



Friday, November 03, 2023

Pakistan's Credible Daily Newspaper

Price Rs. 30

Islamabad POST

Macron pushes French engagement in Uzbekistan visit

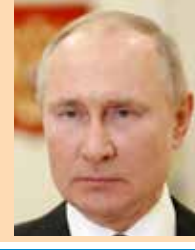
Detailed News On Page-07

Putin revokes ratification of CTBT

Detailed News On Page-07

Jabeur to donate prize money to Palestinians

Detailed News On Page-06



Supreme Court to announce date today

President, ECP agree to hold polls on Feb 8

Sources privy to this development say that a consensus was reached with the help of Attorney General of Pakistan

ANSAR M BHATTI

ISLAMABAD: President Arif Alvi and Chief Election Commissioner (CEC) Sikandar Sultan Raja Thursday agreed that the general elections will be staged in the country on February 8, 2024. The development came after an ECP delegation headed by CEC Raja and Attorney General for Pakistan Mansoor Usman Awan met Alvi at the President's Secretariat to discuss the poll date, a statement from Alvi's office said. Sources privy to this development said that a consensus was reached with the help of the Attorney General of Pakistan. The Chief Election Commission, when met the President, handed over to him the written letter in which the ECP had proposed February 8 as the election date. The ECP delegation left the Presidency after handing over the letter. Then the President consulted his legal team and decided to propose February 08 as the election date. The Attorney General conveyed the President message to the ECP and after AG's efforts the Election Commission decided to agree to the date proposed by the President. The ECP - in today's Supreme Court hearing of petitions calling for timely polls across the country - had told the top court that polls would be held on February 11, but the SC asked the commission to consult with the president. Following the consensus, AGP Awan and CEC Raja will inform the top court about the decision. The court - in the order issued after the hearing - had instructed the AGP to arrange the meeting between ECP and Alvi, provide the president with the court order, and be available to render assistance. "We expect that the matter of appointing a date for holding general elections shall be settled, and this court will be informed tomorrow (Friday),"

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Political parties hail polls date

KHAYAM ABBASI

ISLAMABAD: The Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP), Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) and Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI), the three major political parties of the country, have welcomed the Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) announcement that elections in the country will take place on February 11, 2024. In a major development on Thursday, the ECP's lawyer informed the Supreme Court's (SC) three-member bench led by Chief Justice of Pakistan Qazi Faez Isa that polls will take place on February 11. The date was shared with the SC by the ECP's lawyer during the hearing of petitions calling for timely polls across the country. Welcoming the ECP's announcement, PPP's Nayer Bukhari has said that his party has been calling for holding timely elections. "Unelected individual or cabinet do not have right to rule the country... the elections should have been held within 90 days as per the Constitution," he said while speaking to Geo News. Bukhari said the ECP is answerable to the people and the Supreme Court for not holding elections within 90 days of the dissolution of the assemblies.

Continued on Page 06



ISLAMABAD: President Arif Alvi meets Chief Election Commissioner (CEC) Sikandar Sultan Raja along with Attorney General, at the President House. - DNA

Senate extends NAB Ordinance

Amended law allows custody of the arrested suspects to NAB for up to 30

ADIL SHAHEEN

ISLAMABAD: The Senate on Thursday extended the National Accountability Ordinance (Amendment) Ordinance 2023 for a further period of 120 days. Caretaker Minister for Law Ahmad Irfan Aslam moved the resolution, which was adopted by the House. The extension will take effect from October 31, 2023. The resolution says, "That the Senate resolves to

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Bahrain expels Israel envoy

Biden seeks a break in Israeli attacks

Death toll crosses 9,000; time running out to prevent 'genocide' in Gaza: UN

DNA

WASHINGTON: Fierce fighting between Israeli forces and Palestinian fighters is reported in northern Gaza and Gaza City as bombardment of the besieged enclave intensifies. Large fire breaks out in Kiryat Shmona, a town in northern Israel, after attack from Lebanon. Gaza officials say 195 killed, 120 missing in Israel's bombing of Jabalia refugee camp, which the United Nations says may be "disproportionate attacks that could amount to war crimes". The Turkish-Palestinian Friendship Hospital, Gaza's only medical facility serving cancer patients, is forced to shut down after running out of fuel. The Indonesian Hospital is running on a backup generator. 9,061 Palestinians were killed in the ongoing Israeli bloody attack on the Gaza Strip, including 3,760 children and 2,326 women. The Palestinian Health Ministry spokesman Ashraf al-Qudra affirmed in a press conference that 32,000 citizens were also injured, 70% of whom were children and women. 15 massacres were also

Continued on Page 06

UNSC must act: FO spok

FAISAL SHEIKH

ISLAMABAD: Caretaker Prime Minister Anwaarul Haq Kakar will embark on an official visit to Tashkent, Uzbekistan to participate in the Economic Cooperation Organization (ECO) Summit commencing on next Wednesday. At her weekly news briefing in Islamabad on Thursday, Foreign Office spokesperson Mumtaz Zahra Baloch said the prime minister, at the summit, would reaffirm Pakistan's commitment to ECO vision 2025 and promotion of cooperation in the areas of trade, transport, connectivity, energy, tourism and economic growth and productivity. The prime minister will present Pakistan's vision for the future work of the organisation and promotion of regional connectivity and mutual prosperity.

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Briefs

PTI to field candidates on all seats

STAFF REPORT

RAWALPINDI: The Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) will field its candidate in all the constituencies of the country. Talking to media outside Adiala Jail, senior lawyer Hamid Khan said, following the PTI chairman's directives, the PTI would field candidates in all the constituencies. Hamid Khan made these remarks after meeting the PTI chairman in Adiala jail. Both the leaders discussed the current political situation of the country. Hamid Khan expressed concerns over the treatment meted out to the PTI. Other parties have been given free hands to launch their political activities, he deplored.

Climate change needs collective solutions: FM

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Caretaker Minister for Foreign Affairs Jalil Abbas Jilani has reaffirmed Pakistan's commitment to become part of international efforts to tackle the challenge of climate change. He was addressing a pre-COP28 event held in Islamabad today, ahead of the COP28 conference in Dubai next month. Jalil Abbas Jilani said the conference should devise a global framework for climate adaptation with clear targets and indicators. He hoped that successful conduct of COP28 will correct the global course of action with developed countries leading the responsibility, operationalization of a damage and loss fund and achieving global resilience through adaptation.

IMF tells Pakistan No compromise on targets set under loan deal

The finance ministry had taken note of the progress on quantitative performance criteria, continuous performance criteria, indicative target



ISLAMABAD: Finance Minister Shahmshad Akhtar and her team holding talks with the IMF team. - DNA

ABID RAZA

ISLAMABAD: The International Monetary Fund (IMF) has made it clear to Pakistan that it needs to meet the targets set with the global lender under the \$3 billion Stand By Agreement. The IMF mission led by Nathan Porter had arrived in Pakistan a day earlier to lead the two-week-long talks on the second tranche under the SBA. According to sources, caretaker Finance

Minister Dr Shamshad Akhtar, State Bank of Pakistan Governor Jameel Ahmad, and FBR officials met the IMF delegation today for an introductory session. Officials, who spoke to Pakistani media on the condition of anonymity, said that the IMF delegation lauded the steps taken by Pakistan but emphasised that Pakistan has to strictly implement all the targets. While Dr Akhtar assured the IMF that targets are being

Continued on Page 06

Dr Faisal: No indication of Imran being poisoned

Says ousted premier's diet, health both satisfactory after physical examination

DNA

RAWALPINDI: There is no apparent indication that former premier Imran Khan is being subjected to 'slow poison' in prison, confirmed his personal physician Dr Faisal Sultan on Thursday. Dr Sultan was speaking to the media after meeting with the ousted premier and Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf chief in Adiala Jail, where Imran is being held in connection with the cypher case.

Continued on Page 06

Caretaker govt economic measures paying dividends, says PM Kakar

PM directs Ministry of Information to resolve issue of advertisement dues

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Caretaker Prime Minister Anwaar-ul-Haq Kakar on Thursday assured the Pakistan Broadcasters Association (PBA) of payment of advertisement dues and directed the Information Ministry to resolve the issue as soon as possible. He was talking to a PBA delegation, which called on him. During the meeting, matters relating to the media, especially electronic media, came under discussion. The delegation informed the prime minister about the issue of outstanding dues on account of government advertisements. Highlighting the importance of the media, the prime minister said that being the fourth pillar of state, the media was of utmost importance for the development of society, and the mental and intellectual training of people. He said the protection of the rights of the media representatives was also responsibility of the state. PM Kakar said that through



effective and coordinated communication between the government and the media, the public could stay informed about government policies and initiatives. He said the media played a key role in good governance and accountability of government performance. He expressed the hope that the media would continue to play its role in the stability of democracy through impartial reporting. The prime minister urged the dele-

gation to increase public awareness through the media about the importance of the economic stabilization strategy under the Special Investment Facilitation Council (SIFC). He said that the recent decline in the value of the dollar, prevention of smuggling, prevention of electricity theft and other measures were benefiting the common man. Caretaker Minister for Information Broadcasting Murtaza Solangi, Secretary Information & Broadcasting, and Principal Information Officer were also present in the meeting. The PBA delegation included its Chairperson Shakeel Masood, Secretary General Mian Amir Mehmood, Senior Vice Chairman Mir Ibrahim Rehman and Tahir Khan. Earlier, Caretaker Prime Minister Anwaar-ul-Haq Kakar terming the role of teachers significant in the reformation of society said their specific focus on the character-building of students could lead to the progress of the nation.

Continued on Page 06

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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 Enquiry.....117
Railway Exchange.....9270831-5
WASA Rawalpindi.....5555489
CAA.....9281092



Hospitals

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



Departments

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

Water Tank

Islamabad.....0321-5744480



ISLAMABAD: Guests enjoying traditional Japanese delicacy "Sushi" on the occasion of the armed forces day of Japan.—DNA

Alvi advises youth to play role in growth of country

The only thing that the overseas Pakistanis miss during their stay abroad was the love and family culture of their homeland, he added

Faisal Sheikh

ISLAMABAD: President Dr Arif Alvi on Thursday called upon the youth and fresh graduates who were about to enter their professional lives, to play their productive role in the country's exponential growth. He said the country at this stage, badly needed the exponential growth rather than linear growth as it was already far behind the region in many sectors including education. Addressing the 26th Convocation ceremony of the COMSATS University here, the president believed that if the students in their professional lives, ensure justice in the society, contribute productively in the country's development, and learn to share their resources with the poor, the country would see new

heights of prosperity and development. Today, he said Artificial Intelligence or Computer Science was the second leg of every profession. "The world is running very fast so we must have to run with same pace as the world do." Otherwise, he said the country would lag further behind the region and the world. The president said the world was growing exponentially, however Pakistan's growth pace was relatively slower in the region. He said 9% of total intermediate students manage to get admissions in the higher education while in the region, the ratio was over 25%. The universities should increase enrollments of the students to achieve exponential growth in the country, he added. He maintained lack of timely

decision was one of the major reason behind slow growth. We lacked vision for example, he said, adding we could not foresee the electricity requirement before time and when the time came, we took emergency decision to install power plants that cost much higher. The said the neighboring country India announced the data policy in 2012 while Pakistan announced it after a decade in 2022 and that too due to his personal efforts. During the ceremony, the president gave away medals to the top position holders and conferred degrees to the successful students in various departments of the university. President Alvi said the Holy Prophet Muhammad (SA) always taught for seeking knowledge, good training and love for humankind.

