



Islamabad POST

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Saudi Arabia will not recognize Israel without Palestinian state: MBS

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Russian DPM meets PM

Pakistan keen to expand trade coop with Russia: PM

Welcoming the delegation, the prime minister said that he looked forward to welcoming his Russian counterpart Mikhail Mishustin to Islamabad next month

ANSAR M BHATTI

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Thursday said that Pakistan was keen to expand trade, economic, energy, connectivity and security cooperation with Russia. The prime minister, talking to Russia's Deputy Prime Minister Alexei Overchuk, who called on him here, conveyed that Pakistan considered strengthening relations with Russia as an important priority of Pakistan's foreign policy, according to a PM Office press release. Welcoming the delegation, the prime minister said that he looked forward to welcoming his Russian counterpart Mikhail Mishustin to Islamabad next month. Recalling his "very fruitful" discussion with President Vladimir Putin in July earlier this year and conveyed his thanks to President Putin for sending the high-level delegation to discuss expansion of bilateral cooperation. DPM Overchuk thanked the PM for the warm welcome and reiterated Russia's resolve to deepen relations with Pakistan. He characterized Pakistan-Russia relations as constructive and mutually beneficial. The two sides agreed to maintain regular contacts. The prime minister also witnessed signing of an MoU between Russia and Pakistan, which signifies the shared understanding and desire of the two countries to further strengthen mutually advantageous cooperation in all areas of shared interest, especially trade, investment, energy, IT, agriculture, science & technology and education.

Pakistan, Russia vow to boost economic ties

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan and Russia have reiterated their commitment to expanding trade and economic ties, along with enhancing regional connectivity, to strengthen bilateral relations. Both sides underscored the importance of fostering mutually beneficial cooperation in key sectors such as agriculture, food security, business, education, railways, science and technology, and promoting stronger people-to-people connections. This was discussed during a meeting between President Asif Ali Zardari and the visiting Deputy Prime Minister of Russia, Mr Alexei Overchuk, who along with members of his delegation called on the President, at Aiwan-e-Sadr, on Thursday. Welcoming the Russian Deputy Prime Minister, the President stressed the importance of exploring possibilities for barter trade, in addition to improving connectivity to strengthen economic relations between the two nations. He called for easing visa regulations and increasing connectivity through railways and direct flights to facilitate and enhance people-to-people and business-to-business contacts. During the meeting, it was highlighted that there was great scope to increase bilateral cooperation in the agriculture sector. It was emphasised that there was enormous potential to undertake joint ventures in the agricultural sector for the mutual benefit of the two countries. It was also informed that a 75-member business delegation from Pakistan would visit Russia in October to explore avenues for business and economic cooperation.

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ISLAMABAD: Deputy Prime Minister of Russian Federation Alexei Overchuk calls on Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif. - DNA

Tribunal case IHC nullifies ECP's decision

The court sent the matter back to the ECP while directing the latter to come up with another verdict

MEHTAB PIRZADA

ISLAMABAD: The Islamabad High Court on Thursday nullified the Election Commission of Pakistan's (ECP) decision to change IHC Justice Tariq Mehmood Jahangiri. IHC Chief Justice Aamer Farooq announced reserved verdict of the case pertaining to change of election tribunal and the Election Act Amendment Bill. The court sent the matter back to the ECP while directing the latter to come up with another verdict. Justice Farooq also annulled the order of the ECP to appoint Justice Shakoor Paracha as a judge of the election tribunal.

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UAE delegation calls on Ishaq Dar

DNA

ISLAMABAD: A high ranking UAE delegation led by CEO of Shipping and Transportation, Abu Dhabi Ports Amir Maghami, called on DPM/FM Ishaq Dar to discuss investment opportunities in Pakistan, particularly in the aviation sector. Both sides discussed ways and means to enhance bilateral cooperation. Dar assured the delegation of full support. He assured them that the government had made elaborate arrangements to protect the foreign investments.

Writes letter to ECP

SC ruling can't be implemented after Election Act: Ayaz

In letter to ECP, Ayaz Sadiq says independent returned candidates can't be allowed to switch parties after new law

KHAYAM ABBASI

ISLAMABAD: Days after the Supreme Court issued clarification on the reserved seats verdict, National Assembly Speaker Ayaz Sadiq said that the apex court's July 12 ruling is now "incapable of implementation" after the amendments to Election Act 2017. In what it called a major victory for Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI), a 13-member full bench of the top court on July 12 ruled that the Imran Khan-founded party was eligible for the allocation of reserved seats for women and non-Muslims in the national and provincial assemblies. Justice Mansoor Ali Shah announced the 8-5 majority verdict, nullifying the Peshawar High Court's (PHC) order wherein it had upheld the Election Commission of

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Constitutional courts a must for judicial reforms: Bilawal

SAIFULLAH ANSAR

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) chairman Bilawal Bhutto Zardari has stressed the need for a constitutional court to reform the judicial system. Speaking to representatives of lawyers' fraternity, he highlighted judicial reforms had been a longstanding demand of the PPP. Bilawal praised lawyers for resisting the dictatorship, recalling their role in defeating Musarraf's regime. He noted that his mother,

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Pak-US ties crucial for regional stability: Biden

Biden's statement comes as Ambassador Rizwan Saeed Sheikh presented Letter of Credence at Blair House

FOREIGN DESK

WASHINGTON: United States President Joe Biden has emphasized on the significance of Washington's ties with Islamabad for "regional stability and security", as he received the 'Letter of Credence' from Pakistan's Ambassador to the US, Rizwan Saeed Sheikh. According to a statement released by the Pakistan Embassy in the US on Wednesday, Sheikh presented Biden with the credentials at a ceremony at the Blair House - the US president's official guest house - in Washington, DC. "The relationship between our two countries remains important for regional stability and



security. We appreciate US-Pakistan cooperation on countering terrorist threats," said Biden during the ceremony. The US president maintained that the two countries share "a desire to build upon our

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Briefs

'Form 45 holds no value against votes'

The most important evidence in elections was votes, not Form 45, he said

COURT REPORTER

ISLAMABAD: The Supreme Court of Pakistan has rejected a petition for a recount and allegations of bias against returning officers in the PB-14 constituency. The petition was filed by Ghulam Rasool of Pakistan Peoples' Party (PPP), challenging the victory of Mahmood Khan from Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N). The case involved a request to recount votes from seven out of 96 polling stations. The chief justice asked the petitioner's lawyer how they determined the results were incorrect.

Fawad sees govt's ouster within 45 days

Expresses support for lawyers and judiciary in constitutional bill case

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Former federal minister Fawad Chaudhry said on Thursday the government would be sent packing in coming 45 days. He made these remarks while speaking to reporters outside the office of the Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) after his hearing in the ECP contempt case. "I fully support the lawyers movement, the nation is standing with the lawyers and judiciary. Only senior-most judge will be the chief justice. Constitutional amendments are just for the personal objectives and nothing is being done for Pakistan," he reiterated.

Praises positive role of JUI

Constitutional package in fact martial law: Omar NA opposition leader casts doubts over constitutional court saying any kind of "super court" won't be acceptable

FAISAL SHEIKH

ISLAMABAD: As the coalition government and the opposition intensified their parliamentary battle for the contentious judicial package, Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) leader and the Opposition Leader in the National Assembly Omar Ayub Khan claimed on Thursday that "martial law would have been imposed in the country had the constitutional amendment bill been passed". The government pushed the proposed constitutional package amid speculation about a potential extension in the tenure of Chief Justice of Pakistan (CJP) Qazi Faez Isa, who is set to retire in October this year, following the PTI's request last month for the early issuance of a notification regarding the appointment of the next top judge. "[Federal Law Minister] Azam Nazeer Tarar and [PPP Chairman] Bilawal Bhutto know nothing about the draft amendments," claimed Ayub speaking to journalists outside the parliament.

