



Islamabad POST

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Pakistan's Credible Daily Newspaper

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Uzbek envoy indebted to Pakistan civil, mily leadership for support

Detailed News On Page-08

PTI govt policies led to terrorism

Detailed News On Page-08



Usman beats Shabliy to retain title

Detailed News On Page-06



People rejected PTI narrative of anarchy: Sanauallah

Says only few thousand people attended rally

MEHTAB PIRZADA

ISLAMABAD: Advisor to the Prime Minister on Inter-Provincial Coordination Rana Sanauallah said on Sunday that the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) did not managed to get people in today's procession because commoners rejected their narrative of anarchy. Speaking to a private news channel, he claimed that Pakistani citizens, particularly those in Islamabad and Rawalpindi, had rejected the PTI's "Jalsa". PTI failed to manage a few thousand people even after using all the government resources of Khyber Pakhtoonkhwa, he added. He said that the speeches in the rally were provoking the public for anarchy, especially Chief Minister KP's speech, which was the planning of another 9 May. Considering such violent speeches and PTI's past conduct, it was the responsibility of the government to take security measures in Islamabad, he added.

Over 100,000 protest in France against new PM

DNA

PARIS: More than 100,000 left-wing demonstrators rallied across France on Saturday to protest against the nomination of the centre-right Michel Barnier as prime minister and denounce President Emmanuel Macron's "power grab". The interior ministry said 110,000 people took to the streets nationwide, including 26,000 in Paris, while one leading left-winger put the turnout across France at 300,000. Rallies took place in cities across France including Nantes in the west, Nice and Marseille in the south and Strasbourg in the east. Macron on Thursday appointed Barnier, a 73-year-old former foreign minister who acted as the European Union's Brexit negotiator, as prime minister, seeking to move forward after snap elections in which his centrist alliance came second. Barnier said on Friday that he was open to naming ministers of all political stripes, including "people from the left".

PN celebrates Navy Day with great devotion

SAIFULLAH ANSAR

RAWALPINDI: Pakistan Navy on Sunday celebrated Navy Day with great devotion and enthusiasm. The Navy Day celebrations started with special prayers for national security and success of Kashmir's freedom struggle in all mosques of Pakistan Navy, an Inter Services Public Relations news release said. On September 8, 1965, during Operation Sonmth, Pakistan Navy ships attacked the Indian port of Dwarka, destroying the Indian radar station and destroying the pride of the enemy. Ghazi, the only submarine of the Pakistan Navy, maintained its dominance in the Indian Ocean during the war and paralyzed the 5 times larger Indian Navy in Indian ports. Naval Chief Admiral Naveed Ashraf said in his message that September 8 is a golden chapter in the history of Pakistan Navy, which reminds us of the eternal sacrifices and passions of our sailors.

Imran Khan release PTI gives two-week deadline

Announces to hold rally in Lahore; urges the powers-that-be not to close doors of negotiations

STAFF REPORT

ISLAMABAD: With a pledge to expand movement to Punjab, the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) on Sunday demanded the 'immediate release' of incarcerated party founder Imran Khan as it flexed political muscles in federal capital with a major rally, exceeding the time-frame granted as per the no-objection certificate (NOC). KP Chief Minister Ali Amin Gandapur said that we are giving two weeks deadline to the government for the release of Imran Khan. He said if it does not happen the government has to face consequences. The Chairman PTI Barrister Gohar in his speech called upon the forces who matter that they should not close talks doors. He said the country was already passing through a critical phase therefore further unrest would serve anybody purpose. Without taking name of the Establishment, Gohar said PTI was being pushed to the corner. He warned if this approach continues, it might have severe consequences. The rally kicked off with tight security in the federal capital as the participants of the rally gathered at the venue - Sangjani locality, while multiple caravans

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'Rallies won't bring PTI's founder out of jail'

DNA

LAHORE: Punjab Information Minister Azma Bukhari has said holding rallies will not bring the PTI founder out of jail. Talking to the media at DGPR on Sunday, she said: "We are not afraid of rallies but of actions of the PTI members." She said it was not a jalsa in Islamabad but a concert, held with the resources of the Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa government. People were brought to the jalsa in Rescue-1122 vehicles. She said that it was unfortunate for KP to have had rulers like the PTI founder Imran Khan. The people of

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PTI better pack up now

Masses rejected call for attending rally: Tarar

"Millions of people who were supposed to bring a revolution today, nobody knows where they have gone"

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Information, Broadcasting, National Heritage and Culture Attaullah Tarar said on Sunday that contrary to tall claims of Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf leadership, the people of Pakistan had rejected its rally. In a special media talk regarding the PTI rally near Sangjani, he said traffic remained normal in Islamabad and the Punjab province. "Millions of people who were supposed to bring a revolution today, nobody knows where they have gone. Have they gone to some other country or another place?", he remarked. He stated that the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf had to resort to fake videos to give the impression of huge rally and uploaded false and fake posts on social media to cover up their attendance. He said that the PTI was spreading lies and propaganda on

Continued on Page 06

SP injured in clashes

APP

ISLAMABAD: Several policemen, including Senior Superintendent of Police (Operations) Safe City Islamabad Capital Territory (ICT) police Muhammad Shoaib Khan, were injured in clashes with PTI workers here on Sunday. According to the police spokesperson, these police personnel were injured due to stone pelting by PTI protesters and violent commotion by them. The injured cops were shifted to hospitals for treatment. He said the Peaceful Assembly Law is currently in effect in Islamabad, this law requires all public gatherings to comply with the law. The police and local administration have repeatedly

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ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif administering polio vaccination to children to kickstart countrywide Special Anti Polio Campaign. Islamabad, 8 September, 2024. - DNA

Polio-free Pakistan

Shehbaz launches anti-polio drive in 115 districts

Prime Minister said we are grateful to the partners and friendly international organizations cooperating with the government to eradicate polio from Pakistan

ANSAR M BHATTI

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif today launched a special anti-polio campaign for the complete eradication of polio from the country. He inaugurated the campaign across 115 districts nationwide, aiming to vaccinate 30 million children under the age of five against this debilitating disease. Under the seven-day anti-polio drive, beginning from tomorrow, around 286,000 polio workers will go door-to-door to administer polio drops to children. Addressing the inaugural ceremony in Islamabad this evening, Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif said we are grateful to the

Continued on Page 06

Efforts afoot to provide relief to masses: Maryam

ABID RAZA

LAHORE: Punjab Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz has said that every possible measure is being taken to provide relief to the public. Talking to citizens at a roadside tea stall, on her return from School Nutrition Program launch ceremony in DG Khan, she said

Continued on Page 06

Case of Imran military trial becoming clear: Asif

DNA

ISLAMABAD: As Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) founder Imran Khan remains embroiled in various legal cases, Defence Minister Khawaja Asif has said that it was becoming clearer day by day that the former prime minister will face a military trial. "Evidence against founder PTI points towards military trial," Asif said while speaking to a private news channel on Saturday, adding that military trials had taken place before and will continue to do so in future as well. The defence minister's remarks come after Khan -

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Rupees may face pressure after IMF deal

NAZIR SIYAL

KARACHI: The Pakistani rupee is anticipated to face pressure, potentially exceeding 279 per dollar due to uncertainties surrounding the International Monetary Fund's (IMF) loan programme, a report said on Saturday. The government is exploring various options to bridge the external financing gap, crucial to obtaining final approval for a \$7 billion loan from the IMF. Rollovers pose a significant challenge for the government. In addition to ongoing negotiations

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Pakistan, Türkiye vow to cement cooperation in defence sector

Air Chief Marshal Zaheer Ahmed Baber Sidhu, Chief of the Air Staff, Pakistan Air Force called on Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan

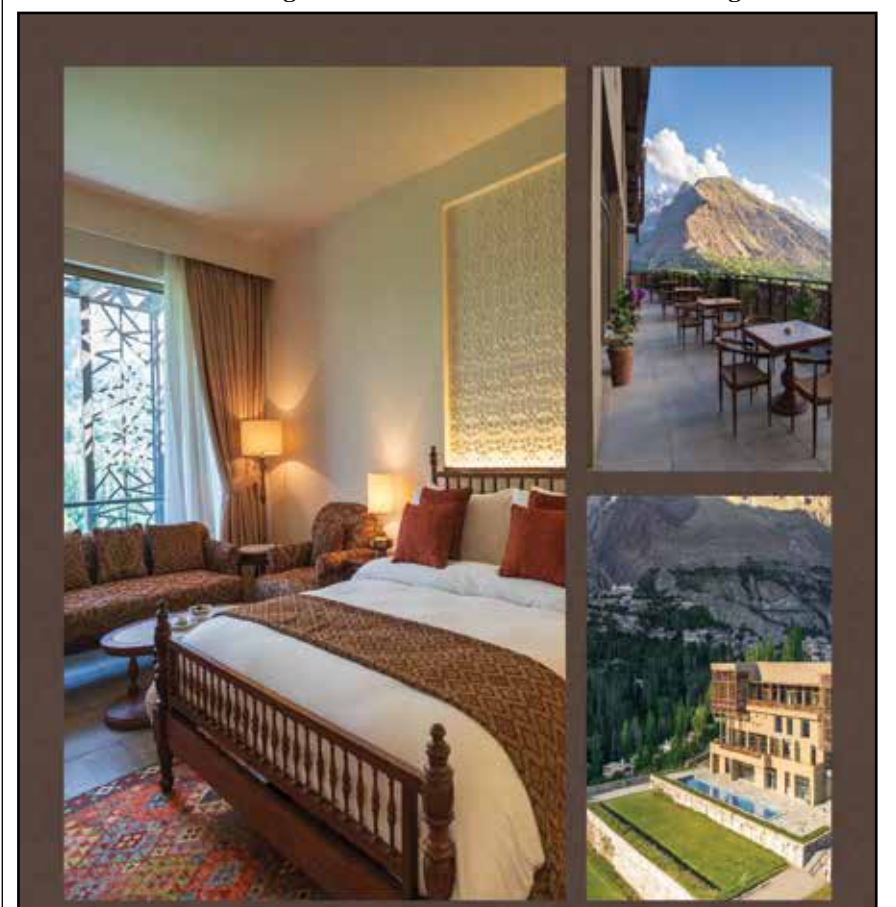
DNA

ANKARA: During a recent visit to Türkiye, Air Chief Marshal Zaheer Ahmed Baber Sidhu, Chief of the Air Staff, Pakistan Air Force called on Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan. Upon his arrival, the Air Chief was received by



the Turkish President at the Presidential Complex in Ankara. The meeting underscored a mutual commitment to enhance defence collaboration between the two nations. During the meeting, Chief of the Air Staff emphasized the shared values and aspirations that form the foundation of the deep-rooted brotherhood between Pakistan and Türkiye. He also expressed his unwavering commitment to enhance the existing bilateral ties in Military-to-Military and Air Force-to-Air Force cooperation with Türkiye, especially in the field of defence production and joint development of Next Generation Aerospace technology. The Air Chief reiterated his resolve to further deepen the strong bond of brotherhood that unites the two nations in the face of shared challenges and expressed his desire to explore future avenues of collaboration in the defence and aviation sectors. President Erdogan praised Pakistan Air Force's progress in niche technologies such as Cyber, Space, Artificial Intelligence and Electronic Warfare, which aligns with the current PAF leadership's focus on development of Multi-Domain Capabilities. President Erdogan acknowledged the strides attained by Pakistan's Aerospace industry in the domains of design, research and software development capabilities over the past couple of years and urged for a

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Govt has no solid plan to fix economy: FRIA

The privatization commission of Pakistan is struggling since months to effectively put in place the privatization of loss-making public sector enterprises; notably, the Pakistan Steel Mills and Pakistan International Airlines despite the urgency and concern expressed, time and again, by the IMF

DNA

LAHORE - The Ferozepur Road Industrial Association (FRIA) senior vice chairman Shahbaz Aslam has said that economic and fiscal discipline of the country will be driven under the direction of IMF now, leaving little room for the government to make its way, which has not come up with any plan to fix the economy and provide relief to the trade and industry. Higher inflation, rising utility tariffs, growing unemployment and, above all, the malaise and dependency among the masses are likely to continue unattended. Shahbaz Aslam said that the privatization commission of Pakistan is struggling since months to effectively put in place the privatization of loss-making public sector enterprises; notably, the Pakistan Steel Mills and Pakistan International Airlines despite the urgency and concern expressed, time and again, by the IMF. The election held on Feb 8 in Pakistan threw up a number of surprises with a significant shift in the country's political landscape. He said that the decision-making processes and any

constitutional amendment has now been driven and influenced more by conflicting self-interests of the coalition partners, watering down the key objectives. This is not what the country needs in these unprecedented times of political and economic challenges confronting the nation. Pakistan's government liquidity and external vulnerability risks will remain very high until there is clarity on a credible longer-term financing plan. Experts said that Pakistan's foreign exchange reserves remained very low at \$10 billion, sufficient to cover only about nine weeks of imports and well below what was required to meet external financing needs for the next three to four years. Based on the IMF's report, Moody's said Pakistan's external financing needs were about \$22 billion in the next fiscal year and about \$25 billion annually in fiscal 2026 and 2027. The country will need a longer-term financing plan to meet its very large financing needs for the next few years, after its current IMF program ends in 2024. At present, Pakistan has been assigned a stable rating of "Caa3" by Moody's. It said

prolonged delays in the formation of a government would increase policy and political uncertainty at a time when it faced very challenging macro-economic conditions. Hopefully, the coalition government will be sensitive to the social, economic and fiscal issues of the state, which in the meantime have exacerbated further. Pakistan's debt-to-GDP ratio is already above 70 percent and the IMF and credit rating agencies estimate that interest payments on its debt will soak up 50 percent to 60 percent of the government's revenues this year. Debt exceeds legal limit by Rs14.5 trillion. That is the worst ratio of any sizable economy in the world. Every macro fundamental is flashing red; notably, growth, debt, revenue mobilization and investment. Some strong and immediate decisions have to be taken by the new government. He observed the government preferred direct taxation to meet revenue shortfall as opposed to resorting to increasing indirect taxes because direct taxes tend to be more progressive in nature; therefore, the burden on the lower income strata of the population is lesser.