Congratulating the successful candidates on getting degrees, he said they had now become elites of the country as around 28 million or 40% children were still out of schools in the country. He said some 55000 school buildings were required to accommodate all the out of school children in the country which was extremely difficult. Therefore, he said some out of the box solutions were required on emergency basis as these uneducated children at later stage would become a huge burden on the country's economy which would not be able to contribute anything productive for the country. In this context, the president advised the girl students to fully utilize their degrees and work diligently for

the development of the country. He said usually, as soon as the girls get married, they quit their professional life due to multiple reasons including fear of harassment at workplace. He said this was the state's responsibility to stop harassment of women. Furthermore, he also asked the education as well as other departments to give the women more leverage if they have a gap during service or education. "They should be welcomed when they re-join duties," he added. The president said the most beautiful culture of this country was the joint family system that symbolized love in the society. The only thing that the overseas Pakistanis miss during their stay abroad was the love and family culture of their homeland, he added.

Solangi for efforts to protect earth from impacts of climate change

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Caretaker Federal Minister for Information and Broadcasting Murtaza Solangi on Thursday called for collective revolutionary measures to avoid the damages caused climate change. Delivering his speech at the "Pre COP28: Paris to Dubai" seminar here the minister said that the future of the coming generations must be secured. The minister urged the international community to play its role in the countries being badly affected by climate change. The planet, he added faced the dangers of climate change and the government, or any department alone could not solve this problem. "We need a strategic vision to tackle the challenge of climate change," Murtaza Sol-

angi maintained. The whole society has to realize about climate change



issue, Murtaza Solangi said adding: "We are facing many social problems to deal with climate change".

Solangi said without bringing about change in society, the dangers of climate change could not be addressed. Parents, teachers, film, television drama writers, poets, elders in the society must discuss the harms of climate change and there

was a need to change the whole culture system. He also said that media must play its role in highlighting climate change issue. For combating climate change, every body will have to actively participate in plantation campaigns as climate change was a threat to the human existence. He said that Pakistan was one of the most affected countries by climate change although it had very small role in causing climate change. The minister said that the present generation had a responsibility to take urgent steps to protect the planet from the negative impacts of climate change for the sake of future generations. "Do we want to be known in human history as the generation that was so selfish and self-centered that we want to deplete and destroy planet earth

and leave nothing for our future generations", he remarked. He said that protecting the planet for the negative effects of climate change was an existential question for humanity. Stressing the need for media role in the creation of awareness among the masses over environmental issues, he said that Pakistan Television would establish a special desk for climate change with dedicated staff filing reports on environmental issues. He urged all media houses to come forward and play a proactive role in highlighting environmental issues on their screens and newspapers. He said that the resolution of disputes between the countries of the world and peaceful co-existence was also vital as wars played havoc with the environment and pushed the entire region into chaos and destruction.

WAPDA awards consultancy services contract for Naulong dam

ISLAMABAD: Water and Power Development Authority (WAPDA) on Thursday signed an agreement amounting to Rs. 705 million for consultancy services of Naulong Dam project with a joint venture comprised of two firms - Dolsar of Turkey and Mott McDonald of Pakistan. General Manager (Projects) South Muhammad Masood Ahmed Soomro and International Projects Coordinator of Dolsar Cem Aker signed the agreement on behalf of WAPDA and the joint venture respectively. The consultancy contract relates to review and update the detailed design, prepare procurement documents, and update the safeguard documents of the project, said a statement issued. As per the contract, these tasks will be completed in 28 months. The Asian Development Bank is providing financial assistance for consultancy services of Naulong Dam Project. The ceremony was attended by Member (Water) WAPDA Javed Akhtar Latif, Chief Engineer and Project Director Naulong Dam Project Muhammad Yousaf Magsi, WAPDA officers and representatives of the consulting firms. Naulong Dam Project is proposed to be constructed on Mula River in Balochistan, about 30 Km from Gandava and 24 Km from Jhal Magsi. The Project will have a gross water storage capacity of 242,163 acre feet to irrigate 47000 acres of land. A small hydel power station, with installed generation capacity of 4.4 MW, will also be constructed under the project. Naulong Dam Project will play a significant role in development of the far flung and backward areas of Balochistan. Main objectives of the projects include development of irrigated agriculture, flood mitigation, provision of drinking water and low-cost hydel electricity to the locals, employment opportunities and poverty alleviation in the area.—DNA

Green Guardian: Azadirachta indica Nature's Defender

The various bioactive compounds in Azadirachta indica help boost the immune system. Regular consumption of neem leaves or neem supplements can enhance the body's ability to fight off infections and diseases

Rabiya Saleem

Azadirachta indica, commonly known as Neem, has been revered for centuries as a "wonder tree" due to its numerous health, cosmetics and environmental benefits. Native to Indian subcontinent, this versatile plant has found its way into traditional medicine, skincare products and even agriculture practices worldwide. In this article, we'll explore the myriad benefits of Azadirachta indica.

Azadirachta indica is a powerhouse of medicinal properties. It's well-known for its antibacterial, antifungal and antiviral properties, make it a vital ingredient in

traditional medicine system such as Ayurveda. Neem is used to treat various ailments, including skin disorders, digestive issues and diabetes. The leaves, bark and seeds contain compounds that promote overall well-being. Neem extract has been evaluated for its antidiabetic activity. The neem extract can control the blood glucose level and help in reduce the activity of glucosidase enzymes. Neem leaf extract dilate the blood vessels in diabetic patients and the neem leaves and seed is found to reduce the amount of insulin required to be administered to a diabetic patient. Neem is a staple in many skincare products thanks to its ability to combat

acne, reduce skin blemishes and improve complexion. It's anti-inflammatory and antiseptic



qualities make it an effective natural remedy for various skin issues. Neem oil can be used to treat dry skin, eczema and

psoriasis. Azadirachta indica has a long history of use in oral care. Neem twigs have been traditionally used as natural toothbrushes to maintain oral hygiene. Neem's antimicrobial properties help fight gum disease, reduce plaque and keep bad breath at bay. In agriculture, Neem plays a crucial role as a natural-pesticides. Neem-based products are eco-friendly alternatives to chemical pesticides, as they are non-toxic to humans and animals. Neem oil and neem cake are used to control insect pests and enhance soil quality, contributing to sustainable farming practices. Neem is not just beneficial for the skin; it also promotes hair health. Neem oil

can strengthen hair, reduce dandruff and promote hair growth. Regular use of Neem-based hair products can result in luscious, healthy locks. The various bioactive compounds in Azadirachta indica help boost the immune system. Regular consumption of neem leaves or neem supplements can enhance the body's ability to fight off infections and diseases. Neem tree offer numerous environmental benefits. They are known to improve air quality by absorbing carbon dioxide and emitting oxygen. Their shade can provide relief in hot climates, and they can help prevent soil erosion. Neem trees also act as a habitat for various

Relief to common man gov't top priority: Sami Saeed

DNA

ISLAMABAD: The National Price Monitoring Committee (NPMC) on Thursday reviewed the prices of essential commodities and directed the quarters concerned to maintain food prices to provide relief to the common man. The meeting, chaired by Minister for Planning, Development and Special Initiatives Muhammad Sami Saeed, was attended by Secretary of Planning Ministry Awais Manzoor Sumra, Chief Statistician from the Pakistan Bureau of Statistics (PBS), Chief Economist of Pakistan, representatives from all provinces, the Federal Board of Revenue (FBR), Ministry of Food Security & Industries, and other relevant stakeholders, a news release said.

Trade deficit narrows by 34.7%; exports jump by 13.55 percent in October

ISLAMABAD, Nov 2 (APP): The country's merchandise trade deficit contracted by 34.70 per cent during the first four months of the current fiscal year compared to the corresponding period of last year, the Pakistan Bureau of Statistics (PBS) reported. The Trade deficit from July-October (2023-24) was recorded at \$7.416 billion as against the deficit of \$11.356 billion in July-October (2022-23), showing negative growth of 34.70 per cent. During the period under review, the exports increased by 0.66 per cent to \$9.617 billion compared to the exports of \$9.554 billion during the corresponding period of last year, according to the latest PBS data. On the other hand, the imports narrowed by 18.54 per cent and were recorded at \$17.033 billion compared to \$20.910 billion last year. Meanwhile, on a year-on-year basis, the exports from the country increased by 13.55 per cent in October compared to the exports of the same month of last year.—APP

COURT NOTICE

In the Court of Naveed Abbas Mangat Civil Judge Gujrat
Title: Rehman Ejaz.
Versus Tariq Dar etc.
Notice to:
3-Zeeshan Ejaz, 4-Rizwan Ejaz, 5-Uzman Ejaz Sons Ejaz Ahmad Dar R/o. Iqbal Colony Jalalpur Jattan, Tehsil & District Gujrat. Suit for Permanent Injunction Whereas in the above mentioned case it has been proved to the satisfaction of the court that the above mentioned defendants are not served in ordinary way. It is therefore proclaimed under order 5 rule 20 CPC that if the said defendants will not appear personally or through a duly authorized agent or pleader in court at 8 AM on 9-11-2023, otherwise case will be decided ex party.

COURT NOTICE

In the Court of Naveed Abbas Mangat Civil Judge Gujrat
Title: Zubair Akram.
Versus Muhammad Younas etc.
Notice to:
7-Luqman Akram, 8-Shahbaz Akram Sons Muhammad Akram, 10-Ejaz Akram, R/o. Malikpur Khurd Tehsil & District Gujrat Suit for Permanent Injunction Whereas in the above mentioned case it has been proved to the satisfaction of the court that the above mentioned defendants are not served in ordinary way. It is therefore proclaimed under order 5 rule 20 CPC that if the said defendants will not appear personally or through a duly authorized agent or pleader in court at 8 AM on 8-11-2023, otherwise case will be decided ex party.

Briefs

Moin ul Haque holds farewell reception

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Ambassador to China, Moin ul Haque, will soon complete his mission and depart from China. He held a farewell reception here to announce his departure. At the event, Haque expressed his sincere gratitude to friends from all walks of life for their contributions to the friendship between Pakistan and China. He said that Pakistan and China have a long history and a splendid culture. Haq said that his mission to China is a highlight of his career, and he deeply felt the sincere friendship between the Pakistani and Chinese people during his stay in China. "During my three-year tenure, I have visited Wuhan, Shaoshan, Ningde, Xinjiang, Shandong, and other regions, creating numerous beautiful memories and witnessing the development of China. Especially in the past 40 years, China has made remarkable achievements in economic development, which Pakistan can learn from," Haque said.

The friendship between Pakistan and China is irreplaceable and unbreakable. It is the inevitable trend of history and the aspiration of the people. In every significant moment, the Chinese people have consistently demonstrated goodwill and empathy towards the Pakistani people. Regardless of external changes and numerous challenges, he added that the friendship between the two countries is enduring and extensive.