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Constitutional package 'not possible' without Fazl's support: Irfan

"As soon as Maulana Fazl is satisfied, the constitutional amendments will be tabled," says senior PML-N leader

STAFF REPORT

ISLAMABAD: Senior Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) Senator Irfan Siddiqui has said that the constitutional amendments will not be possible without Jamiat Ulama-e-Islam Fazl (JUI-F) chief Maulana Fazlur Rehman's support. Senator Siddiqui's

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TTP emerging as umbrella body for other terrorist groups

While some of our friends may believe that they are only threatened by Daesh, they should also be concerned by the threat they could confront from a strengthened TTP in the not too distant future," Ambassador Munir Akram warned the 15-member Council during its debate in the situation in Afghanistan

NEWS DESK

NEW YORK: A top Pakistani diplomat Wednesday told the U.N. Security Council that the Tehrik-e-Taliban (TTP), which has Afghan rulers' protection, was emerging as an umbrella organization for other terrorist groups, whose objectives, he said, were the destabilization of Afghanistan's neighbours. "While some of our friends may believe that they are only threatened by Daesh, they should also be concerned by the threat they could confront from a strengthened TTP in the not too distant future," Ambassador Munir Akram warned the 15-member Council during its debate in the situation in Afghanistan. Pakistan, he said, will take national action, cooperating with regional and international organizations to eliminate TTP's threat. "The TTP (which we in Pakistan call Fitna Al Khawari) is an organization of special concern to Pakistan and should be of concern to the entire region and the world," the Pakistani envoy said, while giving details of its deadly cross-border attacks that resulted in the deaths of hundreds of civilians and soldiers. Even three years after the Taliban assumed the reins of power in Afghanistan, the situation contin-

Terror incidents on rise in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa

Amongst the victim 103 police personnel were killed and 154 other injured

SHAMIM SHAHID

PESHAWAR: Terror and violent incidents are on rise in almost of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa during current calendar year whereas the CTD police reported killing of 337 and injuring 616 others till end of August. Amongst the victim 103 police personnel were killed and 154 other injured. According to report amongst them killed 103 and 159 injured are civilians. As many as 49 killed and 124 injured are personnel of Frontier Corps killed during eight months. Most of violent acts and casualties included 63 occurred in Dera Ismael Khan from where Chief Minister Ali Amin, Governor Faisal Karim Kundi and Inspector General Police Akhtar Hayat are also being. The CTD report made public on the day when Pakistan's Permanent Representative to UN has raised the increasing terrorist threat emanating from Afghanistan. He alleged that banned TTP expanding its influence with the support of the Afghan interim government. Addressing the UN Security Council Muneer Akram said that banned TTP has become the largest

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ues to be dire and deeply concerning, Ambassador Akram said. There will be no normalization "until the fundamental issues that trouble Afghanistan are addressed - terrorism, human rights, political inclusion, illegal Afghan migration and the problem of Afghan refugees." "Terrorism within and from Afghanistan poses the single most serious threat to the country, to the region and to the world, he said, highlighting a recent United Nations report describing TTP as "the largest terrorist group" in that country which receives growing support from Taliban rulers to conduct cross-border attacks in Pakistan. "While the AIG is fighting ISIL-K i.e. (Daesh) - without complete success so far - other terrorist groups such as Al-Qaeda, and the TTP and others, are not only present in Afghanistan; they appear to have been provided safe havens and protection by the AIG (Afghan Interim Government)." At the same time, Ambassador Akram reaffirmed Pakistan's dedication to supporting a peaceful and stable Afghanistan, echoing the shared aspirations of its neighboring countries and the international community for greater political inclusivity in Afghanistan. Pakistan, he said, firmly believes

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Minister stresses optimal use of resources for Afghan refugees

DNA

KARACHI: Minister for States and Frontier Regions, Kashmir Affairs, and Gilgit Baltistan, Engr Amir Muqam, emphasized the need for optimal utilization of resources to effectively achieve the objectives of the Commissionerate of Afghan Refugees. Speaking at a meeting held at the office of the Commissioner of Afghan Refugees in Karachi, Muqam urged the international community to increase funding and support to meet the growing needs of Afghan refugees, which require substantial resources, according to a news release on Thursday. "We look forward to continuing our collaboration to ensure the safety and dignity of refugees within our borders," the Minister stated.

During the meeting, Commissioner Afghan Refugees, Karachi, Hamood ur Rehman, provided the Minister with a comprehensive briefing. The Minister was informed about various projects executed, funding details, and new initiatives recommended for implementation in Sindh.

Four women killed in road mishap

ISLAMABAD: At least four women were killed and eight badly injured when an over-speeding truck ran over a Mehndi ceremony being held at the roadside in district Toba Tek Singh's tehsil Gojra on late Wednesday night. According to details, an eye witness said the truck was laden with gravel when it suddenly appeared on Jhang Road and crushed the participants in the ceremony, a private news channel reported. Rescue teams reported that the deceased women have been identified as Yasmin, Asma, Nimra, and Nisha. Five injured were taken to THQ Hospital Gojra, while three were shifted to Allied Hospital Faisalabad. The condition of the three injured is reported to be critical.—APP

Alhamra set to host two-day kids' Carnival

LAHORE: The Lahore Arts Council (Alhamra) is all set to host a spectacular two-day Kids' Carnival at the Alhamra Arts Centre.

According to the details, the carnival will be held on September 21-22, 2024, this exciting event promises to be a magical experience for children and families, blending entertainment with education. The carnival will offer various activities to ignite young imaginations, including thrilling games, animated movies, storytelling sessions, puppet theater and mesmerizing magic shows. Families can enjoy live face painting, a particular gaming zone and a dedicated play area, creating endless opportunities for fun. Various stalls will also be set up, making this a truly interactive experience for everyone, where families can engage and participate in the fun. Executive Director Alhamra, Sarah Rashid, expressed her enthusiasm for the event said that "At Alhamra—



Russian delegation led by Russian Deputy Minister for Energy and Deputy Minister for Economic Development meeting with Pakistani delegation led by Minister for Petroleum Musadik Malik. — APP

Pak blue economy could generate over \$100b in revenue

STAFF REPORT

KARACHI: The British Deputy High Commission in Karachi Sarah Mooney said that incorporating blue economy in the national economy is of utmost importance for a country like Pakistan. She stated this while addressing as a chief guest at a World Maritime Day 2024 seminar organized by the Directorate of Electronic Media and Publication (DEMP) in collaboration with Maritime Training Institute at a local hotel on Thursday. Sarah Mooney said that Pakistan has a coastline of 1001 km, which is home to many different species of marine animals, plants and mineral resources. She said the blue economy industry had not been used up to its full potential, while it has the potential to generate a revenue of more than \$100bn. Director General Press Information Department PID Erum Tanveer said that Pakistan's unique geographic position-bridging the East and West, with warm, deep-water ports and a 1,000 km-long coastline-places us at the center of global maritime affairs. It also makes us acutely aware of the challenges we face in today's rapidly changing climate. She said Climate change is a global challenge with profound implications for

our oceans, coastlines, and communities. As a responsible member of the international community, Pakistan has introduced several national policies like Blue economy initiatives including sustainable fisheries, marine renewable energy and marine bio-diversity conservation to safeguard our environment and promote sustainable development. The National Forest Policy of 2015, for instance, aims to increase our forest cover and mitigate the impacts of climate change, in line with our commitments to the Paris Agreement and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). DG PID said the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting plays a pivotal role in supporting these national efforts by fostering an informed society and advancing media development. Through the Press Information Department (PID) and the Directorate of Electronic Media and Publications (DEMP), we disseminate vital information on government policies, achievements, and programs, building a positive narrative about Pakistan both at home and abroad. DEMP is instrumental in producing, archiving, and distributing documentaries and publications that serve as valuable resources for the global community. Our state-of-the-art News Analy-

