



# Islamabad POST

Saturday, December 09, 2023

Pakistan's Credible Daily Newspaper

Price Rs. 30

**EU hails breakthrough in Baku, Yerevan relations**

Detailed News On Page-07

**Russia's Putin announces 2024 presidential bid**

Detailed News On Page-08



**Phillips helps New Zealand in 2nd BD Test**

Detailed News On Page-06



## Briefs

### Shaukat Tarin quits PTI

FAIAL SHEIKH

ISLAMABAD: In a fresh blow to the former ruling party, Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf's (PTI) another wicket downed as former finance minister Shaukat Tarin parted ways with Imran Khan-led party on Friday. The former finance czar confirmed giving up his party membership and resignation from his seat in the Senate as well, in conversation with Geo News. Tarin said that he is also bidding adieu to the politics, as he quit the PTI, which already undergoes deterioration amid legal and political hurdles. The ex-minister is the last one to dissociate with the former ruling party, joining a long list of leaders — including Asad Umar, Usman Dar, Fawad Chaudhry, Shireen Mazari, and Pervez Khattak.

### Murad lashes out at PTI

JAN ALI LEGHARI

HYDERABAD: Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) senior leader Murad Ali Shah launched a broadside at PTI on Friday. Expressing his thoughts in Hyderabad, the former Sindh chief minister said, "We did not say to be involved in the May 9 mayhem. Nobody has ever labelled the PPP as lada." PPP senior leader Syed Nasir Shah asserted that his party will spring its surprise in the upcoming elections. Speaking to the media in Lahore, Shah claimed, "We will clinch more than 50 seats from Sindh. We will spring our surprise in Central Punjab in the upcoming elections." He took a swipe at the political opponents, saying, "Some of the people are escaping the elections by making different excuses." Asserting that his party was geared up for the elections, Shah made it clear that his party was not clear that his party was not clear that the alliance in Sindh.

### Interpol approached to arrest Shahzad

DNA

ISLAMABAD: The Federal Investigation Agency (FIA) on Friday approached Interpol for the arrest of 'proclaimed offender' former accountability czar Shahzad Akbar, who is currently in self-imposed exile in UK. Following a request from Islamabad police, the investigation agency penned a letter to Interpol and sought its help in arresting the former accountability czar. The development came after Shahzad Akbar was declared a proclaimed offender by Civil Judge Ahmed Shehzad Gondal in a case, encompassing charges of fraud and other serious offenses.

### Holiday Notice

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

## PM advocates equal rights for minorities

Collective efforts of stakeholders brought economy back on track: Caretaker PM

NAZIR SIYAL

KARACHI: Caretaker Prime Minister Anwaar-ul-Haq Kakar on Friday reaffirmed the equal rights for minority communities and called for enforcing meritocracy and social opportunities for their uplift and mainstreaming. The prime minister, in an interactive session with the students of Aga Khan University, said the minorities were equal Pakistanis as Madina State had also guaranteed equal responsibilities and rights for the citizens. Calling for infusing a sense of confidence in the people, he said that meritocracy should be enforced, and social opportunities for minorities should be created. To a question, he said that the people of Pakistan enjoyed freedom of expression and considering the country's political history, any particular incident could not be associated with the government of that particular term. He said that the incidents involving the violations of freedom of speech were not limited to a particular government. The prime minister, responding to a query by a university student about the arrest of journalists, said that during the tenure, he was referring to, the journalists were shot at and faced many such acts which were against the freedom of expression. "You have a freedom of expression and speech. You spoke your heart before the prime minister. After this, your allegation of no freedom of speech would carry lesser weight," he remarked. About the rights and status of Gilgit Baltistan, he said GB was and would remain part of Pakistan.

Continued on Page 06

Continued on Page 06

## Candidates to be announced soon We want accountability, not power, says Nawaz

PML-N puts forward seat adjustment offer to IPP



DNA

LAHORE: Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) supreme and former prime minister Nawaz Sharif has renewed his demand to hold accountable those elements behind his ouster from power in 2017 and responsible for Pakistan's "destruction". He said this while addressing the party's parliamentary board meeting flanked by PML-N President Shehbaz Sharif, Vice President Maryam Nawaz and other leaders in Lahore on Friday. Speaking about the corruption cases registered against him and his family members,

Continued on Page 06

## Foreigners warned not to indulge in political activities

MEHTAB PIRZADA

ISLAMABAD: As Pakistan continues its repatriation of aliens, caretaker Interior Minister Sarfraz Bugti has said that foreigners living in the country are barred from participating in political activities in light of upcoming general elections slated for February 8, 2024. Speaking to the media on Friday, Bugti warned that foreigners, regardless of the documents with which they entered Pakistan, will face deportation if found involved in political activities. "People involved in political activities are being deported [...] Whether it be Afghan refugees or citizens of any other country, will face deportation [if found in violation of directives]," the minister said. The announcement comes as the interim government, citing security concerns, has initiated a nationwide campaign to expel millions of illegal foreigners, mostly Afghan citizens, living in the country. The policy decision came after Afghan nationals were found to be involved in crimes, smuggling, and 14 suicide bombings

Continued on Page 06

## PPP always tried to address masses' issues

ABBAS HASHMI

LAHORE: Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) co-Chairman Asif Ali Zardari on Friday asserted that his party had always tried to address the issues being faced by the masses, expressing readiness to serve the people of the country. In a statement, the former president reiterated the significance of the slogan "Roti, Kapra aur Makaan", emphasising its deep-rooted connection to the PPP's fundamental principles and ethics. Asif Zardari pointed out that the PPP has always tried to address the concerns of the masses and has propelled itself forward. "PPP has made innumerable sacrifices and its foundation is the martyrs' blood", he added. "Not a single political party sacrificed more than Peoples' Party to fulfill its manifesto,"

Continued on Page 06

## US rejects UNSC immediate ceasefire resolution in Gaza

The resolution was drafted by the Organization of Islamic Cooperation and the Arab Group of nations at the UN, and presented by the UAE

DNA

NEW YORK CITY: All eyes were on the US during a meeting of the UN Security Council, when the 15-member body voted on a draft resolution demanding an immediate ceasefire in Gaza. Robert Wood has told the Security Council that Hamas "continues to pose a threat to Israel and remain in charge of Gaza". "For that reason, while the United States strongly supports the durable peace, in which both Israelis and Palestinians can live in peace and security, we do not support calls for an immediate ceasefire," he said. "This would only plant the seeds for the next war because Hamas has no desire to see a durable peace to see a two state solution," he said. The US is one of five veto-wielding permanent members of the Security Council. The other permanent members are China, France, Russia, and the UK. The resolution was drafted by the Organization of Islamic Cooperation and

Continued on Page 06

## Israel continues war crimes in Gaza

FOREIGN DESK

GAZA: The Israeli occupation forces (IOF) continue their brutal aggression on the Gaza Strip for the 63rd consecutive day on Friday, amidst intensified airstrikes, artillery shelling, destroying homes on top of their residents, and committing more massacres and crimes of genocide, exacerbating the humanitarian situation due to forced displacement and aggression. Meanwhile, fierce clashes and heroic resistance continue in infiltration axes. Israeli forces have dropped a large number of incendiary and smoke bombs on a school sheltering displaced Palestinians in the northern part of the Gaza Strip,

Continued on Page 06

## NATIONAL DAY OF KENYA CELEBRATED



ISLAMABAD: Chief Guest Gohar Ijaz, Federal Minister for Commerce, High Commissioner of Kenya Ms. M Nyambura Kamau, Dean of Diplomatic Corps Muhammad Karmoune, Ambassador of Morocco and others cutting cake to celebrated the National Day of Kenya. — DNA

## Pak-Iran rail service suspended

Officials cite bad track reason for closure

BUREAU REPORT

CHAGAI: The Pakistan-Iran rail service was suspended after the derailment of a freight train moving from Iran to Balochistan's capital on Friday. Railway officials confirmed that five bogies of a freight train derailed which resulted in the suspension of the Pakistan-Iran railway service. They said that the Pakistan Railways team was working to restore the railway track. The affected freight train was transporting goods from Iran to Quetta, they added. The officials said that the railway track being used for international trade was in a dilapidated state which disrupted

Continued on Page 06

## Info minister accuses Imran seeking Afghan sympathies with refugee statement

PTI chief said 1.5m refugees were not that much of a burden on a population of 250m

BUREAU REPORT

QUETTA: Caretaker Information Minister Murtaza Solangi on Friday said former prime minister Imran Khan's statement about the expulsion of Afghan refugees was aimed at "garnering the sympathy" of the interim Afghan government. In November, the caretaker government had initiated a nationwide campaign to deport illegal foreign nationals, the majority of whom are Afghans. While the decision had prompted criticism from Afghanistan and several other quarters, the government has refused to budge, insisting the move is not aimed at any particular ethnic group. Of the more than four million Afghans living in Pakistan, the government estimates 1.7m are undocumented. So far, thousands of

Continued on Page 06

## SHC suspends ban on Imran's statements

DNA

KARACHI: Sindh High Court (SHC) has suspended the Pakistan Electronic Media Regulatory Authority (PEMRA) ban on Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf founder and former prime minister Imran Khan's statements. As per details, a single bench of SHC headed by Justice Adnan Iqbal announced the verdict and suspended the PEMRA directive issued on December 4. The single bench of Sindh High Court issued notices to PEMRA and the federal government for December 21.

Continued on Page 06

## Pak loan program IMF board to meet on January 11

KHAYAM ABBASI

ISLAMABAD: The International Monetary Fund's Executive Board will take up Pakistan's first review on January 11 next year for approval that will unlock \$700 million under the standby arrangement (SBA), international media quoted the lender's spokesperson as saying on Friday. Last month, Pakistan reached a staff-level agreement with the IMF under the \$3 billion SBA and is awaiting the board's approval to receive a second tranche. Earlier this week, a Pakistani newspaper reported that Pakistan's first

review for approval was not included in the IMF's Executive Board meeting agenda for the 1-15 December schedule. The publication reported that the IMF did not firm up its exact schedule because the Fund's team was busy securing re-confirmation from all multilateral and bilateral creditors to meet the financing requirements of \$24.9 billion for the current fiscal year. This delay surfaced in discussions among the policymakers that the IMF might kick-start parleys on the second review probably after the general elections and takeover by the elected government. The IMF programme was initially scheduled to kick-start parleys for a second review from Feb 3, 2024, but if the elections were scheduled to be held on February 8, 2024, then the possibility of holding talks might be done in the last week of Feb or early March 2024. The ongoing SBA programme is going to expire on April 14, 2024.

DECEMBER 2023

Pakistan's Premier News & Diplomatic Affairs Magazine

Find us on:

www.centrelines.com.pk

www.dnanews.com.pl

www.islamabadpost.com.pk

@PostIslamabad/ @Editordnnews

A sister concern of

Islamabad POST

11# Block 18-A, Awan Plaza, G-8 Markez, Islamabad-Pakistan Ph: 051-2261960, 051-2266165



# RCCI delegation meets Alvi to boost gem, furniture exports

President RCCI, comprising Gems and Jewellery and Furniture sector, and had a fruitful meeting with the President of Pakistan Dr. Arif Alvi at Awan E Sadr

DNA

RAWALPINDI: A delegation headed by Saqib Rafiq, President RCCI, comprising Gems and Jewellery and Furniture sector, and had a fruitful meeting with the President of Pakistan Dr. Arif Alvi at Awan E Sadr Islamabad. In the meeting, the issues faced by the Gems and Jewellery sector were discussed in detail, especially regarding SRO 760, value addition, skills development, certification, export poten-

tial, Gems & Jewellery Authority and verification of documentation in foreign embassies. Issues related to the furniture sector including import duty on raw materials, dual checking of containers by ANF, joint ventures and export opportunities were discussed. President Dr. Arif Alvi welcomed the recommendations and suggestions given by the delegation from Gems and Jewellery and Furniture sector and assured all kinds of cooperation to resolve the problems. The President of Pakistan also offered condolence

on the death of Mr. Pervaiz Altaf Advocate, elder brother of group leader Sohail Altaf. RCCI President Saqib Rafiq also gave a brief summary about the upcoming International Gems and Jewellery Show in May next year. Group Leader Sohail Altaf, Senior Vice President Muhammad Hamza Sarosh, and representatives from Gems and Jewellery Mr. Fayyaz Qureshi, Mr. Ghulam Mustafa, Rana Abdul Qadoos and Saqib Naseem, Ikram Rehman Abbasi, Bilal Javed from Furniture Sector were also present in the meeting.