ANF seizes over 115 kg drugs in 13 operations; arrests five accused

RAWALPIND: Anti-Narcotics Force (ANF) seized over 115 kg drugs while conducting 13 operations across the country and arrested five accused, said an ANF Headquarters spokesman here on Thursday. He informed that 970 grams heroin was recovered from a parcel booked for UK at a courier office in Sialkot. 145 heroin and hashish filled capsules were recovered from the possession of two passengers netted at Bacha Khan International Airport. The accused, residents of Khyber, were leaving for Doha by flight number QR-601. 14 heroin-filled capsules weighing 700 grams were recovered from two suspects, residents of Chinot, arrested on University Road Peshawar. The accused, a resident of Chinot, was smuggling heroin from Peshawar to Punjab. 2.4 kg hashish was recovered from a motorcycle intercepted on University Road Peshawar. 300 grams hashish and 100 grams cannabis were recovered from a parcel confiscated from a courier office located on Ring Road Peshawar. The parcel was booked from Peshawar to Khanewal. 10 kg hashish and 4 kg Ice drug were recovered from an uninhabited area of Zakhakel Khyber. 10 kg hashish and 2 kg heroin concealed for smuggling in Panjgur area was recovered. The spokesman further informed that 59 heroin-filled capsules were recovered from the possession of a passenger nabbed.—APP

High Commissioner of Brunei meets Chairman Senate

Both emphasize the need to further bolster these relations, particularly in areas of trade, business, investment, and the economic sector

DNA

ISLAMABAD: High Commissioner of Brunei Darussalam, PG Kamal Bashah PG Ahmed, paid a courtesy call on Chairman Senate, Muhammad Sadiq Sanjrani here at Parliament House on Thursday. Chairman Senate Muhammad Sadiq Sanjrani warmly congratulated High Commissioner PG Kamal Bashah PG Ahmed on his recent appointment and extended his heartfelt best wishes for the role.

The meeting was marked by a strong sense of optimism and hope for an enhancement in the diplomatic ties between Pakistan and Brunei Darussalam as Chairman Senate Muhammad Sadiq Sanjrani expressed his confidence that this appointment would contribute to the strengthening of relations between the two nations.

During the comprehensive discussion, the two sides delved into the prevailing regional situation, addressing issues of mutual interest. Pakistan and Brunei Darussalam's strong bilateral relations, deeply rooted in shared religious values and cooperation, were also highlighted.

Both dignitaries emphasized the need to further bolster these relations, particularly in areas of trade, business, investment, and



the economic sector. Pakistan's investor-friendly policies were showcased as an attractive prospect for potential investments from Brunei Darussalam in various sectors, such as energy, ag-

riculture, and education. Chairman Senate also highlighted the profound trust that Pakistan and Brunei Darussalam share on matters related to Islamophobia, cooperation with-

in the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC), and their collective commitment to world peace. A significant point of discussion revolved around the agricultural sector, where Chair-

man Senate underscored the importance of utilizing scarce water resources and modern technology to enhance productivity.

He underlined the vast investment opportunities available in Pakistan and urged businessmen and investors from both countries to explore and capitalize on these prospects to mutual benefit. Effective strategies in the economic and business sectors were also emphasized as a means to foster growth and cooperation. Moreover, Chairman Senate brought to the forefront the critical issues of Occupied Jammu and Kashmir and Palestine, shedding light on the alarming human rights violations occurring in these regions. He called upon the international community to play an active role in finding solutions to these longstanding conflicts. Muhammad Sadiq Sanjrani stressed that finding resolutions for these issues was a challenging test for the United Nations, and he emphasized the need for a unified plan of action within the Muslim Ummah to end the ongoing cruelty and barbarism in Occupied Kashmir and Palestine. Ambassador of Brunei Darussalam, PG Kamal Bashah PG Ahmed, expressed his country's keen interest in expanding bilateral relations with Pakistan and commended Pakistan's efforts towards regional peace.

Pre-COP28 roundtables highlight Pakistan's Climate-Security Nexus

DNA

ISLAMABAD: The Civil Society Coalition for Climate Change (CSCCC), with the support from United States Institute of Peace (USIP) and the United Arab Emirates Embassy to Pakistan, hosted a series of three roundtable discussions as part of its pre-COP28 preparations. The discussions focused on Pakistan's vulnerability to climate change, climate finance and sub-national perspectives with an overarching nexus on climate security. The multi-disciplinary stakeholder convening brought together government officials, experts, academic, civil society, and media to explore the complex and multifaceted issues surrounding the nexus. The roundtable delved into various dimensions of vulnerability, ranging from the mountainous regions to coastal communities, with a focus on representing sub-national perspectives. Aisha Khan, Chief Executive CSCCC opened the session

with welcome remarks, and reiterated the need for sustained engagement with diverse stakeholders for interdisciplinary and integrated approach in policy planning. During the first roundtable titled "Arc of Vulnerability: Climate-Security Nexus", Amir Khan Goraya from UNDP highlighted the nation's vulnerability to climate change, urging Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) to advocate and build resilience. Experts emphasized the climate-security relationship and integrating climate change into national security policies. They called for unified approaches, accountability, and cooperation between government and development sectors, stressing climate resilience and sustainability. Accurate data collection, sharing, and community sensitization were also emphasized for preparedness. The second roundtable, themed "Unlocking Climate Finance: Scale - Access - Affordability" delved into the financial challenges and op-

portunities associated with tackling climate change in Pakistan, particularly in the context of the upcoming COP28. While delivering the keynote remarks, Sobiah Becker, from GIZ, identified climate finance as a key pillar to reduce emissions and enhance adaptation efforts. The roundtable also discussed the nexus between climate finance and security, emphasizing the importance of ensuring that financial benefits reach vulnerable populations effectively. The third roundtable, centered on the "Subnational Climate Perspectives on Vulnerability, Human Security and Destabilization". The keynote address was delivered by Lt. General Inam Haider Malik, Chairman of NDMA, where he stressed the significance of early disaster detection, including the role of artificial intelligence (AI) and advanced technology in risk reduction. The Special Remarks delivered by Special Secretary Interior Division and Additional Secretary,

Economic Affairs Division reinforced the need for engagement with stakeholders at all levels to strengthen climate resilience at all levels. The experts raised several key points, including the need for better coordination between central and subnational disaster management authorities, promoting gender-sensitive policies, integrating climate change into the health sector, and encouraging collaboration between various stakeholders. The roundtable also discussed innovative solutions and called for a whole-country approach to tackle climate change, ensuring that progress in one region benefits the nation as a whole. Ambassador Shafiq Kakakhel concluded by saying that the comprehensive roundtable discussions laid the groundwork for Pakistan's position at COP28 and has demonstrated the need for multi-stakeholder collaboration in effectively addressing climate change at the national, subnational, and local level.

Govt plays key role for promoting country's soft image

ISLAMABAD: Minister for National Heritage & Culture Jamal Shah Thursday said that the interim government was playing a key role in promoting the country's soft image effectively at the international level and connecting people of various countries with their rich cultures. "Pakistani nation is hospitable and has cultural values which we need to highlight the correct image of the country at national and international levels", Jamal Shah said while talking to a private news channel.

Pakistan has a rich and diverse cultural heritage which can be promoted to attract maximum tourists, he said, adding, that there is a dire need for complete mapping and categorization of cultural sites including those of religious to ensure their preservation. The federal government is ready to extend all possible support for the provinces on this matter, he added. He further explained that our regional languages, literature, culture and art defined the identity of a nation and the government had been taking measures to promote them to create a knowledgeable, educated and well-informed society that could enjoy peace and prosperity. He urged poets, drama and film writers to highlight Pakistan's rich culture for not only educating the future generation but also promoting tourism at the global level. Replying to a question, he said we will increase our efforts to make and preserve the heritage sites in the state to attract more tourists, including improving the infrastructure and drama theatres. He said the government has planned to spend all available resources to open new museums, restore archaeological sites and promote its cultural heritage.—DNA

Pakistani education consultancy unlocks new opportunities

ISLAMABAD: In a bid to provide Pakistani students with enhanced educational opportunities, local education consultancy firms are actively working to unlock the doors for students to study in China. With its rich cultural heritage, world-class universities and emerging global influence, China has become an attractive destination for Pakistani students seeking higher education options abroad, Gwadar Pro reported on Thursday. Muhammad Sajjad, founder of Hussain Education Consultants Pvt Ltd, recently attended the highly anticipated 2023 China Annual Conference and Expo for International Cooperation held recently in Beijing. This significant event, renowned for its emphasis on fostering global partnerships and knowledge exchange, brought together 500 international influential figures from the education industry, government officials, and experts from around the world exchanged cutting-edge ideas, innovative ideas and latest practices on key issues of common concern to the world, such as international talent training, international mobility of students, and training of talents studying in China, etc. With the aim of producing internationally qualified professionals to address the shortage of skilled experts in Pakistan, Mr Sajjad works with over 400 Chinese universities. He said that the conference and expo provided a platform for them to engage in meaningful discussions with Chinese and international education stakeholders. "We had the chance to exchange ideas, explore potential collaborations, and strengthen our ties with even more educational institutions in China," he added. During his participation, Mr. Sajjad shared his insights, focusing on promoting Chinese universities as an attractive destination for Pakistani students seeking higher education opportunities. China's rapid economic growth and increasing global influence have led to the establishment of numerous scholarship programs and exchange initiatives specifically designed to attract international students. Another key advantage of studying in China is the wide range of academic disciplines available. Chinese universities offer programs in fields such as engineering, medicine, business, computer science and social sciences, giving Pakistani students with diverse options to pursue their desired career paths.—DNA

New York lawmaker set to arrive Pakistan on Saturday

DNA

ISLAMABAD: A milestone in the US-Pakistan relationship is being set as Deputy Speaker of the State of New York Phil Ramos is scheduled to arrive Pakistan on Saturday. It's history in the making as no US State lawmaker has ever embarked on a mission with such a vast agenda. Why is Phil Ramos visiting Pakistan? The primary focus of his visit is to explore the possibilities of declaring Sindh and Punjab as sister states of New York. This relationship helps build collaboration between the two respective regions in various sectors including agriculture, education, health, trade, and

culture. Sources told INP that moreover, Ramos will try to facilitate Pakistani Americans getting medical insurance in Pakistan. Till now, they have to pay through their own pockets if they get medical treatment in Pakistan despite paying costly bills for health insurance in the US. If the issue is resolved, both countries will equally reap the monetary benefits of this development. For the United States, it will lower the burden on already strained and understaffed hospitals. Moreover, American insurance companies will benefit by paying relatively less amount to their customers as medicines and treatment is relatively cost-effective in Pakistan. For private Pakistani hospitals, it will be an additional source of income as Pakistani Americans prefer to go back to the US to



avoid paying here unnecessarily when they already have spent on health insurance. This step will be a blessing in disguise for old, retirees, and special people who want

to stay longer with their families in Pakistan but can't afford their medical bills. The idea of providing medical insurance in Pakistan was coined by Ramos as he hails from New York — home of almost a hundred thousand Pakistani Americans. Hence, in order to facilitate constituents, Ramos intends to take a step for the benefit of all Pakistani American families. Earlier, Ramos had discussed this idea in a Zoom meeting with Pakistan Muslim League Nawaz (PML-N) Senator Ishaq Dar, when he had the portfolio of federal minister of finance. Now, this visit will give Ramos a chance to meet Senator Dar face-to-face and discuss some other initiatives as well. However, on the first

leg of his visit, the deputy speaker will meet Dr Gohar Ejaz, the caretaker minister of industries and production who happens to be a prominent entrepreneur, philanthropist, and leading industrialist of Pakistan as well. This interaction falls in line with the main focus of his trip as Phil wants to enhance economic ties. Dr Ejaz is looking forward to meeting and exploring ways to strengthen and improve economic relations. Next, a meeting is planned at the Lahore Chamber of Commerce & Industry where Ramos will encourage small and medium business community leaders to directly engage with the traders in New York.