ISLAMABAD: Chairman Prime Minister's Youth Programme Rana Mashhood Ahmed Khan visited Huwei Islamabad Office. —DNA

Multan's Sabun Wali Gali, food lovers' haven

MULTAN: Located in a densely populated area of interior city in Haram gate, 'Sabun Wali Gali' is known for its mouthwatering items for food lovers who visit here to relish a variety of dishes for breakfast and lunch. Muton Korma, nihari, trotters, brain, desi chicken, halwa puri, kulchey (Naan) lassi, kheer and several other food items are available in the gali. On weekends, people from different areas of the city visit the eateries for taking away 'special breakfast' for their families and friends. "I have been running a shop for last 15 years in Sabun Wali Gali. We have permanent customers. Residents of the gali love to eat these desi dishes. Our rates are also very reasonable," said M. Asif who was serving customers on Sunday in the gali. He said that they never compromise on the quality of food which is very popular among foodies. The breakfast of these items is very "heavy", that is why the customers prefer it on weekends, he said and added that these items are much better than fast and junk food which is preferred by youths these days. "Our youth does not know the dietary value of desi food dishes," he lamented. Dr Muhammad Tariq, head of Chemistry Dept Govt Post-graduate Civil Lines College, stated that his family has been living in Sabun Wali Gali for last over 50 years, adding that they not only relished these dishes in their childhood, but also love to eat from here occasionally after shifting from the area. "My younger brother still lives in it in our ancestral house. Twice or thrice a month, I visit him along with my family. Besides Daal Chawal, we order nihari, brain etc from the gali. The food here is really tasty," he maintained.

Nishtar Medical University Senior Medical Officer Dr Imran Rafiq recalled that he used to live in Pak gate along with his family many years back and added that food available in the interior city is matchless including Doli Roti, Daal Mong, Dahi bhaley locally known as 'matha' grains, nihari, head and throates, kulchey (Naan) with or without seame seeds (til) etc. Mostly, brain, head and throates, tongue and nihari are full of cholesterol, these should not be eaten frequently, the senior medic advised.—APP

More industrial bodies announce support for PPP Alliance

ABID RAZA

LAHORE: More industrial groups and trade bodies have announced their support for the Paf Pioneer Progressive Alliance (PPPA) for the upcoming LCCI elections, expressing full confidence of the leadership of Mian Anjum Nisar, rejecting all other so-called groups altogether. In a large gathering, organized by PPP Alliance and attended by a large number of business representatives from across the city and the members of the PIAF posed their confidence for the Anjum Nisar group, assuring him of full support in the upcoming election of the LCCI. The delegations of Shah Alam Ainak Board,

Cardboard Association and Montgomery Road Traders Association called on patron-in-chief PIAF Mian Anjum Nisar, Chairman PIAF Fahimur Rehman Sehgal and other PIAF members. Hundreds of members of Lahore Chamber, executive committee members of PIAF and market presidents of adjacent areas participated in the meeting. Speaking in the delegation, Mian Najam Nisar and Fahimur Rehman Saigol said that the service of traders from the platform of PIAF has been going on for the past 52 years and the presence of a large number of traders and industrialists in every event is the proof in this regard. It shows that PIAF is not just a show but a name of service to

the business community and the voters of Lahore Chamber make the Alliance successful. In this power show, in addition to dozens of association officials, PIAF Patron-in-Chief Mian Anjum Nisar, Chairman PIAF Fahimur Rahman, Mian Muhammad Ali, Abuzar Shad, Vice Chairman PIAF Nasrullah Mughal, Vice Chairman Tahir Manzoor Chaudhry, Senior Vice President Lahore Chamber Zafar Mehmood Chaudhry, Vice President Adnan Khalid Butt and others participated. PIAF Fahimur Rahman Saigol, addressing the meeting, said that PIAF has an excellent record of 22 years of service to the business community because PIAF brings qualified and working people to Lahore.

KUATS conducts written test for MoFA

KARACHI: The University of Karachi under its Karachi University Assessment and Testing Service (KUATS) conducted a written test for the positions announced by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs on Sunday. The 30-minute written test was conducted for the posts of driver and naib qasid at five different examination centers established on the campus. The MoFA had received 699 applications for the post of driver and 2, 843 applications for the post of naib qasid. As many as 205 candidates for the driver's post and 1, 109 candidates for the post of naib qasid appeared in the written test. The test for the drivers started at 09:00 am and the test for naib qasid started at 10:00 am. —APP

Explosives and weapons seized in Sangjani

ISLAMABAD: Islamabad Capital Territory (ICT) Police have successfully thwarted a potential terror attack by seizing a cache of dangerous weapons and explosives in the Sangjani area. According to an ICT police spokesperson, heightened security alerts have been in place due to the ongoing threat of terrorism. He said Search operations were being conducted in view of the threat of terrorism in the gatherings. Considering these circumstances additional personnel were deployed in different areas of the city, he added. He said during a search operation in Sangjani, police discovered a suspicious bag. Upon examination, the bag was found to contain destructive explosives, hand grenades, detonators.—APP

Governor Balochistan appraises AIOU

QUETTA: Governor Balochistan Sheikh Jaffar Khan Mandokhail on Sunday lauded the efforts of the management of Allama Iqbal Open University (AIOU) on creating opportunities for modern education and skills for overseas Pakistanis also which is ensuring that knowledge knows no borders. Addressing the convocation of Allama Iqbal Open University Quetta Chapter, he said that Allama Iqbal Open University is a major source of imparting higher education in the country which simultaneously enlightens the minds of students from urban and rural areas of the country. Jaffar Khan Mandokhail highlighted the uniqueness of AIOU providing education to students of any age, class and from all over the country. He expressed these views while address-

ing the participants of the convocation held at Noori Naseer Khan Cultural Complex on Sunday. During the convocation, the graduates including 27 females were conferred with degrees and gold medals, which is an important milestone in their educational journey. Many distinguished guests, including Professor of Allama Iqbal Open University Dr Nasir Mahmood, Dean of Faculties, a large number of parents, teachers and graduating graduates attended the convocation. Addressing the participants of the convocation, Governor Balochistan Jaffar Khan Mandokhail said that AIOU is considered to be one of the most prominent universities in the world due to its distance education system. He added it is gratifying that Allama Iqbal Open University paves the way for a bright future by harnessing

modern digital information technology to produce skilled manpower as per modern market demands. Governor Balochistan Jaffar Khan extended his heartfelt congratulations to all the new graduates of Allama Iqbal Open University and their parents. He said that a prestigious convocation is a testament to your success, dedication and perseverance. He said that consistent with great wisdom and prudence which emphasizes on seek knowledge from the cradle to the grave. While congratulating AIOU on the successful convocation, he appreciated the conscious efforts of the Vice Chancellor and his entire team and said that he has high expectations from AIOU to continue the chain of imparting education and skills and stay up-to-date with the ever-changing world.—APP

RWMC starts Rabi-ul Awwal cleanliness campaign

RAWALPINDI: Rawalpindi Waste Management Company (RWMC) had kicked off its special cleanliness campaign for the month of Rabi ul Awwal (SAW), besides deploying additional sanitary workers. According to RWMC spokesman, a comprehensive cleanliness plan had been devised for the Eid Milad U-Nabi (SAW) while the holidays of all the staff of RWMC were cancelled on September 17. He informed all streets, roads, procession routes, and their vicinity were being cleaned and the waste containers were emptied. In addition, the construction material or debris was also being removed from the routes of the procession and its adjacent areas. Meanwhile, he added that RWMC's communication teams were distributing waste bags and pamphlets in various areas of the city to highlight the importance of cleanliness and dengue prevention. To eradicate dengue larvae, comprehensive Standing Operating Procedures (SOPs) and an action plan were followed, and weekly reports were submitted to the district administration and the government of Punjab. He added the RWMC carried out the cleanliness of nullahs and choked drains during Friday night's rainfall to ensure sanitation in several city areas. However, he urged the citizens to cooperate with the company in keeping the city clean. In case of any complaint, citizens were asked to register their complaints on helpline number 1139, which would be resolved immediately. Furthermore, RWMC has appealed to the citizens not to throw garbage and plastic bags in nullahs and drains, which cause obstruction, adding that RWMC would utilise all its resources to keep the city environment-friendly.—DNA

Power theft to become rampant due to unaffordable tariff: BMP

Anjum Nisar forwards recommendations to deal economic challenges

DNA

LAHORE: The Federation of Pakistan Chambers of Commerce and Industry's Businessmen Panel (BMP) has condemned the constant increase in power tariffs on the pretext of fuel adjustment, as it has increased the production cost and added to the already high cost of trade and industry. Seeking comparable energy tariffs for domestic industries in order to capture the global market, FPCCI former president and BMP Chairman Mian Anjum Nisar stated that due to high electricity rates, power theft will become rampant as the tariff was unaffordable to consumers. In a meeting held here on Sunday, he forwarded several recommendations so that the small industry could deal with the challenges posed by the present economic crisis, saying mere statements would not work unless solid measures are taken by the government, including a sizable reduction in fuel prices, bringing down key policy rate to single digit, regionally competitive energy rates and substantial cut

in duties and taxes. It is unfortunate that the State Bank has several times introduced a financing scheme for Small and Medium Enterprises, enabling them to get loans without collateral but it was never implemented in its true spirit. The scheme was launched to improve the SMEs' access to finances in collaboration with the government and aimed at enabling businesses that cannot offer security or collateral to access bank finance. The BMP and PIAF meeting was held here to deliberate the government economic policies and called for concrete steps to keep industrial wheels running, especially for SMEs, saving the livelihood of millions of workers associated with the small and medium industries. The BMP Chairman urged the central bank to announce a soft loan with a minimum markup rate, especially for SMEs to bail out their struggling businesses.

The Businessmen Panel called for significant cuts in import duties and waiver of sales tax, income tax, and additional income taxes, which are still being charged in this time of grave crisis. Mian Anjum Nisar asked the government to take con-

crete steps to keep the industrial wheels running especially for SMEs, to save the livelihood of millions of workers associated with the small industries. He said that to save the economy from the impacts of the slow growth, the government should announce special incentives for a cash-strapped small and medium industry, which represents more than 90% of around 3.2 million business enterprises in Pakistan, contributing 40% to GDP, employing more than 80% of non-agricultural workforce, and generating 25% of export earnings. The BMP Chairman Anjum Nisar stated that providing affordable electricity would assist in lowering production costs, thereby benefiting the public. He stated that rising imports and a widening trade deficit posed a serious threat to economic growth and must be addressed urgently. He said that with continuous hike in cost of production in the country, what the Pakistan's economy really needs is persistent and sound economic management, asking the authorities for undertaking economic reforms and improving the regulatory environment for better Ease of Do-

ing Business level to boost foreign investment so that financial stability can be achieved in the long-run. The BMP chief urged the power ministry to identify system constraints and communicate targets to all concerned departments in order to launch a wartime effort to upgrade the transmission system. The FPCCI former president said that we should keep our focus on support for cash flow management for the SME sector and the government may prioritize its incentive preferences under the growth and importance for the economy. He suggested that the authorities should reduce sales tax to at least 10% to improve demand generation, besides announcing interest-free loans to pay employees' salaries. Mian Anjum Nisar alleged all previous governments for extensive borrowing of forex during last five years to meet local expenditure, which had increased the burden of foreign debt of Pakistan substantially, instead of making serious efforts to enhance the ranking of Ease of Doing Business Index of Pakistan, as it is must to attract foreign as well as local investment and high economic growth.

'Pakistan govt sincere in promoting literacy'

FARRUKH SHEHZAD

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif has called upon the nation to support the government's efforts in promoting literacy and ensuring education for all, emphasizing the importance of building a bright future for the children and the country. "Literacy is a fundamental human and constitutional right that guarantees the future of our country," the prime minister said in a message on Sunday, International Literacy Day. Literacy Day is observed every year on September 8 to remind policymakers of the critical importance of literacy. This year's theme of the day is: "Promoting

multilingual education: Literacy for mutual understanding and peace". The premier said literacy was not merely the ability to read and write, it was a gateway to empowerment, economic opportunities, and active participation in society. "Today, we reaffirm our commitment to advancing the education agenda, striving for a more informed and sustainable nation", he said, adding, "Education is the backbone of our society. For this purpose, we have declared an educational emergency across the country, launched an enrollment campaign for students, and initiated mid-day meals for children in schools." To reduce the dropout rate and encourage every child to complete their education, the prime minister pointed

out that the government had introduced scholarships and other incentives. In this rapidly emerging world, developing literacy and skills in line with technology was inevitable, the prime minister said. He said the government was implementing a comprehensive plan to integrate technology into the educational system, ensuring that the youth were equipped with the necessary skills to thrive in the digital economy. He said private sector and civil society organisations were equal partners in the government's efforts. "By establishing effective partnerships, we can link education with employment and self-employment opportunities, creating a stronger and more inclusive workforce," he added.