LAHORE: A group photo after launching ceremony of my book "1000 Words for the New Millennium" at Quaid-e-Azam library, the Mall Lahore. L-R Prof. Dr. Ishtiaq Ahmad Gondal (Punjab University), Prof. Dr. (Rtd) Mian Muhammad Akram, Dr. Abdus Sattar Abbasi (Author), Mr. Salman Abid (renowned columnist), Mr. Salman Ghani (Dunya News) And Mr. Kashif Manzoor (Director General Public Libraries, Punjab)

## Dr. Jamal takes action against unregulated beauty products

LAHORE: Caretaker Punjab Minister for Primary and Secondary Healthcare Dr. Jamal Nasir has issued directions for curbing the unregistered beauty products including creams, injections, and tablets. A crackdown on undocumented individuals administering beauty injections and unregistered beauty parlours has been ordered, with no leniency for those posing health risks under the guise of beauty. At a conference of secretaries of district drug control boards, held on Friday, Dr. Nasir emphasised that only qualified skincare specialists and surgeons were permitted to administer beauty injections, and strict actions would be taken against unauthorised injections.

Furthermore, the legal status of all beauty parlours in the province would be verified, and they were required to operate in accordance with the health principles. Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) would be developed in consultation with the Health Commission to ensure compliance. The minister highlighted the dangers of non-standard beauty creams, linking them to complex diseases, including cancer. Stringent policies would be implemented to address non-standard cosmetics, beauty creams, and injections. SOPs are also mandated for production of cosmetic creams.—APP

## 'Political will' must to revamp health sector

Dr. Nadeem Jan, has emphasized that strong political will was a must to revamp the healthcare system in the country

ADIL SHAHEN

ISLAMABAD : Caretaker Federal Minister for Health, Dr. Nadeem Jan, has emphasized that strong political will was a must to revamp the healthcare system in the country. Political parties should keep the health reforms agenda on the top of their election manifestos by ensuring quality health services and affordability to the masses at their doorstep, the minister said while talking to a private news

channel on Friday. Jan said that health and education were the main pillars of the development paradigm, but unfortunately in our country, both sectors had been neglected in the past. He said another challenge that the country faces is the population explosion, which crossed 250 million, and resources are minimal to cater to the needs. The minister said polio is still present in the environmental samples due to neighboring Afghanistan. To a query, he said the caretaker government,

in a short span of time, performed well and brought a health reform agenda. "We are working on two main pillars. One is good governance, and the other is to improve service delivery by ensuring equal distribution of resources in a transparent and controllable manner," he explained. He stressed the need to bring reforms in other allied departments of health like the Pakistan Medical Dental Council, the Drug Regulatory Authority of Pakistan and the Pakistan Nursing Council.

## Marsata helpline aids displaced Afghans in KP

PESHAWAR :In a significant development aimed at supporting Afghan displaced people in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Blue Veins, with the support of The International Organization for Migration (IOM) Pakistan, has inaugurated a toll-free helpline named Marsata (0800-02828). According to a press release issued here on Friday, this helpline is dedicated to providing Gender-Based Violence (GBV) referral services, marking a critical step in aiding the vulnerable Afghan community. Gender-based violence (GBV) is a prevalent issue within the displaced Afghan community setting, which is further exacerbated by lack of the necessary knowledge and awareness to seek help. Often, survivors and community are unaware

of available resources and available services or fear stigma, leading to underreporting and a continuation of the cycle of violence. Addressing this gap in awareness and providing accessible information is crucial for the protection and empowerment of affected individuals. For effective services provision by Marsata Helpline, a comprehensive mapping of service providers was conducted to ensure effective coordination with other helplines and service providers. This meticulous groundwork ensures that the helpline is well-equipped to link GBV survivors among the Afghan displaced people to the necessary services. At the occasion of the launching ceremony organized at Peshawar, Fazal

Rabbi, Director of the SSU Commissionerate for Afghan Refugees Khyber Pakhtunkhwa expressed that "Pakistan Government and Afghan Commissionerate are devoted to enhancing protection services for the Afghan community in Pakistan, ensuring they are safeguarded from harassment, violence, and abuse. We will contribute our support and collaboration with organizations committed to doing so in the ambit of the law." Amir Hamza, Protection Coordinator at IOM Pakistan, highlighted the importance of this initiative. "Protecting the displaced Afghan population is paramount. Marsata will play a pivotal role in offering crucial support and services, especially to those affected by GBV.—APP



## Child development center inaugurated

DNA

FAISALABAD : A state-of-the-art child development center has been established at Red Crescent Maternity Hospital by the district administration. Divisional Commissioner Silwat Saeed inaugurated the center on Friday. Deputy Commissioner Abdullah Nayer Sheikh accompanied her. Chief Officer, District Council Muhammad Faisal, CEO Health Dr. Asfandiar, Medical Superintendent Dr. Hafiz Mukhtar Randhawa and other officers and doctors were also present. The commissioner went to various parts of the center and appreciated the deputy commissioner for setting up the first modern child development center at the hospital level in the district. She said that the checkup and treatment facilities of autism spectrum disorders, speech and hearing problems, cerebral palsy, muscle weakness, intellectual disability, hemophilia, thalassemia and hyperactivity disorder would be available in the center. Appreciating the displaying of attractive colorful pictures and LEDs in the rooms, the commissioner said that steps are underway to build a similar center in the Children's Hospital. On the occasion, the experts briefed her about treatment plans for children suffering from autism.

## PTA conducts QoS survey in different cities

ISLAMABAD :Pakistan Telecommunication Authority (PTA) has carried out an Independent Quality of Service (QoS) survey in order to measure the performance and quality of Cellular Mobile Operators' (CMOs). The survey has been conducted in seventeen (17) x cities of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Punjab and Sindh, said news release issued here on Thursday. Additionally, a joint QoS survey along with CMOs was carried out in seven cities of Gilgit Baltistan during 3rd quarter i.e. July-September 2023. During the survey, Mobile Network Coverage along with QoS KPIs of Voice, SMS and Mobile Broadband were checked using state-of-the-art automated QoS Monitoring &

Benchmarking Tool to ascertain conformance with Next Generation Mobile Service (NGMS) licenses and Cellular Mobile Network Quality of Service Regulations 2021. Based upon the compliance level of each KPI against threshold defined in the respective licenses and QoS Regulations, CMOs have been ranked between 1st to 5th position in Mobile Network Coverage and Voice Services as per compliance level in surveyed cities. Similarly, in Mobile Broadband Speed segment, the ranking is with respect to the highest data download and upload speed, network latency and webpage loading time. The performance of the CMOs was also benchmarked using Ookla @ Speed Test mobile

application to gauge the performance of Upload & Download Throughputs and Network Latency. The survey results revealed that CMOs are compliant with respect to upload and download speed to a great extent, while improvement is observed in network latency and webpage loading time as compared to earlier surveys. Similarly, some of the Voice KPIs have also been found below the licensed threshold in few areas. Necessary instructions have been issued to the operators for taking corrective measures so as to ensure improvement in the service quality up to the standards. The survey results are available at PTA's website (<https://pta.gov.pk/en/consumer-support/qos-survey/qos-survey>).—APP



ISLAMABAD President Non-Gazetted Welfare Association Malik Tahir Mehmood Awan, former press secretary Tanveer Nowshahi, and others presenting souvenir to Joint Executive Director PIMS Dr. Farrukh Kamal on his retirement during a ceremony at PIMS Hospital. — DNA

## Sindh govt plans to induct 180 electric buses

This was disclosed in a meeting held between Sindh CM and Asian Development Bank high power delegation led by Ms. F. Cleo Kawawaki, Principal Director and Head of OMDP

NAZIR SIYAL

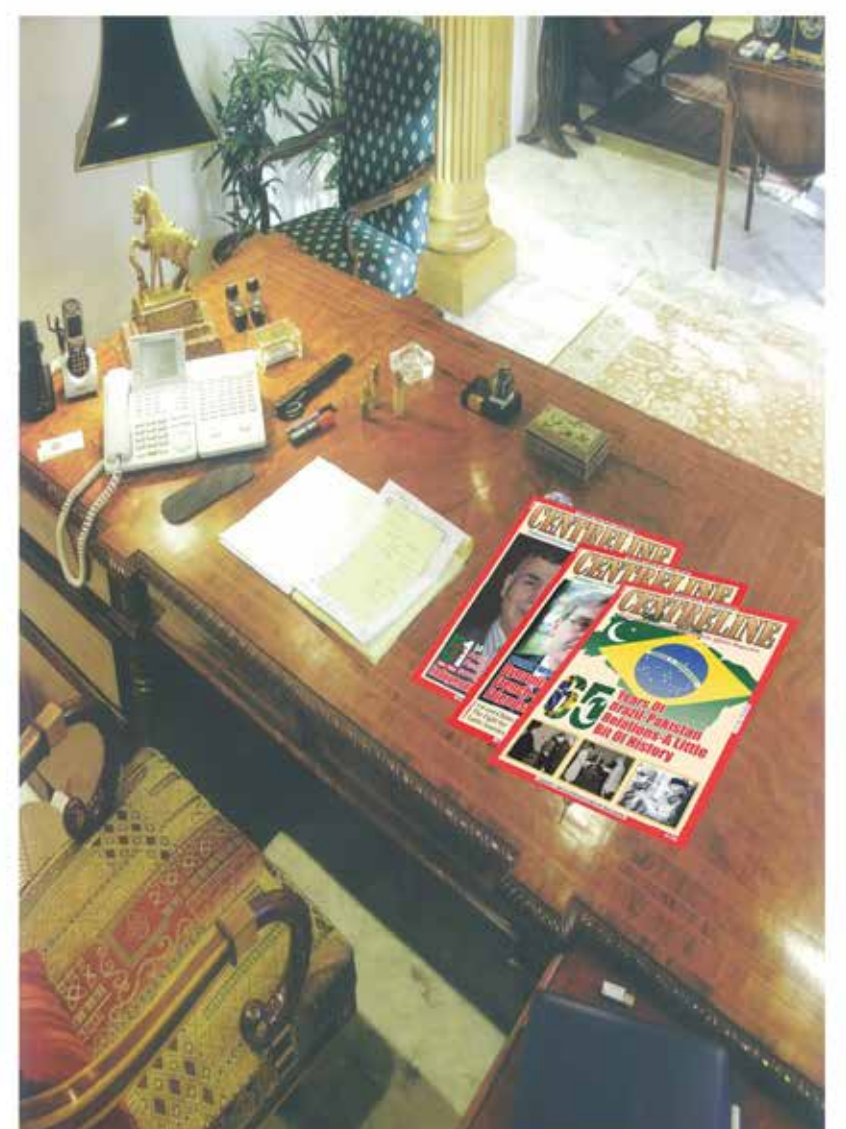
KARACHI: The Sindh government has decided to induct 180 electric buses, to be powered by solar energy, on the feeders of the BRTs so that cleaner and more efficient public transportation solutions could be established to bring an end to the operational subsidy. This was disclosed in a meeting held between Sindh Chief Minister Justice (Retd) Maqbool Baqar and Asian Development Bank high power delegation led by Ms. F. Cleo Kawawaki, Principal Director and Head of Office of Market Development and

PPP (OMDP). The other delegation members were Mohammad Azim Hashmi, Advisor to the Principal Director, Deputy Country Director Asad Aleem, and Senior Project Officer Salman Mian. The CM was assisted by Electric Buses for BRT feeders: The CM discussing the Electric Buses for BRT Feeder routes said that the Sindh government was exploring the transformative impact of electric buses to strive for cleaner and more efficient public transportation solutions in Karachi. The project aims to introduce electric buses on BRT feeder routes. It aligns with the focus on climate change,

resilience, and carbon credits. The operational Business Plan (Feasibility Study) of the project is going to commence at the end of December 2023. Chairman P&D Shakil Mangejo told the ADB head that the Green and Orange Lines have been implemented in Karachi to facilitate estimated passenger traffic of 50,000 per day. With the induction of feeder route buses, existing and future lines will be integrated which will contribute towards the long-term sustainability of the overall system. Secretary Transport said that under the project 170-180 electric buses would be inducted into the existing

BRT routes of Green and Orange Line. Partial electricity generation through solarization under a wheeling mechanism could help reduce operating costs targeted to be covered through tariff and non-tariff with no requirement for operational subsidy. The ADB head Ms. F. Cleo Kawawaki said that the ADB was working with the provincial government and would support the project. The chief minister, talking about the West Karachi Recycled Water Project, said that Karachi was one of the most water-stressed cities. The city has a population of more than 20 million and requires 1,100

MIGD of water supply but only receives 550 MIGD, therefore more investment in water supply and treatment infrastructure is badly needed. KWSB mandated the ADB to be the transaction advisor about an unsolicited proposal for a treatment plant at Haroonabad near Sindh Industrial Trade Estate (SITE). Market survey shows that the present water demand of industries in SITE is 40-50 MIGD. Due to water shortage, KWSB is only able to supply around 2-3 MIGD. As per the proposal a full vertically integrated wastewater treatment system with supply, delivery, and billing.