Solangi attends launching ceremony of book


ISLAMABAD: Caretaker Federal Minister for Information and Broadcasting Murtaza Solangi attended the CEO's Investment Summit on Thursday. The business community's favourite book "100 Best Performing CEOs and Companies of Pakistan," was launched at the event. Founder and President of CEO Club Pakistan Ijaz Nisar presented the book as a gift to the Information Minister. The book contains the success stories of 100 Pakistani CEOs working at the local and international levels who have highlighted the positive image of Pakistan in the world in difficult situations.—APP

Emergency operations: Rescue-1122 saves 4974 lives in October


RAWALPIND: Rawalpindi Rescue-1122 saved the lives of 4974 victims in 5330 emergency operations conducted during October and maintained an average response time of less than 7 minutes, Rescue-1122 spokesman said here on Thursday. He informed that the rescue service responded to total 5330 emergency operations including 1407 road traffic accidents, 86 fire calls, 553 special rescue operations, four cylinder/gas blasts, a building-collapse incident, 3140 medical emergencies and 139 crimes in October. Rescue 1122's Command and Control Room in Rawalpindi claimed its response to fire incidents in October helped save property and goods worth millions of rupees from being gutted.

Rank Pinning ceremony of newly promoted SP held

ISLAMABAD: Islamabad Capital City Police Officer (ICCP) Dr. Akbar Nasir Khan along with CPO Headquarters Hassan Raza on Wednesday pinned the badges to the newly promoted Superintendent of Police (SP) Hakim Khan, a police public relations officer said. He said that the ICCPO congratulated the officer on his promotion and wished him all the best for his future endeavors. He said that promotion and increase in rank in the police service actually reflects an increase in responsibilities therefore, the promoted officer should make equal implementation of law, observance of merit and best service delivery.—APP



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UN resolution seeks end to Israel-Palestine conflict

WHEN the UN General Assembly adopted a resolution on the Palestine-Israel conflict, calling for an “immediate, durable and sustained humanitarian truce leading to a cessation of hostilities”, many let out a sigh of relief, hoping it will end, even if temporarily, the deaths and sufferings of people in the Gaza Strip. But that was not to be, for Israel intensified its attacks on Gaza and began its ground offensive into northern Gaza a couple of days later, with Hamas firing rockets into Israel at infrequent intervals. Before Israel intensified its assault, its permanent representative to the UN called the UN General Assembly resolution a “shame” and rejected it. No matter how much Israel, with the overt support of the United States, tries to justify its military offensive on the pretext of “self-defense”, it cannot deny that what the UN has called for in the resolution is in line with the interests of all parties. Also, its attempts to drive the Palestinian people away from northern Gaza and turn it into a buffer zone go against the two-state solution it has agreed to. The UN resolution “rejects any attempts at the forced transfer of the Palestinian civilian population”, reflecting the views of an overwhelming majority of countries. Israel should not ignore that fact. The complexity of the Palestinian question means it cannot be resolved by pleasing one party at the cost of the other. The issue can be resolved only through dialogue and negotiations. The Palestinian people have been under illegal occupation for too long, because the international community has overlooked their right to a separate state and live a life of dignity. All countries have the right to defend themselves. But that does not mean they can violate international law, international humanitarian law in particular. An eye for an eye makes the whole world blind. The pressing priority now is to fully implement the UN General Assembly resolution, stop the fighting, and prevent the situation from turning into a bigger humanitarian crisis. As Foreign Ministry spokesperson Wang Wenbin said, both the Palestinian and Israeli sides should realize that the use of force has never brought lasting peace. Only by pursuing common security can we ensure long-term security, and only through political settlement can all parties’ legitimate security concerns be addressed. China has always stood on the side of fairness and justice, and condemns all actions that harm civilians and violate international law. China assumes the rotating presidency of the UN Security Council for November on Wednesday, and it is committed to working with the international community to help end the Israel-Palestine conflict and ensure the safety of civilians, especially women and children.

Pakistan's First And Only Diplomatic Daily

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Member APNS / ABC Certified

Vol: 05 Issue: 19

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Sunak's light-touch AI regulation: threat too grave

THE challenge of regulating artificial intelligence is sometimes compared to the management of nuclear energy: there are valuable civil applications alongside terrifying military ones, and a credible risk of existential calamity if it all goes wrong. But nuclear weapons are expensive and hard to acquire. By contrast, AI can distribute awesome power at relatively low cost. This adds unprecedented complexity to the task facing attendees at an AI safety summit that Rishi Sunak is hosting this week at Bletchley Park. The prime minister wants to position the UK as a global leader in the field. It is a creditable diplomatic endeavour, partly vindicated by the “Bletchley declaration” in which 28 countries agree to a sustained global dialogue on managing emerging AI risks. Significantly, both the US and China have signed. But there are limits to how much control Britain can have over such a sensitive agenda, as was demonstrated in a speech by the US vice-president, Kamala Harris, delivered before the summit. Ms Harris announced the creation of an AI safety institute based in Washington, and a more western-focused political declaration on military uses of the new technology. The Intervention was a reminder that the US is a superpower, jealous of its technological primacy and disinclined to outsource discussion of matters pertaining to its vital strategic interest. Ms Harris’s speech also expressed an important difference of emphasis between the White House and Downing Street on the best approach to AI safety. The prime minister’s declared preference is “not to rush to regulate”. This is an ideological choice – “a point of principle” – that government should always prefer measures that encourage innovation and avoid ones that risk stifling it. Mr Sunak queries the merit in laws “for things we don’t yet understand”. The White House is not so sanguine. As Ms Harris put it: “We reject the false choice that suggests we can either protect the public or advance innovation. We can – and we must – do both. And we must do so swiftly, as this technology rapidly advances.” Consistent with that urgency, President Joe Biden signed an executive order on Monday, mandating a wide range of controls to protect American citizens against cavalier or wilfully malevolent use of AI. It is a sprawling, detailed agenda covering the threat of cyberweapons proliferation, consumer protection, the prospect of AI machines undermining workplace rights, the risk that algorithms derived from biased datasets embed social inequalities in automated systems, and more. The EU is developing a similarly broad law. But the British approach looks lackadaisical, despite Mr Sunak’s personal focus on the topic. His doctrinal aversion to economic intervention runs deeper than his interest in technology. His deference to the enterprising spirit of tech bosses trumps concern for the impact their products are already having on the frontline of digital disruption, on precarious jobs, on workers, in schools, or indeed at the ballot box via electoral manipulation. Mr Sunak seems rather too attuned to the libertarian ethos of Silicon Valley, where grandiloquent fretting about existential risk can be a substitute for practical real-world mitigation.

The strategy of victimization: “Israel and Terrorism”

Kainat Rasheed



The Head of the main UN agency in Gaza said “the scale of the tragedy is unprecedented” following his first visit to enclave since the Israel-Hamas war began in start of October. Israel’s actions have been accused of breaching International Humanitarian and criminal laws, potentially leading to allegations of committing war crimes. The UN Human Rights office has said the attack on Jabalya, Gaza’s largest refugee camp, “could amount to war crimes”...

AMIDST the ongoing conflict between Israel and Gaza a controversial strategy has emerged: the rebranding of military actions as a “second phase of war” “This narrative changed shift, combined with the isolation of Gaza from the world, has ignited debates and accusations of a coverup surrounding Israel operations. The allegations surrounding Israel’s actions in Gaza and its accusations against Hamas for using hospitals for military purposes have raised concerns about potential violations of International Humanitarian Law and intensification of the conflict. Israel’s expanding ground campaign in Gaza has blanketed the region in darkness by cutting off all communication sources. The World Health Organization makes heartfelt plea to global leaders, urging them to use their influence to halt conflicts promptly. WHO (World Health Organization) update on last Saturday there also reports of bombardments near the Indonesia and hospitals, when phone and internet services were cut as Israel jets dropped more bombs. Multiple organizations have expressed concern over the humanitarian situation in Gaza but the UN’s action often seems limited to verbal statements due to its significant reliance on funding from the United States, which has a strong alliance with Israel.

Drawing comparisons to historical events, Israel often portrays itself as a victim, seeking moral legitimacy while concealing actions that some view as terrorist or criminal in the name of self-defense, akin to the U.S. use of nuclear bombs in Hiroshima and Nagasaki during World War-II. Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu’s made clear on Monday that Israel would not agree to a ceasefire, saying “this is a time for war” and also critics says that Hamas – with its bloodthirsty rhetoric, open antisemitism and stated intention never to share the land- played into the hands of a prime minister who also wanted to be able to tell western governments that Israel has “no partner” for peace. The Head of the main UN agency in Gaza said “the scale of the tragedy is unprecedented” following his first visit to enclave since the Israel-Hamas war began in start of October. Israel’s actions have been accused of breaching International Humanitarian and criminal laws, potentially leading to allegations of committing war crimes. The UN Human Rights office has said the attack on Jabalya, Gaza’s largest refugee camp, “could amount to war crimes” given “the high number of civilian casualties and the scale of destruction” its wrote on social media. Israel’s weeks long bombardment of Gaza

has killed at least 8,700 people, according to figures released by the Palestinian Minister health in Ramallah, drawn from sources in the Hamas-controlled enclave. The support that America extends to Israel is primarily driven by their national interests and the influential power they hold on the global stage. This dynamic often results in the silence of many third world nations when it comes to Israel’s actions, as they fear potential repercussions from the dominant United States. As a result, concerns about Israel’s activities in the region sometimes go unaddressed, leaving a contentious situation unresolved. The importance of adhering to international laws cannot be overstated when it comes to maintaining peace in our world. It is crucial for UNESCO (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization) and its member countries to advocate for peace and the resolution of conflicts through diplomatic means. The situation in Israel, with its ongoing concerns about war activities, poses significant questions regarding global peace and international security. It is vital for nations to work together to address these issues and find peaceful solutions, in the pursuit of a more secure and harmonious world.