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National Days and Armed Forces Days

SEPTEMBER

- Sept01/Libya Revolution Day
- Sept01/Tanzania Defence day
- Sept01/Uzbekistan Independence Day
- Sept07/Brazil Independence Day
- Sept09/DPR Korea National Day
- Sept09/Tajikistan Independence Day
- Sept16/Malaysia Armed Forces Day
- Sept16/Mexico National Day
- Sept16/Papua New Guinea Independence Day
- Sept18/Chile National Day
- Sept21/Malta Independence Day
- Sept23/Saudi Arabia National Day

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



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Railway Inquiry.....117
Railway Exchange9270831-5
WASA Rawalpindi..5555489
CAA.....9281092



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



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

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Islamabad.....0321-5744480

A celebration of art and empowerment

Serena Hotels and Nomad Gallery's crafts Festival

MAHNOOR ANSAR

ISLAMABAD: In a vibrant celebration of culture, artistry, and women's empowerment, Serena Hotels, under its Culture Diplomacy initiative, collaborated with Nomad Gallery to organize a two-day Crafts Festival on the 7th and 8th of September 2024 that showcased Pakistan's rich artistic heritage. This festival marks a significant milestone as Nomad Gallery celebrates 40 years of creating a space for artistic voices and supporting women's empowerment within the cultural community. The festival also featured the beauty of the Kalash people and their cultural contributions with the screening of the award-winning documentary "Discovering Greater Chitral", which celebrates the natural beauty and heritage of the region. The crafts festival offered a dynamic showcase of handicrafts, textiles, design aesthetics, and contemporary art, focusing on women's economic empowerment and cultural preservation. Artisans and women entrepreneurs from regions across Pakistan, including Punjab, Sindh, Baluchistan, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Gilgit-Baltistan, and Kashmir, will present exquisite



creations such as jewelry and textiles, reflecting Pakistan's diverse artistic traditions. H.E. Georg Steiner, the Swiss Ambassador to Paki-

stan, inaugurated the festival as the guest of honor. Speaking on the occasion, he said: "Art and culture are powerful tools for promoting mutual understand-

ing and strengthening the ties between communities. This festival is an excellent platform to showcase the creativity and strength of Pakistan's artisans, espe-



cially women who are using their craft to drive economic and social change". As part of Serena Hotels' Culture Diplomacy initiative, this Crafts Festival is

an indication to the continuing commitment to preserving cultural heritage and empowering communities. Through its extensive CSR programs, Serena

Hotels has long supported the development of sustainable tourism and cultural preservation, providing platforms for artisans and entrepreneurs to thrive.

Govt committed to increase literacy rate

DNA

ISLAMABAD: On this International Literacy Day, I would like to emphasize the profound impact of literacy in empowering individuals and contributing to a more informed and prosperous society. Literacy is not just the ability to read and write; it is a fundamental human right that opens doors to economic opportunities, active societal participation, and personal growth. In line with Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif's vision, the Prime Min-

ister's Youth Programme is fully committed to advancing the literacy agenda across Pakistan. Our Programme is at the forefront of efforts to provide quality education through comprehensive skills development initiatives, ensuring lifelong learning opportunities for every citizen. As part of the "Education Emergency" initiative, our government's focus is on enrolling approximately 26 million out-of-school children, with the goal of transforming Pakistan into a global leader in education. This ambitious

endeavor includes strategies such as providing free meals, scholarships, and various incentives to reduce dropout rates and encourage students to complete their education. We are also dedicated to integrating technology into our education system. By promoting technology-friendly literacy and skills development, we aim to equip our youth with the necessary competencies to excel in the digital economy. This initiative underscores our commitment to modernizing education and prepar-

ing young Pakistanis for future success. Furthermore, we recognize the crucial role of collaboration with the private sector and civil society. Through strategic partnerships, we seek to connect education with employment and self-employment opportunities, fostering a more inclusive and dynamic workforce. As we observe International Literacy Day, I urge all stakeholders to unite in our mission to advance literacy and education. Together, we can build a brighter, more equitable future for our children and our nation.

Expansion of marine protected areas' cover urged

MAHNOOR ANSAR

ISLAMABAD: Coordinator to the Prime Minister on Climate Change, Romina Khurshid Alam on Sunday urged the Sindh and Balochistan governments to boost efforts to conserve marine ecosystems. Following the recent declaration of Churna Island as a Marine Protected Area (MPA) by the Balochistan government, Romina Alam called for additional MPAs to be established to achieve the global target of protecting 30% of the ocean area by 2030. Alam also praised the Balochistan government's move for protection of Churna Island, stating it a "positive step towards protecting marine resources and promoting environmentally sustainable development." Churna Island, known for its extensive coral habitats and biodiversity, is now Pakistan's second MPA. The island is home to over 50 species of corals, 250 species of fish, and numerous invertebrates and vertebrates. She offered full support to the Balochistan government in conserving marine biodiversity and safeguarding the island's fragile ecosystem and diverse wildlife.

Tarar grieved over death of Athar Waqar Azeem

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Information, Broadcasting, National Heritage and Culture Attaullah Tarar on Sunday expressed deep grief and sorrow over the death of former PTV News Director Current Affairs Athar Waqar Azeem. In a condolence message, the minister in his heartfelt sympathy and condolences to the family of the deceased said, he was deeply saddened to hear the news of Athar Waqar Azeem's death. Athar Waqar Azeem's services to Pakistan Television will always be remembered, he maintained. —APP

FIA arrests gang involved in human smuggling

DNA

ISLAMABAD: A major breakthrough has been achieved in the fight against human smuggling, as an international network involved in this heinous crime has been busted by the Federal Investigation Agency (FIA) Lahore, on the tip of intelligence agencies. On the special instructions of Federal Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi, FIA Lahore Circle has arrested an international network involved in human smuggling on the information provided by intelligence agencies. This network was involved

in luring people by giving them false promises of employment abroad and has so far robbed crores of rupees from innocent people. The group was expert in making fake documents, including passports, visas, and other essential papers required for international travel. The human smuggling group had its own printing press, where fake documents of various countries were being prepared. Individuals seeking political asylum in different countries were also taking assistance from this group. During the investigation, the network's connection with international Donkey groups

has also been revealed, and it has been found that Indian and Afghan nationals were involved in these criminal activities. During the investigation, an Indian conspiracy to defame Pakistan was also exposed. The crackdown on this networks will strengthen the international confidence in Pakistani institutions. The scope of the investigation has been expanded, and further arrests are expected. After the investigation, strict legal action will be taken against the accused. These arrests saved several Pakistanis from losing their hard earned money

and respect. The arrest of this massive network is a major victory for law enforcement agencies in the fight against human trafficking.. Federal Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi appreciated the intelligence agencies and FIA Lahore for this successful operation. He said that this operation is an important milestone in Pakistan's crackdown against human smuggling. He emphasized that such operations will be continued to curb human tray and the mafia involved in human smuggling will be dealt with iron hands.



ISLAMABAD: Minority leader MNA Isphanyar Bhanadara calls on Prime Minister Mian Muhammad Shahbaz Sharif.—DNA

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Briefs

Meta's
Simon Milner
speaks to
TCM

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan, September 7, 2024 - Simon Milner, Meta's Vice President of Public Policy for the Asia Pacific region, joined Talha Ahad from The Centrum Media (TCM) to discuss Meta's work to support innovation and foster responsible digital citizenship among the youth in Pakistan. The podcast focused on Meta's investment in Artificial Intelligence, like Meta AI which is available in Pakistan and the recent Meta Llama Pitchathon in Islamabad for developers. Simon Milner shared Meta's efforts to help people build community online and suggested ways to maximize reach on Meta platforms. They also talked about local partnerships and the role of effective policy making in global tech governance. He appreciated Pakistan's robust creator and developer communities and reaffirmed Meta's commitment to play a part in supporting the country's growing digital economy.

Transgender
community
welcomes
transgender
school

ISLAMABAD: Transgender community from different parts of the country have welcomed the government's initiative of launching the first-ever transgender school in the Lodhran district which will provide educational facility to this neglected segment of society enabling them to create space for them in society. The transgender community has received the fruit of their longstanding struggle for their identity and rights with provision of Computerized National Identity Cards (CNICs), the right to contest in the election, first-ever special ward in the Pakistan Institute of Medical Sciences (PIMS) and now a proper education facility. These few initiatives by the government have boosted the morals of Transgender community who were earlier sources of fun for the people and compelled to just adopt a single profession of dancing and singing at weddings to meet their both ends. A transgender and ex-candidate for the general election 2018, Na-deem Kashish said that despite many initiatives and legislative frameworks, the most maltreated community of transgender individuals are still at poles a part in society to get their fundamental rights of education. She said, "First ever step of establishing a school for transgender by the government will create more opportunities for our community to come forward and play their due role in national development." She said that most of the transgender discontinue their education due to discriminatory behavior of the society so this step will further encourage them to prove their abilities. —APP

Pakistan Air Force observes
7th September as Martyrs' Day

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan Air Force observed 7th September as Martyrs' Day at all PAF Bases throughout the country. The day commenced with a solemn observance, including special Du'aa and Quran Khawani, dedicated to the martyrs of the 1965 & 1971 Wars, as well as those who made the ultimate sacrifice in the line of duty since the establishment of Pakistan. Air Chief Marshal Zaheer Ahmed Baber Sidhu, Chief of the Air Staff, Pakistan Air Force was the Chief Guest during a Martyrs' Day Ceremony held at Air Headquarters, Islamabad. Speaking at the occasion, the Air Chief said that PAF has a proud history of sacrifice, valour and professionalism. He highlighted that the Martyrs' Day is an embodiment of exceptional bravery, flawless professionalism, and an unparalleled spirit of sacrifice of the Armed Forces of Pakistan. Hailing the glorious deeds of heroism displayed by the Martyrs of Pakistan Air Force, the Air Chief said, "We owe our heroes an eternal debt of gratitude for what they have done for us, setting a supreme example of sacrifice for generations to come. On this solemn occasion, we extend our heartfelt tributes to those heroes who made the ultimate sacrifice for our motherland." Chief of the



Air Staff also expressed solidarity with Kashmiri brothers and sisters in their indigenous and just struggle for self-determination. In his concluding remarks,

he reiterated his resolve to make all-out efforts for the progress and development of Pakistan in the constantly evolving global landscape and pledged that Pakistan

Air Force would continue to strive hard for the advancement in space, electronic warfare, cyber, niche technologies and indigenous defence capability to ensure

sovereignty and territorial integrity of Pakistan. Later, to pay homage to the martyrs, the Air Chief laid floral wreath at the Martyrs' Monument and offered Pateha.

Experts call for
Government action

ISLAMABAD - Speaking at the Devcom-Pakistan Centre for Geopolitical Studies, the experts called upon the government to take on board the civil society, academia, and the private sector to collaborate in addressing these geopolitical challenges. By adopting a proactive and strategic approach, Pakistan can strengthen its resilience, safeguard its interests, and carve a stable and prosperous path forward in an increasingly uncertain world. The webinar put up strategic recommendations, emphasizing a multi-faceted approach to navigating the complex geopolitical landscape. Key suggestions included strengthening ties with neighboring countries and regional blocs to build collective security and economic resilience; reducing reliance on traditional markets by expanding trade partnerships and developing new economic sectors such as technology and renewable energy; actively engaging in water and resource diplomacy to secure Pakistan's access to essential resources and mitigate the risks of conflict; and rationalizing relationships with global powers without compromising national interests, leveraging Pakistan's strategic location as a regional pivot. Senator Mushahid Hussain Sayed was the keynote speaker. The panel of experts included Devcom-Pakistan Executive Director Munir Ahmed, Kinnaird College for Women Associate Professor Dr. Khushboo Ejaz, BNU Centre for Geopolitical Research Senior Fellow Dr. Zainab Ahmed, and Center for South Asia and International Studies Executive Director Dr. Mehmood ul Hassan Khan. Others who spoke on the occasion Aneela Khan, Muhammad Sadiq, Muhammad Hasnain, Shabana Kulsoom, and Hassan Raza. Senator Mushahid Hussain Sayed urged a proactive regional foreign policy while seeing strategic space for Pakistan as an emerging Middle Power. He gave a profile of the emerging world order in which the core change is that the global centre of gravity is shifting from the West to the East, marked by the slow-motion unraveling of the Western-led political and economic order, replaced by the dawn of the 'Asian Century' and peaceful rise of China. He referred to three new realities in this regard. First, the retrenchment of American power clout and influence, especially in the global south. The Gaza genocide has exposed the moral bankruptcy of the West. Second, the rise of China, which is the first non-white & non-western power to challenge Western hegemony in the last 300 years. Third, the US has launched a New Cold War against China and Russia in Europe, which shows a military-centric mindset as opposed to China's worldview based on economic connectivity, trade and investment. Senator Mushahid Hussain Sayed stated Pakistan now has strategic space to play an autonomous role as one of five emerging Muslim middle-powers who will be pivotal in the resurgence of the global south. He said these five Muslim middle-powers are: Pakistan, Indonesia, Turkey, Saudi Arabia and Iran. He also referred to his upcoming visit to Moscow for the BRICS Forum where the Senator is the first and only Pakistani to be specially invited to address BRICS.—DNA

Govt revision of
IPP agreements
is laudable

MEHTAB PIRZADA

ISLAMABAD: Former President of the Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry (ICCI), Dr. Shahid Rasheed Butt, said on Sunday that the business community applauds the government's decision to revise the agreements with IPPs. He said that affordable power is necessary to provide relief to the masses and help restore distressed businesses. He added that the high cost of electricity is impacting individuals, production, and exports while the government is losing revenue. Shahid Rasheed Butt said in a statement issued here today that authorities should make serious efforts to resolve the matter of IPPs as soon as possible so that the public can get some relief and business activities can be restored. The business leader said it has become imperative to lower the rising electricity prices that have plagued the entire country. Rising electricity rates have created serious social problems in the country. Production has decreased by billions of dollars, and millions of people have become unemployed. He said the closure of businesses has also significantly reduced the government's revenue, adding that the current electricity pricing system is unsustainable and that it has become impossible to maintain the current situation for long. He said that the owners of IPPs have also realized that the growing public unrest is worrisome, and the sooner the situation is resolved, the better. He informed that some IPP owners have quietly sold their businesses, anticipating the difficulties and public backlash.