ANYONE WHO'S SOMEONE...  
reads Centreline

MEMBER APNS Monthly ABC CENTRELINE  
Largest Diplomatic Magazine

[www.dnaneus.com.pk](http://www.dnaneus.com.pk), [www.centreline.com.pk](http://www.centreline.com.pk)



## Briefs

IRSA  
releases  
85,800  
cusecs water

ISLAMABAD: Indus River System Authority (IRSA) on Friday released 85,800 cusecs water from various rim stations with an inflow of 40,100 cusecs. According to the data released by IRSA, water level in the River Indus at Tarbela Dam was 1489.60 feet and was 89.60 feet higher than its dead level of 1,398 feet. Water inflow and outflow in the dam was recorded as 20,100 cusecs and 45,000 cusecs respectively. The water level in River Jhelum at Mangla Dam was 1169.50 feet, which was 119.50 feet higher than its dead level of 1,050 feet. The inflow and outflow of water was recorded 5,200 cusecs and 26,000 cusecs respectively. The release of water at Kalabagh, Taunsa, Guddu and Sukkur was recorded as 58,400, 43,500, 39,400, and 9,000 cusecs respectively. Similarly, from River Kabul, a total of 7,200 cusecs of water released at Nowshera and 2,000 cusecs released from River Chenab at Marala.—APP

PTDC to  
organize film  
competition

ISLAMABAD: The Pakistan Tourism Development Corporation (PTDC) will organize 'Salam Pakistan' short tourism documentary film and photography competitions on December 11 in connection with International Mountain Day. Talking to APP, he urged filmmakers and storytellers to capture the essence of our diverse and stunning landscapes, as Pakistan is amazing and rich with tourism potential. He said, "Four to five-minute documentaries and photography competitions on the topics of culture and mountain heritage, mountain people and their lifestyles, fascinating mountain scenery, mountain adventure, and sports will be part of the event." "The winners of these competitions will be awarded cash prizes at the sustainable tourism conference," the official added. He said, "More information can be obtained from PTDC's official website, <https://tourism.gov.pk>." "The selected images will also be displayed on the banner at the Pakistan National Council of Arts in Islamabad on the occasion of World Mountain Day," he concluded.—APP

'Political  
will' must  
to revamp  
health sector;  
Minister Jan

ISLAMABAD: Caretaker Federal Minister for Health, Dr. Nadeem Jan, has emphasized that strong political will was a must to revamp the healthcare system in the country. Political parties should keep the health reforms agenda on the top of their election manifestos by ensuring quality health services and affordability to the masses at their doorstep, the minister said while talking to a private news channel on Friday. Jan said that health and education were the main pillars of the development paradigm, but unfortunately in our country, both sectors had been neglected in the past. He said another challenge that the country faces is the population explosion, which crossed 250 million, and resources are minimal to cater to the needs. The minister said polio is still present in the environmental samples due to neighboring Afghanistan. To a query, he said the caretaker government, in a short span of time, performed well and brought a health reform agenda. "We are working on two main pillars. One is good governance, and the other is to improve service delivery by ensuring equal distribution of resources in a transparent and controllable manner," he explained. He stressed the need to bring reforms in other allied departments of health like the Pakistan Medical Dental Council, the Drug Regulatory Authority of Pakistan and the Pakistan Nursing Council.—APP

Pak students to visit Japan  
under Japan-SAARC exchange

JENESYS is a youth exchange program between Japan and the Asia Pacific region launched by the Japanese Government which aims at promoting mutual trust and understanding among the peoples of Japan and the Asia-Pacific region

FAISAL SHEIKH

ISLAMABAD: On the invitation by the Government of Japan, a group of seven Pakistani undergraduate students and a working youth will be visiting Japan from December 11 to 19, 2023 under the Japan-SAARC Network Program of People-to-People Exchange known as JENESYS (Japan-East Asia Network of Exchange for Students and Youths). The theme for this year's visit program is Connectivity / Economic Cooperation. JENESYS is a youth exchange program between Japan and the Asia Pacific region launched by the Japanese Government which aims at promoting mutual trust and understanding among the peoples of Japan and the Asia-Pacific region. Under the JENESYS 2023 program, youth from SAARC countries during their stay in Japan will be provided opportunities to learn and deepen further their understanding of Japan's economy, society, history, politics, and diplomatic relations, and also experience Japan's diverse culture through lectures and visits. The Embassy of Japan held a pre-departure orientation session for the visiting group to give them useful information before their departure for Japan. While speaking on the occasion, H.E. WADA



Mitsuhiro, the Ambassador of Japan to Pakistan, congratulated the young students upon their selection for visiting Japan under this youth exchange program which, he said, will be a life-time opportunity for the young minds to learn more about Japan. People-to-people

exchange, especially that of youth is essential for promoting mutual understanding and friendly relations between the countries. The Ambassador hoped that the visiting Pakistani students will find ample opportunities to learn and enjoy the life, culture and

historical heritage of Japan during their stay in the country and share their experiences with their friends. This year under JENESYS 2023 program, a total of 56 undergraduate/graduate students and working youth from SAARC countries

have been invited by the Government of Japan to participate in this short term invitation. The program is expected not only to promote capacity building but also to develop mutual understanding among youths of Japan and that of SAARC countries.

National voters' day  
observed, emphasizing the  
essential value of voting

ISLAMABAD: National Voters' Day, celebrated on Thursday, aimed to underscore the importance of voting and inspire greater participation in the electoral process across the country. The objective of Voters' Day includes mobilizing people, especially women, to step forward and register as voters. National Voters Day, observed on December 7, commemorates the country's first general elections held in 1970. Designated by the Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP), it aims to raise awareness and highlight the significance of the right to vote. Annually celebrated on this date, National Voters Day aims to emphasize the

significance of voting and encourages active participation, particularly among youth and women, in the electoral process. Chief Election Commissioner (CEC) Sikandar Sultan Raja, in his National Voters Day message, mentioned that the Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) is ready to unveil the election schedule soon, and the polling is set for February 8, 2024. Raja urges people to vote for a brighter future, emphasizing that the power is in their hands. He stresses considering their own and children's future while casting their vote. Printing and delivering final election lists are done; the Election Commission will soon notify District Re-

turning Officers, Returning Officers, and Assistant Officers. Emphasizing its full preparedness and commitment, the Election Commission (ECP) assures voters of complete security throughout the election process, ensuring the exercise of their voting rights with privacy and transparency in the upcoming elections. Meanwhile, Kohat University of Science and Technology, Hangu campus, hosted an event to commemorate National Voters Day, organized by the District Election Commissioner (DEC) office in Hangu. Representatives from various departments, along with District Voter Education Committee (DVEC) members,

actively took part in the event, which concluded with an awareness walk. National Voters' Day was observed in Tehsil Bara, District Khyber, under the district election commission. The event at Afridi Model School and College included Deputy District Education Officer Misrey Khan as chief guest, alongside Election Commissioner Shahid Ali, Assistant District Officer Musharraf Khan, teachers, students, and civil society members. District Election Commissioner Shahid Ali emphasized the importance of National Voters' Day, aiming to amplify voter awareness and increase turnout in the upcoming general election.—DNA

GB education uplift;  
'school improvement  
programme' transforms  
communities

ISLAMABAD: An initiative to transform schools and communities in Northern Pakistan, the 'School Improvement Programme' is being implemented in 436 government schools in the under-served areas of Gilgit Baltistan and Chitral. The program, launched in partnership with the local governments and the Agha Khan Foundation, aimed at enhancing government capacity, improving school leadership, enabling teacher transformation, and encouraging parental participation and community engagement. Muhammad Irshad, the headmaster of the Higher Secondary School Thalay Valley of Ghanche District, Gilgit Baltistan, told PTV that the actual objective of the program was to improve the quality of education to enhance students learning. He said training was being imparted to teachers, and sessions were being held to enhance community participation. As a result, our students are now performing better in board exams. Muhammad Nawaz, the principal of Model School Thalay, said a mini library was provided to us where sessions were being arranged for parents, and now they are more involved in their children's education. As a learning aid, he said an LCD screen was also installed at the school with the provision of science experiment gadgets for the learning of students. Ijaz Hussain, a parent, said, "Our children are now more interested in learning due to the program; we, as parents, are now more interested in our children's education. We are very happy that our children's performance has improved." Naila Batool, another parent, said more parents are now taking an interest in their children's education. "We are also visiting the school now more often, and our children's scores have also improved a lot," she explained. The School Improvement Program has taken the lead in strengthening the education system in marginalized areas and over 40,000 students, and 1900 teachers have so far benefited from the project.—DNA

ICP and INL  
sign MOU to  
strengthen  
mutual  
collaboration

ISLAMABAD: Islamabad Capital Police (ICP) and the International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Section (INL) have signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU) to enhance mutual cooperation for bolstering the operational capabilities of the police force. The MOU was signed by Islamabad Capital City Police Officer (ICCP), Dr. Akbar Nasir Khan, and the Director of INL at the Central Police Office in Islamabad. Senior police officers from Islamabad Capital Police and officials from INL were also present at the signing ceremony. Under this MoU, INL will provide extensive support to enhance the operational capacities of the Islamabad Capital Police. Additionally, INL commits to assisting the Islamabad Capital Police in resolving any technical issues that may arise during operations. Prior to this collaboration, INL had organized various courses to enhance the skills of the wireless staff of the Islamabad Capital Police. Technical assistance was also provided to further improve the communication systems of the Islamabad police.—APP

DC  
intensifies  
crackdown on  
professional  
panhandlers,  
28 netted

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Deputy Commissioner (DC) Irfan Nawaz Memon has launched a major crackdown on professional beggars, with the Magistrate Secretariat spearheading the operation. In swift action, 28 beggars were apprehended from F-6 and F-7 areas and subsequently transferred to the Kohsar police station, Dr Abdullah Tabasum said while talking to APP on Friday. He said, "This decisive action sends a clear message that the city will not tolerate professional panhandling. The operation, which is being overseen by Assistant Commissioners and Magistrates, is ongoing and promises to significantly reduce the number of beggars on the streets." While the adult beggars were taken into custody, minor children were sent to the Edhi Center, ensuring their safety and well-being. This two-pronged approach demonstrates the city's commitment to both tackling the issue of professional begging and protecting vulnerable children, he concluded.