sis Center monitors over 50 TV channels simultaneously, ensuring accurate and timely dissemination of information. Mentioning the documentary played on the occasion, she said we proudly launch a new documentary that underscores the significance of preserving our mangrove ecosystems a critical part of our coastal heritage. Mangroves act as natural barriers against storms, protect against coastal erosion, and serve as vital carbon sinks, playing a crucial role in global climate change mitigation. This documentary is perfectly aligned with the theme of World Maritime Day, reinforcing the twin pillars of safety and sustainability. She extended her gratitude to the Pakistan Branch of The Nautical Institute, the Institute of Chartered Shipbrokers, the Chartered Institute of Logistics and Transport, and the Pakistan Merchant Navy Officers' Association for their efforts in organizing the seminar. On the occasion recorded video messages of international personalities belonging to the Maritime sector were also played. In his message, Secretary General International Maritime Organization (IMO) Arsenio Dominguez said that as we prepare to observe World Maritime Day 2024 on September 26, 2024, it is a perfect moment

to reflect on and celebrate this year's theme: "Navigating the Future: Safety First!" This theme underscores the crucial importance of maritime safety and the tireless efforts of the International Maritime Organization (IMO) in ensuring that global shipping remains secure and efficient. He said maritime safety is not just a regulatory requirement but a fundamental aspect of the global economy. Every day, the IMO works diligently to establish and enforce standards that safeguard the safety of ships and their crews across all corners of the world. Given that more than 80% of the world's goods are transported by sea annually, the impact of these safety measures cannot be overstated. The effectiveness of the IMO's initiatives is evident in the smooth and secure movement of goods that facilitate our daily lives. Arsenio added that a testament to the advancements in maritime safety is the impressive fleet of modern vessels that operate under the stringent guidelines set forth by the IMO. He said on World Maritime Day, it is important to recognize and celebrate the myriad achievements in maritime safety that he has realized through the collaborative efforts of the IMO, national maritime authorities, and the global maritime community. This day offers

an opportunity to appreciate the advancements made in ship design, safety protocols, an emergency response systems, all of which contribute to a safer maritime environment. Arsenio Dominguez said that furthermore, as we celebrate these accomplishments, let us also acknowledge the ongoing challenges and the need for continuous improvement. The maritime industry is constantly evolving, and with new technologies and emerging risks maintaining a focus on safety remains paramount. By embracing innovation and fostering a culture of safety, we can navigate the future with confidence, ensuring that maritime transport remains secure for generations to come. "Let us all join in honouring the significant contributions of the International Maritime Organization and the many dedicated professionals within the maritime industry", the Secretary General IMO concluded. On the occasion the messages of Chief Executive of the Nautical Institute, Capt. John Lloyd and the President of the Institute of Chartered Shipbrokers, Kevin Shakesheff were also played. In his keynote speech CEO Seacare Pakistan, Vice Chairman, Capt. Ali Asghar Khan highlighted the importance of Maritime Day.

Global artists to join Sindh's cultural celebration

ISLAMABAD: Chief Secretary Sindh Syed Asif Hyder Shah Thursday said that the World Culture Festival will leave a lasting legacy, promoting cultural exchange, preserving traditional arts and inspiring creativity which will be a benchmark for future cultural festivals in Pakistan. Talking to private news channels, he explained that the 35-day festival will commence on September 26 where the festival will provide a platform for local artists to showcase their talents alongside international performers. This opportunity not only will further boost their confidence but also expose them to global audiences, paving the way for future collaborations and cultural exchange, he added. By bringing together artists from 40 countries, the festival fosters global connections and inspires a shared appreciation for cultural heritage, he said. The World Culture Festival Karachi will revitalise the city's cultural landscape, cementing its status as a cultural hub, he said, adding, that this event will put Karachi on the global cultural map and will attract cultural enthusiasts.—APP

Advisor on health briefed on the Sehat Card Program

STAFF REPORTER

PESHAWAR: Advisor to Chief Minister Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP) on Health, Advocate Ihtisham Ali was briefed on the Sehat Card Program by Chief Executive Officer Dr Riaz Tanoli. The briefing was attended by Special Secretary Health Habibullah, CEO Sehat Card Dr Riaz Tanoli, and other relevant officials. During the briefing, the Health Advisor was informed about the treatment packages offered under the Sehat Card Program. The Secondary Care Package provides Rs 40,000 per person and Rs 20,000 per family, while the Tertiary Care Package offers free treatment up to Rs 400,000. The Advisor was also briefed that Rs10.5 million families in KP were receiving free treatment at 753 public and private hospitals under the Sehat Card Program. So far, Rs. 88 billion had been spent on the free treatment of 3,529,487 individuals. It was further highlighted that the provincial government was bearing monthly expenses of Rs. 2.5 billion and annual costs of Rs 30 billion for free treatment under the program.

Efforts afoot for welfare of policemen: RPO Dera

DERA ISMAIL KHAN: Regional Police Officer (RPO) Jehanzab Nazir Khan has said that tangible measures are being taken for the welfare of policemen of the region. "Measures are being taken for the policing matters as well as your welfare on urgent basis," the RPO observed while addressing a police darbar held at Ijaz Shaheed Police Lines which serves as an open house for police personnel to voice their concerns to the higher authorities District Police Officer (DPO) Nasir Mehmood and other officers and personnel from all units attended the forum. According to a police spokesman, during the darbar held in light of directives of Inspector General of Police (IGP) Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Akhtar Hayat Khan, officers and personnel of various ranks presented their individual and collective issues. The RPO listened to police personnel's issues and some of which were resolved on the spot, while for resolution of more complex issues, instructions were given to the DPO Dera to address them promptly. The RPO Dera said Dera Ismail Khan was a crucial region as far as maintaining law and order was concerned, where the police were facing numerous challenges. He also praised the bravery and services of the police and urged them to continue performing their duties with the same high spirit of honesty and hard-work and dedication. He urged officers to value their profession and earn a place in the hearts of the public through their contributions. He said that the police force was an organized entity, having no place for any act that breached the prescribed rules and regulations. In this regard, he stressed the importance of adhering to the instructions regarding social media issued by the IGP. At the conclusion of the darbar, attending officers and personnel raised slogans of "Pakistan Zindabad" and "Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Police Zindabad," expressing their commitment to continue their services with integrity and dedication.—DNA