Brainchild
Communications
secures 24
awards

ISLAMABAD: Brainchild Communications Pakistan has once again raised the bar at the Dragons 2024 Awards, securing a remarkable total of 24 awards, including multiple Golden Dragons, Silver Dragons, and Black Dragons. The awards showcase the strength and creativity across Mediavest, Publicis Media, Starcom PK, and Starcom WW, placing the agencies at the forefront of the media landscape. Among the top honors, the agencies secured several Golden Dragon Awards. Mediavest won the Best Integrated Marketing Campaign award for its work with Foodpanda on the PSL 2024 campaign. Mediavest also claimed the Best Small Budget Campaign award for Dawlance's Father's Day campaign. Additionally, Publicis Media earned the Best Digital Campaign award for the Nestle Pure Life Weather-Based AI Campaign. These accolades reflect the agencies' unwavering dedication to delivering innovative, results-driven campaigns that captivate audiences and set new industry standards. This remarkable achievement underscores Brainchild Communications' pursuit of excellence and its innovative approach to marketing. —APP

RDA accelerates operation
against illegal
construction,
encroachments

RAWALPINDI: Rawalpindi Development Authority (RDA) has accelerated its ongoing operation against illegal construction and encroachments, said RDA spokesman here on Sunday. He informed that the authority taking a significant step to curb illegal construction and enhancing the monitoring of private housing schemes had appointed two new superintendents and four surveyors. The appointments are part of the RDA's ongoing efforts to ensure strict compliance with building regulations and to protect the urban environment. The newly appointed officials would play a critical role for field surveillance, ensuring that all construction activities within the RDA's jurisdiction adhere to approved plans and legal requirements. The two new superintendents, known for their extensive experience in urban development, would lead the teams responsible for overseeing field operations. —APP

National Skills University
celebrates Police Day

DNA

ISLAMABAD: National Skills University Celebrated International Police Day of Cooperation. In very graceful way at university campus. The seminar highlighting global law enforcement and the significance of being law-abiding citizens. The event was graced by Dr. Sultan Azam Temuri, CEO of the International Governance and Sustainability Institute (IG-SI) and Chairperson of the UNPKFC, who

delivered a powerful keynote address. Prof. Dr. Mohammad Mukhtar, Vice Chancellor of National Skills University, opened the seminar with a welcome speech. He cited the example of Dr. Sohail Habib Tajik, lauding his efforts in Bahawalpur to bridge the gap between the police and the public. Following the welcome, Ms. Shaista Sohail, CEO of Save Our Society (SOS), presented the objectives of the event. She highlighted the outreach efforts of SOS in improving hygiene and environmen-

tal conditions in marginalized areas of Islamabad. Dr. Sultan Azam Temuri in his keynote address, emphasized the role of law enforcement in maintaining global security and shared insights across four key areas. International Police Day of Cooperation celebrated annually on September 7, to honor the contributions of law enforcement worldwide. Officially adopted by the UN General Assembly in 2022, the day underscores the importance of global police cooperation he added.

General Practice
HEALTHCARE CENTRE

ICCI President, Maldivian Ambassador discuss trade

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Maldivian High Commissioner Mohamed Thoha emphasized the need for direct air links between Maldives and Pakistan to foster brotherly relations and promote bilateral tourism. He made these remarks during a visit to the Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry (ICCI), where he met with President Ahsan Zafar Bakhtawari to explore new avenues of bilateral cooperation. Thoha highlighted the rich trade and business potential between the two countries, particularly in the export of high-grade tuna from Maldives to Pakistan. He described Pakistan as a fascinating country with hospitable inhabitants and identified opportunities for strengthening business ties in sectors like fruit and vegetable exports. The High Commissioner also showcased his country's investor-friendly environment, offering visa exemptions and real estate investment opportunities. He mentioned Maldives' plans to build 36,000 apart-



ments in Male' and invited Pakistani investors to explore this sector. Thoha emphasized the importance of reviving the South Asian Association of Regional States (SAARC) to strengthen regional cooperation. Ahsan Zafar Bakhtawari commended the High Commissioner's efforts to advance bilateral business ties and suggested collaborative efforts to promote tourism. He also highlighted the potential for

exchange programs, close collaboration between Chambers of Commerce, tuna imports, climate change initiatives, and ecotourism to enhance relations. He also invited the visiting guest to join the ICCI's upcoming delegation to Swat Valley on September 22-23, which will include Ambassadors, diplomats, and business leaders. This trip aims to explore the valley's vast potential and uncover opportunities for col-

laboration and investment. Zafar Bakhtawari, Secretary General United Business Group (UBG) said that Maldives carries significance for Pakistan not only because of a Muslim country but also a member of the SAARC. He praised the High Commissioner as a dynamic personality and expressed hope for strengthened relations during his tenure. He noted Pakistan's support for Maldivian diplomats.



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Phone: 051-2266165 / 051-2261960

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

The loss of global influence

NICHOLAS Burns, the US ambassador to China, and his State Department colleague Jose Fernandez think the United States has created a successful playbook to help other countries resist China's economic coercion. So say two representatives of a nation which has imposed two-thirds of the world's total number of sanctions with 60 per cent of low-income countries being so targeted. Even the International Criminal Court has been on its hit list. Recommended readings: "America is losing Southeast Asia: Why US allies in the region are turning toward China." That's the title of an essay in the current edition of Foreign Affairs. "When many Southeast Asians look at the United States now, they see a country that is dysfunctional at home and pushing a nakedly self-interested agenda abroad," it said. "Chinese investments are generally welcomed in Southeast Asia ... The United States should avoid overstating its convergence with Asian partners. Stressing the convergence narrative suggests, at best, that Washington lacks an awareness of the United States' declining position in Southeast Asia and, at worst, that Southeast Asia is being overlooked in US foreign policy." As has been widely reported, the Singapore-based ISEAS-Yusof Ishak Institute this year found 50.5 per cent of respondents across Asean countries chose "strategic alignment" with China against 49.5 per cent for the US. In 2020, it was 50.2 per cent for the US and 49.8 per cent for China. The month before, the same premier US foreign policy journal ran another essay with a similar title: "America is losing the Arab world and China is reaping the benefits." It must be easy writing headlines for the publication. "Few Arab leaders now want to be seen openly cooperating with Washington, given the sharp rise in anti-American sentiment among the populations they rule," it said, mostly because of the brutal war in Gaza. "In nine of the 10 countries in which Arab Barometer asked about US favourability in 2021, at least a third of all respondents said that they held a favourable view of the United States. In four out of the five countries surveyed between December 2023 and March 2024, however, fewer than a third viewed the United States favourably." The US loss has been China's gain: "Arab citizens' views of China have warmed in our recent surveys, reversing a half-decade trend of weakening support for China in the Arab world." After Southeast Asia and the Middle East, what about Africa? It's hardly a contest there on the continent. More than 50 African leaders just gathered in Beijing for a summit that showcased their ever closer ties. (There are 54 countries in Africa.) Beijing has pledged nearly US\$51 billion in aid and investment over three years to the continent. It will exempt import tariffs from 33 African nations and expand their access to the Chinese domestic market. The ninth Forum on China-Africa Cooperation included influential leaders such as Nigeria's Bola Tinubu, South Africa's Cyril Ramaphosa, and William Ruto of Kenya. President Xi Jinping has travelled to Africa five times since entering office in 2012. No US president has stepped foot on the continent since Barack Obama.



Closing walls on Netanyahu?

ALMOST a year into the genocidal campaign against Gaza and Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu has failed to achieve his stated war goals. Now, it appears that he is willing to sacrifice the entire Zionist project in the hope that if he wages war for long enough, his problems will simply go away. Eventually he will have to make a major decision to change the dynamics of the war. Israeli Premier Benjamin Netanyahu is many things, including a war criminal, a racist and a narcissist, but what he is more than anything is a political survivor; likely owing to the infinite ability to draw from the most depraved aspects of his aforementioned traits. Through his quest for survival however, he has managed to shape Israeli society in his own image and bring to the surface, the most genocidal traits of the Zionist settler-colonial project. For the past 30 years, Benjamin Netanyahu has been playing other career politicians against each other, weaponizing whatever divisions he discovers in the Israeli political climate and building the power of a fanatical religious-nationalist settler movement. Although the Israeli PM may have liked to not have resorted to maintaining his position of power through the helping hand of the extremist Religious Zionism alliance, he has no other options on the table. As he attempts to continue navigating his way through the political minefield he currently inhabits, he risks collapse under the immense pressure. It is undeniable that the Zionist Project has always been expansionist and genocidal in its nature, as it is predicated on eliminating in whole or part the indigenous population of Palestine in order to build an ethno-State. Therefore, taking the approach that the current Israeli government is somehow worse in its intentions than any of the others is a poor argument. However, Benjamin Netanyahu is an interesting figure to study, as he hastens the collapse of the Zionist Entity and understanding his predicament is to understand that of the Zionist regime. As mentioned above, Netanyahu is a political survivor, there is no doubt about this fact at all. But, for one man to remain in power for so long, in the way he has, there comes a point when fundamental problems inevitably arise. Through his journey in Israeli politics, he has always sought to play the role of the persecuted resistance to some kind of conspiracy which comes from the Israeli so-called Left. In order to keep up this argument, he has successfully managed to change the goalpost of what constitutes a "Left" in the Israeli political system. When he first became Prime Minister in 1996, the "Left" was the Israeli Labour Party, who were not Leftists and could perhaps be labeled Centrist at best. However, Labour died a death from which it never truly recovered with the Oslo Accords and has by this point become a nominal factor. On the other hand, as each election cycle passed, more and more Right-Wing parties would rise in the Israeli political system, many of which were created due to some sort of disagreement with Benjamin Netanyahu. With the Israeli society slowly migrating further and further Right, into the most extreme ideologies imaginable, the goal post has kept moving, to the point that any sense of an Israeli "Centrist" or Liberal group is so marginal that they constitute a joke, take for example the Meretz Party, that's about as "Left" as is acceptable and even then they are fringe.

Xinjiang, Balochistan and FATA

Qamar Bashir



Xinjiang now boasts a state of art modern transportation network, including railways, highways, and airports connecting it to major cities in China and neighboring countries. Notable projects include the Urumqi-Hami section of the Lanzhou-Xinjiang high-speed railway, which links Xinjiang to the eastern provinces. The total investment in these transportation projects over the years runs into tens of billions of dollars. Cities like Urumqi, Kashgar have been developed on ultramodern lines including the construction of modern residential areas, commercial centers, and public facilities and development of "new towns" to accommodate...

IN Pakistan, we often adhere to the belief that force is the primary solution for dealing with terrorists, extremists, separatists, insurgents, and even civil unrest, whether it involves political, religious parties, students, or civil society. The prevailing notion is that if force doesn't achieve the desired outcome, more force should be applied. In contrast, China's approach in Xinjiang, where separatism, Pan-Islamism, and Pan-Turkism were significant issues since 1949, has been to respond with development. When challenges arise, China has chosen to accelerate development further. These two philosophies—force versus development—are starkly opposed and have yielded opposite results. The insurgencies in Xinjiang, Balochistan, and Pakistan's erstwhile Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA) have distinct historical, ethnic, and geopolitical contexts, yet they share similarities in grievances but differ markedly in the governmental responses. The narratives of the insurgencies in Xinjiang, Balochistan, and FATA share more similarities than differences. In Xinjiang, the Uyghur insurgency is driven by claims of cultural and religious repression, economic disenfranchisement, and ethnic discrimination. The insurgents frame their struggle as a fight for cultural survival and autonomy, often invoking the idea of an independent "East Turkestan." The Baloch insurgency, while lacking a religious element, is fueled by economic exploitation, particularly in natural resources like gas and minerals, political marginalization, and human rights abuses. As one of Pakistan's least developed regions, many Baloch feel excluded from their own wealth, seeking greater autonomy or independence, citing historical grievances and ongoing exploitation. In FATA, the insurgency stems from resistance to Pakistan's military operations, perceived interference in local customs, and the impact of the war on terror. The TTP, in particular, framed its struggle in religious terms, opposing the Pakistani state's alignment with the US and seeking to impose their version of Sharia law. When comparing the narratives of these three ethnic groups, the Uyghur and Taliban in FATA share more similarities, particularly in their use of religious connotations to justify their struggles for autonomy or independence. In contrast, the Baloch narrative is distinctive due to its focus on economic and political grievances, without a religious dimension. Consequently, the Baloch narrative may be easier to address or counter compared to the more deeply rooted and ideologically driven narratives of the TTP and Uyghurs.

To counter the Baloch insurgency and integrate the Baloch people into the national mainstream, the government only had to adopt a holistic approach to address the root causes of the conflict, including economic marginalization, political exclusion, and cultural grievances by investing in local development, ensuring fair resource distribution, and enhancing political representation while granting greater administrative autonomy to Balochistan. On the contrary, the government response to deal with insurgency in Balochistan is normally perceived exactly the opposite. The propaganda war has incalculated the impression albeit without any conclusive evidence that the response of Pakistan's government included military operations, targeted killings, enforced disappearances. The media is rife with reports that tens of thousands of people, including insurgents, civilians, and security personnel, have been killed in the ongoing conflict making this conflict as one of Pakistan's deadliest. Similarly the response of the Government to erstwhile FATA is perceived primarily kinetic. Reportedly, the Pakistani government has conducted numerous military operations (e.g., Operation Zarb-e-Azb) to dismantle militant networks. The insurgency and counter-insurgency operations have led to tens of thousands of deaths, including militants, security forces, and civilians. Displacement and destruction of infrastructure have also been significant. Contrastingly, in Xinjiang, the Chinese government primarily pursued the policy of development which worked like magic. The region has purposefully made a lynchpin of China's Belt and Road Initiative (BRI). During the 13th Five-Year Plan period (2016-2020), China invested over \$100 billion in Xinjiang's development. The substantial investment has also been made in infrastructure, industry, IT, and modern agriculture, as part of its broader strategy to integrate the region more closely with the rest of the country and to address the underlying economic disparities that contribute to unrest. Xinjiang now boasts a state of art modern transportation network, including railways, highways, and airports connecting it to major cities in China and neighboring countries. Notable projects include the Urumqi-Hami section of the Lanzhou-Xinjiang high-speed railway, which links Xinjiang to the eastern provinces. The total investment in these transportation projects over the years runs into tens of billions of dollars. Cities like Urumqi, Kashgar have been developed on ultramodern lines including the construction of modern residential areas, commercial

centers, and public facilities and development of "new towns" to accommodate the growing population and improve living standards. Xinjiang has become a hub for energy production, particularly in coal, oil, and natural gas. The region is also a significant producer of cotton and textiles, beside adorning industrial parks and zones for petrochemicals and mining, and Kashgar Economic Development Zone and the Urumqi Economic and Technological Development Zone. In addition, IT parks, advanced surveillance technologies, data centers, technology parks, 5G networks, cloud computing, and big data technologies have been developed to attract domestic and foreign investment. In the agriculture sector China has introduced modern water management, crop genetics, and mechanization to substantially enhance the yield of cotton, grapes, and melons production, besides setting up of large-scale farms, processing plants, and distribution networks. These investments are part of China's broader strategy to stabilize the region, boost economic growth, and integrate Xinjiang more closely with the rest of the country and the global economy, particularly through the Belt and Road Initiative. Contrarily the investments in FATA and Balochistan pale in comparison to the scale of investment made by China in Xinjiang. While China's investments in Xinjiang have transformed the region's infrastructure and economy, Pakistan's investments in FATA and Balochistan are insignificant and are plagued by issues like governance challenges, security concerns, and underutilization of funds no matter how meager. China's investments in Xinjiang are part of a strategic focus on integrating the region into the national economy and the Belt and Road Initiative. In contrast, Pakistan's investments in FATA and Balochistan have often been reactive, addressing immediate security concerns rather than being part of a long-term strategic vision for regional development. If we genuinely aim to reintegrate FATA and Balochistan into the national mainstream, we must adopt the Chinese philosophy of development and more development. Without this focus on economic and social progress, the cycle of violence from both the government and insurgents will persist, leaving the regions mired in conflict and instability. Development offers the only sustainable path to peace and inclusion.