ISLAMABAD: Ambassador of Azerbaijan to Pakistan H.E. Mr. Khazar Farhadov met with Lt. Gen. Anwar Ali Hyder (Retd), Federal Minister for Defence and Defence Production of Pakistan.—DNA

Pakistan's exports to South  
China surge by 65%

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan has witnessed an extraordinary 65% increase in its exports to South China from July 2022 to October 2023, showcasing the nation's growing influence in the region, said Muhammad Irfan Trade & Investment Counsellor at Pakistan Consulate in Guangzhou. The surge in trade is particularly notable in key provinces, including Fujian, Guangdong, Guangxi, Hainan, and Hunan, which experienced remarkable growth rates of 194%, 3%, 64%, 53%, and 117%, respectively. He said that from July 2022 to Oct 2023 Pakistan exports to the south region were \$334.88 million whereas last year in the same period it was USD 202.71 million

which increased by 65% year on year, China Economic Net (CEN) reported on Friday. "Fujian Province, renowned for its robust economy and strategic location on China's southeastern coast, witnessed an impressive 194% surge in imports from Pakistan during this period. This remarkable growth can be attributed to the strengthening economic ties between the two nations and the increasing demand for Pakistani products in Fujian. The main products imported from Pakistan are Uncombed single cotton yarn, Sesamum seeds, and seafood", he added. He further said that overall Pakistan's exports to China also increased 41% from July 2022 to Oct 2023 worth USD 1.23 billion whereas

last year in the same period it was USD 876.8 million. Guangdong, a key economic powerhouse and a major player in China's export landscape, saw a steady 3% rise in imports from Pakistan. This growth is a testament to the resilience of the trade relationship between the two regions, emphasizing the mutual benefits derived from their economic collaboration. Irfan said that the province of Guangxi experienced a substantial 64% increase in imports from Pakistan, highlighting the diversification of trade avenues and the effectiveness of bilateral trade agreements. The strategic positioning of Guangxi, bordering Vietnam and serving as a gateway to Southeast Asia, further amplifies its role as a

pivotal partner for Pakistan. "Hainan Province, known for its tropical climate and burgeoning tourism industry, witnessed a commendable 53% surge in imports from Pakistan. This growth is indicative of the expanding market for Pakistani goods in this southernmost province, showcasing the versatility and appeal of Pakistani products in diverse sectors. Hunan Province, located in south-central China, recorded an impressive 117% increase in imports from Pakistan during this period", Irfan stated. Irfan said that the overall spike in exports to South China reflects the success of Pakistan's strategic trade policies, its commitment to fostering economic partnerships, and the quality of its export commodities.

**WHERE EACH STITCH IS WATCHED**

MOST EXPERIENCED  
MANUFACTURERS &  
EXPORTERS OF  
MARTIAL ARTS UNIFORMS  
IN  
PAKISTAN

JUDO  
KARATE  
KUNG-FU  
JU-JUTSU  
TAEKWONDO  
UNIFORMS AND  
COLOURED BELTS

ASHRAF INDUSTRIES (PVT) LTD  
127 C, Industrial Estate  
Suike-51340, Pakistan  
Phones: +92-51-3258000 / 3255788  
E-mail: [info@ashraf.net.pk](mailto:info@ashraf.net.pk)

**Ashraf**

Pakistan's First And Only Diplomatic Daily

Editor-in-Chief: Ansar Mahmood Bhatti

Deputy Editor: Abid Raza

Member APNS / ABC Certified

Vol: 05 Issue: 54

Email: dailyisbpost@gmail.com

Phone: 051-2266165 / 051-2261960

Off 11: Awan Plaza, Block 18-A, G-8 Markaz Islamabad

## A view on the new Rwanda bill

The Conservative government's proposal to remove asylum seekers to Rwanda has always been more a piece of performative cruelty than a practical or strategic policy. It plays to the party and media gallery rather than truly addressing the migration problem. This remains even more true today, following the publication of the government's draconian and disgraceful safety of Rwanda bill. This reneges on Britain's human rights laws and brushes the historic role of our country's courts aside. The overriding purpose of the policy and the bill is to give voters the impression that the Conservatives have gripped the small boats issue before next year's general election. Planes taking off for Rwanda make good propaganda. Yet even if the planes were to take off, Rwanda itself has made clear that the numbers removed would only be in the hundreds. The government is fixated on the migration margins, not the mainstream. The same performative priority applies to the row that exploded among Tory MPs with the resignation of the former immigration minister Robert Jenrick. Mr Jenrick quit because he thinks the new bill is too weak to prevent a repeat of the supreme court's previous negative verdict on Rwanda removals. In his resignation letter, he calls the bill "a triumph of hope over experience". On Thursday, his former Home Office boss Suella Braverman backed Mr Jenrick in a feisty interview. "The sorry truth is that it won't work and it will not stop the boats," she told the Today programme. Rishi Sunak faces a perilous party management problem. The decision to put him in front of the cameras for a hasty press conference on Thursday was proof that No 10 can see the danger it is in from his divided party. The prime minister gave an uncharacteristically robust defence of his bill. He said it would block "every single reason that has been used to prevent flights to Rwanda from taking off". He insisted that there was only an inch of difference between his approach and Mr Jenrick's. His problem is that many on the right of the Tory party still feel that it doesn't go far enough, while more liberal MPs fear it goes too far. With the bill due for its second reading in the Commons on Tuesday (the day after Mr Sunak gives evidence to the Covid inquiry), he does not have much time to rally the votes and calm his MPs. Nor does he have a great well of personal support to tap. His claim to be a safe pair of hands no longer convinces. If he appeases Ms Braverman and her allies, he risks losing support among Tory MPs who still believe in human rights laws. If he accepts liberal calls for some rights to remain in the bill, he inflames the authoritarians on the party right. Mr Sunak's authority is more fragile than ever. Many in the party are already thinking ahead to a future leadership contest, whether in this parliament or the next. Ms Braverman is self-evidently on manoeuvres. Mr Sunak said on Thursday that he does not regard Tuesday's vote as a confidence issue. But, even if he wins, it will be tough to prevent significant defeats at committee stage or in the Lords. If Mr Sunak loses next week, a vote-of-confidence challenge against him could soon follow. Mr Sunak may be tempted to emulate John Major in 1995 by calling an explicit put-up-or-shut-up confidence vote himself. But that is not a happy precedent.



## US tries to pass Peace Corps buck to China

Money talks. That little funds have been forthcoming to support the plan of the US Peace Corps to return to the Solomon Islands is the strongest indication that even those holding the purse strings in the United States see little merit in it. The sum the Peace Corps has received for its work in the Pacific island nation with a population of 700,000 for the fiscal year 2024 is just \$500. That the Corps put a footnote in its budget sheet stressing they are still "close to finalizing agreements" with the latter's government does little to hide the fact that it continues to miss deadlines to secure funding from the US Congress to support its work there. Further, the agency's budget for that nation for the past three years has been zero despite the US having announced the Peace Corps would return to the Solomon Islands in October 2019 after a two-decade absence. Neither the US nor the Solomon Islands has officially commented on the Peace Corp's failing to implement its plan. But the words of an anonymous former US official to Al Jazeera that groundlessly blame China for "influenced (ing) the Solomon Islands Cabinet's decision to pause approval for the Peace Corps to return to the islands" lack such diplomatic courtesy. It shows that facing a failure to increase its influence in the Solomon Islands, the US wants to pass the buck to China. But it is a well-known fact that the Peace Corps has carried the heavy baggage of ideological confrontation since it was founded by former US president John F. Kennedy during the height of the Cold War. After the end of the Cold War there were calls for canceling the program and disbanding the organization, but with the persistence of the Cold War mentality in the US it has not only survived but also expanded. It is also a well-known fact that the US is not so welcome in the Solomon Islands. A local report in January this year found that "every year, more than 20 people are killed and many more are injured in the Solomon Islands by unexploded ordnance left behind 80 years ago" during World War II. To get rid of these ordnance the US claimed it would donate \$1 million to the HALO Trust to do the clearing job there, but that's not enough. Passing the buck is something the US habitually does to try and lessen its responsibility for any failure. China's position is clear that the return of the Peace Corps is a matter between the US and the Solomon Islands. As early as July, Foreign Ministry spokeswoman Mao Ning said at a news conference that Pacific island nations are not any country's backyard and China is not interested in seeking any sphere of influence there. She also expressed the hope that the US will sincerely help the Pacific island nations prosper, develop and stabilize. The US basically turned its back on the Pacific island countries after the end of the Cold War. It is only now Washington is trying to create a new one that it has developed a renewed interest in them.

## The UAE walks an ever-tightening geopolitical tightrope

James M. Dorsey

The UAE is quietly positioning its Palestinian protégé, Mohammed Dahlan, a controversial Gaza-born former Al-Fatah security chief in the Strip opposed to Palestine Authority President Mahmoud Abbas, as a potential compromise Gaza administrator once the guns fall silent. Of all the options for governing Gaza in the immediate aftermath of the war being discussed in world capitals few seem politically viable, making Israeli reoccupation a realistic possibility

The United Arab Emirates walks a geopolitical tightrope, juggling big power rivalries and mounting regional instability fuelled by the Gaza war. This week's visit by Russian President Vladimir Putin is Exhibit A. Mr. Putin's movements beyond the confines of Russia are restricted. Signatories of the Rome Statute that established the International Criminal Court are obliged to arrest Mr. Putin against whom the court has issued a Ukraine-related international arrest warrant. Visiting the UAE and Saudi Arabia was a safe bet. Neither country is a signatory to the Rome Statute. Even so, Mr. Putin's visit puts the UAE at odds with its foremost security partner, the United States, that wants its allies to implement Western sanctions against Russia for its 2022 invasion of Ukraine. The UAE, like other Gulf countries, has done everything but. Trade between Russia and the UAE increased by nearly 68% on the year to US\$9 billion in 2022, according to Russian state news agency Tass. Russian exports to the UAE comprised US\$8.5 billion of that total. Some one million Russians visited the UAE last year. Similarly, the United States has pressured the UAE to halt alleged arms supplies to the rebel Rapid Support Forces (RSF) in Sudan that has been fighting the country's armed forces since April. The UAE denied supporting the RSF. The UAE, despite US designation of Emirati companies for violating sanctions against Russia, has so far successfully leveraged its value to the United States and Europe to ensure that it doesn't rupture relations. The UAE has earned brownie points in Washington with its recognition of Israel in 2020 along with Bahrain and Morocco, rejection of calls to break off diplomatic relations with the Jewish state in protest against the Gaza war, condemnation of the October 7 Hamas attack, and its support of the United States in Afghanistan. The UAE is quietly positioning its Palestinian protégé, Mohammed Dahlan, a controversial Gaza-born former Al-Fatah security chief in the Strip opposed to Palestine Authority President Mahmoud Abbas, as a potential compromise Gaza administrator once the guns fall silent. Of all the options for governing Gaza in the immediate aftermath of the war being

discussed in world capitals few seem politically viable, making Israeli reoccupation a realistic possibility. With the United States and much of the international community ruling out Israeli reoccupation, Mr. Dahlan could emerge as an alternative. Mr. Dahlan's close associate, Samir al-Mashharawi, together with former Palestine Authority foreign minister Nasser Al-Qudwa, a proponent of political reform, met in Qatar this week with Hamas exile leaders Khaled Mishaal and Ismail Haniyeh. Arab media reported that the discussion was intended to "come up with a political initiative based on a ceasefire and provide our people with some hope that matches the price paid by the victims." This week, signalling its intention to keep relations on an even keel, the Biden administration approved the \$85 million sale of 18 AN/TPQ-50 radar systems to the UAE. The system is a counter-battery radar designed to identify and track incoming indirect fire, including rockets, artillery, and mortars. "The UAE is a vital US partner for political stability and economic progress in the Middle East," the Pentagon said in a statement, adding the "sale will support the foreign policy and national security of the United States by helping to improve the security of an important regional partner." Beyond oil, trade, and Ukraine, Gaza figured high on Mr. Putin's agenda. Arab media reports suggested that the UAE sought Russian assistance in moving Iranian militias in Syria away from the Israeli-occupied Golan Heights in an effort to prevent a regional expansion of the Gulf war. In October, the UAE warned Syrian President Bashar al-Assad not to intervene in the war or allow attacks on Israel from Syrian soil. Preventing an expansion of the war is a key US and Emirati interest. The UAE played a key role in returning Syria to the Arab and Muslim fold after a decade-long suspension of Syrian membership of the Arab League because of its conduct of the civil war that was little different from the way Israel wages war in Gaza. Mr. Assad's participation in last month's Arab and Muslim summit calling for a ceasefire displayed the same hypocrisy Western countries exercise in their different approaches to the wars in Ukraine and Gaza. Al-

though not publicly mentioned, UAE concerns about increased Russian-Iranian military cooperation and UAE restrictions on the re-export to Russia of sensitive goods used for military purposes in Ukraine were certain to have come up in Mr. Putin's discussions. Mr. Putin will have been relieved that the UAE had yet to implement the restrictions even though it promised to do so in September when US, British, and European officials visited Abu Dhabi to voice concern about the Gulf country's links to Russia. The UAE said after the visit that it was considering introducing export licenses on certain technologies, including semiconductors. The UAE insists that it restricts, as a matter of policy, the export and re-export of identified dual-use products to conflict zones and has a legal export control framework in place through which it continuously monitors dual-use exports. Like in the case of Sudan, the UAE appears to implement policies towards conflict zones selectively. Even so, the UAE's top artificial intelligence company, G42, acknowledged this week that balancing relations with the United States and China was no longer an option. G42 is controlled by the UAE's secretive national security adviser, Tahnoun bin Zayed. "For better or worse, as a commercial company, we are in a position where we have to make a choice. We cannot work with both sides. We can't," G42 CEO Peng Xiao told the Financial Times. Mr. Xiao, who renounced his US citizenship to become an Emirati national, said the company was phasing out Chinese hardware to ensure access to US-made chips. US national security advisor Jake Sullivan cautioned Mr. Bin Zayed earlier this year about US concerns about G42's close cooperation with Chinese companies, including Huawei, the telecommunications giant under US sanctions. US officials warned their UAE counterparts that G42 could be sanctioned. Huawei provided G42 with servers and data centre networking gear. Even so, a US Congressional Research Service report cautioned earlier this year that "the degree to which the UAE may leverage its 'soft power' in ways that are beneficial to US interests remains to be seen."

