarat state was hit by heavy rainfall accompanied by thunderstorms and hailstorms on Sunday and Monday, with some areas receiving up to 144mm (5.7 inches) of rain in 24 hours, Reuters news agency reported citing state government data. India's Home Minister Amit Shah said he was "deeply saddened" by the deaths, adding that local authorities were engaging in relief work. In India, lightning strikes killed more than 100,000 people between 1967 and 2019, according to official data. This is more than a third of fatalities caused by natural hazards during this period. — Agencies

Multinational counter terrorism exercise concludes in Pabbi

DNA

RAWALPINDI: Two weeks long multinational joint counter terrorism exercise Fajar Al Sharq-V was conducted at National Counter Terrorism Centre, Pabbi with participation of Special Forces contingents from the brotherly countries. Exercise Fajar Al Sharq-V is a multinational joint exercise

in Counter Terrorism domain among the Special Forces of Pakistan, Bahrain, Iraq and Kuwait. The exercise is aimed at nurturing of joint employment and interoperability besides, harnessing the historic military to military relations among the brotherly countries. The member countries have displayed zeal and enthusiasm for benefiting from each other's expertise/ experience.



Shahzad Akbar comes under acid attack in UK

"My wife and children remained unharmed, only I got injuries"

LONDON: Former prime minister Imran Khan's accountability chief Shahzad Akbar has revealed that an unidentified man threw acid on his face at his home in the United Kingdom. The incident took place in an area near London outside the former Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) leader's residence. Speaking to media, Akbar said a delivery person came to his house and threw acid on him as soon as he opened the door. However, he said, most of the acid landed on the door and only a small amount landed on him.

"My wife and children remained unharmed, only I got some injuries," said the former PTI leader. Akbar told media that he is currently living in a small village outside of London where he shifted about 1.5 months ago. He said that his new address had been leaked. The politician, who has been in self-exile in the UK, said that he was at home with his kids on Sunday when a delivery man wearing a helmet rang the doorbell. — Agencies

LHC turns down plea seeking Kakar's ouster

DNA

LAHORE: The Lahore High Court (LHC) on Monday disposed of a petition seeking removal of caretaker Prime Minister Anwaarul Haq Kakar from office for his "failure to carry out his constitutional duties". Justice Shahid Bilal Hassan of the LHC announced the verdict which court reserved earlier in the day after hearing the arguments from both sides.

Advocate Muhammad Muqsit, the petitioner, argued that the constitution provided that the caretaker government was only for 90 days. "The caretaker government has completed its 90-day tenure and the country is running without an executive," he submitted. The petitioner said the caretaker prime minister had failed to fulfill his constitutional obligation by not holding elections in time. He had tarnished the sanctity of the office of the prime minister, Advocate Muqsit added.

NATO chief seeks Turkish approval for Sweden

ANKARA: NATO Secretary-General Jens Stoltenberg told reporters on Monday that the time has come for Türkiye to approve Sweden's membership to the military alliance. Stoltenberg has long sought to convince Türkiye to accept Sweden's membership while Ankara repeatedly expressed concerns over the Nordic country's tolerance of terrorist groups, namely the PKK and Gülenist Terrorist Group (FETÖ), as well as the country regularly allowing the desecration of the Quran under police protection. The NATO chief was speaking at a news conference ahead of a meeting of foreign ministers of the bloc, under the shadow of the Palestine-Israel and Russia-Ukraine conflicts. "Sweden has delivered on what they promised and now the time has come for Turkey to finalize the accession process," Stoltenberg said. Türkiye and Hungary are the only NATO members not yet to have ratified Sweden joining the alliance more than 18 months after it applied for membership. The Turkish Parliament started to debate Sweden's bid to join this month after President Recep Tayyip Erdogan launched the process following a deal at a NATO summit in July. NATO's other 29 allies had hoped to be able to formally welcome Sweden into the alliance at a meeting of foreign ministers in Brussels this week. However, the process is still at the committee level in the Turkish Parliament. — DNA

Iran urges permanent truce to in Gaza

TEHRAN: Iran on Monday called for a permanent ceasefire in Gaza to stop Israel's "crimes" in the territory as the truce between Israel and Hamas entered its final day. With the four-day truce is approaching its scheduled end early Tuesday, Hamas has said it is willing to extend the pause and free more hostages. The pause that began Friday has seen dozens of hostages freed, with over 100 Palestinian prisoners released by Israel in return. "As the Islamic Republic of Iran, we want and expect... that the crimes of the Zionist regime against the Palestinian people will be stopped completely," said Nasser Kanani, Iran's foreign ministry spokesman. Kanani told reporters during his weekly press conference that Iran is "following" the extension of the truce "with the regional party active in this field, the state of Qatar." Iran's Foreign Minister Hossein Amir-Abdollahian was on a visit to the Qatari capital Doha on Thursday. "One of the main goals of the ongoing negotiations and efforts is to ensure that the existing temporary cease-fire takes a stable form and that the cruel aggression of the Zionist regime (Israel) against Gaza is not repeated," he added. — Agencies

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