— Former Press Secretary to the President
Former Press Minister to the
Embassy of Pakistan to France
Former MD, SRBC, CEO, ATV

Breaking the chains of Pakistan's drug crisis

Sundas Mehreen

The consequences of ignoring this issue are too severe to overlook. With our youth bulge serving as the torchbearers of Pakistan's future, it is crucial to intensify drug demand reduction campaigns, starting from the grassroots levels and pushing for pragmatic societal change. This change must come from both top-down and bottom-up approaches, where the government enforces strict anti-drug policies while communities take charge of spreading awareness and protecting their youth

UNDOUBTEDLY, youth is the decisive force behind a progressive and developed state. Though they were a minority, the youth remarkably revitalized the independence movement in 1947 and played a crucial role in defending the state during the 1965 war. This historical role underscores the untapped potential they offer today, as Pakistan's youth bulge stands at a staggering 64% of the total population. This demographic shift presents a pivotal opportunity to reshape the future, but only if harnessed productively. However, this opportunity comes with challenges. The current socio-economic landscape of Pakistan, marked by unemployment, lack of educational opportunities, and a rise in societal tensions, creates an environment where the youth, if left unsupported, can be easily drawn towards destructive behaviors. The internet and social media, while offering great opportunities for learning and connection, also expose the youth to dangerous influences, such as extremist ideologies, cybercrime, and drug peddling, which can flourish in online spaces. In this context, the exodus of talent through brain drain becomes a critical liability, particularly when adversaries seek to disincite, demoralize, corrupt, and even weaponize the youth, leading to behaviors that harm national stability. One of the most perilous threats among these is the proliferation of drugs. In Pakistan, an estimated 7.8 million people (UN) take drugs regularly, and about 700 people die every day due to drug-related complications, translating to 250,000 deaths annually. The severity of the issue is magnified by the alarming statistics of drug-related arrests in 2024 alone, where 1,344 individuals were apprehended, including 105 females, 88 students, and 34 foreigners. This clearly shows that the drug menace is not only widespread but deeply embedded within our societal framework, particularly in educational institutions and family structures, which are supposed to cradle our future.

The education system, once seen as a protective environment for youth, is now becoming vulnerable to this menace. The explosive rise in synthetic drugs and the increasing involvement of females in drug trafficking clearly indicate that youth are the primary target, and this threat has been festering for a long time. Educational institutions are now grappling with the spread of narcotics on campuses, from universities to high schools, contributing to a vicious cycle of addiction that leads to deteriorating academic performance, behavioral problems, and, ultimately, the breakdown of family and community structures. Given the sheer magnitude of the problem, it is imperative to build a robust defense against the proliferation of narcotics. This can only be achieved through collective involvement, synergizing Law Enforcement Agencies with the youth, thereby creating the most effective defense mechanism to protect the very individuals who will shoulder the future of the nation. A safe and healthy youth is directly proportional to a strong and stable state. Therefore, promoting healthy activities like sports, debates, and arts can play a crucial role in preventing youth from falling into the trap of addiction. While the Anti-Narcotics Force (ANF) has conducted 3,414 awareness sessions across Pakistan, involving the youth in the fight against drugs, there remains an urgent need to take this step further. Drug awareness programs should be formally integrated into the school curriculum, and evidence-based initiatives should be launched within families, schools, and communities to spearhead a nationwide campaign. Such campaigns must focus on prevention, early intervention, and creating support systems that are easily accessible to all youth, regardless of socio-economic background. Furthermore, efforts to reclaim those already ensnared by addiction are critical. The government must provide proper regulation, registration, and monitoring of private rehabilitation centers, which are currently operating with little oversight. Registering

and regulating private rehabilitation centers, providing adequate support, and encouraging public-private partnerships in addiction recovery can offer pathways for these individuals to return as productive members of society. To fully address this issue, we must also recognize the role of the family unit in preventing drug addiction. Parents need to be educated on how to detect early signs of drug use and how to support their children through difficult times. Awareness sessions that involve parents, guardians, and teachers could strengthen the social safety net around youth, making it harder for them to fall through the cracks and into addiction. The consequences of ignoring this issue are too severe to overlook. With our youth bulge serving as the torchbearers of Pakistan's future, it is crucial to intensify drug demand reduction campaigns, starting from the grassroots levels and pushing for pragmatic societal change. This change must come from both top-down and bottom-up approaches, where the government enforces strict anti-drug policies while communities take charge of spreading awareness and protecting their youth. Unfortunately, the gravity of the problem remains underappreciated, as addicts continue to be stigmatized as societal outcasts rather than individuals in need of support and rehabilitation. If this stigma is not addressed, it will hinder efforts to reintegrate former addicts into society, leaving them vulnerable to relapse and perpetuating the cycle of drug abuse. But are we, as a society, truly listening? The time to act is now. The window of opportunity is shrinking, and the future of Pakistan hinges on how we respond to this looming crisis. Will we rise to the challenge and protect our youth, or will we continue to turn a blind eye as this demographic treasure is turned into a liability?

— The author is a Research Associate
and anti-drug activist dedicated to
tackling substance abuse through research
and advocacy for community impact.

Briefs

PTI gives two-week deadline

FROM PAGE 01
moved towards the city under the leadership of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP) Chief Minister (CM) Ali Amin Gandapur, despite roadblocks at various points. The former ruling party had been finally allowed to hold the gathering today (September 8) under a no-objection certificate (NOC) issued earlier in the week, after postponing it twice – once in July and then in August – after authorities revoked the permission. The multiple deferrals drew scathing criticism from other leaders and workers for not being able to hold the public gathering. However, the Islamabad district administration put the security on high alert this morning and blocked off multiple arteries leading to the capital city, in the light of the "Peaceful Assembly and Public Order Bill, 2024" aimed at regulating public gatherings, which was signed into a law by President Asif Ali Zardari just a day ahead of the rally.

'Rallies won't bring PTI's...

FROM PAGE 01
Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa were deceived in the name of 'Naya Pakistan', she added. They were brought from KP to attend the rally, and God knows how much money was paid to participants. She said that everyone who was involved in the events of May 9, or those who instructed for it would have to answer for it. May 9 is an event similar to the fall of Dhaka, and it could never be forgotten, she said and added that during the PTI government, 40 cases were tried in military courts. If the GHQ attack case could be tried in military courts, why Imran Khan case could not be tried in military court for ordering for May-9 attack? The Punjab information minister said that Imran Khan had opposed the NAB amendments, but now his application had been filed for relief under the same law. She said that the situation in Dera Ghazi Khan was far from ideal. Usman Buzdar, who belongs to DG Khan, could not deliver.

SP injured in clashes

FROM PAGE 01
underscores the importance of following these regulations to prevent disruptions and ensure public safety, he said. Strict legal action will be taken for violations of the designated routes, and violators will be arrested immediately, he added. Routes have been designated by the ICT administration for participation in the Jalsa. He said travel to the gathering on foot, by motorcycle, or by vehicle outside of these designated routes is prohibited and not permitted by law. The public is requested to cooperate with the police in this regard, he added.

Case of Imran...

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fearing a military trial over his alleged involvement in last year's May 9 riots which saw military installations being targeted – filed a petition in the Islamabad High Court (IHC) to stop his potential trial in military courts. The plea filed under Article 199 of the Constitution came amid speculations about a military trial of the deposed premier which have been rife for some time now.

Rupees may face...

FROM PAGE 01
with bilateral partners, the government is actively seeking commercial loans from international banks and investors. The finance minister is tasked with a difficult job of closing the funding gap at favourable rates within a limited timeframe to ensure timely approval from the IMF board. Although the government is still optimistic that funding can be obtained soon, any further delays in the loan programme could cause financial markets to become uneasy.

Asian Hockey C'Ship: Pakistan, Malaysia match ends in a draw

Japan, Korea match ends in a draw with each team scoring five goals; India outplay China



SPORTS DESK / DNA

HOHHOT CITY: Pakistan initially took the lead against Malaysia with a score of 2-0 in the Asian Hockey Champions Trophy match played in Hohhot City, Inner Mongolia, China. But Malaysia fought back and scored back to back two goals. Pakistan managed to score the first goal in the second quarter while in the intense second half of the game, the green shirts

were able to score the second goal of the team. The Asian Hockey Champions Trophy established in 2011 is a prestigious tournament that features top hockey teams from across Asia. The competition provides a platform for teams to showcase their skills and vie for regional supremacy. This year's tournament has brought together leading teams from the continent, highlighting the growing competitiveness of Asian hockey. Historically, the tournament has seen strong performances from traditional hockey power-

houses, with teams like Pakistan, India and Malaysia frequently competing for the top spot. Pakistan won the championship three times while India is the defending champions as they won the 2023 edition by defeating Malaysia 4-3 in the final. At the 2018 edition, the final between India and Pakistan was abandoned due to heavy rainfall and they were declared joint winners. Coming into this tournament after finished fourth in the FIH Men's Nations Cup, Pakistan is eager to get on to a good start under

newly-appointed Head Coach Tahir Zaman. Captain of Pakistan, Aamud Butt, said: "We have been here since the 25th August and have played four practice matches with China. We are very excited to play this tournament under the guidance of Tahir Zaman who will join the team tonight. We are excited to play here, this is the first time Huhunbur is hosting this tournament and the facilities are excellent. We start our match against Malaysia and we want to start the tournament on a good note."

Date	Match	Time
September 8, Sunday	South Korea vs Japan	11:00 AM
September 8, Sunday	Malaysia vs Pakistan	1:15 PM
September 8, Sunday	India vs China	3:30 PM
September 9, Monday	South Korea vs Pakistan	11:00 AM
September 9, Monday	India vs Japan	1:15 PM
September 9, Monday	China vs Malaysia	3:30 PM
September 11, Wednesday	Pakistan vs Japan	11:00 AM
September 11, Wednesday	Malaysia vs India	1:15 PM
September 11, Wednesday	China vs South Korea	3:30 PM
September 12, Thursday	Japan vs Malaysia	11:00 AM
September 12, Thursday	South Korea vs India	1:15 PM
September 12, Thursday	Pakistan vs China	3:30 PM
September 14, Saturday	Malaysia vs South Korea	11:00 AM
September 14, Saturday	India vs Pakistan	1:15 PM
September 14, Saturday	Japan vs China	3:30 PM
September 16, Monday	5th-6th place play-off	10:30 AM
September 16, Monday	Semi-final 1	1:10 PM
September 16, Monday	Semi-final 2	3:30 PM
September 17, Tuesday	Third-place play-off	1:00 PM
September 17, Tuesday	Final	3:30 PM

Green leads Australia to series sweep of Scotland

All-rounder Green top scored for the tourists with 62 not out after taking 3-35

EDINBURGH: Cameron Green starred with both bat and ball as Australia completed a 3-0 sweep of Scotland from their T20 series in Edinburgh on Saturday. All-rounder Green top scored for the tourists with 62 not out after taking 3-35 as Australia chased down the Scotland total of 149 with 23 balls to spare. Brandon McMullen scored his third half-century in four matches against Australia, but his 56 and 25 from opener George Munsey were the only batters to make significant contributions for Scotland. Green picked up his first three-wicket haul in T20 cricket and then stepped in with the bat to rescue a faltering start from the world champions. Brad Currie removed both Australian openers Jake Fraser-McGurk and Travis Head inside the first two overs. But Green put on 61 for the third wicket alongside captain Mitch Marsh to put the visitors back on course for victory. Tim David added a quickfire 25 before Aaron Hardie joined Green to finish the job with a four through the covers. **Brief scores:** Scotland 149/9, 20 overs (Brandon McMullen 56; Cameron Green 3-35) v Australia 154/4, 16.1 overs (Green 62, Brad Currie 2-20) **Toss:** Australia **Result:** Australia won by six wickets Australia win series 3-0. – Agencies

Handbrake comes off for England

LONDON: It started in unconvincing fashion - and ended with positives and plaudits. When Lee Carsley walked out of the tunnel just before kick-off at the Aviva Stadium in Dublin on Saturday, he made the mistake of turning the wrong way and walking towards the Republic of Ireland dugout. But his day got better as England turned on the style to sweep their opponents aside 2-0 in his first game as interim boss. England fans have been craving exciting and entertaining football, which was in limited supply under previous head coach Gareth Southgate, despite their run to this summer's European Championship final. "The expression, the freedom to express yourself was missing from Euro 2024," said winger Anthony Gordon, who was limited to just one late substitute appearance at the tournament. "We controlled games but we weren't dynamic. We weren't relentless. We lacked dynamism and excitement." In Dublin, England played with a zip and a swagger - especially in the first half - to give their fans reason to believe that 'Carsball' could be a good option for the future. They created six big chances, more than in any of their matches at Euro 2024, and had a significantly higher expected goal count. They also had more shots than in any of their Euro matches, bar one. England carved out 16 attempts - with nine on target - as they played with a freshness and a vigour that was sadly lacking in some of their games at Euro 2024. Harry Kane came under heavy criticism in the summer and there were even calls for the England captain to be dropped. – Agencies

Pegula takes pride in loss in first US open final

She reached the Grand Slam final for the first time this year

NEW YORK: Jessica Pegula, a top American tennis player, sounded confident after losing to the world's second-best player, Aryna Sabalenka, at the US Open 2024 on Sunday. "I made a lot of quarter-finals but can I make a semi? Can I be a contender to actually win a Grand Slam?" Pegula, 30, reached the Grand Slam final for the first time this year. It is worth noting that Pegula was defeated by 26-year-old 7-5, 7-5, after giving her best during the game. The breakthrough on Arthur Ashe Stadium's hard court was a confidence-boosting stepping stone like several others in her career, the 30-year-old told reporters after the women's final. Continuing with the conversation, Pegula revealed that the match was a confidence-boosting event for her. "I think I've taken confidence from winning a 250, from winning a 1000, from being able to win another 1000. Multiple ones now. Then, to be able to be a Grand Slam finalist, I think that was kind of the

last thing for me," Pegula said. Moreover, she recalled her previous clashes in comparison to the final showdown in the US Open. "I made a lot of quarter-finals but can I make a semi? Can I be a contender to actually win a Grand Slam?"