## Nuclear power deserves a place in the clean energy mix

Khaled Abou Zahr

The same questions on carbon neutrality apply to the production and transport of renewable materials. This is also something that impacts electric batteries, from their manufacturing to their disposal. Environmental pundits focus on attacking and trying to cancel other sources of energy instead of answering these simple questions. Questions also arise on the geopolitical level, as the US and China are flitting between competition and confrontation. There are a growing number of voices in the US that state that solar and wind energy are reinforcing China within the great power competition

New technologies and their adoption have become more than just a business or an economic decision. They now have political and geopolitical importance too. This is very clear when we dig into the energy sector. We notice that the debate is not centered on facts and the simple equation of energy output versus emissions or negative impact in a time of greater environmental focus. It is measured by political gains and geopolitical agendas. There is a lot of hypocrisy and manipulation, to say the least. In the political debate, the nuclear option has been sabotaged by elitist environmental thinking. They say that it is a dirty energy source despite the fact it does not emit carbon dioxide. In reality, it is one of the cleanest sources and should be a foundation of the energy mix, on top of which renewable energies can be added. This is why it was a good omen to see a special meeting on nuclear energy taking place this week during the UN's COP28 climate summit in the UAE. The resulting commitment by the US and 21 other nations to triple nuclear energy capacity by 2050 is a significant step toward achieving carbon emissions reduction targets. This pledge, supported by countries like France, the UAE, Ghana, South Korea, the UK and Canada, underscores the crucial role nuclear power must play in meeting national climate pledges and the targets set by the 2015 Paris Agreement. More importantly, it highlights the fact that nuclear energy should stand as one of the key pillars of the energy mix. For decades, there have been attacks on nuclear energy by progressive and green parties. They are mainly based on two points: cost and security. The reality is that reducing the lifespan of nuclear plants without linking it to their actual capacity explodes the cost. Amortizing a plant over 30 years instead of 70, which is possible with the replacement of key components and some developments, makes a huge difference. Regarding security, the focus is mainly on nuclear waste and general operations. Here too, the risks have been greatly exaggerated. Despite historical incidents such

as Three Mile Island and Chernobyl, advancements in technology and stricter regulations have made nuclear power safer than ever. Advancements in technology and stricter regulations have made nuclear power safer than ever. Those who attack the nuclear power industry also avoid answering a simple question: how clean is the renewable energy supply chain from production to use and disposal? According to the US-based Solar Energy Industries Association, the turnover speed of solar panels is surpassing initial projections. And, with the current exorbitant costs associated with recycling, there is a genuine risk that all discarded panels, as well as similarly challenging-to-recycle wind turbines, may end up in landfills. So, basically, all energy sources have a waste issue. But the solution for nuclear waste is far better managed. The same questions on carbon neutrality apply to the production and transport of renewable materials. This is also something that impacts electric batteries, from their manufacturing to their disposal. Environmental pundits focus on attacking and trying to cancel other sources of energy instead of answering these simple questions. Questions also arise on the geopolitical level, as the US and China are flitting between competition and confrontation. There are a growing number of voices in the US that state that solar and wind energy are reinforcing China within the great power competition. This is because, in 2022, China accounted for 77.8 percent of global photovoltaic module production. The country with the second-largest share was Vietnam, which accounted for just 6.4 percent. With the supply chain being centralized in China, this raises questions regarding energy dependency. This is also why many are stating that the fact the World Bank does not finance nuclear power projects puts China at an advantage, as it does finance solar and other renewable energy projects. The debate on nuclear energy also sinks deep into domestic politics. France, which has been a pioneer of nuclear power, is a good example. Henri Proglio, the former CEO of EDF, discussed a few months ago France's loss of energy

independence in a think tank seminar. He highlighted historical efforts to achieve energy independence, blaming recent challenges on a shift in public opinion and European regulations favoring competition. He highlighted the historical success of the French nuclear industry, symbolized by it becoming an electricity exporter with competitive prices. Proglio also advocated for extending the lifespan of existing nuclear plants, considering them a base for energy production, and raised doubts about the viability and cost-effectiveness of offshore wind projects. Basically, all energy sources have a waste issue. But the solution for nuclear waste is far better managed. Yet the bombshell he dropped was that he accused Germany of sabotaging French energy independence via the EU because it presented an industrial threat. He rightly criticized the challenges posed by the shift to renewables, particularly citing the German Energiewende and the substantial investments in wind energy. He stated that Berlin was concerned because its electricity relied heavily on coal and especially lignite, which is particularly bad for the environment. Germany has invested €600 billion (\$646 billion) of the total €1 trillion invested in renewables by European countries, according to Proglio. This hefty investment led to the near-bankruptcy of major power companies E.ON and RWE, which were only saved by the federal government. The reality is that it is simply impossible and unrealistic to shift to 100 percent renewable energies tomorrow, with Germany serving as a good example. This would simply mean the collapse of the global economy and security. Even the advocates of this solution know this is the case. It is now clear their real goal lies elsewhere. This is why there is an urgent need to actively push nuclear power's place in the energy mix. Yet, after years of global bashing, the ability to turn this industry around is still hampered by a lack of funds, expertise and viable partnerships. Maybe the pledge made at COP28 will support the finding of a solution and promote collaboration instead of the petty settling of accounts.

—Sourced by Arab news

## Briefs

## PM advocates equal...

FROM PAGE 01

He said the matter of rights should be tackled peacefully without any resentment. "The political procedure should move forward. The GB should be our Singapore. Our identities are associated with each other," he remarked. To a question, the prime minister said after the 18th amendment, health was a devolved subject with the provinces having all the funding to spend on the sector. The visionary leadership is essential to address the challenges, especially the management of funds, he added. About the lack of education research, the prime minister said allocating billions of rupees for the parliamentarians amidst the higher education and research crisis was unjustified. Earlier, Caretaker Prime Minister Anwaar-ul-Haq Kakar has said that the collective efforts of all stakeholders have successfully brought the economy back on track.

## Foreigners warned...

FROM PAGE 01

out of 24 this year, with the government alleging that the militants use Afghan soil to train fighters and plan attacks inside Pakistan – an accusation denied by Afghanistan's Taliban-led administration. Of the more than four million Afghans living in Pakistan, the government estimates 1.7 million are undocumented with many fleeing their war-torn country during its decades of internal conflict since the late 1970s, while the Taliban takeover after the US withdrawal in 2021 led to another exodus. Reiterating that only Pakistanis are allowed to engage in politics in the country, he underscored that even "registered" foreigners are prohibited from playing any role in politics. "[We] have identified 10 people who were involved in political activities," the security czar said.

## US rejects UNSC...

FROM PAGE 01

the Arab Group of nations at the UN, and presented by the UAE, which currently occupies the Arab seat on the council. The text demands "an immediate humanitarian ceasefire" in Gaza and "the immediate and unconditional release of all hostages, as well as ensuring humanitarian access." It expresses "grave concern over the catastrophic humanitarian situation in the Gaza Strip and the suffering of the Palestinian civilian population, and (emphasizes) that the Palestinian and Israeli civilian populations must be protected in accordance with international humanitarian law."

## Israel continues...

FROM PAGE 01

setting it on fire. Hossam Shabat, a journalist at the scene, published a video on X, formerly known as Twitter, on Friday, showing people rushing to extinguish the fire. Similar reports of widespread use of smoke bombs overnight were reported across several parts of the Gaza Strip, especially its northern part, where hundreds of thousands of civilians are living. Palestinian photojournalist, Mahmoud Abusalama, said Israeli troops had been shelling the Jabalia refugee camp for hours and using gas and smoke bombs, adding "Children and women are suffocating in their homes."

## Pak-Iran...

FROM PAGE 01

the movement of cargo trains multiple times. Last month, the railway service between Pakistan and Iran was suspended after heavy rainfall in the area. The rail freight service between Quetta to Iran and Iran to Quetta has resumed. The good trains from Pakistan left for Iran, the railways authorities said. The railway track was drowned under the rainwater, which suspended goods train traffic in Iran, Pakistan Railways officials said. "A goods train carrying sulfur cargo from Iran was stopped midway," officials further said. "An Iran-bound train from Quetta was also stopped at Dalbandin".



ISLAMABAD: Inara Technologies Islamabad arranged a friendly cricket match. Players are posing for a group picture on the occasion of the match. – DNA

## Pakistan beat Nepal in maiden ACC U19 Asia Cup

Pakistan efficiently chased down Nepal's target of 153 runs, achieving the win in the 27th over

## OUR CORRESPONDENTS

DUBAI: The Pakistan U19 team kicked off their ACC U19 Asia Cup 2023 campaign on a high note after defeating Nepal U19 by seven wickets at ICC Academy Ground No 2 in Dubai. Right-arm quick Mohammad Zeeshan registered a six-wicket haul to help dismiss Nepal U19 for 152 in 47.2 overs. In turn, Saad Baig-led Pakistan U19 chased 153 in 26.2 overs with seven wickets to spare. Pakistan U19's decision to bowl first paid dividends as Zeeshan ran through the Nepal batting line-up. The 18-year-old pacer picked up six wickets at the expense of 19 runs, registering the second-best figures at this level for a Pakistan bowler, bested only by Shaheen Shah Afridi who registered 6-15 against Ireland in 2018.

He was supported well by his fellow quicks as left-armer Amir Hassan grabbed two wickets and right-armer Ubaid Shah had one to his name. Nepal U19 opening batter Arjun Kumar contributed 21 from 37, including three fours, and was the only top-



order batter to register a score in double digits. The fifth batter in, wicketkeeper-batter Uttam Magar produced a gritty half-centu-

ry, hitting 51 from 76 balls including three boundaries and two maximums. Left-hander Dinesh Kandel, who came to the crease

after the fifth wicket fell, stitched a 70-run stand with Magar, to help stable the innings. The partnership was cut short by Zeeshan, who removed Kandel for 31 from 59, including two fours and a six.

Chasing 153, Pakistan U19 faltered a little at the start. Right-arm pacer Gulshan Jha struck twice as opening batter Shamyul Husain was caught for a duck and his fellow opener, Shahzaib Khan, joined him back in the pavilion shortly after, scoring only 15 from 29 including two boundaries.

Pakistan U19 captain Saad Baig (50, 56b, 5x4s) and Azan Awaiz (56 not out, 62b, 8x4s) batted together to yield a 108-run stand that brought the chase back on track. In the 24th over, Saad was caught off Aakash Tripathi's bowling. Zeeshan, who had earlier starred with the ball, then hit a fiery 20 from just eight balls, showcasing two fours and as many sixes. For his extraordinary all-round performance, Zeeshan was named man of the match. Pakistan U19 are set to play against India U19 on 10 December at ICC Academy Ground with the first ball set to be bowled at 1030 PKT.

## We want accountability...

FROM PAGE 01

Nawaz said those who lodged "bogus cases" should be taken to task. "Our party leaders were put behind bars in false cases and I am being delivered justice after a period of seven years," the PML-N supremo said. He was referring to the graft cases registered against him and his family members following the infamous Panama Papers revelations. While he was prime minister of the country, the Supreme Court disqualified him for life for not declaring a receivable salary and also directed National Accountability Bureau (NAB) to file references against him.