Test of diplomacy

Maleeha Lodhi

The Security Council failed to adopt both resolutions in its session on October 25. The US resolution, which had no ceasefire provision, faced a double veto, from Russia and China. Explaining its action, China’s envoy Zhang Jun said the US draft resolution contained divisive elements and did “not reflect the world’s strongest calls for a ceasefire [and] an end to the fighting.” “At this moment” he added “ceasefire is not just a diplomatic term. It means the life and death of many civilians.” The Russian resolution calling for a humanitarian ceasefire was unable to secure the required nine votes, with the US and UK opposing it and several members abstaining in the vote

WITH Israel’s killing spree continuing and its ground operations expanding in Gaza, a catastrophic humanitarian crisis has been unfolding. The Israeli leadership has defied growing international calls for a cessation of hostilities. Emboldened by unconditional US support, Israel has intensified its bombing campaign across the Gaza Strip resulting in heavy loss of Palestinian civilian lives. Over 8,000 Palestinians have been killed in airstrikes since the war began, 70% of them women and children and over a hundred people have been killed in Israeli raids in the West bank. Diplomatic efforts have failed to bring the war to an end or even secure a pause in the violence. The UN Security Council has been the arena of bitter diplomatic battles rather than a forum for unified action to halt the bloodshed. The open debate on the Gaza situation last week laid bare sharp disagreements among member states, pitting the US, Israel and their handful of allies, opposed to a ceasefire against the rest, with many members urging an immediate ceasefire. This polarisation paralysed the world body responsible for the maintenance of international peace and stability. Speaking during the debate, UN Secretary General Antonio Guterres described the humanitarian situation as dire, warned of the risk of war spiralling throughout the region and called again for a ceasefire. He denounced “the clear violations of international humanitarian law” being witnessed in Gaza. His comment that the Hamas attack did not happen in a vacuum but after “56 years of suffocating occupation” produced an angry response from Israel’s envoy who called on Guterres to resign and announced his country would stop issuing visas to UN officials. This wasn’t the only clash in the world’s highest diplomatic forum. The Palestinian foreign minister Riyad al-Maliki took

aim at western countries for failing to show any concern for Palestinian civilians being massacred in Gaza. He also called inaction by the Security Council “inexcusable.” This was echoed by Arab ministers who addressed the Council. The Jordanian and Egyptian foreign ministers bemoaned the Security Council’s failure to call for an immediate ceasefire. As did Qatar’s foreign minister who called it “deplorable.” Pull-quote: The UN Security Council has been the arena of bitter diplomatic battles rather than a forum for unified action to halt the bloodshed. It was the US who resisted calls for a ceasefire and instead sent weapons to Israel and deployed more military assets in the region. This encouraged Tel Aviv to continue on a path of escalation. The US opposed two resolutions calling for a ceasefire, moved earlier by Russia and Brazil. But under mounting pressure from the international community, it put forward its own resolution. Other than recognizing Israel’s right to defend itself, this called for a humanitarian pause to allow the delivery of assistance. A rival resolution was proposed by Russia that urged an immediate and durable ceasefire and for Israel to rescind its decision to forcibly relocate Gazans to the south of the strip. The Security Council failed to adopt both resolutions in its session on October 25. The US resolution, which had no ceasefire provision, faced a double veto, from Russia and China. Explaining its action, China’s envoy Zhang Jun said the US draft resolution contained divisive elements and did “not reflect the world’s strongest calls for a ceasefire [and] an end to the fighting.” “At this moment” he added “ceasefire is not just a diplomatic term. It means the life and death of many civilians.” The Russian resolution calling for a humanitarian ceasefire was

unable to secure the required nine votes, with the US and UK opposing it and several members abstaining in the vote. Given the deadlock in the Security Council, the focus shifted to the UN General Assembly often referred to as the world’s parliament. It met in a special emergency session on October 26 to discuss and vote on a resolution proposed by Jordan on behalf of the Arab group. Pakistan was one of its co-sponsors. This called for “an immediate, durable & sustained humanitarian truce leading to a cessation of hostilities.” It demanded unhindered humanitarian access to deliver urgent assistance to civilians in Gaza. It also called for the rescinding of Israel’s order for Palestinian civilians to evacuate all areas in the Gaza strip north of the Wadi Gaza and relocate to southern Gaza. It rejected “any attempts at forcible transfer of the Palestinian civilian population.” The resolution was adopted on October 27 by an overwhelming majority of 120 in the 193-member body, with 14 countries opposing it. Unlike SC resolutions, GA resolutions are non-binding and have no legal force but they carry political and moral weight. Its adoption showed that the majority of the international community want an end to the violence with the US increasingly isolated. Only four European countries voted ‘no’ with the US; many voted for the resolution. This will mount pressure for de-escalation but will not halt the war. It raises the question of whether the deadlock in the Security Council means diplomacy has failed or is any diplomatic action possible before more carnage takes place in Gaza. For this to happen, the US will have to review its blind support for Israel and accept that its present one-sided stance is a recipe for unprecedented disaster in the Middle East that can push the region towards a wider conflagration.

– Sourced by Arab News.

Briefs

President,
ECP...

FROM PAGE 01

the top court said in the order. The Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP), Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N), and Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI), the three major political parties of the country, had welcomed the ECP announcement that elections in the country will take place on February 11, 2024. Welcoming the ECP's announcement, PPP's Nayer Bukhari has said that his party has been calling for holding timely elections. "Unelected individual or cabinet do not have right to rule the country... the elections should have been held within 90 days as per the Constitution," he said while speaking to Geo News. PML-N senior leader Ayaz Sadiq welcomed the announcement saying that it's a positive development and that the process to hold elections has commenced. However, he said fixing date polls is the mandate of the ECP.

Political
parties...

FROM PAGE 01

Responding to a question, the PPP leader said the caretaker government's conduct will establish whether all political parties are given a level-playing field. PML-N senior leader Ayaz Sadiq welcomed the announcement saying that it's a positive development as it will ensure stability in the country. "I welcome this development even more because the announcement came from Supreme Court which has increased its sanctity," he remarked. He said it would be difficult for the ECP to backtrack on this date since the poll date was shared with the country's top court. "We believe that elections will take on time," he added. MQM-P's Amin Ul Haque said that welcomed the ECP's announcement to hold elections on February 11. However, he added that to take the country forward democratic tradition must continue and for that free and fair elections must be held.

No
compromise..

FROM PAGE 01

implemented under the loan programme and that all the conditions of the IMF have been implemented so far. A Pakistani newspaper had reported a day earlier that the finance ministry has evaluated the progress on key targets, including achieving the disbursement of Rs87.5 billion in cash transfers to beneficiaries under the Benazir Income Support Programme (BISP). IMF, under the quantitative performance criteria, had set the ceiling on the amount of government guarantees related target at Rs4,000 billion but the ministry was able to confine total guarantees to Rs3,853 billion till the end of September 2023. But the real bone of contention in the review talks would be the external financing needs of Pakistan.

Dr Faisal...

FROM PAGE 01

He told journalists that Imran's health and diet were both satisfactory and the ousted premier voiced no complaints in this regard. Perhaps he had expressed some concerns regarding his health earlier and those are now being misquoted, said Dr Sultan, clarifying that no such symptoms were detected in the physical examination now. Meanwhile, Imran's lawyer Hamid Khan told the media that the party and its supporters were all concerned about Imran's health given the attacks on his life earlier.

ICC WORLD CUP 2023
India inflict second-biggest
world cup defeat on SL

Shami strikes another fifer as IND humiliate SL by 302 runs

SPORTS DESK

MUMBAI: India pacers decimated the Sri Lankan batting attack after Virat Kohli, Shubman Gill and Shreyas Iyer to power the home side to hand Sri Lanka the second-biggest World Cup defeat in the 33rd match of the ICC World Cup 2023. After inviting India to bat, Dilshan Madushanka drew first blood for Sri Lanka as he castled Rohit Sharma on the second ball of the innings after he sent the first one for four. Virat Kohli then joined Shubman Gill and together they scored 189 runs for the second wicket, completing their half-centuries. Shubman Gill appeared to be in a position to score his maiden World Cup ton, while Virat Kohli was eyeing his 49th ODI century to tie Sachin Tendulkar's record for most ODI hundreds. However, Dilshan Madushanka rained on their parade as he re-



turned to the attack and removed both batters in consecutive overs. Shubman Gill top-scored with a run-a-ball 92, featuring 11 boundaries and two sixes, meanwhile, Virat Kohli scored 88 runs from 92 deliveries with the help of as many boundaries as his partner. Shreyas Iyer, came down to bat at number four and added 60 runs for the fourth wicket with KL Rahul, who scored 21 runs during his 19-ball stay at the crease. Iyer added another 57 runs with Ravindra Jadeja for the sixth wicket but was dismissed by Madushanka after hitting back-to-back sixes. Iyer's blistering knock of 82 runs from 56 balls featured three boundaries and six sixes. Jadeja on the other end scored a brief 35-run cameo off 24 balls before being run-out on the last ball of the innings. Other than Madushanka's five wickets, Dushantha Chameera was the only bowler to pick a wicket for Sri Lanka, while two batters got run-out.

NZ call up Jamieson
as cover for Henry

BANGALORE: New Zealand have called Kyle Jamieson into their ICC World Cup 2023 squad as cover while fellow pace bowler Matt Henry awaits the results of a scan on a hamstring injury. Jamieson, previously with the squad in India as cover for Tim Southee, will arrive in Bengaluru late on Thursday ahead of Saturday's pool game against Pakistan. New Zealand coach Gary Stead said that with Henry awaiting the results of a scan on his right hamstring and fast bowler Lockie Ferguson recovering from an Achilles injury, the Black Caps had to summon cover. They have two group games remaining and a place in the semi-finals of ICC World Cup 2023 is still up for grabs. "The severity of Matt's injury, combined with a short turnaround to Pakistan, meant we couldn't risk being a bowler down for Saturday," Stead said on Thursday. "Matt's been a world-class performer for us in ODI cricket for the past two World Cup cycles so we've got our fingers crossed for the scan results later today," he added. Stead was confident it would not take long for the towering 28-year-old Kyle Jamieson, who has taken 14 wickets in 13 ODIs, to re-adjust to Indian conditions. "Kyle's on his way over as we speak and we look forward to welcoming him back into the group," he said. Stead added: "He'll likely train with us on Friday with a mind to being available for Saturday's game." New Zealand have been beset by injuries during ICC World Cup 2023 with star batsman Kane Williamson (thumb) and all-rounder Mark Chapman (thigh) both currently sidelined. The 2019 World Cup finalists endured a 190-run thrashing by South Africa on Thursday, with Henry breaking down midway through his sixth over. Their third defeat of this World Cup meant New Zealand slipped to fourth in the 10-team table with eight points, two ahead of Pakistan as well as Afghanistan, who have a game in hand. - Agencies

Texas Rangers capture
first World Series title

PHOENIX: Nathan Eovaldi pitched six gutsy innings, Mitch Garver broke a scoreless tie with an RBI single in the seventh and the Texas Rangers are World Series champions for the first time in their 63-year franchise history after beating the Arizona Diamondbacks 5-0 in Game 5 on Wednesday night. Marcus Semien homered late and the Rangers, held hitless for six innings by Zac Gallen, finished a record 11-0 on the road this postseason by capping the Fall Classic with three straight wins in the desert. One night after Texas took a 10-run lead by the third in a Game 4 snoozer, it finished the Series by outlasting the Diamondbacks in a white-knuckle pitchers' duel through eight innings, piling on four runs in the ninth for good measure. Gallen took a no-hitter into the seventh before giving up an opposite-field single to Corey Seager, whose weak grounder found a hole. Rangers rookie Evan Carter — all of 21 years old — followed with a double into the right-center gap. Garver then delivered the first run, pumping his fist as a hard-hit grounder got through the middle of the infield to score Seager and make it 1-0.