I lost to girls that pretty much won the tournament every time. I know my level was right there," Pegula said. After battling an injury this season that forced her to skip Roland Garros, a more relaxed approach to this year's U.S. Open pro-

vided a lift. "I handled the moment a little bit better this year... with just having maybe a different perspective of I had a rough start to the year and I didn't really expect to be doing this well in the hard-court swing," she said. – Agencies



Rice explains reason behind declining captain's armband

The Arsenal midfielder had an impressive evening at the Aviva Stadium

London: Declan Rice has disclosed his reluctance to assume the captain's armband during England's solid 2-0 victory over the Republic of Ireland, suggesting that it rightly belonged to John Stones instead. The Arsenal midfielder had an impressive evening at the Aviva Stadium, not only breaking the deadlock for Lee Carsley's side but also providing the assist for Jack Grealish's second goal just minutes later. Supporters with keen eyes observed Rice seemingly refusing the captain's armband from Harry Kane when the Tottenham Hotspur striker was substituted late in the match. The armband was eventually given to Stones, whom Rice considered the appropriate choice for the captaincy. Speaking after the match, Rice explained: "Kane tried to give me the armband but Stones is more senior and ex-

perienced than me. I just said to Harry, 'Probably John deserves it more than me. I said to give it to John.'" Rice added: "That was it. It doesn't need to be made into a bigger thing. John is one of the more senior ones. Usually he is captain when Harry doesn't play so it was the right decision." Carsley, who was basking in the glory of a successful debut as interim manager post-Southgate's exit after the Euro 2024 final loss, also addressed Rice's deference over the captaincy by saying: "I think John [Stones] was vice-captain so just out of respect with John coming on, he gave him the armband. I don't think he refused it." During the intense match at The Aviva Stadium, Rice, previously capped by the Republic of Ireland before his switch to England, as well as Grealish, faced hostility from the local supporters. While Grealish exulted over his goal, Rice responded quite differently upon scoring, offering an apologetic gesture and maintaining a reserved demeanour. Rice shared his sentiment post-match: "Obviously my grandparents are Irish and they've all passed away now. So I did not want to be disrespectful to them. I really enjoyed myself playing for Ireland and did not think it was appropriate."

Usman beats Shabliy to retain Bellator lightweight title

The bout offered little in terms of action or excitement as Nurmagomedov (18-0, 1 NC) secured a strategic win

DUBAI: Usman Nurmagomedov successfully defended his lightweight title with a unanimous decision victory over Alexander Shabliy in the main event of Bellator Championship Series 4 at the Pechanga Arena in San Diego. The bout offered little in terms of action or excitement as Nurmagomedov (18-0, 1 NC) secured a strategic win, chipping away with punches and kicks to edge out the victory with scores of 50-45, 49-46, and 49-46. "He was such a tough guy,"

Nurmagomedov, 26, said of his Russian opponent. "I am happy with my victory and want to defend my title next in Dubai." Former Bellator featherweight champion AJ McKee sat cage-side and may be next in line for the title if he manages to overcome Paul Hughes in their October bout. Nurmagomedov is the younger brother of UFC bantamweight Umar, cousin of former UFC lightweight champion Khabib, and a teammate of current UFC lightweight champion Islam

Makhachev. His victory on Saturday marked his second successful defence of the lightweight title, which he claimed in November 2022. His unanimous decision win over Brent Primus in October 2023 was later overturned to a no contest after Nurmagomedov tested positive for a banned substance contained in a prescription drug. Fighting out of Russia, Shabliy (24-4) entered the contest on a nine-fight winning streak in professional bouts, including a unanimous decision over former

Bellator lightweight champion Patricky Pitbull last November. Shabliy proved to be a tough opponent for Nurmagomedov, though his hesitance to take the initiative cost him his first shot at a world title. Nurmagomedov, arguably the most dynamic striker at Eagle MMA, frequently switched stances and offered varied offensive approaches to create openings. However, Shabliy was defensively sound, effectively countering with his right hand whenever Nurmagomedov

closed the distance. Nonetheless, those punches were too few and far between to sway the judges. In the second round, Nurmagomedov kept the pressure on, but Shabliy successfully fended off his takedown attempts and stayed out of danger. By the third round, Nurmagomedov found success with leg kicks and landed a solid uppercut during another tense exchange, though the crowd grew restless due to the lack of drama. The most significant mo-

ment of the fight came late in the fourth round when Nurmagomedov landed a left head kick on Shabliy and secured a takedown, maintaining top control for the final 75 seconds of the round. The final round followed a similar pattern, with Shabliy waiting for the perfect opportunity and Nurmagomedov refusing to give him one. A scattering of boos echoed through the arena as both fighters struggled to mount substantial offence as the fight drew to a close. – Agencies

Shehbaz launches anti-polio...

FROM PAGE 01
partners and friendly international organizations cooperating with the government to eradicate polio from Pakistan. He hoped that the federal government, in collaboration with provincial governments and partners, will succeed in completely eradicating polio from the country. The PM expressed the confidence that polio eradication efforts will bear fruit. He commended the efforts of federal and provincial officials, polio workers, and security personnel in the fight against poliovirus. He urged parents to ensure their children under five receive polio drops to protect them from lifelong disability. He requested the parents to fully cooperate with the polio teams for the safe future of their children. On this occasion, the Prime Minister also administered polio drops to children.

Efforts afoot to provide...

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price hike has now been lowered and edible items including flour, sugar, oil, pulses and vegetables become cheaper. She said PML-N President Nawaz Sharif is seriously concerned about costly electricity bills and federal and Punjab governments are striving hard to provide further relief to the public in this regard.

Pakistan, Türkiye...

FROM PAGE 01
more significant workshare in the software integration, design and development of Next Generation Fighter program codenamed KAAAN. He emphasized the importance of sharing niche & disruptive technologies developed in Pakistan in order to bolster multi-domain capabilities of both countries. The Turkish President also expressed his desire that the existing Joint Working Group for Aerospace industry collaboration transitions from quarterly to monthly follow-ups, with a revitalized National Level Framework set to be signed soon.

Masses rejected...

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social media by sharing old videos of rallies from Kashmir and even Indian Punjab farmers' footages. He made it clear that the PTI leadership could not escape accountability by such tactics. He said PTI founder chairman will have to face trial for corrupt practices. The PTI leadership will be held accountable for Toshka Khana fraud, £190 million embezzlement scam, which was biggest corruption case in Pakistan's history.

Briefs

PM pays tribute to Pakistan Navy on 'Navy Day'

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif on Sunday commended the Pakistan Navy for their unwavering dedication to duty and passion for the country. "On Navy Day, I extend my heartfelt felicitations to all members of the Pakistan Navy. Their steadfast commitment to protecting our maritime boundaries exemplifies their unwavering dedication to duty and passion for the country," the prime minister wrote on his official X timeline. He said regardless of the challenges they faced, their determination and spirit remained resolute. "We deeply value their service and sacrifices, and their contributions to safeguarding our maritime borders." —APP

Pope to bring in humanitarian aid to Papua New Guinea

DNA

PORT MORESBY, Papua New Guinea: Pope Francis honored the Catholic Church of the peripheries on Sunday as he celebrated Mass in Papua New Guinea before heading to a remote part of the South Pacific nation with a ton of humanitarian aid to deliver to the missionaries and faithful who live there.

An estimated 35,000 people filled the stadium in the capital Port Moresby for the morning Mass. It began with dancers in grass skirts and feathered headdresses performing to traditional drum beats as priests in green vestments processed up onto the altar.

In his homily, Francis told the crowd that they may well feel themselves distant from both their faith and the institutional church, but that God was near to them. "You who live on this large island in the Pacific Ocean may sometimes have thought of yourselves as a far away and distant land, situated at the edge of the world," Francis said. "Yet ... today the Lord wants to draw near to you, to break down distances, to let you know that you are at the center of his heart and that each one of you is important to him." Francis was himself traveling to a distant land on Sunday, flying into remote Vanimo, on Papua New Guinea's northwest coast, to meet with the small Catholic community there served by missionaries from his native Argentina. Francis was being transported by an Australian military aircraft and was bringing with him one ton of humanitarian aid, including medicine, clothes and toys for children, according to Vatican spokesman Matteo Bruni. Eight suitcases of medicine and other necessities had been prepared by one of the Argentine missionaries, the Rev. Alejandro Diaz, during a recent trip to Rome and left with the Vatican to bring in on the cargo plane, the ANSA news agency reported. Francis has long prioritized the church on the "peripheries," saying it is actually more important than the center of the institutional church.

RCCI Calls for 4% Interest Rate Cut

DNA

RAWALPINDI: The Rawalpindi Chamber of Commerce and Industry (RCCI) has urged the Government of Pakistan to lower interest rates by four percent. Saqib Rafiq, President RCCI in a statement said that the year-over-year (YOY) inflation in August 2024 was 9.6 percent as opposed to 27.4 percent in August 2023. Also, the rating agency, Moody's has recently upgraded Pakistan's local and foreign currency issuer and senior unsecured debt rating to Caa2 from Caa3. Saqib Rafiq further remarked that with inflation dropping to the lowest level in three years, there was a strong justification for reduction in the policy rate.

Shooting at the W Bank-Jordan border crossing kills 3 Israelis

Israeli officials say three people were shot and killed Sunday at the border crossing between the West Bank and Jordan. Israel says the gunman approached the bridge crossing from the Jordanian side in a truck and opened fire at Israeli security forces, who killed the assailant. Jordanian authorities say they are investigating the shooting at King Hussein crossing

DNA

JERUSALEM: Three Israelis were shot and killed Sunday at the border crossing between the West Bank and Jordan, Israeli officials said, in what appeared to be an attack linked to the 11-month-old war in Gaza. The military said the gunman approached the Allenby Bridge Crossing from the Jordanian side in a truck and opened fire at Israeli security forces, who killed the assailant in a shootout. It said the three people killed were Israeli civilians. Israel's Magen David Adom rescue service said they were all men in their 50s. Jordan is investigating the shooting, its state-run Petra News

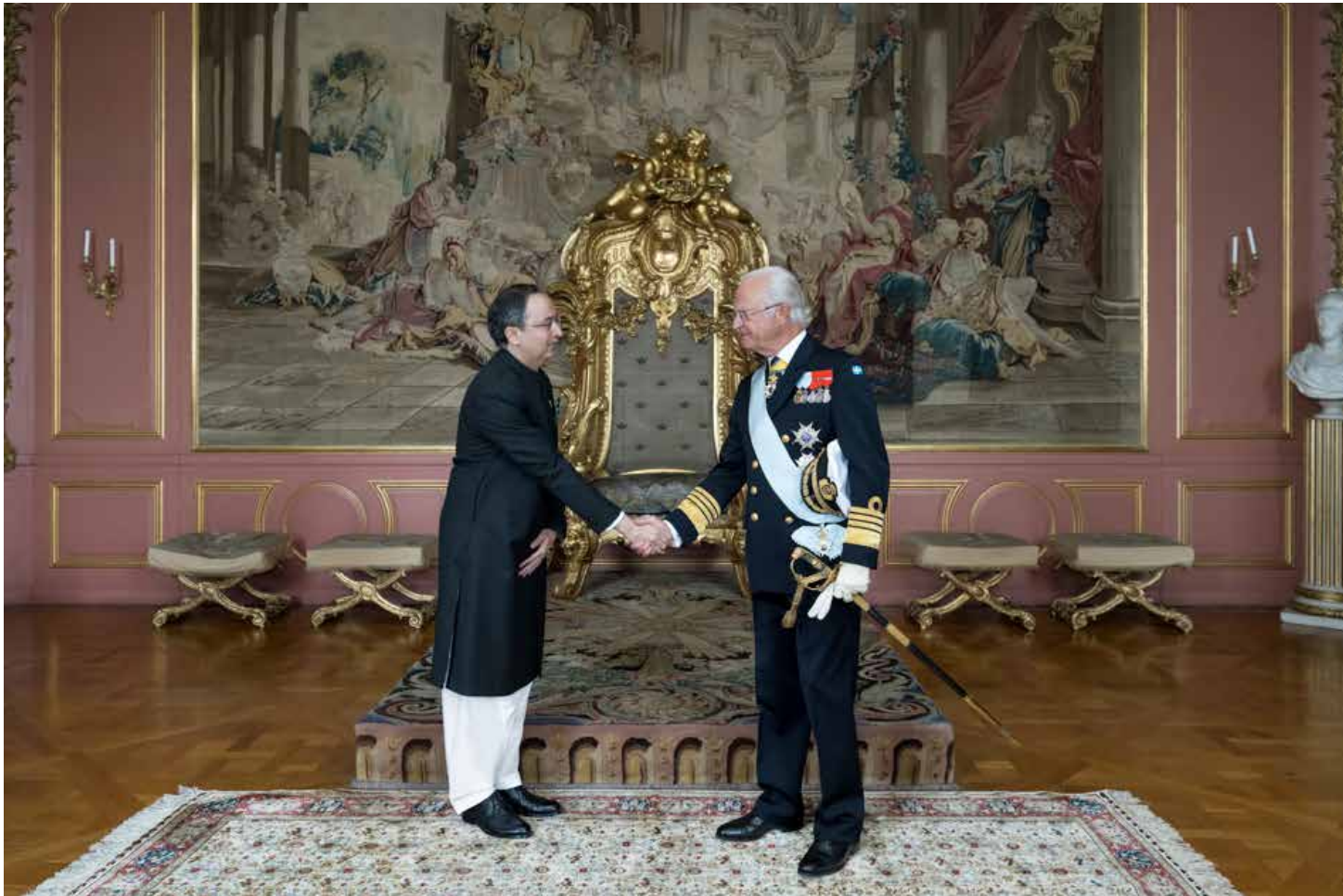
Agency reported. The West-ern-allied Arab country made peace with Israel in 1994, but is deeply critical of its policies toward the Palestinians. Jordan has a large Palestinian population and has seen mass protests against Israel over the war in Gaza. The Allenby crossing over the Jordan River, also known as the King Hussein Bridge, is mainly used by Palestinians and international tourists, as well as for cargo shipments. The crossing has seen very few security incidents over the years, but in 2014 Israeli security guards shot and killed a Jordanian judge who they said had attacked them. Authorities in Israel and Jordan said the crossing was closed

until further notice, and Israel later announced the closure of both of its land crossings with Jordan, near Beit Shean in the north and Eilat in the south. Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu condemned the attack and linked it to Israel's larger conflict with Iran and allied militant groups, including Hamas in Gaza and Hezbollah in Lebanon. The Israeli-occupied West Bank has seen a surge of violence since Hamas' Oct. 7 attack out of Gaza triggered the war there. Israel has launched near-daily military arrest raids into dense Palestinian residential areas, and there has also been a rise in settler violence and Palestinian attacks on Israelis. Meanwhile,