## PPP always tried to...

FROM PAGE 01

he claimed. He expressed readiness to serve the people of the country with "renewed vigour and a sense of duty." Furthermore, the PPP co-chairman called for the digitisation to ensure transparency and good governance, particularly in sectors like food, education, and health. "The PPP has also underlined women's rights," he noted, adding that anti-harassment laws should be strengthened and their implementation should be ensured. The PPP co-chairman made these remarks during a meeting with party's Punjab leadership in Lahore. The meeting deliberated on PPP's strategy for upcoming general elections.

## Imran seeking...

FROM PAGE 01

Afghans have returned home from the Torkham and Chaman border crossings. On Thursday, a statement from Imran – who is currently incarcerated in Adiala Jail – was issued on social media platform X on the issue, criticising the treatment allegedly being meted out to Afghan refugees. Imran said that treating refugees with respect was a "national obligation" while also talking about the traditional and historical links between Pakistan and Afghanistan. He said Pakistan had accommodated Afghan refugees for close to four decades and the effects of decades of hospitality were being wasted due to a "deficient plan".

## SHC suspends...

FROM PAGE 01

Earlier, PEMRA urged media to boycott those who are responsible for May 9 violence. The Media Regulatory Authority issued regulations for all Television Channels which stated that every citizen can exercise their freedom of expression except in extraordinary situations. The media watchdog said that statements that may incite violence, hatred and threat to peace of the society, are banned. It is pertinent to mention here that PEMRA imposed a ban on broadcast 'live and recorded' speeches and press conferences of former prime minister and Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf Chairman Imran Khan on all satellite TV channels with immediate effect.

## Asian Baseball C'ship: Pakistan secure second win



DNA

KARACHI: Pakistan secured their second victory in the placement round of the ongoing Asian Baseball Championship in Taipei, Taiwan, triumphing over Palestine with a resounding score of 12-3. Pakistan exhibited stellar performances by key players like Amjad

Islam, Umair Imad Butt, and Aman Khan. Jabran, Zaakir, Sameer, and Wasim also delivered commendable performances, contributing significantly to the team's success. Looking ahead in the placement round, Pakistan is set to face Hong Kong in their upcoming match scheduled for tomorrow. This recent win follows Pakistan's earlier triumph

over Thailand in the initial round of group matches by 4-1. Pakistan lost their first two matches in the event after going down against world number one Japan 14-0 and Philippines 4-2. However, 18-year-old pitcher Musharaf Khan starred for the Green Shirts against Thailand as he pitched all 9 innings and recorded all 27 outs. According to World Baseball Rankings, Pakistan are placed 49th while Thailand are six places above them at 43. Losing their first two games means that Pakistan were not able to qualify for the Super Fourth round. However, they will compete for 5th-8th place against Thailand, Hong Kong and Palestine. The top two teams in the Super Round will compete for the title on December 10. Taiwan, the defending champions, and South Korea are joined by Hong Kong and Palestine in the event's Group A, with the last edition's runners-up Japan, the Philippines, Pakistan and Thailand in Group B.

## Sajid likely to join Pakistan's Test squad

SYDNEY: Right-arm off-spinner Sajid Khan is reportedly likely to be called up to Pakistan's Test squad in Australia ahead of the first Test, commencing on December 14 in Perth. Reports suggest that Sajid Khan was contacted by team management to prepare himself after spin bowler Abrar Ahmed suffered an injury on the third day of a four-day game against Prime Minister's XI. Abrar Ahmed complained of discomfort in his right leg after bowling eight overs on the third day and was taken off the field. Following his complaint, Abrar Ahmed was sent for an MRI scan. Further details will be shared in due course after the medical panel assesses the MRI reports. The selection committee will take a final decision on Sajid Khan's inclusion after Abrar Ahmed's MRI reports. The four-day game was scheduled as part of Pakistan's preparation ahead of their three-match Test series against Australia. – Agencies

## PSL season nine's logo revealed

LAHORE: The Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) has revealed a fresh logo for the upcoming ninth season of the Pakistan Super League (PSL), just ahead of the scheduled draft on December 13. This revamped logo sets the tone for the 2024 season, slated to take place in February-March of the following year. Traditionally, the PCB introduces a new brand identity preceding each new season. The unveiling of the logo was showcased across various social media platforms belonging to the PSL. On Thursday, the PCB announced the list of players retained by all six franchises. Defending champions Lahore Qalandars retained their skipper Shaheen Afridi in the Platinum category. Islamabad United successfully retained their captain Shadab Khan alongside their top-trade Naseem Shah. "Following the finalisation of all trades and retentions, Multan Sultans will now have the first pick in the first round of the Platinum category, after Multan and Quetta traded Iftikhar Ahmed and Rilee Rossouw between them," the PCB said in a press release. "Naseem Shah's move to Islamabad United also saw their first round Platinum pick exchanged with Quetta Gladiators' third-round Platinum pick." "Following Shan Masood's move to Karachi Kings, their first-round Silver pick was exchanged for Multan Sultans' fourth-round Silver pick. Owing to Imad Wasim's move to Islamabad United, Islamabad's first-round Silver pick was exchanged with Karachi's second-round Silver pick. "Furthermore, Karachi Kings and Quetta Gladiators will be required to pick a local player in the Platinum category." "As per the precedent, each of the six sides will have the Right to Match Card that will allow them to pick any player released from their roster during the draft." – DNA

## Phillips helps NZ fight back in second BD Test

All-rounder Phillips lifted New Zealand from a precarious 55-5 at the start of day to 180 all out in response to Bangladesh's first innings total of 172 in Dhaka

## SPORTS DESK

DHAKA: Glenn Phillips hit an aggressive 87 to keep New Zealand in the game on day three of a finely poised rain-hit second and final Test against Bangladesh on Friday. All-rounder Phillips lifted New Zealand from a precarious 55-5 at the start of the day to 180 all out in response to Bangladesh's first innings total of 172 in Dhaka. Bangladesh wiped out the eight-run deficit to reach 38-2 when bad light forced early stumps, with 37 overs remaining on the day at the Sher-e-Bangla National Stadium. Opener Zakir Hasan was batting on 16 with Mominul Haque on nought. Spinner Ajaz Patel removed Mahmudul Hasan Joy for two in the first over and skipper Tim Southee took down his Bangladesh counterpart Najmul Hasan Shanto for 15. Play resumed Friday after four sessions – one in the morning – were washed out because of rain with New Zealand trailing

Bangladesh by 117 runs. Glenn Phillips came to the rescue with nine fours and four sixes in his defiant 72-ball knock.

He put on a 55-run eighth-wicket stand with Kyle Jamieson (20) and stood strong till his departure. Mehidy Hasan Miraz and



Tajjul Islam picked up three wickets each for Bangladesh. Nayeem Hasan and Shoriful Islam claimed two wickets apiece. Glenn Phillips and fellow overnight batsman Daryl Mitchell took an aggressive approach and were rewarded with a stand of 49 for the sixth wicket before Bangladesh had their first success of the day. Mehidy took a superb catch, running to his left from mid-on and diving at full length to dismiss Mitchell for 18 off Nayeem. Nayeem removed Mitchell Santner in his next over but Jamieson helped claw back the momentum towards New Zealand before his dismissal by Shoriful. Shoriful then forced Phillips to edge a catch behind the stumps before Tajjul wrapped up the New Zealand innings with the wicket of Southee (14). Fifteen wickets fell on the first day but no ball was bowled on the second day after constant rain in the national capital. The hosts, chasing a first-ever series win over the Black Caps, lead the two-Test series 1-0 after a 150-run victory in Sylhet.

## Briefs

Ukraine claims  
downed 14  
Russian cruise  
missiles

KYIV : Kiev said that Russia had launched more than a dozen cruise missiles at Ukraine overnight in Moscow's latest aerial barrage that left two dead and several wounded. Officials in Kiev say Russian forces stockpiled drones and missiles for attacks on Ukraine's struggling energy grid over winter. "Nineteen cruise missiles X101/X555 were launched. And we have not a bad result from our air defences - 14 destroyed cruise missiles," Yuriy Ignat, a spokesperson for Ukraine's air force, told state media. He said the missiles were downed over the Kiev and Dnipropetrovsk regions and that they were targeting civilian infrastructure. Prime Minister Denys Shmygal said the attacks had left two people dead and seven people injured in Dnipropetrovsk and the eastern Kharkiv region. The European Union is poised to give its member states the power to halt gas imports from Russia and Belarus, the Financial Times reported. Any member state will be able to block companies from Russia and Belarus from obtaining space in their gas pipelines and liquefied natural gas terminals, the FT reported, citing a draft legal text proposed by Brussels. EU member states could have the authority to "partially or, where justified, completely limit" access to infrastructure to gas operators from Russia and Belarus, in order to protect their vital security interests, the newspaper said. —APP

Netherlands  
arrests Assad  
official for  
sexual  
violence

AMSTERDAM : A Syrian refugee was arrested on Friday in the Netherlands on suspicion of crimes against humanity, including sexual violence, while he was allegedly head of an interrogation team in a militia aligned to Bashar al Assad's regime. The arrest of the 55-year-old man marks the first time Dutch authorities have charged a suspect with sexual violence as a crime against humanity, the National Public Prosecution Service said in a statement. He is the latest suspect charged in the Netherlands with crimes committed during Syria's grinding civil war. Under universal jurisdiction, the Netherlands can prosecute certain crimes even if they were committed abroad. The Netherlands and Canada have also taken Syria to the United Nations' top court, accusing the Assad regime of a years-long campaign of "institutionalised" torture against its own people. —DNA

WHO  
says more  
contaminated  
medicinal  
syrups found

WASHINGTON : The World Health Organization said that several contaminated syrups and suspension medicines had been identified in countries in the WHO regions of the Americas, the Eastern Mediterranean, South-East Asia and the Western Pacific. The affected products were manufactured by Pharmix Laboratories in Pakistan, the WHO said, and were first identified in the Maldives and Pakistan. Some of the tainted products have also been found in Belize, Fiji and Laos. Pharmix was not immediately available for comment. The medicines, liquids containing active ingredients to treat various conditions, contained unacceptable levels of the contaminant ethylene glycol, WHO said. The alert is the latest in a line of warnings from WHO about similarly contaminated medicines made in India and Indonesia, which were linked to the deaths of around 300 children worldwide last year. —Agencies

ICCI, NBF discuss to explore  
joint investment project

ICCI is working on the establishment of a new industrial zone in the region to boost industrialization and the NPF should collaborate with ICCI in this important project of national importance

MEHATB PIRZADA

ISLAMABAD: Ahsan Zafar Bakhtawari, President, Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry (ICCI) leading a delegation held a meeting with Sabir Ahmed, Managing Director, National Police Foundation (NPF) during a visit to his office and discussed with him the options of collaboration on some joint investment projects. Muhammad Karim Khan Secretary, Capt. (R) Atta Muhammad Director Welfare/Security, Syed Ali Mohsin Director Housing and Ishfaq Ahmed Director Finance, National Police Foundation were also present in the meeting. Ahsan Zafar Bakhtawari said that ICCI is working on the establishment of a new industrial zone in the region to boost industrialization and the NPF should collaborate with ICCI in this important project of national importance. He said that the local industry is facing a shortage of skilled manpower while the NPF is already running vocational training centers across the country and proposed that ICCI and NPF should join hands to produce skilled workers for local industry to improve its productivity. He said that NPF is managing a sheet glass industry and ICCI members can explore part-



nerships in this important project. He said that ICCI is also interested in establishing a citizen club, hospital, airline, and a university as joint ventures with NPF as these important projects would be very beneficial to society and the economy. Sabir Ahmed, Managing Director, National Police Foundation welcomed the ICCI delegation and briefed them

about the welfare, housing, and other projects of NPF. He also briefed the ICCI delegation about its mega construction project Broadway Center and said that ICCI members should explore this project for business activities. He said that despite being an agricultural country, Pakistan is importing agricultural products worth US\$ 11-12 billion per annum, which is unfortunate, and stressed that NBF and ICCI should consider collaboration for bringing investment in corporate farming to reduce agricultural import bill. He said that the business community should invest in R&D to produce quality seeds to bring a revolution in the agriculture sector. He said that Pakistan has good po-

tential to grow olive oil to meet domestic needs and increase its exports. He said that the business community should play a role in transforming Pakistan from an import-based economy to an export-led economy. Zafar Bakhtawari, former President ICCI and Secretary General UBG Pakistan said that Pakistan is facing a serious issue of connect-

ivity as many airlines of the world are not coming to Pakistan. He said that ICCI has planned to launch an airline in the private sector to connect Pakistan with major export destinations to boost Pakistan's trade and exports and stressed that the NPF should join hands with ICCI in this vital project of national importance.