Child protection unit inaugurated in Mardan

DNA

MARDAN: The Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Child Protection and Welfare Commission (KPCPWC), in collaboration with UNICEF, achieved a significant milestone with the inauguration of the Child Protection Unit in Mardan. The inauguration ceremony brought together key stakeholders, senior government officials, representatives from civil society, academia, adolescents, and children from District Mardan to mark this momentous occasion on Thursday. District Officer Social Welfare, Special Education and Women Empowerment Mardan Jamal Shah highlighted the significance of the Child Protection Unit and its role in safe-

guarding the rights and welfare of children in the region. Program Manager UNICEF Peshawar Wisam Hazem thanked the KP government for taking the initiative to inaugurate the Child Protection Unit in Mardan district and congratulated the district administration and KP Child Protection and Welfare Commission for their leadership in establishing the unit. He said it would contribute to strengthening the child protection system in the district. Hazem reaffirmed UNICEF's continued commitment to supporting these efforts. Sohail Ahmad, Child Protection Specialist from the UNICEF Peshawar emphasized that creating a safe, nurturing environment for children requires sustained and collective action by the community, government,

and partners. He further elaborated on UNICEF's long-standing support to the KPCPWC, aligning with global standards and frameworks on child rights. He also stressed that strengthening child protection systems requires a holistic, multi-sectoral approach, integrating services across various sectors such as health, education, social welfare, and justice. He commended the provincial government for its commitment, particularly for investment of public funds to establish 21 Child Protection Units across the province. The event included enlightening sessions on the journey of Child Protection System development in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, presented by Ijaz Muhammad Khan, Deputy Chief Protection Officer of KP Child Protec-

tion and Welfare Commission. He provided an overview of the journey of the child protection system in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, focusing on the key legislative and structural advancements and informed about child protection courts, the prohibition of corporal punishment, and the establishment of a toll-free helpline (1121) for child protection. He said that the child protection units have registered over 32,000 children at risk and provided psychosocial support to thousands. Member Provincial Assembly and Chairman of the District Development Advisory Committee Zarshad Khan, was the chief guest of the inauguration ceremony. He thanked the KPCPWC and UNICEF for playing an important role in ensuring child protection at the district

and community level. He also appreciated the role of child protection unit Mardan, and extended his services. He said that this initiative is a testament to the dedication and commitment of the KPCPWC and the Ministry of Social Welfare to create a safe and protective environment for all children in the province. He further added that the successful inauguration of the child protection unit in Mardan reflects a significant step toward creating a safer and more secure environment for children in the region, underlining the importance of protecting children from violence, exploitation, neglect, abuse, and harmful practices. The event concluded with a ribbon-cutting ceremony, followed by a guided tour of the child protection unit for the guests.



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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

Hotels & Restaurants



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



Turkish Airlines.....8494949



Emergency

Rescue (Police).....15
Bomb Disposal.....15
Fire Services Rawalpindi/ Islamabad.....1122 & 16
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& Rescue Services.4451122
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Motorway Police.9270601-20
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Rawalpindi.....9270601-20



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



Departments

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

Water Tank

Islamabad.....0321-5744480

IWCCI holds an expo to empower businesswomen

MAHNOOR ANSAR

ISLAMABAD: The Islamabad Women's Chamber of Commerce & Industry (IWCCI) successfully hosted the 6th Islamabad Expo 2024, a landmark event that brought together women entrepreneurs from 20 cities across Pakistan to showcase their talent, innovation, and creativity. Held at the Pak China Friendship Center, the two-day expo saw participation from women-owned businesses from Lahore, Multan, Bahawalpur, Peshawar, Abbottabad, Haripur, Mardan, Karachi, Hyderabad, Quetta, Faisalabad, Gilgit, Sialkot, Hunza, Dera Ghazi Khan, Skardu, Jhelum, and more. The Islamabad Expo 2024 was evidence of the growing entrepreneurial spirit among businesswomen in Pakistan. Hundreds of exhibitors displayed various creative crafts and innovative products, highlighting the country's cultural richness and diversity. Visitors experienced everything from handcrafted textiles and jewellery to modern fashion and artisanal goods. Women from remote regions such as Gilgit, Hunza, and Skardu showcased their traditional crafts. At the same time, urban entrepreneurs brought cutting-edge solutions in beauty, technology, and lifestyle products. The Expo featured panel discussions on financial empowerment for women entrepreneurs, with participation from leading financial institutions, including Askari Bank, Bank of Khyber, Jazz, and Care. These sessions provided valuable insights into financial literacy, banking solutions, and the importance



of digital payment platforms, particularly for small and medium-sized businesses. The Expo attracted thousands of visitors who came to explore the diverse products, engage with women entrepreneurs, and participate in insightful discussions. The event underscored the importance of community support and networking in advancing the role of women in the economy. The Expo was a

shining example of IWCCI's continued efforts to empower women entrepreneurs. MNA Romina Khurshid, President FPCCI Atif Ikram Sheikh, and President ICCI Ahsan Zafar Bakhtawari inaugurated the event. At the occasion, they said that women's empowerment is a noble cause and that the efforts of the founder president of IWCCI Samina Fazil, spanned over decades,

are highly laudable. They said that every woman has the right to exercise her rights and to be protected from violence and harmful practices in both the development and humanitarian contexts. Activities that promote women's self-worth, right to determine their choices, access to opportunities and resources, right and power to control their lives both within and outside

the home, and ability to influence social change are very necessary, the speakers added. In Pakistan, gaps in empowerment are seen at the earliest stages of a girl's life. At every step, girls, adolescents, and women face challenges and obstacles in making their own choices and determining their path in the lives they wish to live, which must be changed, they said.

Iqra University showcases future of fashion at thesis display

ISLAMABAD: Iqra University's Islamabad H-9 Campus came alive with creativity and innovation on Thursday as it unveiled The Final Textile Thesis Display 2024. This highly anticipated event celebrates the remarkable talent and craftsmanship of the graduating students from the esteemed Fashion and Design Department. The display, a culmination of four years of rigorous training and artistic exploration, showcases a diverse array of visionary collections that reflect the students' unique perspectives and creative prowess. The event was graced by distinguished jurors from the industry, including Sana Akhtar, CEO of Potterywheel Design House and a visiting faculty member at several art universities, and Parbhat Amsal, a seasoned educator with over 20 years of teaching experience in the twin cities. Sana Khan, Head of the Fashion and Design Department, warmly welcomed the jurors, providing them with exclusive insights into the students' work. "We are immensely proud to present the exceptional talent of our graduating students," said Khan. "Their creativity and dedication have culminated in an extraordinary display of fashion artistry, paving the way for their promising futures in the industry." The opening day of The Final Textile Thesis Display 2024 attracted a diverse audience, including students, parents, and community members, all eager to witness the innovative designs and exceptional craftsmanship on display. Shabahaat Khan, Course Instructor for the Final Collection, accompanied the guests, offering detailed briefings on the showcased collections. APP

COMSTech organizes webinar on "A one health approach to Zoonotic outbreaks"

DNA

ISLAMABAD : COMSTech organized webinar on "A one health approach to zoonotic outbreaks" conducted by Dr. Tariq Mahmood Ali, Dean of Social Sciences at the Health Services Academy (HSA), Islamabad on Thursday. Dr. Tariq's talk delved into the critical concept of "One Health," a collaborative approach that emphasizes the interconnectedness of human, animal, and environmental health. This approach is crucial in addressing zoonotic outbreaks - infectious diseases that jump from animals to humans, such as rabies, SARS, and COVID-19. Dr.

Tariq introduced the One Health framework, highlighting the question of how increased human-animal interaction can lead to significant health crises. He explored the multidisciplinary strategy, encompassing preparedness, alert, response, and recovery, for effective outbreak management. He defined public health and its role in preventing disease and promoting well-being for all. Dr. Tariq analysed the four phases of outbreak response - preparedness, alert, response, and recovery - emphasizing the importance of collaboration across human, animal, and environmental health sectors. Dr. Tariq explored the critical role of animal

health in managing zoonotic outbreaks. He highlighted how veterinary services play a vital role in preventing and controlling diseases transmitted between animals and humans, including those from livestock, companion animals, and wildlife. Challenges like antimicrobial resistance and global trade were discussed, along with the need for coordinated action across human, environmental, and animal health sectors. He emphasized the importance of preparedness, early detection, effective communication, and collaboration between public and private veterinary services. He explored the implementation of the One

Health approach and emphasized the need for coordinated, cross-sectoral collaboration to effectively prevent and manage zoonotic outbreaks. Dr. Tariq concluded by acknowledging existing challenges and advocating for continued coordination and integration across sectors. Dr. Tariq is a distinguished academic and public sector professional with over 20 years of experience. He holds a PhD in Economics and degrees in Statistics, Mathematics, and Economics, and has published extensively in peer-reviewed journals. More than fifty participants from different OIC member states participated in the webinar.