Garver was 1 for 17 at the plate in the World Series before his huge hit. The Rangers tacked on four more runs in the ninth to break open the game. Semien's two-run homer off Paul Sewald made it 5-0. The outburst was typical of the Texas offense, which scored at least three runs in an inning 13 times this postseason. Eovaldi pitched out of trouble all night before Aroldis Chapman and Josh Sborz finished it. It's the first title for the Rangers, whose history dates back to 1961 when they were the expansion Washington Senators. They moved to Texas for the 1972 season and came agonizingly close to a World Series championship in 2011, needing just one strike on two occasions before eventually falling to the St. Louis Cardinals. Now, after five stadiums, roughly two dozen managers and 10,033 games, the Rangers are champions. It wasn't easy. Texas led the AL West for a big chunk of the season, but coughed up the division title on the final day of the regular season to rival Houston. The Rangers also weathered injuries to key pieces, particularly ace pitcher Jacob deGrom. That loss

in the regular-season finale at Seattle left the Rangers with the No. 5 seed in the AL playoffs and it sent them across the country to open the playoffs at Tampa Bay, part of two-week trip that took them to four cities — two on each coast. Then Texas got its revenge against Houston, winning a hard-fought series in seven games that brought them to the World Series. Finally, the Rangers had to get past the Diamondbacks, who won just 84 games during the regular season but beat the Brewers, Dodgers and Phillies in a remarkable postseason run that finally fizzled. Gallen was one of the best pitchers in the majors this season, starting for the National League in the All-Star game. But the 28-year-old hadn't been as sharp in the playoffs, with a 2.22 record and 5.27 ERA over five starts. That changed on Wednesday. The bespectacled righty was at his best, moving down the first 14 hitters he faced before walking Nathaniel Lowe. He got some help from his defense in the fourth — shortstop Geraldo Perdomo made a nice grab on a hard-hit grounder from Marcus Semien, and Christian Walker was there to snag the one-hop throw to first. - Agencies



KARACHI: Pakistan Navy Special Service Group and Qatari Naval Special Forces demonstrating Counter Piracy Operation during Joint Naval Exercise MUHARIB AL BAHR VI being conducted at Karachi. - DNA

Emerging Pakistani
Female cricketer earns
Australian contract

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Saira Jabeen, a 22-year-old emerging talent from the North of Pakistan, has secured a six-month contract with the Paramatta Women's Grade Cricket Club in Sydney, Australia. She touched down in Australia on September 28, 2023. Hailing from the picturesque Kalash Valley, Saira Jabeen has recently earned a spot in the list of 74 women cricketers who received PCB's first domestic women contracts for 11 months. "I have a good experience of Pakistan's grassroots cricket, and now with this opportunity, I would gain valuable exposure to competitive cricket in Australia. I hope that by blending these experiences, I can make a significant difference in the future." "My journey is facilitated by Mel Jones, the former Australian women's cricket team captain and Mr. Yahya Ghaznavi from the Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB), who played a pivotal role in connecting me with the Paramatta club." "I want to set an example for all those girls who are dreaming but are not able to chase their dreams due to societal pressure," Saira Jabeen affirmed, highlighting her commitment to inspiring aspiring female cricketers. Born with a passion for the game, Saira Jabeen shared that her journey was not without challenges. "I used to disguise myself to play with the guys," she recalled, mentioning how she had even cut her hair short to blend in with her male counterparts. "They were very good and supportive. They used to encourage me to play," she added, reflecting on the encouraging environment she found among her fellow cricketers.

Jabeur to donate prize money to Palestinians

The situation in the world doesn't make me happy," Jabeur added as she broke down in tears, before composing herself enough to talk about the Israel-Hamas conflict

OUR CORRESPONDENTS

CANCUN: An emotional Ons Jabeur said she would donate part of her WTA Finals prize money to Palestinians after avenging her Wimbledon final defeat to Marketa Vondrousova. After earning her first win of the week at the season-ending championships in Cancun, Tunisia's Jabeur choked back tears as she spoke on court. "The situation in the world doesn't make me happy," Jabeur added as she broke down in tears, before composing herself enough to talk about the Israel-Hamas conflict. "It's very tough seeing children, babies dying every day," she said. "It's heartbreaking, so I've decided to donate part of my prize money to help the Palestinians." "I cannot be happy with just this win, with what is happening. I'm sorry guys, it's supposed to be about tennis, but it's very frustrat-

ing looking at videos every day. "I'm sorry — it's not a political message, it's just humanity. I want peace in this world and that's it." Later, in her post-match press conference, the 29-year-old Jabeur said it had been a challenge to focus on tennis. "I try to stay off social media as much as I can, but it's very tough," Jabeur said. "You go through videos, photos, they're horrible, horrible photos every day. It doesn't help me sleep or recover very well and the worst thing is I feel hopeless." "Maybe donating some money would help a little bit with what they have been going through. But I know money doesn't mean anything right now to them. So I wish freedom for everybody and really peace for everyone." Jabeur must beat world number two Iga Swiatek in the final match of round-robin play on Friday to have any chance of qualifying for the semifinals in Mexico.

Senate
extends...

FROM PAGE 01

extend the National Accountability (Amendment) Ordinance, 2023 (I of 2023), for further period of one hundred and twenty days with effect from 31st October, 2023 under proviso to sub-paragraph (ii) of paragraph (a) of clause (2) of Article 89 of the Constitution of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan."

Earlier, the minister laid in the Senate the National Accountability (Amendment) Ordinance, 2023 (Ordinance No. I of 2023), as required by clause (2) of Article 89 of the Constitution. The amended law allows custody of the arrested suspects to the National Accountability Bureau (NAB) for up to 30 days instead of 14 days. It also empowers the NAB chairman to issue a warrant of arrest during the course of inquiry if an accused is not joining inquiry despite notices or willfully does not cooperate in such inquiry.

Biden seeks...

FROM PAGE 01

carried out in the past 24 hours, claiming the lives of 256 victims, he added. Whereas, Bahrain has recalled its ambassador to Israel and suspended economic ties with Tel Aviv, the country's parliament announced on Thursday. The statement published on the Bahraini parliament website confirmed that the Israeli ambassador has left Bahrain, while Bahrain called back its ambassador from Israel, and decided to suspend all economic relations with Israel. It added that its decision to recall its envoy and suspend economic relations is based on the kingdom's "solid and historical stance that supports the Palestinian cause and the legitimate rights of the Palestinian people." "This is certainly terrain that is more heavily sown than in the past with minefields and booby-traps. Hamas has learned and prepared itself well," said Brigadier General Iddo Mizrahi, chief of Israel's military engineers.

UNSC must...

FROM PAGE 01

The prime minister will also engage in bilateral discussions with the leadership of Uzbekistan and other participating leaders. Expressing concerns over the dire situation in Gaza, the spokesperson said the UN Security Council must act and fulfill its responsibility of upholding peace. She said the world body must call for lifting the siege, protecting civilians and facilitating humanitarian corridors for provision of uninterrupted essential supplies to the beleaguered people of Gaza. Alluding to the illegal foreigners' repatriation plan, the foreign office spokesperson said this applies to all foreigners residing illegally in Pakistan irrespective of their nationality and country of origin. She said this process would continue in an orderly and phased manner. She said this decision was in exercise of Pakistan's sovereign domestic laws and compliant with applicable international norms and principles. She also clarified that it did not apply to individuals who enjoy refugee status.

Caretaker
govt ...

FROM PAGE 01

PM Kakar said besides education, training of discipline among the youth was of prime significance in shaping their character. Experienced teachers can play a vital role in mentoring the youth, he added. The prime minister expressed these views in a meeting with his former teacher Nisar Ahmed, whom he warmly received here at the Prime Minister's House. He mentioned that Qaide-Azam in his golden principles also laid emphasis on discipline in addition to unity and faith. "Only a disciplined and organized nation can contribute to the development of itself and the world," he said.

Briefs

Poland extends border controls over migration concern

WARSAW : Poland has extended temporary controls on its border with Slovakia until Nov. 22 in an apparent response to continuing efforts by migrants to enter from Slovak territory. The number of migrants arriving in Slovakia, mostly from the Middle East and Afghanistan, has risen 11-fold to nearly 40,000 this year, according to Slovak government data published in October. "Border controls ... are extended for the period from November 3, 2023 to November 22, 2023," a regulation issued by Poland's Ministry of Internal Affairs and Administration said. Temporary controls on the border with Slovakia were introduced on Oct. 4, with Warsaw citing "a serious threat of illegal immigration on the Polish-Slovak section of the state border." The measure was later extended to Nov. 2. According to the latest regulation, the border can be crossed through eight road and three railway crossings and eleven pedestrian crossings. Poland, Slovakia, the Czech Republic, Hungary, Austria and Germany are part of the European Union's Schengen open-border zone. In September, Germany introduced checks on borders with its peers as countries face increasing migration and the EU carves out a new migration pact that will overhaul rules for handling irregular arrivals.—APP

Australian woman charged with mushroom meal murders

DNA

SYDNEY : Australian police charged a woman with murder Thursday over a mushroom meal that left three people dead and a local preacher fighting for his life. Erin Patterson, 49, faces three counts of murder and two of attempted murder over the meal, Victoria state detectives said in a statement. She has publicly denied any wrongdoing. The charges were laid just hours after detectives had arrested her and searched her home in the small rural town of Leongatha, southeast of Melbourne. In addition, police said they had charged Patterson with another three counts of attempted murder over three earlier incidents in 2021-2022 when a 48-year-old man "became ill after meals".

Tokyo stocks rally on Fed hopes

DNA

TOKYO : Tokyo stocks rose Thursday after technology issues were supported by Wall Street gains after the U.S. Federal Reserve indicated it has come to the end of its long-running interest rate hiking cycle. Japan's benchmark Nikkei stock index, the 225-issue Nikkei Stock Average, ended up 348.24 points, or 1.10 percent, from Wednesday at 31,949.89. The broader Topix index, meanwhile, finished 11.71 points, or 0.51 percent, higher at 2,322.39. Analysts said Tokyo's stock market responded positively to the gains in U.S. shares after the Fed decision and hopes that the central bank's tightening policy to tame inflation has been effective following some weaker-than-expected economic data. On the top-tier Prime Market, gainers were led by service, electric power and gas and air transportation issues. Among semiconductor-related stocks tracking gains in the technology-heavy Nasdaq index overnight, Screen Holdings climbed 573 yen, or 7.7 percent, to 8,014 yen, and Advantest increased 359 yen, or 10.0 percent, to 3,949 yen.



ISLAMABAD : A group photo of Foreign delegation along with Pakistan Engineering Council officials pose for group photo with Vice Chancellor Dr Mansoor Ahmed in a ceremony held at Capital university of science and technology.—DNA

Macron pushes French engagement in Uzbekistan visit

Macron was in Uzbekistan – the first trip to the country by a French president in nearly 30 years – to push France's business and cultural profile

NEWS DESK

PARIS : French President Emmanuel Macron said Thursday his country needed to boost its footprint in Central Asia as Europe, Russia, China and Turkey all jostle for influence in the resource-rich region. Macron was in Uzbekistan – the first trip to the country by a French president in nearly 30 years – to push France's business and cultural profile. Macron used the trip to give his backing to Uzbek President Shavkat Mirziyoyev's programme of opening the country up to global investors. "Uzbekistan is transforming. We must be there," Macron said at the opening of a French-Uzbek business forum in the ancient Silk Road city of Samarkand. After decades of isolation following the collapse of the USSR, Mirziyoyev is trying to court global investment and improve the ex-Soviet country's image. Critics and rights groups say Uzbekistan is still strongly authoritarian, with political opposition and dissent outlawed. Last year 21 people were killed during clashes between police and protesters in a rare episode of civil unrest. Paris

has emphasised the country's "reform dynamic" and said it regularly brings up issues around rule of law. "The French government has confidence in your strategy," Macron told Mirziyoyev. "We believe in this policy. We encourage it and we want to participate in it." The two leaders were filmed greeting each other with a long embrace when Macron arrived Wednesday evening. Macron's trip to the re-

gion was being watched closely in Moscow and Beijing, which have longstanding ties in Central Asia. The region is key to China's mammoth "New Silk Road" infrastructure project, while Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan are all part of a Moscow-led military alliance. But with Moscow waging war in Ukraine, other powers have sensed an opening. In neighbouring Kazakhstan on

Wednesday, Macron thanked the country for "refusing to become a vassal" for larger powers seeking dominance. Kazakhstan is a close ally of Russia, but has not backed its neighbour's invasion of Ukraine and has pledged to enforce international sanctions against Moscow. Moscow gave a cold reception to Macron's visit Thursday, warning France and other EU states not to "intimi-

date" countries that have ties to Russia. "Every state and the Central Asian states naturally have the right to their foreign policy," Russian foreign ministry spokeswoman Maria Zakharova said. "But there is an anti-Russian agenda that Western countries and Western leaders are incorporating into their contacts with a number of countries and in particular with Central Asian countries," she added. Both Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan are aiming for greater economic openness and a balanced diplomacy, even though Russia remains their primary partner. Macron is the first French leader to visit Uzbekistan since Francois Mitterrand in 1994. Mirziyoyev said Macron's visit had "historic significance" and that the two leaders had "agreed to advance bilateral relations to the level of a strategic partnership." Around 60 French business leaders have accompanied Macron on his trip. Several agreements in the energy, minerals and transport sectors were signed, including French uranium giant Orano, which said it had extracted 350 kilogrammes of uranium in a pilot project and intended to boost its presence in the country.