Hezbollah fighters in Lebanon and Israeli forces traded cross-border attacks, both sides said early Sunday, a day after the Lebanese health ministry reported three rescuers killed in an Israeli attack. The Iran-backed Lebanese movement has exchanged near-daily fire with Israeli forces in support of ally Hamas since the Palestinian militant group's October 7 attack on Israel triggered the war in the Gaza Strip, with repeated escalations during 11 months of the cross-border violence. Hezbollah said it had bombed the northern Israeli town of "Kiryat Shmona with a volley of Falqa rockets" early Sunday "in response to the enemy attacks... and par-

ticularly the attack" that killed the emergency workers in the Lebanese village of Froun. On Saturday, Lebanon's health ministry said three emergency responders were killed and two others wounded, one of them critically, in an Israeli strike on Froun. The ministry said the attack had targeted "a Lebanese civil defense team that was putting out fires sparked by the recent Israeli strikes," while the Israeli military said it had "eliminated terrorists" from the Hezbollah-allied Amal movement in Froun. Lebanon's civil defense agency said three of its employees were killed in "an Israeli strike that targeted a firefighting vehicle after they had finished a firefighting mis-

sion." Prime Minister Najib Mikati condemned the attack, saying in a statement that "this new aggression against Lebanon is a blatant violation of international laws... and human values." Separately on Sunday, Hezbollah said that its fighters had also fired rockets at the Israeli community of Shamir, near Kiryat Shmona. Hezbollah usually says it targets military positions in northern Israel, while Israel has said it targets Hezbollah infrastructure and fighters in south and east Lebanon. The Israeli military on Sunday morning announced it had carried out a series of air strikes on "Hezbollah military structures" and intercepted projectiles launched from Lebanon during the night.



STOCKHOLM: In an elaborate ceremony marked with traditional grandeur, Ambassador Bilal Hayee on 4th September 2024, presented his letter of credence to his Majesty Carl Gustaf XVI at the Royal Palace. —DNA

Sudan rejects UN call for 'impartial' force to protect civilians

PORT SUDAN: Sudan has rejected a call by UN experts for the deployment of an "independent and impartial force" to protect millions of civilians driven from their homes by more than a year of war. The conflict since April last year, pitting the army against paramilitary forces, has killed tens of thousands of people and triggered one of the world's worst humanitarian crises. The independent UN experts said Friday their fact-finding mission had uncovered "harrowing" violations by both sides, "which may amount to war crimes and crimes against humanity." They called for "an independent and impartial force with a mandate to safeguard civilians" to be deployed "without delay." The Sudanese foreign ministry, which is loyal to the army under General Abdel Fattah Al-Burhan, said in a statement late Saturday. —APP

Algerian candidate Hassani Cherif's campaign says it recorded election violations

ALGIERS: Algerian presidential candidate Abdelali Hassani Cherif's campaign said in a statement on Sunday that it had recorded cases of violations in the country's Saturday presidential election, initial results of which have yet to be announced. The campaign said the violations included putting pressure on some polling station officials to inflate the results, failure to deliver vote-sorting records to the candidates' representatives, and instances of proxy group voting. Algerians voted on Saturday in an election in which military-backed President Abdelmadjid Tebboune is widely expected to win a second term. —APP

Venezuela says presidential opposition candidate has left country

DNA

CARACAS: The Venezuelan government said Saturday opposition candidate Edmundo Gonzalez Urrutia — in hiding after he challenged President Nicolas Maduro's disputed reelection — has left the country, seeking asylum in Spain. "After taking refuge voluntarily at the Spanish embassy in Caracas a few days ago, (Gonzalez Urrutia) asked the Spanish government for political asylum," Venezuela's vice president said on social media, adding that Caracas had agreed to his safe passage and that he had left. The opposition could not immediately be reached for comment. Venezuela has been in a political crisis since authorities declared Maduro the victor of the July 28 election. The opposition cried foul, claiming it had evidence Gonzalez Urrutia had won by a comfortable margin.

Iran's president to visit Iraq on first foreign trip

TEHRAN: Iran's President Masoud Pezeshkian will visit neighboring Iraq on Wednesday, state media reported Sunday, in what will be his first trip abroad since he took office in July. Pezeshkian will head a high-ranking Iranian delegation to Baghdad to meet senior Iraqi officials. The visit comes at the invitation of Iraq's premier, Mohammed Shia Al-Sudani, the official IRNA news agency quoted Iran's ambassador to Baghdad Mohammad Kazem Al-Sadegh as saying. The two countries will sign memoranda of understanding on cooperation and security, Sadegh said, without elaborating. He said the agreements were to have been signed during a planned visit to Iraq by Iran's late president, Ebrahim Raisi. —APP

Saudi Arabia's non-oil economy grows 4.9% in Q2

RIYADH: Saudi Arabia's non-oil activities expanded 4.9 percent year-on-year in the second quarter of 2024, driven by gains in the financial and insurance sectors, official data showed. According to data from the General Authority for Statistics, the financial, insurance, and business services sectors surged 7.1 percent in the second quarter compared to the same period last year. Non-oil activity also rose 2.1 percent compared to the previous quarter, reflecting the Kingdom's efforts to broaden its economic base. The non-oil sector's growth aligns with Saudi Arabia's Vision 2030, a strategic plan aimed at reducing the country's reliance on oil revenues. The report further revealed that Saudi Arabia's seasonally adjusted gross domestic product increased by 1.4 percent in the second quarter compared to the first. However, GDP saw a slight year-on-year decline of 0.3 percent in the same period, largely due to an 8.9 percent drop in oil activities following the Kingdom's decision to cut crude output in line with OPEC+ agreements. To stabilize the market, Saudi Arabia reduced oil production by 500,000 barrels per day in April 2023, a cut that has been extended until December 2024. GASTAT also noted that the Kingdom's GDP at current prices reached SR1.02 trillion (\$270 billion) in the second quarter. "Crude oil and natural gas activities achieved the highest contribution to the GDP at 23.2 percent, followed by government activities at 16 percent, and wholesale and retail trade, restaurants, and hotels activities with a contribution of 10.1 percent," stated GASTAT. Government activities increased by 3.6 percent year-on-year and by 2.3 percent quarter-on-quarter. Meanwhile, electricity, gas, and water activities saw an 8.9 percent rise year-on-year, while wholesale and retail trade, restaurants, and hotels grew by 6.8 percent. The report also highlighted that government final consumption expenditure rose by 10.9 percent year on year and 4.3 percent quarter on quarter. In the second quarter, gross fixed capital formation increased by 3.2 percent compared to the same period last year. —DNA

Allegations of double standards dominate reaction to American killed by Israel

NEWS DESK

CHICAGO: Aysenur Ezgi Eygi, 26, was shot and killed on Friday in the West Bank village of Beitah near Nablus during a non-violent protest against the expansion of illegal Jewish settlements and escalating settler violence against Palestinian home and landowners. Social media discourse was dominated by expressions of outrage over what was described as a double standard in US media, which did not hesitate to blame Arabs and Muslims when pro-Israel Americans were killed but was reluctant to point a finger at Israelis when pro-Palestinian Americans were killed. Human rights attorney and author Qasim Rashid condemned American media's double standard, writing on X: "Shame on these legacy media outlets. Not one is willing to state the fact that the Israeli military killed Aysenur Ezgi Eygi — a US

citizen. Apparently, a magical bullet appeared out of thin air & killed her. This is how legacy media normalizes violence against people of color." When several Israelis, including one with American dual citizenship, Hersh Goldberg-Polin, were killed in Gaza last week, mainstream news media featured an avalanche of condemnation from American politicians. President Joe Biden said he was "devastated and outraged" over Polin's death, while Democratic presidential nominee Kamala Harris invoked a Jewish prayer for the dead, saying, "May Hersh's memory be a blessing." Harris went on further to denounce Hamas as "an evil terrorist organization," adding that "with these murders, Hamas has even more American blood on its hands." In contrast, both Biden and Harris were personally silent regarding the killing of Eygi, allowing the release of a generic media statement attributed to the

White House, which said it was "deeply disturbed" by her death.

The White House called for Israel to investigate Eygi's killing, a sentiment reiterated by US Secretary of State Antony Blinken who, during a press briefing in the Dominican Republic, expressed condolences to the victim's family but said: "Let's find out exactly what happened ... and that's exactly what we're in the process of doing." Neither the White House nor Blinken, however, asked for an investigation into Polin's death and immediately embraced Israel's assertions that he was killed by Hamas. And while Blinken did not post any comments regarding Eygi's killing on his official X account, he posted at length on Polin's death, writing on social media: "Hersh Goldberg-Polin is an American hero who will be remembered for his kindness and selflessness. Our hearts break for

Jon, Rachel, and their entire family, as well as the other families who found out today their loved ones won't be coming home. May their memory be a blessing." US State Department Spokesman Matthew Miller also spoke at length at a press briefing following news of Polin's death but repeated Blinken's statement saying the State Department is "urgently" gathering more information on Eygi's death. After graduating from university, Eygi volunteered with the International Solidarity Movement, which monitors and protests the expansion of illegal Jewish-only settlements on non-Jewish-owned lands in the West Bank and in East Jerusalem. The ISM released a lengthy statement describing Eygi as "peacefully demonstrating alongside Palestinians" but criticized the hypocrisy of American politicians and news outlets' response to her death.

Need stressed for transgender sensitization on AIDs

PESHAWAR: Participants of a Provincial AIDs Network meeting laid stress on effective advocacy and sensitization of transgender community about access to health care initiatives taken by the government with support from international organizations for the treatment of deadly AIDs disease. The meeting was organized by Da Hawa Lur (Daughter of Eve), a non-governmental organization, and was attended by people from concerned departments working over prevention, control and treatment of HIV AIDs. Welcoming the participants, CEO Da Hawa Lur, Khurshid Bano said the purpose of arranging this get together is to hold consultation and find out gaps in health related interventions as what progress is needed to cope with the threat of AIDs infection to different segments. Sharing a recap of activities being taken in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa during

the last several years, Rasheed Khan of Provincial AIDs Control Programme informed that starting from two AIDs treatment centers in Peshawar, the province has now established around 13 centers including three in merged districts including North Waziristan, Bajaur and Kurram. To remove the stigma associated with AIDs, the treatment centers have been named as 'Family Care Centers' for the ease of patients coming for treatment, Rasheed added. He informed participants that around 7941 AIDs patients are registered with AIDs Control Programme and around 6500 are getting treatment free of cost. Giving a break-up of total figure, he said out of 7941 patients, 5571 are male, 1824 are female, 141 are transgender, 241 are boys and 164 are girls. Two Community Based Organizations (CBOs) including a UNDP supported and Active

Health Organization are also working on treatment of AIDs infected transgender and has succeeded in convincing large number of community members in getting their bloods samples for screening. A total of 4000 transgender were tested and out of them around 141 are found infected with AIDs and are provided treatment through Provincial AIDs Control Programme, Rasheed continued. The AIDs Control Programme also have a component of 'Lost to Follow up' under which those patients who stopped availing cure services are traced and contacted to find out reason behind the gap, Rasheed continued. President KP Chapter TransAction, Farzana Riaz underscored need for awareness of trans persons about health issues. She said due to stigma attached with AIDs, transgender avoid diagnosis testing on basis of symptoms and when their condition deteriorates they ap-

proach medical practitioners. Aehzaz ud Din of Dost Welfare Organization calls for increasing caring support to transgender for their protection from HIV and drugs. He suggested for involvement of transgender in activities aimed at welfare of their own community. Through involving a community member, the outreach will be easy and effective, Aehzaz opined. Aehzaz also made a recommendation of offering some financial incentive for attracting transgender towards availing free services for prevention and treatment of AIDs disease. Former member KP assembly, Sumera Shams insisted on screening of transgender and migrant community at airport for detection of actual figures of AIDs infection and for adopting effective prevention measures. She also stressed for compilation of proper data on AIDs spread on basis of which government policies are chalked out and funding are

availed from donors. Sumera said AID spread through different sources and one of them is beauty salons including hair transplants. She said government should chalk out a policy of monitoring the cleanliness standards and safety protocols being implemented at beauty salons which is showing mushroom growth in the country and posing threats to spread of different disease by using instruments without proper sterilization. Coordinator National Commission for Human Rights (NCHR) KP, Rizwanullah Shah observed that transgender are integral part of society and deserves proper and equal treatment in every sector including health, education, social welfare, relief, rehabilitation etc. He said protection of this segment from different vulnerabilities can be achieved through its involvement in relevant activities without giving any consideration to their educational qualification and competence.