Transporters, consumers welcome petrol price reduction

ISLAMABAD: In a welcome move, the government's decision to slash petroleum prices and introduce discounted fares of transports brought smiles to the faces of citizens nationwide on Thursday where mostly citizens called for the continuation of these measures to alleviate the financial burden on the general public. The government's decision to reduce petrol prices has been widely welcomed by transporters and consumers across the country, a report aired by PTV news channel said. Transporters have assured prompt implementation of reduced fares, while consumers are thrilled about the decreased financial burden, said a citizen. Industry experts predict that the decision will stimulate economic growth, increase consumer spending and will benefit the transportation sector. "This is a great decision by the government. We will immediately implement reduced fares to benefit commuters." Rahim Khan, President, Karachi Transport Association said. "We appreciate the government's move to reduce petrol prices. This will help increase our profit margins." M. Iqbal, Transporter, Lahore added. "The price slash will enable us to provide affordable transportation to citizens. We thank the government." Secretary, Karachi Transport Association added. "This decision will boost our business and provide relief to consumers. We welcome the move," another transporter in Islamabad said. "Reduced petrol prices will increase our competitiveness in the market." Tahir Hussain, transporter, Islamabad mentioned. "I'm thrilled about the petrol price reduction. My daily commute will become affordable." Anna Ali, Student from Islamabad said. Consumers in Lahore also expressed gratitude, stating that the price slash would reduce their daily expenses and it has reduced 10 to 12 percent transport fares. Residents in Islamabad while appreciating the government's efforts said that transporters have reduced the daily commuter fares which is a positive move for the economy. "Finally, some relief, the fare cut will help me manage my expenses better." Nadia Ali, Housewife commented. "This decrease in fares is a welcome move. It will make my daily travel more affordable." Sara Ahmed, working lady in Islamabad added. "The 12% fare reduction will save me Rs. 500 on my monthly trips to Lahore." Amir Shahzad, a businessman added. "The decreased fares will make education more accessible for students like me." Ali Hassan, a student of Rawalpindi said. —DNA

IRSA releases 202,100 cusecs water

ISLAMABAD :Indus River System Authority (IRSA) on Thursday released 202,100 cusecs water from various rim stations with inflow of 143,900 cusecs. According to the data released by IRSA, water level in River Indus at Tarela Dam was 1542.12 feet and was 144.12 feet higher than its dead level of 1,398 feet. Water inflow and outflow in the dam was recorded as 81,500 cusecs and 110,000 cusecs respectively. The water level in River Jhelum at Mangla Dam was 1225.25 feet, which was 177.25 feet higher than its dead level of 1,050 feet. The inflow and outflow of water was recorded 15,300 cusecs and 45,000 cusecs respectively. The release of water at Kalabagh, Taunsa, Guddu and Sukkur was recorded as 114,800, 111,400, 91,200 and 37,400 cusecs respectively. Similarly, from River Kabul, a total of 21,700 cusecs of water released at Nowshera and 5,000 cusecs released from River Chenab at Marala. —APP

National economy inching towards 'growth' from stability

ISLAMABAD: Coordinator to the Prime Minister on Commerce and Industry Rana Ihsan Afzal Khan Thursday said the national economy had begun to show steady progress due to the prudent policies introduced by the incumbent government, marking a shift from stability to 'growth.' "All economic indicators are moving in the right direction," he said while addressing a news conference after the Pakistan Stock Exchange (PSX) 100 Index gained over 1,500 points, surging to 81,900, which he called a 'superb performance' and a 'big achievement.' He noted that the stock exchange's positive trajectory reflected market-based sentiments and the confidence of investors and entrepreneurs in government policies. "This indicates that the agreement with the IMF will be achieved successfully, hopefully by September 25, and the national economy will continue on its growth trajectory," he expressed confidence. The coordinator added that Pakistan's shift from 'stability' to 'positive' regarding its debt liability and external challenges was also being acknowledged by the world's top credit agencies like Fitch and Moody's. Sharing some official statistics, Ihsan Afzal said during the first two months of the current fiscal year, the country's export sector witnessed a remarkable increase, with textile and clothing exports rising by 13 percent year on year basis, IT services by 27 percent, and overall exports by 7.2 percent during July and August. During the same period, he said the country's remittances increased by 44 percent, reaching \$5.9 billion, which he termed a 'massive surge' reflecting the confidence of overseas Pakistanis in government policies. Similarly, he mentioned that the current account deficit declined remarkably, standing at \$0.2 billion, while the exchange rate against the dollar remained stable and fluctuated according to market trends. —DNA

PTA launches four-day training of trainers program

ISLAMABAD: The Pakistan Telecommunication Authority (PTA) launched a four-day "Training of Trainers" (ToT) program for officers from PTA, UNICEF, Telenor Pakistan, the National Commission on the Rights of Child (NCRC), and the NCERT. According to the news release, the initiative is part of a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) signed with UNICEF Pakistan and reflects PTA's commitment to Child Online Protection. The program aims to raise awareness about the online risks children face and equip officers with the tools to help parents effectively manage their safe children's digital activities. This training was conducted as part of an ongoing 10-day training program for 15 master trainers, who will train 210 facilitators to educate stu-

dents, parents, and teachers, promoting digital literacy and online safety. The training covered critical topics such as online safety, Dark Web threats, and responsible internet usage. Experts from TikTok and Tencent shared insights into safety tools and practices on their platforms. Addressing the training session, Dr. Khawar Siddique Khokhar, Member Compliance & Enforcement PTA, emphasized the importance of collective efforts to protect children in the digital space. He reaffirmed the PTA's commitment to providing parents and educators with the necessary tools to ensure children's online safety and promote responsible internet use. Member C&E PTA, UNICEF and Telenor representative also awarded the certificates to the participants.—APP

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Briefs

Police accelerate operation against unfit PSVs

DNA

RAWALPINDI: Rawalpindi district police on the directives of City Police Officer (CPO) Rawalpindi Syed Khalid Hamdani have accelerated their ongoing operation against unfit Public Service Vehicles (PSVs) and impounded 636 besides issuing challan slips to 4833. According to a police spokesman, Police under a grand operation launched near 25 days ago, were taking action in accordance with the law against the rules violators. He said that fines amounting to over Rs 5.2 million were imposed on the violators. Police were taking strict action in accordance with the law against unfit commercial vehicles, checking route permits and licenses of the drivers. The spokesman said that legal action was taken against 422 drivers for driving vehicles without licenses. The licenses of 27 drivers found guilty of negligence were cancelled, he said adding, 39 cases were also registered against drivers and the owners of public service vehicles. All possible steps were being taken to ensure safe travel on PSVs, he added. He said that the traveling time of the vehicles was also being checked. Legal action would be ensured against those endanger lives of the citizens, he said. The spokesman said that action would also be taken against the PSVs owners and bus terminal managers found guilty of negligence. The special squad of City Traffic Police is also ensuring checking of vehicles at bus terminals, he informed. An awareness campaign was also launched to educate the citizens and drivers, he added.

Marcil Stittner new Marriott GM

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Mr. Marcil Stittner as joined as the new General Manager of the Islamabad Marriott Hotel. With over 20 years of management experience in luxury hospitality, Marcil brings knowledge from renowned brands like InterContinental, Hilton, Starwood, and Hyatt Hotels. The management of the Marriott Hotel has welcomed the new General Manager.