ICCI is working on the establishment of a new industrial zone in the region to boost industrialization and the NPF should collaborate with ICCI in this important project of national importance.

US urged to aid F-16 sales  
for Sweden's NATO bid

NEWS DESK

ISTANBUL : The US should do what is necessary on F-16 sales to complete the process for Sweden's NATO bid, Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan said on Friday. "If we are two NATO allies, then you should do your part, simultaneously, our parliament will make a necessary decision," Erdogan told journalists on his return flight from a one-day visit to Greece. "You say that you will take a step on the F-16 issue after it passes through Congress; I also have a parliament. It is not possible for me to take such a step before it passes through my par-

liament." Erdogan signed Sweden's NATO accession protocol and submitted it to parliament on Oct. 23. On Nov. 16, parliament's Foreign Affairs Committee postponed consideration of the protocol. To join the alliance, which Sweden sought after Russia attacked nearby Ukraine, Stockholm has to have the approval of all current NATO members, including Türkiye, a NATO member for over 70 years, and the owner of its second-largest army, after the US. Türkiye has been pushing Swedish authorities to take concrete steps to alleviate Ankara's security concerns, especially regarding support for the PKK terrorist organization,

a group whose decades-long attacks on Türkiye have taken some 40,000 lives. Türkiye is seeking to purchase from the US the latest model F-16 Block 70 aircraft, as well as 79 modernization kits to upgrade its remaining F-16s to Block 70 level. Turkish foreign minister's visit to US Erdogan said that Turkish Foreign Minister Hakan Fidan along with his counterparts assigned by the joint Arab-Islamic extraordinary summit, will visit the US on Friday for talks on Gaza. The Turkish president hopes Fidan and the members of the Muslim group achieve a result in ending the US' pro-Israel stance on Gaza. "With this result, they can

exert pressure on Israel for peace." He said there is no planned meeting with US President Joe Biden, adding: "His stance on Gaza is known to us all. If he calls us, we will discuss whatever matters need to be discussed with him directly." Israel resumed its military offensive against the Gaza Strip on Dec. 1 after the end of a weeklong humanitarian pause with the Palestinian group, Hamas. At least 17,177 Palestinians have been killed and more than 46,000 others injured in relentless air and ground attacks on the enclave since Oct. 7 following a cross-border attack by Hamas. The Israeli death toll in the Hamas attack stood at 1,200, according to official figures.

European Union  
hails breakthrough in  
Azerbaijan-Armenia ties

LONDON : The president of the European Council welcomed a newly-announced agreement between Azerbaijan and Armenia for the release of detainees and taking "tangible steps" toward building confidence. "Delighted to welcome a major breakthrough in Armenia-Azerbaijan relations as they issue a joint statement. Welcome in particular release of detainees and unprecedented opening in political dialogue," Charles Michel wrote on X. Azerbaijan and Armenia announced in a statement late Thursday that they agreed to mutually release detainees in a step toward peace. "The Republic of Armenia and the Republic of Azerbaijan share the view that there is a historical chance to achieve a long-awaited peace in the region. Two countries reconfirm their intention to normalize relations and to reach the peace treaty on the basis of respect for the principles of sovereignty and territorial integrity," according to the statement that was quoted by Azerbaijan's state-run news agency. Establishing and deepening dialogue between the two countries has been a key objective of the EU-led Brussels process, said Michel, adding that "today's progress is a key step." Michel noted that he encourages the leaders to finalize a peace deal as soon as possible. —DNA

Chinese fighters, weather  
balloon cross Taiwan Strait

TAIPEI: Taiwan said on Friday that 12 Chinese fighter jets and a suspected weather balloon had crossed the Taiwan Strait's sensitive median line, in a ratcheting up of tensions about a month before the island's presidential election. Democratically governed Taiwan, which China claims as its own territory, has complained for the past four years of regular Chinese military patrols and drills near the island. Taiwan holds presidential and parliamentary polls on Jan. 13 and campaigning has kicked into high gear with how the next government handles relations with China a major point of contention. Taiwan's defense ministry, offering details of Chinese missions on Thursday night, said 12 fighter jets had crossed the median line, that once served as an unofficial barrier between the two sides but which Chinese planes now regularly fly over. In an unusual addition to its statement, the ministry said that around midday on Thursday it had also detected a Chinese balloon 101 nautical miles (187 km) southwest of the northern Taiwanese city of Keelung, which traveled eastward for about an hour, crossing the strait before disappearing. Taiwan Defense Minister Chiu Kuo-cheng told reporters at parliament that their "initial understanding" was it was probably a weather balloon, but felt the ministry had an obligation to report this to be public. —DNA



ISLAMABAD: A younger vender is selling Oranges Juice along the road side as people like it very much during winter season in Federal Capital. —ONLINE

Israel's crimes extend beyond civilians to journalists  
Türkiye ready to assume responsibility to 'prevent more bloodshed in Gaza'

ISTANBUL: Israel is targeting not only women and children in Gaza but also journalists trying to work under difficult conditions, Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan said on Friday. International organizations are responsible for the world's inability to establish global peace and security and solve problems, Erdogan said in an address to the TRT World Forum 2023 in Istanbul. "Global media cartels are trying to cover up the brutality in Gaza and legitimize the massacre of journalists under the pretext of Hamas," he added, referring to Israel's attacks on Gaza since Oct. 7, which have taken over 17,000 lives, most of them women and children. "Every day a journalist is being killed, yet from institutions that for years have been preaching about press freedom all we hear is silence," he said. Lauding Turkish media outlets for reporting on Gaza accurately, showing the world the real condi-

tions there under a deadly siege, he said: "I would like to congratulate TRT, Anadolu, and our other media institutions that opened a vital corridor from Gaza to the world." Over 70 journalists have been killed in Gaza, said Erdogan, adding: "Where is the world's renowned press? Why don't they publish headlines about the journalists killed?" Erdogan recalled that Israel had killed a journalist working for Anadolu as a freelance cameraman reporting from Gaza and also had broken the video camera of a TRT News journalist while he was covering the events in Jerusalem's Old City. Despite attacking the journalists, Israel could not prevent the truth from being uncovered, he said. The main goal is to expose the lies and accusations about Gaza and to make them known to all of humanity, especially to Türkiye, the president added. "Despite all its barbarity, Israel is also losing its propaganda war in

media, unable to break the resilience of people of Gaza," he said. "Wherever they are in the world, media members, especially all conscientious individuals, must be courageous, stand tall, and speak the truth and justice openly and sincerely. 'If Israel's cruelty can't be stopped, no one could feel safe anywhere in the world,'" said Erdogan, adding: "Because the Pandora's box has opened." Despite some Western countries being well aware of the crimes committed by Israel, they act with a sense of embarrassment, Erdogan said. "Just as (former President of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia Slobodan) Milosevic was tried and convicted, I believe that (Israel's Prime Minister Benjamin) Netanyahu and his accomplices will be judged in the same way and ultimately be convicted." Netanyahu and his supporters are also "terrorists as the accomplices of terrorism" and will "undoubt-

edly" be tried at the International Court of Justice in the Hague, he added. "It is not the West - which pours fuel on the fire - which pays the price for every moment lost in achieving lasting peace, but unfortunately the innocents," the Turkish president said. The US and European countries, by ignoring the Palestinian people and especially the oppressed in Gaza, are doing the greatest harm to themselves, Erdogan said. "They are still unaware that they have undergone a test that will fundamentally shake the security and welfare order over which the West trembles." Erdogan said he finds antisemitism "inhuman," adding but antisemitism is being fueled by Netanyahu and his associates for "political gain." "Türkiye is ready to shoulder the responsibility to prevent more bloodshed from happening (in Gaza)," Erdogan said, referring to its offer to mediate peace or serve as a guarantor for the region.

"In a just peace, there are no losers," he added. "We will not give up reclaiming justice and the truth, regardless of who may be uneasy about it," he said. The Turkish president also welcomed and praised UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres for invoking Article 99 of the UN Charter for the first time since he became the organization's top official in 2017, as he urged the UN Security Council to act on the war in Gaza. In a letter on Wednesday, Guterres said: "I urge the Security Council to press to avert a humanitarian catastrophe. I reiterate my appeal for a humanitarian ceasefire to be declared. This is urgent." More than 75 journalists have been killed and 140 wounded in Israeli attacks since Oct. 7. At least 17,487 Palestinians have been killed and more than 46,480 others injured in relentless air and ground attacks on the Gaza Strip since Oct. 7 following a cross-border attack by Palestinian group Hamas.

UN climate  
talks chief  
pushes for  
rapid deal

DUBAI : The head of UN climate talks pressed nations Friday to move fast to deliver an "unprecedented" pact on tackling global warming, as negotiators scrambled to bridge differences over phasing out fossil fuels. While UN climate talks rarely finish on time, COP28 president Sultan Al Jaber has set the ambitious goal of wrapping up the summit in Dubai on schedule at 11 am (0700 GMT) on Tuesday. With ministers now in town, Jaber said he wanted negotiators to produce a new draft deal on Friday. Despite disagreements over the future of fossil fuels, Jaber voiced optimism that the talks hosted by the oil-rich United Arab Emirates can finish with a historic agreement.

"We have the potential to deliver a paradigm shift," he said Friday after delegations from nearly 200 nations took a breather the day before. "Let us please get this job done. I need you to step up and I need you to come out of your comfort zones," he said. Climate campaigners have viewed Jaber - head of UAE national oil firm ADNOC - with deep suspicion, but he has sought to assure sceptics by stating that a phase-down of fossil fuels was "inevitable." COP28 kicked off last week with the landmark launch of a loss and damage fund for nations devastated by climate change. —dna

Migrants  
huddle in  
open-air  
camps on US  
order

JACUMBA: Hundreds of migrants who cross into the United States from Mexico each day are being herded into open-air camps, where they have no access to food or water. And some are left to sleep on the open ground in a desert riddled with scorpions and snakes, activists say. Campaigners say many will be there for days, waiting to be processed by an immigration system that is overwhelmed by - and under-prepared for - the sheer number of people. "We were told by border patrol that this is the new normal," Erika Pinheiro, executive director of the non-governmental Al Otro Lado, told AFP in Jacumba, California. Pinheiro said authorities keep asylum-seekers confined in camps like this until they can be taken to an official processing center. In the Jacumba area, a total daily average of 800 people are in the three camps. "The migrants are told that they will be deported unless they stay in these camps," Pinheiro said. "However, Border Patrol is not providing food, water, shelter or medical care. Sanitary facilities are abysmal." Al Otro Lado - whose name means "On the other side" - is one of a number of non-profits that bring food, water and blankets, and provide some medical care. —APP

"TRT World  
Forum 2023"  
is Starting

ANKARA : TRT's influential event shaping the global agenda, the TRT World Forum, is being held in Istanbul on Dec. 8-9. In its seventh year, the event brings together over 150 distinguished speakers from various parts of the world, including internationally recognized academics, politicians, civil society workers, experts from think tanks, bureaucrats, and journalists. TRT World Forum, one of the largest forums in the media sector globally, brings together President of Türkiye Recep Tayyip Erdoğan, Presidency's Director of Communications Fahrettin Altun, Director General of TRT Mehmet Zahid Sobac and scholars, journalists, policymakers, and NGOs from around the world on its first day. Aiming to keep a pulse on the world agenda, propose solutions to global issues, and provide a platform for the discussion of diverse ideas, The TRT World Forum will begin with the opening speech of President Erdoğan, who has attended all TRT World Forums since 2017, and whose remarks on the agenda of Türkiye and the world have resonated globally. —APP

## Briefs

### Ahad Cheema gets clean chit

DNA

LAHORE: An accountability court of Lahore on Friday acquitted Adviser to Prime Minister Ahad Cheema in assets beyond means reference. Accountability Court Judge Malik Ali Zulqarnain Awan announced the reserved verdict. The court, accepting Cheema's appeal, acquitted him in assets beyond means reference. The NAB court, in its previous hearing, had reserved its judgement on Cheema's appeal. Earlier, the National Accountability Bureau (NAB) had acquitted Cheema in assets beyond means case. As per NAB report, such a reference was not admissible against Cheema. The Bureau said assets of PM's adviser were in accordance with his income. His alleged offshore companies made properties from their own income. The NAB further stated that accounts of Sadia Mansoor, Mansoor Ahmad and Nazia Ashraf did not belong to Cheema. As per reinvestigation, Cheema's income was Rs213 million and his expenditure was Rs131 million. The Bureau in its report said during investigation Cheema furnished record of his income and expenditure to the Bureau. The same was got verified by the NAB which was correct. The NAB had requested the court to proceed on the matter as per law.