Uganda nabs ISIL-linked militia chief after tourist murders

KAMPALA : Uganda says it has captured the leader of an ISIL (ISIS)-linked militia unit it blames for killing two foreign tourists and their local guide in a national park last month. The militia chief known as "Njovu" was detained on Tuesday during a raid in which six members of his squad were killed, the government said on Thursday. The militiamen belonged to the Allied Democratic Forces (ADF), an ISIL-affiliated group based in the neighbouring Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC). The group has allegedly killed scores of civilians this year. Uganda's government says the ADF is also responsible for the October 17 murder of a honeymooning couple – David Barlow from Britain and Celia Barlow from South Africa – along with their Ugandan guide Eric Ayai. The trio were killed while on a safari in Queen Elizabeth National Park near the DRC border. ISIL claimed responsibility for the attack the day after the killings, saying it had killed "three Christian tourists" with machine guns. Uganda had promised to track down the killers. "This was a successful joint military-intelligence-led operation, and the whole squad that had been sent by the ADF to cause mayhem, kill tourists, burn schools, hospitals, was eliminated," Ugandan military spokesman Deo Akiiki told the Agence France-Presse news agency on Thursday. "The only survivor is the commander whom we captured," he said, adding that he would be put on trial. Akiiki said the militia chief was found with possessions of the slain tourists and their Ugandan guide's ID card. Allegiance to ISILgandan President Yoweri Museveni has long pressed security forces to "wipe out" the ADF, which is vehemently against his administration. The ADF began as a rebel coalition opposing the Ugandan government in the early 1990s. After being defeated by the army, it retreated into the DRC and began engaging in the illicit trade of timber, gold and farm products. It pledged loyalty to ISIL four years ago and is considered a "terrorist organisation" by the Ugandan government.—DNA

Africa-US trade program seeks 10-year extension

JOHANNESBURG : Africa wants the U.S. Congress to renew its flagship trade programme for the continent for at least 10 years, the African Union's top trade official said on Thursday, adding that any modifications to the initiative should only be considered later. Speaking at the start of three days of meetings of African trade ministers and U.S. officials, AU Trade Commissioner Albert Muchanga also said the United States will not be granted tariff free access to a new African free trade area. First launched in 2000, the African Growth and Opportunity Act (AGOA) grants exports from qualifying African countries duty free access to the United States – the world's largest consumer market. It is due to expire in September 2025, and discussions are currently under way for its possible renewal. "An extension of 10 to 20 years is very critical to the investment community. Anything lower than that would generate uncertainty," Muchanga told the ministers, who gathered in Johannesburg to form a common position on the future of the programme.—APP

Ukraine 'Optimistic' about opening EU accession talks

Hosting the Berlin conference, German Foreign Minister Annalena Baerbock said that big countries like hers must be ready to make sacrifices in the course of the reforms

KYIV : Ukrainian Foreign Minister Dmytro Kuleba said Thursday that Kyiv was confident about its quest to open EU membership talks this year, touting reforms it made even in the face of the Russian invasion. Speaking ahead of a conference on Europe in Berlin, Kuleba told reporters Ukraine was on track to fulfil its obligations to open negotiations on accession. "We are optimistic. We did a lot of reforms and we passed legislation necessary to meet, to implement the recommendations," he said. "So we are looking forward to the presentation of this report and I have reasons to believe that it will pave the way to the decision of the European Council on opening accession talks with

Ukraine." Ukraine applied for EU membership just days after Russia's invasion on February 24, 2022, and received candidacy status several months later in a strong signal of support from Brussels. EU chief Ursula von der Leyen acknowledged in September that Kyiv had made "great strides" in its bid for EU membership. Enlargement will be at the core of the EU summit on December 14 and 15 in Brussels, by which time the European Commission will have submitted reports on bids by Ukraine and also Moldova. Kuleba warned against letting the EU's own ongoing reform process slow down accession of new members. "EU reform should not take enlargement process as a

hostage and we have to find the right balance between the process of reforming the European Union and continuing with enlargement," he said. The 27-member bloc is in the throes of a broad renewal process, and there is an ongoing tussle on whether to complete its own reforms before letting in more members or whether to expand first and work on the change together. Hosting the Berlin conference, German Foreign Minister Annalena Baerbock said that big countries like hers must be ready to make sacrifices in the course of the reforms. "That can mean for a country like mine, Germany, that we say we are prepared to do without having a commissioner for a time," she said.—Agencies

U.S. farm leaders boost agriculture trade in China

BEIJING : Dozens of U.S. agriculture industry representatives gathered in Beijing on Thursday to meet Chinese counterparts amid growing U.S. efforts to bolster farm trade even as political ties between their two countries remain strained. A delegation from 11 groups including the U.S. Soybean Export Council, U.S. Grains Council and U.S. Wheat Associates is visiting a week after Chinese grain buyers signed non-binding agreements in Iowa to buy billions of dollars worth of produce, mostly soybeans, the first such signing since 2017. This week's visit, the likes of which had become rare due to bilateral tensions and three years of Chinese COVID-19 border controls, comes ahead of an expected meeting between President Xi Jinping and President Joe Biden in San Francisco this month. "We've got a big complicated relationship, but agriculture is the ballast in the relationship," Nicholas Burns, U.S. ambassador to China, told the gathering of U.S. and Chinese industry officials. U.S. Grains Council officials visited China's commerce ministry earlier on Thursday and raised China's anti-dumping and anti-subsidy measures against U.S. imports of distillers dried grains (DDGS), a protein-rich byproduct from ethanol production.—DNA

Putin withdraws Russia from nuclear test ban

The signing of the new law to abandon the landmark agreement outlawing nuclear weapons tests came

FOREIGN DESK

MOSCOW : Russia's President Vladimir Putin has revoked his country's ratification of the Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty (CTBT), a move he says is designed to bring Moscow into line with the United States. The signing of the new law to abandon the landmark agreement outlawing nuclear weapons tests came on Thursday, a week after Russia's upper house Federation Council unanimously approved it. The lower house State Duma had passed the bill in an accelerated vote before this. With Putin's signature, the legislation came

into effect on Thursday. The 1996 treaty outlaws all nuclear explosions, including live tests of nuclear weapons, though it was never effective because some key countries did not ratify it. Moscow on October 6 announced its intention to withdraw from the treaty to "mirror" the position of the US, which has signed, but not ratified the treaty. It is unclear, however, whether the revocation will result in Russia resuming tests of nuclear weapons. Putin said on October 5: "I hear calls to start testing nuclear weapons. I am not ready to say whether we really need to conduct tests or not." Deputy Foreign Minister Sergei Ryabkov said earlier

this month that Moscow would continue to respect the ban and would resume nuclear tests only if the US does so. "As our president said, we must be on alert, and if the United States moves towards the start of nuclear tests, we will have to respond here in the same way," the official said. Just hours after the upper house vote, Russia's military conducted a "massive" retaliatory nuclear strike drill. The exercise, which involved the test launch of missiles from a land-based silo, a nuclear submarine and a long-range bomber aircraft, was overseen by Putin. "Disturbed" The US stated earlier this month that it was "disturbed" by Russia's move to

revoke the CTBT ratification. "A move like this by any state party needlessly endangers the global norm against nuclear explosive testing," the US Department of State said. Russia should not be "wielding arms control and irresponsible nuclear rhetoric in a failing attempt to coerce other states", the State Department added, appearing to suggest that the move was aimed at pressuring the US and other countries which are supporting Ukraine in its fight against Russian forces. Since invading the neighbouring country, Putin has repeatedly invoked Russia's nuclear doctrine. With the abandonment of the CTBT, the

last remaining bilateral nuclear weapons treaty between Washington and Moscow is New START, under which the pair used to regularly inspect each other's nuclear facilities and limit warheads. Russia suspended the treaty in February. It is due to expire in early 2026. Ryabkov said last week that the Kremlin had received informal proposals from the US to resume talks on issues of strategic stability and arms control "in isolation from everything that is happening". However, he said Moscow believes it is "simply impossible" to return to such dialogue without a change in the "deeply fundamental hostile course towards Russia on the part of the US".

Violent BD protests close factories

DHAKA : Hundreds of garment factories in Bangladesh have shuttered as thousands of workers staged violent protests to demand a near-tripling of their wages, police said Thursday.

Bangladesh's 3,500 garment factories account for around 85 percent of the South Asian country's \$55 billion in annual exports, supplying major Western brands including Adidas, Gap, H&M and Levi Strauss.

But conditions are dire for many of the sector's four million workers, the vast majority of whom are women whose monthly wages start at 8,300 taka (\$75).

Police said on Thursday that workers had ransacked dozens of factories across Gazipur and other industrial neighbourhoods on the outskirts of the capital Dhaka since the protests began over the weekend.

"More than 250 garment factories have been shut in the protests. Up to 50 factories have been ransacked and vandalised, including four or five which were set alight," Gazipur police chief Sarwar Alam told media reporters.—APP

Climate funding fall signals stalling action

PARIS : International funding for climate resilience in developing countries slumped in 2021 despite increasingly ferocious impacts, the United Nations said Thursday, as Secretary-General Antonio Guterres warned action was "stalling" even as the need to protect people increases. Many developing economies least to blame for the greenhouse gases that stoke global warming are among the most exposed to the costly and destructive effects of worsening weather extremes and rising seas. But in its latest annual assessment of climate preparedness funding, the UN Environment Programme (UNEP) found that public finance to developing countries fell 15 percent to around \$21 billion in 2021 – the most recent year for which figures are available. Meanwhile, the overall annual funding that developing countries need to adapt to climate impacts this decade is projected to have increased to as much as \$387 billion, UNEP said.