Dengue death toll rises to 4 in Rawalpindi

RAWALPINDI: District Health Authority Rawalpindi has confirmed 4 deaths in the district due to dengue since last month. All the deaths were caused for late reporting to the relevant allied hospitals. Addressing to a media briefing here on Thursday, Dr. Asif Arbab Niazi, Chief Executive Officer (CEO) District Health Authority Rawalpindi confirmed the deaths saying the dengue outbreak has turned into endemic with gradual increase in the district. He appealed the citizens to follow dengue SOPs for the safety of life. "Covered water tanks, monitor health symptoms to timely report to symptoms and take hygienic measures", he said while highlighting the preventive measures. Giving details of the four casualties Dr. Asif said that Shayan, a 17 years of

UNESCO EE Net-Pakistan start-up readiness launched

The workshop's resource persons were Raza Abbas and Naureen Ghaffar, Managing Director of Agile Global Consultancy, Executive Committee Member of the Rawalpindi Chamber of Commerce and Industry, and an alumna of IoBM

FAISAL SHEIKH

ISLAMABAD: The Pakistan Chapter of the UNESCO Entrepreneurship Education Network (UNESCO EE-Net) launched the pilot Start-up Readiness Program. The program was held and conceptualized at the Shahjehan Syed Karim Incubation Center (SSKIC) at the Institute of Business Management (IoBM). The event featured a workshop on "Mindset Shift: Innovating with Purpose & Sparking Entrepreneurial Thinking", attended by students from leading public and private universities and TVET vocational institutions. Raza Abbas, Head of SSKIC-IoBM and the focal person for UNESCO EE-Net, highlighted the significance of the network, sharing that IoBM has the distinct honour of being appointed the national chapter of UNESCO EE-Net in Pakistan, the first of its kind in the country's history. The workshop's resource persons were Raza Abbas and Naureen Ghaffar, Managing Director of Agile Global Consultancy, Executive Committee Member of the Rawalpindi Chamber of Commerce and Industry, and an alumna of IoBM. Raza initiated the training session by sharing a video on the significance and the rules of high-performance teamwork. He set the foundation by introducing an activity where participants could develop a "purpose reservoir" to self-motivate and reflect during their



start-up journey. He also shared the effectuation framework for igniting entrepreneurial thinking, outlining its five principles. He inspired the importance of developing an agile mindset and discussed tools for cultivating an agile and purposeful mindset through 11 specific tools.

Naureen Ghaffar underscored the value of conducting individual SWOT analyses for business, after which groups of participants were formed to collaborate toward the common goal of business success. Dr. Imran Batada, Chief Digital Officer and Director CIT at

IoBM, was the Chief Guest. He was pleased to see an interactive audience, inspiring the participants by highlighting the opportunities available for start-ups, and he praised the excellent work of the SSKIC team. The Start-Up Readiness Pro-

gram is a game-changing initiative designed to improve the quality of start-ups in incubation centers and increase their retention throughout the start-up journey. The program consists of four interactive workshops running from September 14 to October 5, 2024.

Constitutional amendments increase political instability

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Former President of the Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry (ICCI), Dr. Shahid Rasheed Butt, said on Thursday that the issue of Constitutional amendments is increasing the level of political instability in the country. Intensifying political tensions can bring the economy that is recovering after a long time to its knees, he said. The development of the economy ought to be the primary priority, rather than politics, as the masses urgently need a break, he added. Shahid Rasheed Butt said in

a statement issued here today that the 24th International Monetary Fund program must not be derailed due to rising political temperatures. He said the government should stop efforts to get constitutional amendments approved as it increases political instability, and the political tussle can sink the recovering economy. Instead of making the country a political laboratory and a banana republic, the focus should be economic development, he stressed. Shahid Rashid Butt said that the draft of constitutional amendments was very controversial, due to which it has been rejected by the allies of the government and opposition, while lawyers

and other circles were raising their voices against it. Instead of manipulating for a consensus on this matter, the government should close this Pandora's Box. The business leader said the amendments against the constitution's basic features would cause harm instead of benefit. He noted that for the first time in the country's history, despite the government's weakness, the economy is getting stable, and its development journey may soon start. The inflation is decreasing, the rupee is appreciating, interest rates are being reduced, foreign exchange reserves are stable, and the current account is in surplus. Still, the public is yet to get

relief, he observed. He said that Nawaz Sharif was disqualified when the economy was growing rapidly, while Imran Khan was also removed when the growth rate was more than six percent. These measures resulted in political gains for some but affected the economy. The economy has not yet fully recovered from these blows, and presently, the economy is no longer in a position to withstand further shocks. Now, the current government is finding it difficult to accomplish some important tasks that those with smaller numbers and less strong support in the past could achieve.

Annual Mehfil-e-Milad held at Girls College G-10/4

ISLAMABAD: The annual Mehfil-e-Milad gathering was organized in Model College for girls postgraduate G10/4. Hundred of students from all sections, along with faculty, attend this auspicious gathering. Principal Prof. Sadia Abrar said that we have to include the biography of Sarkar du Alam Muhammad SAW and His Hosanna in our lives so that the world and the hereafter will be blessed to eliminate the gloom of darkness and ignorance, Prophet Muhammad Sallallahu Alayhe Wasallam came to this world. He brought the treasure of faith. To remove hypocrisy, he came as 'Truthful'. He came to eliminate wine. He came to restore the respect and dignity of women, the mother, daughter, and sister. He came to free the slaves undergoing hardships and cruelties. With the advent of prophet Muhammad Sallallahu Alayhe Wasallam, beams of brightness stretched across the world. Success can be achieved if prayer and recitation of the Holy Quran are included in the daily routine, then a person can not only avoid bad deeds, but this life becomes easier and Allah Almighty eases the difficulties of such a person. she added.—DNA

ANF foils attempt to smuggle drugs, weapons

RAWALPINDI: Anti-Narcotics Force (ANF) while conducting a raid in Karachi foiled an attempt to smuggle drugs and weapons and recovered 1200 grams charras, seven pistols and ammunition, said an ANF Headquarters spokesman here on Thursday. He informed that ANF conducted a raid at a courier office near Nursery Stop in Karachi and recovered 1200 grams hashish and weapons, concealed in electronic goods sent from Peshawar. The recovered weapons included five 9 mm pistols, two 30 bore pistols and 17 magazines with 55 rounds.—APP

ISSI to host moot on archeological heritage

ISLAMABAD: The Institute of Strategic Studies Islamabad (ISSI) will be hosting a One-Day International Conference, titled "Celebrating Pakistan's Ancient Archaeological and Civilisational Heritage", at ISSI on 30 September 2024. As the cradle of ancient civilisations, Pakistan boasts millennia-old, multi-layered heritage, including the Indus Valley Civilisation and the Buddhist Gandhara Civilisation. It is home to pre-historic cities of Mohenjo-Daro and Harappa and iconic archeological sites at Taxila, Swat and Takht-e-Bahi. While the Indus Valley civilisation was the contemporary of ancient Egyptian and Babylonian civilisations, the Buddhist Gandhara evolved with multiple influences and is known particularly for its distinctive iconography. With six archeological marvels designated as UNESCO World Heritage Sites, and a treasure trove of pre-historic and historic artefacts, Pakistan's incredible civilisational legacy is imprinted deep on the global cultural landscape. The International Conference will serve as a platform for insightful expert and policy discourse, focused on enhancing global awareness about Pakistan's rich and varied heritage and devising strategies for a range of objectives from improved conservation and preservation to promotion of sustainable tourism. The Conference sessions will explore archeological and cultural aspects of this unique heritage from technical and scholarly perspectives and contribute to enhanced understanding as well as interfaith dialogue and harmony. Additionally, the Conference participants will undertake comprehensive analysis of tourism models and international best practices that support local economies, better preserve cultural heritage, and offer enriching experiences for tourists from within and abroad, while promoting cross-cultural ties and dynamic people-to-people exchanges. By bringing together eminent international and Pakistani scholars.—DNA