### NAB summons Bushra In Toshiakhana case

DNA

RAWALPINDI: The National Accountability Bureau (NAB) has summoned Bushra Bibi, wife of Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) founder Imran Khan in Toshiakhana case. As per details, the NAB Rawalpindi issued notice to Bushra Bibi and summoned her on December 11 at 11 am in connection with Toshiakhana case. NAB directed the wife of PTI founder to bring the gold necklace, diamond ring and bracelet with her to the court appearance. Earlier, the caretaker federal government placed Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) Imran Khan's wife Bushra Bibi's name on the Exit Control List (ECL), said sources. Former prime minister and PTI chairman Imran Khan's wife's name had been placed on ECL in the National Crime Agency (NCA) £190 million scandal, sources privy to the development told ARY News. Her name was put on the ECL on the recommendation of the National Accountability Bureau (NAB). The former first lady has been accused of keeping a locket, chain, earrings, two rings and bracelet from the Toshiakhana gifts. She is also accused of keeping gold, diamond, necklace, and bracelet, as well as gold and diamond rings, earrings and bracelet. The NAB has maintained that the gifts were not submitted to the Toshiakhana to calculate their prices.

# IIOJK special status: Indian SC to announce verdict on Dec 11

A five-member bench headed by Chief Justice of India (CJI) D.Y. Chandrachud had begun hearing the set of petitions on July 11 and reserved its verdict on September 5

NEWS DESK

NEW DELHI: India's Supreme Court will pronounce its verdict on a set of pleas against New Delhi's 2019 imposition of direct rule in occupied Kashmir on Dec 11 (Monday), The Times of India reported on Friday. In 2019, India's ruling Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) had revoked occupied Kashmir's special status by repealing Article 370 of the constitution. Article 370 had limited the power of the Indian parliament to impose laws in the state, apart from matters of defence, foreign affairs and communications. The move allowed people from the rest of the country to have the right to acquire property in occupied Kashmir and settle there permanently. Kashmiris, international organisations and critics of India's Hindu nationalist-led government had termed the move an attempt to dilute the demographics of Muslim-majority Kashmir with Hindu settlers. A five-member bench headed by Chief Justice of India (CJI) D.Y. Chandrachud had begun hearing the set of petitions on July 11 and reserved its verdict on September 5. According to India Today, the petitioners included leaders of the National Conference



and the People's Democratic Party (PDP). The bench – also including Justices Sanjay Kishan Kaul, Sanjiv Khanna, B. R. Gava and Surya Kant – is to decide if the move was legal despite lacking the endorsement from parliament usually required for constitutional change. During the proceedings, the PDP had told the court that then-governor Satya Pal Malik was not consulted before

the decision was taken by the central government to abrogate Article 370, India Today stated. Meanwhile, the centre had argued in support of its step and claimed there was no "constitutional fraud" in annulling the provision, the report added. Senior counsel Kapil Sibal had contended that the concurrence of the state government provided by the governor did not

express the will of the people. The apex court had asked the BJP-ruled central government whether there was a timeline to convert Indian-held Kashmir from a union territory to a state. Pakistan and India have fought three wars over control of the region and thousands have been killed in a freedom movement against Indian rule in the Muslim-majority territory since 1989. The suspension of occupied Kashmir's semi-autonomous status allowed Indians from elsewhere to buy land and claim government jobs there, a policy denounced by critics as "settler colonialism". Many residents and critics say that authorities have since curbed media freedoms and public protests in a drastic curtailment of civil liberties. Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi's government has long been a key plank of Modi's Hindu nationalist BJP. The frequency of armed clashes between Indian soldiers and freedom fighters has dropped significantly in recent years as India works to fortify its rule over the territory.

### Sheikh eyes twin Rawalpindi seats

DNA

RAWALPINDI: Former interior minister Sheikh Rashid Ahmed said on Friday he would contest election on the symbol of qalam and dwat (pen and ink) from two constituencies of Rawalpindi - NA-56 and 57 - where he worked a lot for his constituents. Speaking to reporters after joining a case proceeding in the Lahore High Court's Rawalpindi Bench, the Awami Muslim League chief said that after 'seclusion' he had stopped using social media platform X (formerly known as Twitter), and only read newspaper. He said no one mistreated him (during his absence he refer to as spiritual seclusion) and he did not testify against anyone. He reiterated that he remained in 'seclusion' for 40 days during which no one troubled him. He said he was confident that the general elections would be held on Feb 8 following the statement of CEC Sikandar Sultan Raja.

## Bajaurjirga pledges full coop with Army for peace

Primary objective of these meetings is to collaboratively find solutions and bring an end to prevailing unrest in Bajaur

BAJAUR: In a jirga held in Bajaur, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, political and tribal elders from Tarkani and Utmankhel voiced their unwavering support for the Pakistan Army and law enforcement agencies. The gathering witnessed the participation of district administration, political figures, religious leaders, and local representatives, all contributing suggestions to address the ongoing unrest in the region. A committee, comprising members of the jirga, was formed with the purpose of engaging in dialogues with key authorities, including Corps Commander Peshawar, IGFC North, IG Police, Chief Secretary, and other significant officials. The primary objective of these meetings is to collaboratively find solutions and bring an end to the prevailing unrest in Bajaur. The jirga unanimously emphasised that the establishment of peace and stability in the area is paramount for the well-being of the local population. All political and tribal leaders expressed their commitment to extend full cooperation to the Pakistan Army and law enforcement agencies. Commending the government's decisive actions against illegal residents and acknowledging the positive outcomes, the jirga members also voiced criticism over Afghanistan's alleged facilitation of TTP terrorists. The elders applauded the robust measures taken by the Pakistan Army and law enforcement agencies to curb extortion, smuggling, illegal foreign exchange activities, and other illicit businesses. - DNA

## ECP issues notice to PTI on Babar's plea

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

ISLAMABAD: The Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) on Friday issued notice to PTI on a petition filed by its founding member Akbar S Babar challenging the party's intra-party polls. The PTI recently held intra-party polls after which Babar, along with other party members, filed a petition, against "rigged/fraudulent PTI intra-party elections" requesting the country's top electoral authority to order the party to conduct fresh polls. Following the polls held in Peshawar to elect the party's new officeholders including a re-

placement for former chairman Imran, the party members voted in favour of Barrister Gohar Khan, the ex-PTI chief's lawyer whom he nominated himself for the key post. In the wake of the elections, held on December 2, Babar refused to accept the polls and move the electoral authority against the irregularities. The senior politician added that he and other founding leaders are part of the party following the high court's decision. The politician approached the ECP seeking its intervention in the matter as a member of PTI whose membership was validated by the electoral body. A 5-member commission, led by Chief Election Commissioner Sikandar Sultan Raja, conducted the hearing on the petition filed by 14 PTI members against the intra-party polls. Babar and others, in the petition, mentioned that there was no schedule given before the elections and the voter lists were also not released.

## Putin announces 2024 presidential bid

About 70% of Russian citizens believe their current leader should seek another term in office, according to a recent poll

NEWS DESK

MOSCOW: Russian President Vladimir Putin has announced that he will seek re-election in 2024. Russia's presidential election will be held between March 15 and March 17, 2024. The winner will be inaugurated in early May. If Putin wins, it will be his fifth term as head of state. The Russian leader made his remarks at a ceremony where he awarded Hero of Russia medals to servicemen who had taken part in the special military operation against Ukraine. Hero of the Donetsk People's Republic Artyom Zhoga, who was recently named speaker of the

Russian federal subject's parliament, asked if he would run in 2024 and he replied in the affirmative. The footage from the ceremony shows Zhoga shaking hands with Putin and telling him that the entire Donbass would like him to participate in the election. "Thanks to your actions... we became free, we got the opportunity to choose... You are our president... We are your team, we need you, Russia needs you," he said. Thanking him for the praise, Putin admitted that while he had "different thoughts at different times" on the subject, the time had come to make a final decision. "I am going to run for President of the Russian Federation," he said.

## KSE-100 index breaches 66,000 points

KARACHI: Bulls maintained their grip on the PSX as the benchmark index shot past the 66,000 mark on Friday – for the first time in history – by gaining over 1,500 points. The benchmark KSE-100 index hit an all-time high of 66,273.73 points. However, it closed at 66,223.63 points after gaining 1505.56 points or 2.33%, compared to yesterday's close of 64,718.07 points. Raza Jafri, who is the head of equities at Karachi-based Intermarket Securities, said that the banks and energy sector led the rally at the bourse as cheap valuations and a reasonably settled environment help flows remain strong as foreign and local buys continue to invest. "MPC next week should set the tone for near-term trading. While unchanged interest rates are widely expected, investors will look for clues in the text of the monetary policy statement to gauge how much interest rates can come down by next year," he added. - DNA


## Farah, Shahzad, others summoned NCA case

COURT REPORTER

ISLAMABAD: An accountability court in Islamabad on Friday summoned co-accused in a £190 million settlement case – Farhat Shahzadi aka Farah Gogi, ex-accountability czar Shahzad Akbar, Zulfiqar Bukhari and others – via advertisements. Incarcerated Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) supreme and deposed prime minister Imran Khan is facing charges of corruption of billions of rupees in a case also involving a property tycoon. Khan – along with his wife Bushra Bibi and other PTI leaders – are facing a National Accountability Bureau (NAB) inquiry related to a settlement between the then-PTI government and the property tycoon, which reportedly caused a loss of £190 million to the national exchequer. Irked by the suspects' prolonged absence from the court's proceedings, the judge ordered to summon the accused via advertisements. Later, the advertisements against the co-accused in the case have been posted outside the judicial complex. The court has ordered the co-accused in the case to appear before the court on January 6, 2024. It is pertinent to mention here that currently, Akbar is in the United Kingdom. Last month, Akbar came under an acid attack, confirmed the UK police. In a statement, Hertfordshire police said that they were contacted by the ambulance service just before 4:45pm on November 26 of reports of an assault in Royston – around 50 miles out of London where Akbar now lives with his wife and two daughters.



ISLAMABAD: Pakistan's Ambassador of Indonesia Ameer Khurram Rathore presented his Credentials to Joko Widodo, President of the Republic of Indonesia. He conveyed warm regards from the leadership of Pakistan, and President Jokowi graciously reciprocated the sentiments. - DNA



**FAISALABAD SERENA HOTEL**

## Winter Escape

**Premier Package**

- Deluxe room
- Welcome drinks on arrival
- Free stay for children under 5 years
- Free airport transfers
- Fruit basket on arrival
- Buffet breakfast for 02 at Lyallpur Coffee Shop
- Temperature controlled swimming pool
- Access to recreational facilities
- High speed internet

**Luxe Package**

- Executive room
- Access to Executive lounge
- Minibar (beverages only)
- Welcome drinks on arrival
- Free stay for children under 5 years
- Free airport transfers
- Fruit basket on arrival
- 4 pieces pressing per night
- Buffet breakfast for 02 at Lyallpur
- Access to recreational facilities
- Temperature controlled swimming pool
- High speed internet




**Discounts:**  
15% discount on food and beverages, international calls, rent-a-car service and laundry.

**PKR 18k**  
plus tax per night

**PKR 21k**  
plus tax per night

Validity: December 10, 2023 - January 31, 2024

\*Terms and conditions apply

For bookings, please call: 041 111 133 133 or  
Email at: reservation.fsh@serena.com.pk