Briefs

Mian Parvez Aslam Group's landslide victory in RCCI polls

MEHTAB PIRZADA

RAWALPINDI: After withdrawal of nomination papers by five candidates contesting for 10 corporate seats, Mian Parvez Aslam group's all 10 contestants have swept the elections of Rawalpindi Chamber of Commerce and Industry (RCCI). For ten corporate class seats, the opposition group failed to field a single candidate for the RCCI's elections 2024. According to the details, fifteen candidates were in the fray for ten corporate class seats on the last date of withdrawal of nomination papers, five candidates withdrew their nomination papers thus all the candidates have been elected unopposed on ten seats. The unopposed winners of the corporate class include Usman Shaukat, Bilal Maqbool, Muhammad Badar Haroon, Afzaal Saeed Butt, Bilal Javed, Uzair Zahid Bakhtawari, Fahad Barlas, Muhammad Imran, Muhammad Samiullah and Rahmanullah. A total of 41 candidates submitted their nomination papers for the ten seats of the associate class of the executive body, out of which 21 candidates have withdrawn their nomination papers, thus twenty candidates are in the contest for the associate class. Polling for associate class will be held on September 11 in chamber premises.

Rupee may face pressure amid uncertainty

NAZIR SIYAL

KARACHI: The Pakistani rupee is anticipated to face pressure, potentially exceeding 279 per dollar due to uncertainties surrounding the International Monetary Fund's (IMF) loan programme, a report said on Saturday. The government is exploring various options to bridge the external financing gap, crucial to obtaining final approval for a \$7 billion loan from the IMF. Rollovers pose a significant challenge for the government. In addition to ongoing negotiations with bilateral partners, the government is actively seeking commercial loans from international banks and investors. The finance minister is tasked with a difficult job of closing the funding gap at favourable rates within a limited timeframe to ensure timely approval from the IMF board. Although the government is still optimistic that funding can be obtained soon, any further delays in the loan programme could cause financial markets to become uneasy. The rupee witnessed some fluctuations in the interbank market this week. On Monday, the local currency finished at 278.64 per dollar; on Wednesday, it ended at 278.76 after further declines. On Friday, though, it gained momentum and closed at 278.56 to the dollar. "The rupee will benefit from the 9% drop in oil with Brent trading around the \$71 level," said Tresmark in a client note. "Going forward, the outlook looks stable for the rupee but its likeliness of breaching 279/\$ at any point has increased due to uncertainty around the IMF programme. For now, forward selling by exporters has slowed down to a trickle," it added. The decision to keep the rupee stable is still omnipresent. So even though there has been significant buying pressure last week, the rupee remained range-bound, according to the report. "Liquidity in the interbank was slightly more squeezed than last week and resulted with swap premiums in the shorter range (1 week) trending around 14 per cent versus premiums in the medium tenors (3 months) trending around 8.0 per cent," it said. In the State Bank of Pakistan's next monetary policy meeting on Sept 12 (Thursday), traders are expecting a 100-200 basis point interest rate drop due to a notable decline in inflation.

Connectivity strategy

Uzbek envoy indebted to Pakistan civil, mily leadership for support

Says Only in last 3 years President of Uzbekistan Shavkat Mirziyoyev more than 9 times has held personal interaction with his Pakistani counterparts the PM Shehbaz Sharif, President Asif Ali Zardari and Chief of Army Staff Gen Asim Munir



DNA

ISLAMABAD: Ambassador of Uzbekistan to Pakistan Arif Usmanov said that he was extremely grateful to the President of Islamic Republic of Pakistan Asif Ali Zardari, PM Shahbaz Sharif, the Government of Pakistan, Pakistan Army Navy and Air force for great support to our connectivity Strategy. The ambassador expressed these views on the occasion of the Independence Day of Uzbekistan. Jam Kamal Khan, Federal Minister of Islamic Republic of Pakistan for commerce was the chief guest on the occasion. The Ambassador also congratulated brave Pakistani nation on Army and Martyrs Day and celebrations of Pakistan Air Force Yaum-e-Fazaya as great manifestation of unity, resilience, dedication to defend Motherland it's peaceful life and longterm stability in the region. "Our Ministries of Defense are regularly holding Staff Talks on military cooperation and according to Agreement on military-technical cooperation this year 1st meeting of the Joint Working Commis-

sion was held in Islamabad. The Uzbekistan and Pakistan enjoying active cooperation in the sphere of military training as well as holding multilateral exercises on combatting terrorism", he added. He said, Uzbekistan and Pakistan are not only genuine partners but brotherly cooperation has been elevated to a level of the strategic partnership. Only in last 3 years President of Uzbekistan Shavkat Mirziyoyev more than 9 times has held personal interaction with his Pakistani counterparts the PM Shehbaz Sharif, President Asif Ali Zardari and Chief of Army Staff Gen Asim Munir, strengthening the trade and industrial, technological projects as well as the active military cooperation between our countries. Ambassador Usmanov said by our joint efforts we have increased up to half billion of bilateral trade via brotherly Afghanistan based on Transit and Preferential trade agreements. Pakistan (and Turkey are) the only countries with whom Uzbekistan has reached such level of trade and logistics cooperation. Alhamdulillah. No doubt that our teams will reach very soon the goals of 1 billion Trade and Industrial cooperation



Road Maps, Inshallah'. He said, 'only this year we been able to arrange more than a 50 high-level meetings more than hundred ministerial summits. In Tashkent and Islamabad Samarqand and Lahore, Bukhara and Karachi Peshawar and Termez we gained most remarkable results - as the people to people contacts, B2B forums strengthening region to region connectivity'. The President of Uzbekistan Shavkat Mirziyoyev in his address on the 33rd Anniversary of the Independence of the Republic of Uzbekistan has stressed that large-scale work carried out in recent years. Uzbekistan GDP increased by 6.4% in 2024 (6.2% for the same period in 2023) and amounted to \$101 billion (inflation - 5.2%), foreign direct investments has increased by 37% and amounted to \$22 billion as well as foreign trade turnover with 186 countries increased by 8.5% (export level amounted to \$45 billion). "Only united - we are one nation, only together - a strong country!", Shavkat Mirziyoyev said. The government of Uzbekistan is proudly serving to people in strengthening the political stability, the economic development and the cooperation

with foreign partners. Our Leaders underscored the importance of further accelerating regional connectivity in the fields of textiles, pharmaceutical production, renewable energy, agriculture, IT logistics and many other sectors. Particular attention of our nations and brotherly neighbor Afghanistan is the construction project of the Uzbekistan-Afghanistan-Pakistan railway, he added. The ambassador said, in Tashkent new project office was established and recently the Government of Pakistan (Ministry of Railways) hosted in Islamabad trilateral meeting of the project office. Three countries have signed the Protocol upon the feasibility studies, financing and construction of this game changer project. 'Let me express my confidence that every next year meetings will be resulted with new significant inputs for the further re-connectivity between Pakistan and Uzbekistan'. In his concluding remarks the ambassador said it was an honor and exceptional privilege for him to be posted for the third time in this great country Pakistan and be a humble servant of the re-connectivity between our two regions and nations.

Danish company seeks long-term collaboration with Pakistan

FAISAL SHEIKH

ISLAMABAD: Mikko Keto Global CEO of FLSmidth (a Danish Company) on Sunday identified vast potential in Pakistan's geology, especially in Balochistan's Tethyan Metallogenic Belt, to produce crucial minerals for the energy transition and looked forward to a long-term partnership. In a statement, he said that FLSmidth, (Danish multinational technology company based in Copenhagen, Denmark), had been eager to engage in a long-term partnership to ensure the sustainable tapping of Pakistan's vast mineral potential. He highlighted that the country's exceptional geology, especially along the Tethyan Metallogenic Belt in Balochistan, had offered a unique chance to produce essential minerals for the energy transition. After expressing his heartfelt gratitude to Jakob, Linulf, Shoaib, and all others who contributed to the success of his Pakistan trip, he had acknowledged the fruitful talks he had with the government regarding emerging mining opportunities during his recent visit to Islamabad, Pakistan, and had reaffirmed their long-standing commitment to a country where they had been active for fifty years. According to Mikko Keto, it was clear from all the discussions that the public and private sectors were deploying all efforts to support a thriving and responsible mining industry for the benefit of the country and its people. Mikko Keto observed that, following the discussions, it was apparent that concerted efforts were being made by both the public and private sectors to foster a flourishing and responsible mining industry, to the advantage of the nation and its populace. Shoaib Sarwar, Pakistan's Ambassador to Denmark, said Mikko Keto, Global CEO of FLSmidth, recently visited Islamabad to explore business prospects in the mining sector. Notably, FLSmidth, a prominent Danish company, has already made significant contributions to Pakistan's cement industry, with over 80% of the country's cement plants installed by them.

Trump, Harris tied on eve of televised presidential debate

A poll found that 78-year-old Trump is leading Harris nationally by 48 to 47 percent, well within the margin of error

FOREIGN DESK

WASHINGTON: The US presidential race remains neck-and-neck according to polls released Sunday, two days before Kamala Harris and Donald Trump hold their first - and potentially only - televised debate. The latest polling confirms that Trump retains locked-in support from about half of voters, despite the Republican's historic status as a convicted felon and his role in instigating the unprecedented attempt to overturn his 2020 loss to Joe Biden. Harris, who only jumped into the race after President Biden abruptly quit in July, has rapidly transformed herself from a little-noticed vice president into a serious contender. However, the polls show she has not made a major breakthrough, leaving the race a toss-up. A New York Times/Siena poll found that 78-year-old Trump is leading Harris nationally by 48 to 47 percent, well within the margin of error. US presidential elections are decided by tallying the results of state-by-state contests, rather than an overall national popular vote, meaning that a tiny handful of swing states typically decide the balance. The poll found Harris, 59, narrowly ahead in Wisconsin, Michigan and Pennsylvania and tied in four other swing states - Nevada, Georgia, North Carolina and Arizona. A CBS News/YouGov poll put Harris ahead by one percentage point in Michigan and Wisconsin and tied in Pennsylvania. The election is already chaotic, with 81-year-old Biden dropping out amid concerns over his age, Trump narrowly surviving an assassin's bullet at a rally, and fears mounting that Trump will again refuse to concede if he loses in November. However, the latest numbers confirm that each candidate retains a remarkably stable base of loyalists, almost evenly splitting the country. One game changer could be Tuesday's ABC News debate, the only one scheduled between the two.

Gaza war in its 12th month with truce hopes slim

GAZA: The war between Israel and Hamas in Gaza entered its 12th month Saturday with little sign of respite for the Palestinian territory or hope for Israeli hostages still held there. The chances of a truce that would swap Palestinian prisoners jailed by Israel for hostages held by Hamas appeared slim, with both sides sticking doggedly to their positions. The United States, Qatar and Egypt have all been mediating in an effort to bring about a ceasefire in the war, which authorities in Gaza say has killed at least 40,939 people. According to the United Nations human rights office, most of the dead are women and children. Of the 251 hostages seized by Palestinian militants during the attack, 97 remain in Gaza, including 33 the Israeli military says are dead. Scores were released during a one-week truce in November. Israel's announcement last Sunday that the bodies of six hostages including a US-Israeli citizen had been recovered shortly after being killed sparked grief and anger in Israel. Thousands of demonstrators rallied on Saturday evening in Tel Aviv and other Israeli cities, demanding the government secure the release of hostages. They carried banners that read "The blood is on your hands" and "Who's next." International pressure to end the war was further underlined by Friday's fatal shooting in the occupied West Bank of Turkish-American activist Aysenur Ezgi Eygi, who was demonstrating against Israeli settlements in the territory. - Agencies

Dar alleges PFI govt policies led to resurgence of terrorism

DNA

LONDON: With the country engaged in retaliatory measures following a recent spate of attacks, Senator Ishaq Dar alleged on Sunday that the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) government's policy of 'appeasing and rehabilitating' extremist groups contributed to the resurgence of terrorism. Dar, who is the Deputy Prime Minister and also the Foreign Minister of the country, made these remarks during an interaction with British lawmakers of Pakistani origin at a dinner hosted by the High Commissioner Dr Mohammad Faisal at the Pakistan House in London, said a statement issued today. The dinner was attended by the Deputy Speaker House of Commons Nusrat Ghani, Yasmin Qureshi (MP), Lord Qurban Hussain, Baroness Nosheen Mubarak, Lord Zameer Chaudhry, Baroness Sayeeda Warsi, Baroness Shaista Gohir, Mohammad Afzal Khan (MP), Naseem Shah (MP), Imran Hussain (MP), Tahir Ali (MP), Zubair Ahmed (MP), Adnan Hussain (MP), Mohammad Yasin (MP) and Ayoub Khan (MP). Dar informed the audience that during the Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) government from 2013 to 2017, terrorism was contained at an immense cost of blood and national exchequer. However, the previous government's policy of appeasing and rehabilitating extremist groups, such as the Tehreek-e-Taliban (TTP), and the release of over 100 hardened terrorists, led to a resurgence of terrorism, he noted.

The nation has been reeling under rising violent attacks since the Taliban rulers returned to power in Afghanistan in 2021, particularly in the bordering provinces of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP) and Balochistan. The two most vulnerable provinces saw a sharp rise in deadly attacks last month, according to data from the Pak Institute for Peace Studies (PIPS). The digital database of security incidents managed by the Islamabad-based think-tank suggested an alarming situation as the number of attacks jumped from 38 in July to 59 in August. These incidents included 29 attacks in KP, 28 in Balochistan, and two in Punjab. The most recent and deadliest among the 28 attacks in the southwestern province resulted in 57 deaths and injuries to another 84 people. Meanwhile, the deputy premier briefed the British Pakistani lawmakers on the government's roadmap to economic revival. He recalled that during the Nawaz Sharif-led government from 2013 to 2017, Pakistan had grown to the world's 24th-largest economy and was projected to become a member of the G20. "However, political instability, beginning in 2018, had derailed Pakistan's economic trajectory," he regretted. Dar stressed that the government was committed to putting Pakistan back on the road to economic growth and development that the country had been charting in 2017. "The difficult and politically unpopular measures taken by the recent govt are now beginning to bear fruit," he said.

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