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US political chaos

How much more dysfunctional and unstable does the United States need to get for global investors to lose confidence in the country's economy and markets? If the performance of the US stock market – which is up nearly 540 per cent since January 2009 and currently stands at a record high – is anything to go by, an awful lot more. Although volatile equity markets are a poor gauge of the underlying vulnerabilities of economies, investors have never taken political risks in the US seriously. This refusal to acknowledge political dysfunction and the threats to the rule of law and democracy stems from the role of the US dollar as the world's pre-eminent reserve currency and the dominance of the US Treasury bond market, the bedrock of the global financial system. Part of the "exorbitant privilege" of being able to issue staggering amounts of debt in its own currency – which accounts for nearly 60 per cent of global foreign reserves and is involved in almost 90 per cent of the world's foreign exchange transactions – is that the US is regarded as a safe haven. In fact, not only does the US benefit in times of uncertainty, it does so even when it is the source of the uncertainty. A good example is when S&P Global Ratings unexpectedly stripped the US of its coveted triple A credit rating in August 2011, partly because of the willingness of US politicians to play fast and loose with the country's strained public finances. Almost immediately after the downgrade, US government bonds rallied as investors continued to view Treasuries as a refuge in volatile markets. Although the haven credentials of US assets are still quite strong, advanced economies are riskier than they were 15-20 years ago. A debt crisis in the euro zone in 2011-12 spread like wildfire across southern Europe and nearly tore the bloc apart. However, the Rubicon-crossing moment was in 2016 when Britain unexpectedly voted to leave the European Union and Donald Trump stunned the world by winning the US presidential election. Given the dominant role of the US in the global economy and the long-held perception of the country as a beacon of democracy and freedom, the surge in populist nationalism in the US is far more consequential and alarming. As markets fixate on the scope for reductions in borrowing costs as the US Federal Reserve kicks off its interest rate easing cycle and speculation mounts over the outcome of November's presidential election, investors are missing the forest for the trees. How unruly could things get if Trump once again loses the election amid narrow defeats in a handful of key swing states and refuses to concede? These risks are downplayed or ignored on trading floors, partly because investors are notoriously bad at assessing and pricing political risk. Complacency, however, is a more important factor. Most investors believe the US economy and asset prices are resilient enough to cope with any threat to democracy and the rule of law. The fact that the political system survived four years of chaos under Trump only fuels their complacency. Yet the only reason the system remains intact is because polarisation and partisanship were not strong enough to allow Trump to overturn the 2020 election result. Today, the US political system might be even more dysfunctional and illegitimate in the eyes of voters. According to the findings of a new report by the World Justice Project, 46 per cent of Republicans and 27 per cent of Democrats said they would not consider November's election result legitimate if the other party's candidate won.

China, Africa and US hegemony

The aftermath of the Forum on China-Africa Cooperation (FOCAC) is clear: Washington's economic and diplomatic influence on the continent is set to wane even further. Beijing has backed a consensus to help African states increase "their influence and role in global governance," and 30 clean energy projects stand to deepen development cooperation in the coming years. In stark contrast, Washington doesn't have the diplomatic foresight, economic muscle, or investment potential to rival such a consensus. Instead, it insists that China is spreading misinformation across the Sahel to "undermine" so-called US influence. That influence was lost a long time ago through unwarranted sanctions, diplomatic meddling and military interference. Washington's present anxiety is set to grow as Beijing and African states ramp up their cooperation across a range of fields, regardless of what the US thinks. Look at China's desire to attract more African states to the 'BRICS' grouping. Washington is once again an outlier when it comes to the growing economic appeal, development potential, and multilateral allure of BRICS. More African engagement under the multilateral grouping could further reorient the continent's foreign policy away from US hegemonic designs. It could end up refocusing cooperation towards nations that truly prioritize Africa's sustainable development needs. China and Africa's joint support for an "orderly multipolar world" offers nuanced pushback against the historical injustices sustained under a US-dominated Western world order. From historical injustices to Africa's low-priority status in US foreign policy, Washington's blatant neglect of this mega-diverse continent is revealing its implications. The message is clear: more foreign interference on the continent will not be tolerated. Washington is also feeling the heat. It is pushing misinformation against China and Russia by painting both countries as a source of instability across civil society and African militaries. But it refuses to admit that blatant US military interference has been the real troubling factor. For instance, Washington was forced to withdraw all its troops from Niger this year, further weakening its claim that it is a positive force for counterterrorism cooperation in Africa. If the US has been a genuine partner with African states, why has it not gone out of its way to relieve Africa's debt burdens and facilitate development? African states are now showing considerable autonomy in their pivot towards China, which proposed a string of debt relief measures and has reportedly laid the groundwork for more development projects and nearly one million jobs. "We [China and Africa] highlight the significance of the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA), and that the full implementation of the AfCFTA agreement will boost Africa's economic development including through value addition and job creation," affirmed China and Africa in a joint statement last week. Thus, joint development progress in the aftermath of FOCAC will further debunk discredited US allegations of a Chinese "debt trap" on the continent and expose US aversion to the Belt and Road. A 30-point joint declaration on Africa's future last week makes certain that the continent will not follow US dictates on its sovereign decisions or its right to exercise a multi-vector foreign policy.



Trump to Reverse US Russia-Ukraine Policy

Qamar Bashir



The EU, Russia, and Ukraine should proactively pursue this peace formula to achieve key objectives: reducing military confrontations, protecting civilian infrastructure and lives, and entering into serious, objective negotiations as the primary method of resolving the conflict. History shows that even the most devastating wars ultimately end at the negotiation table. Brazil and China, as the main proponents of this peace formula, should employ all tools of traditional and public diplomacy to foster acceptance of the plan among primary and auxiliary

The world is currently grappling with the profound impacts of two high-intensity, high-stakes international conflicts: the Palestine-Israel conflict and the Russia-Ukraine war. These wars have inflicted deep financial, economic, emotional, and psychological wounds, affecting those who still hold human dignity and the value of life in high regard. The resolution of these tragic and inhumane conflicts largely depends on the leadership of the next President of the United States, who holds significant influence over the international diplomatic landscape. In the last article titled "Trump or Harris: There is No Respite for Palestine," the central argument was that both U.S. presidential candidates have aligned closely with Israel, leaving little hope for change in the ongoing Israel-Palestine conflict. However, their views diverge significantly on the war between Russia and Ukraine. Kamala Harris has taken a firm stance in support of Ukraine, emphasizing that the conflict not only threatens Ukraine's sovereignty but also undermines international norms and global stability. She has reiterated repeatedly that U.S. military and financial support for Ukraine is not only a moral obligation but also in the strategic interest of the U.S. and its allies. Should she become President, it is likely that this support will continue for the foreseeable future, suggesting that the war may persist under her leadership. Her approach aligns with the belligerent stance of the European Union (EU), which, in line with Biden's policy, has imposed multiple sanctions on Russia, targeting its financial, energy, and military sectors. The EU has also provided extensive military and humanitarian aid to Ukraine to prevent Russia from redrawing borders by force. Most EU countries advocate for Ukraine's complete victory and caution against any concessions to Russia. Unlike the Israel-Palestine conflict, which is unlikely to be significantly affected by who becomes the next U.S. president, the Russia-Ukraine war could see a dramatically different approach if Donald Trump wins the presidency. The first action he is likely to take would be to halt military aid to Ukraine and stop funding the defense of the European Union, which heavily depends