"Storms, fires, floods, drought and extreme temperatures are becoming more frequent and more ferocious, and they're on course to get far worse," Guterres said in a statement, adding that the need to protect people and nature was "more pressing than ever." "Yet, as needs rise, action is stalling," he said.—Agencies

Briefs

Deportation of illegals challenged in LHC

DNA

LAHORE: Lahore High Court's Justice Ali Baqar Najafi has directed petitioners to come up with relevant documents to challenge the government's directive to deport illegal immigrants from Pakistan. The Registrar's Office objected to not being intimidated about the government's notification under which the immigrants were asked to leave Pakistan. As the proceedings commenced, Justice Najafi asked about the relevant documents to which the petitioner's counsel advocate Izzat Fatima argued that there is no specific notification except a public notice of the press release issued by the federal government. However, on the direction of the court, advocate Fatima said they would come up with relevant documents by the next date of the hearing. The petitioners, Khial Noor, Hazrat Ali, and other family members, contended that caretaker Interior Minister Sarfraz Bugti gave a month for them to leave Pakistan to avoid deportation. The counsel argued that deporting all refugees without giving them the right to present their case or the right of asylum is a sheer violation of human rights. In her opinion, this could lead to dire consequences for Pakistan. Speaking in favor of women and children especially, she said they had escaped from Afghanistan due to the threat of persecution and had accepted Pakistan as their new home. Further, the petitioners are amongst those who grew up in Pakistan only and have no connection whatsoever with Afghanistan.

Bangladesh: Political violence grips country

DNA

DHAKA: Weeks of mounting political tension have erupted into protests and bloodshed in Bangladesh, leaving the country on edge ahead of general elections due in January. Several senior opposition leaders were arrested last Sunday, a day after a massive rally against the government turned violent, resulting in the deaths of at least two opposition supporters. The rejuvenated main opposition BNP has intensified protests calling on Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina to resign. The BNP and its allies want a neutral interim government ahead of the general elections, arguing that free and fair polls are not possible under Ms Hasina. The government led by her Awami League has rejected this demand. The BNP rally in the capital Dhaka attracted tens of thousands of people - one of the biggest gatherings seen there in a decade. But things soon turned violent. Police fired rubber bullets and tear gas while opposition supporters threw stones and bricks. Some roads in the capital were strewn with exploded sound grenades, tear gas shells and broken glass.

Dar underscores US role as Pak largest trade partner

The ambassador lauded the Pakistani leadership's commitment and contributions in fostering peace and stability in the region

DNA

ISLAMABAD: United States (US) Ambassador to Pakistan, Donald Blome here on Thursday called on the Leader of the House in Senate, Senator Mohammad Ishaq Dar. The meeting served as an important platform for discussing various topics of mutual interest including the ways and means for further strengthening the enduring relationship between the two countries. Dar underscored the role of the US as Pakistan's largest trade partner and emphasized the importance of continued collaboration and cooperation for further enhancing the trade and economic ties between the two countries. The discussions delved into a comprehensive analysis of the ongoing Afghan Refugees issue, acknowledging Pakistan's relentless efforts to promote the regional peace. The ambassador lauded the Pakistani leadership's commitment and contributions in fostering peace and stability in the region.



Donald Blome, with regard to the deportation of illegal and undocumented migrants from Pakistan, including Afghan nationals, agreed to the fact that being a sovereign country, Pakistan had every right to deal with them in accordance with the law of the land and also to take all possible measures to strengthen its borders. In the meeting, the progress and current status of the ongoing International Monetary Fund's SBA program was discussed. Dar expressed optimism about successful conclusion of the second review of the said program which is due now. On the future economic prospects of Pakistan, the Senator expressed confidence that Pakistan would be able to revive its economy after the forthcoming general elections in early 2024. He expressed hope that the general elections would be held in free and fair manners with level playing field for all the political parties.

More than 165,000 Afghans flee Pakistan after deportation order

DNA

ISLAMABAD: More than 165,000 Afghans have fled Pakistan in the month since the government ordered illegal immigrant to leave or face arrest and deportation, officials said Thursday. The majority rushed to the border in the past several days as the November 1 deadline approached and police began to open up dozens of "holding centres" to detain arrested Afghans. Authorities on the Afghan side of the border have been overwhelmed by the scale of the exodus as they attempt to process those returning - some of whom are setting foot in Afghanistan for the first time in their lives. "We are constantly in contact with them (Pakistani authorities) asking for more time. People must be allowed to return with dignity," the Taliban government's refugees minister Khalil Haqqani told media. "They should not give Afghans a hard time, they should not make more enemies," he said at a temporary processing centre, which opened overnight Wednesday. Taliban authorities set up the centre several kilometres from a border crossing, as well as camps for families

with nowhere to go, after a bottleneck there sparked an "emergency situation" for thousands of stranded people, an official said. Meanwhile, Pakistani authorities detained hundreds of Afghans on Thursday, with officials vowing to keep up their immigration crackdown, and encouraging undocumented Afghans to continue leaving voluntarily. "Illegal Afghans arrived at Torkham in heavy numbers because of the deadline... People can still return voluntarily but today only 1,000 are present at the border," Abdul Nasir Khan, deputy commissioner of the border district, told media. At the Torkham border crossing in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, officials worked into the early hours of Thursday to clear a queue of 28,000 people that stretched for seven kilometres (four miles). Just over 129,000 have fled from KP, the provincial home department said, while 38,100 have crossed through Chaman in Balochistan, border officials there told media. Campaign continues: Millions of Afghans have poured into Pakistan in recent decades, fleeing a series of violent conflicts, including an estimated 600,000 since the Taliban government seized power in August 2021.

Pakistan has said the deportations are to protect its "welfare and security" after a sharp rise in attacks, which the government blames on militants operating from Afghanistan. More than 100 people were detained in one police operation in the mega city of Karachi on Thursday, while police rounded up 425 Afghans in Quetta. "The campaign against illegal immigrants will continue," Saad Bin Asad, the Quetta deputy commissioner, told media. Border bottleneck: More than 24,000 Afghans crossed into Afghanistan using the Torkham border crossing on Wednesday alone, Deputy Commissioner Khyber Tribal District Abdul Nasir Khan told media. "There were a large number waiting for clearance and we made extra arrangements to better facilitate the clearance process," Khan said. Authorities had worked well into the night at a camp set up near the crossing, he added. The border, at the northwestern end of the Khyber Pass on the road between Peshawar and Afghanistan's Jalalabad, is usually closed by sundown. Khan said 128,000 Afghans have left for through the border crossing since the Pakistan government issued its directive.

Democracy worldwide trending downwards: report

STOCKHOLM: Nearly half the world's countries are seeing the level of democracy decline, an international think tank said Thursday. And some countries with historically long democratic traditions are among them. The Stockholm-based International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance (International IDEA) said 85 out of 173 countries surveyed had "suffered a decline in at least one key indicator of democratic performance in the past five years". "Many established democracies are experiencing setbacks... ranging from declines in social group equality in the United States, freedom of the press in Austria and access to justice in the United Kingdom," it added. "This is the sixth year that we've seen more countries with democratic declines than improvements," its programme officer, Michael Roney, told AFP. He is one of the authors of "The Global State of Democracy 2023" report. That six-year trend represented the longest "democratic recession" the organisation had seen since it started collecting data in 1975, he added. The rule of law embodied by independent courts and freedom from political violence was also weakening in countries such as Austria, Hungary and Peru, the report noted. The "bedrocks of democracy are weakening across the globe", it warned. While the declines could be seen in all parts of the world, in Africa they were exemplified by the wave of coups d'etat there. In the rights category, the authors noted declines in freedom of expression and freedom of assembly, though overall declines were not significant. In the category of rule of law, there were improvements "after many years of stagnation in levels of corruption", though the picture was "not unambiguously positive", the report said. Democratic deterioration has also been exacerbated by an erosion of "checks and balances", which in the authors' view goes beyond the traditional understanding of the term. Institutions keeping powers in check also include entities such as human rights organisations, civil society networks as well as investigative journalists. "We're also seeing declines in historically high performing democracies in Europe and North America and in Asia," Roney said. The organisation had noted a democratic downturn tied to the Covid-19 pandemic, and Roney said that now with data from after the peak of the pandemic that had not seen any type of "rebound" yet. Some positive developments were noted, such as improvements in the area of rule of law in several countries in Central Europe as well as lower levels of corruption and increased political participation in several African countries. - APP

PDMA declares smog a calamity in Punjab

DNA

LAHORE: The Provincial Disaster Management Authority (PDMA) Punjab on Wednesday declared smog a calamity, while Director PDMA Nazia Jabeen has written a letter to provincial management to take immediate measures to combat smog. All the deputy commissioners have been given authority of Relief Commissioners to take action against those who are contributing in smog, and administrative orders have been issued accordingly. There is a complete ban on burning crops and the management has been issued instructions for a strict crackdown against vehicles emitting smoke as well. Action will be taken against all factories that are causing environmental pollution. The district administration will closely monitor all industries and brick-kilns, Director PDMA said. She also directed to take strict action against those who violate government orders, also stressing to establish strong communication with the public and seek videos where violations occur. The PDMA will also organize seminars in universities, colleges, and schools for smog control.

Inflation lowest for ten months at 26.9%

DNA

ISLAMABAD: The inflation rate fell to 26.9% in October - the lowest for ten months and more than expected - strengthening the position of the central bank during the International Monetary Fund (IMF) talks against any demand for a raise in the interest rates. The slowdown in the inflation rate was across the board, although the prices were still very high for the majority of the population of the country. The prices of non-perishable food items, like politically sensitive sugar, remained on the upward trajectory. The Pakistan Bureau of Statistics (PBS) - the national data collecting agency - reported on Wednesday that the Consumer Price Index rose to 26.9% last month compared to a year ago. This was the lowest pace in the past 10 months.

Pakistan, Netherlands launch commemorative stamp



KHAYAM ABBASI

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan and the Netherlands on Thursday launched a joint commemorative stamp to celebrate the 75th year of the diplomatic ties between the two countries. Foreign Secretary Syrus Sajjad Qazi and Dutch Ambassador Henny de Vries unveiled the stamp and cut a cake, here at the

Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Since the establishment of diplomatic relations in 1948, Pakistan-Netherlands bilateral cooperation has continued to grow in diverse sectors, including politics, trade and investment, science and technology, education, water management, climate change, and cooperation at multilateral institutions. The Netherlands is the second-largest trade destination for Paki-

stan's exports to the European Union. The unique edition postage stamp has been designed by a celebrated Pakistani visual artist, Aisha Khalid, who is regarded as a pioneer in the new miniature global movement emerging from Pakistan. The special design of the stamp symbolizes the longstanding friendship and mutually beneficial cooperation between Pakistan and the Netherlands.

PPP hints at forging 'election alliance' with PTI

LAHORE: The Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) has hinted at forming an electoral alliance with its arch-rival, the Pakistan Tehreek-i-Insaf (PTI), to counter its former PDM ally, the Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N). Addressing a press conference here, Punjab PPP acting president Rana Farooq Saeed announced that the party "may forge an alliance with other parties, including the PTI." It may be recalled that a PML-N leader had recently announced that the party intended to contest elections in Sindh by forging alliance with the MuttahidaQaumi Movement-Pakistan and the Grand Democratic Alliance. Saeed said the PPP was ready to face the challenges posed by political rivals. "Alliances are made and broken. It is a political process," he added. He said no-one would accept the election results if any party was kept out of the process. Regarding the May 9 carnage, the PPP leader said those who were involved in the hooliganism must be punished but those who had been only silent spectators during the incidents should be forgiven and that innocent PTI workers should not be barred from taking part in the elections. He alleged the PML-N was attempting to keep the PTI out of the electoral race. Saeed said it seemed that the elections would be held because "some forces" had been active. - DNA



ISLAMABAD: COAS General Syed Asim Munir Minister meets Minister of Defense of Azerbaijan, Colonel General Zakir Hasanov. - DNA

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