on the formidable support of the U.S. military. Trump would likely demand that the EU shoulder the full financial burden of the U.S.'s intervention in the Russia-Ukraine conflict. In 2024 alone, the cost of military intervention to the U.S. amounted to \$175 billion in aid to Ukraine, with \$107 billion directly allocated to the Ukrainian government for military and economic support. Meanwhile, the EU has provided over \$126 billion in financial, military, and humanitarian aid since the war began, with an additional \$54 billion committed for Ukraine's recovery, bringing the total EU contribution to \$167 billion. Under Donald Trump, Russia is likely to have a much easier time navigating the conflict. Unlike Joe Biden, Trump would likely pursue serious negotiations with Russia and use the threat of Russia's potential use of nuclear arms to pressure the European Union into aligning with his stance. Ukraine could face significant setbacks as U.S. aid may dry up, and EU support could dwindle due to the shift in U.S. policy toward the war under a Trump administration. Given this scenario, stakeholders are likely developing strategies based on the potential outcomes of the 2024 U.S. presidential election. If Kamala Harris becomes president, the U.S. is expected to maintain its current approach, continuing military and financial support for Ukraine. However, a Donald Trump presidency introduces unpredictability. His maverick behavior, aggressive rhetoric, and belief that he can swiftly end the Russia-Ukraine conflict create a highly uncertain and challenging situation for all involved. Stakeholders are likely scrambling to find a viable solution to navigate the potential challenges they may face if Donald Trump becomes the next U.S. president. One practical and effective way to avoid a highly volatile and unpredictable situation is to adopt the China-Brazil formula to end the conflict and prevent further loss of life and destruction of civilian and military assets. The China-Brazil joint peace plan focuses on de-escalation, diplomacy, and humanitarian aid to resolve the Ukraine-Russia conflict. The plan urges all parties to refrain from expanding the battlefield or escalating tensions, emphasizing that dialogue and negotiations are the

only sustainable solutions. It proposes an international peace conference with equal participation from all sides. Additionally, the initiative stresses the importance of expanding humanitarian aid, protecting civilians and prisoners of war, and preventing the use of nuclear or other weapons of mass destruction. The proposal also highlights the need for international cooperation on critical issues like energy, food security, and safeguarding key infrastructure to ensure global stability. The EU, Russia, and Ukraine should proactively pursue this peace formula to achieve key objectives: reducing military confrontations, protecting civilian infrastructure and lives, and entering into serious, objective negotiations as the primary method of resolving the conflict. History shows that even the most devastating wars ultimately end at the negotiation table. Brazil and China, as the main proponents of this peace formula, should employ all tools of traditional and public diplomacy to foster acceptance of the plan among primary and auxiliary stakeholders. These tools should include high-level diplomatic engagement, such as bilateral and multilateral meetings with the key countries involved or affected by the conflict. Additionally, track-two diplomacy—non-governmental, informal, and unofficial dialogues between influential parties—should be used to build broader consensus and momentum for peace. In terms of public diplomacy, they should employ strategic media campaigns to shape public opinion and influence key stakeholders, highlighting the humanitarian and geopolitical benefits of the proposal. Additionally, cultural diplomacy, such as leveraging cultural exchanges and showcasing shared values, could foster a favorable environment for dialogue. Brazil and China can also use multilateral platforms, such as the United Nations, BRICS, and G20, to rally broader international support for the initiative. They should also engage civil society organizations and academic think tanks to promote dialogue and develop policy recommendations to further enhance the formula's acceptability. This approach would save the stakeholders from the war mongering policies of Kamala Harris and from the unpredictable, illogical and impractical approach of Donald Trump.

The Baluchistan crisis

Dr. Muhammad Aram Zahreer



Another critical factor in the strengthening of the BLA is the increasingly active participation of women in their ranks. The recruitment of women as suicide bombers is a stark indication of how deeply the BLA's cause has permeated the province's society. This development also reflects the militants' growing ability to mobilize and radicalize a broader segment of the population, including women and youth

The recent escalation in terrorism within Pakistan has cast significant doubts on the efficacy of the state's security measures, especially as the country embarks on one of its most costly counter-terrorism initiatives to date, Operation Azm-e-Istehkam (Resolve for Stability). This operation is designed to restore stability in regions plagued by insurgency and terrorism. However, recent events in Baluchistan, the most volatile and conflict-ridden region of Pakistan, have starkly highlighted the limitations and challenges of this approach. Last week, Baluchistan was the epicenter of a series of meticulously coordinated violent attacks that resulted in the deaths of over 70 individuals and caused extensive damage to critical infrastructure. The Baloch Liberation Army (BLA), an ethnic separatist group that has been engaged in a protracted insurgency against the state for over a decade, claimed these attacks. The BLA's recent actions have not only caused immediate harm but have also sent a powerful message about their growing capability and reach. The emergence of videos online showing convoys of BLA militants openly brandishing weapons and moving unchallenged through various parts of Baluchistan's westernmost province, where they were seen celebrating with locals, has further exacerbated concerns about the state's ability to maintain control. These images, combined with the insurgents' increasing success in closing roads and extending their influence into urban areas, have created a widespread perception that the state is gradually losing its grip on the province. This perception of declining state control is deeply troubling and raises questions about the future stability of Baluchistan and, by extension, Pakistan. In response to these developments, the Pakistani government, which has historically employed a heavy-handed approach to managing the Baluchistan issue, swiftly convened an emergency meeting of the top national security committee. During this meeting, the government reiterated its commitment to forcefully suppressing those who threaten the region's peace and stability. The military has already initiated intelligence-based retaliatory operations, aimed at targeting the insurgents with precision. Additionally, the government has pledged billions of rupees to enhance the counterterrorism capabilities of law enforcement agencies. These measures, however, are not without their complications. For the first time, the federal government has publicly acknowledged a critical shortage of appointed personnel, which is severely hampering its counterterrorism efforts. In

an unexpected and controversial move, the government has decided to depute officials from other provinces, particularly Punjab, to take up posts in Baluchistan. This decision has sparked fierce criticism and is widely viewed as an attempt to marginalize the local Baloch population by denying them the governance and policing of their own province. The federal government's recent actions have added to the already numerous grievances harbored by the Baloch population against state security agencies. These agencies have long been accused of engaging in enforced disappearances, extrajudicial killings and other severe violations of basic human rights. The government's handling of Baluchistan's natural resources has also been a point of contention. The Baloch population has repeatedly accused the government of exploiting the province's resources while failing to provide adequate local employment opportunities, particularly in the context of the multibillion-dollar China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) project. This project, which is a cornerstone of Pakistan's economic strategy, has been marred by allegations of corruption and mismanagement, further fueling local discontent. In a recent escalation of tensions, a Baloch human rights group organized region-wide protests, effectively blocking access to Gwadar city's Chinese-operated deep-sea port. These protests, which have garnered significant attention, are seen as a direct challenge to the government's authority and a demand for greater autonomy and rights for the Baloch people. The BLA's armed attacks appear to be coordinated with these ongoing protests, aiming to pressure the government into addressing the longstanding grievances of the Baloch population. The timing of these attacks and protests is particularly significant as Pakistan prepares to host a crucial Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) summit in October. The civil-military regime has characterized the recent wave of insurgency as an attempt by hostile foreign elements to sabotage the upcoming summit and has described the protesters as proxies for terrorists, labeling them as the political wing of the Baloch separatist militants. The government's conflation of non-violent protests with armed militancy has exacerbated the situation and risks further alienating the Baloch population. This lack of distinction between legitimate expressions of dissent and violent insurgency increases the likelihood of escalating violence in the region. The BLA, through its recent attacks, has significantly raised its profile, positioning itself as a formidable rebel movement capable of challenging Pakistani security forces. This, in turn, has bolstered its appeal among the ethnic Baloch pop-

ulation, particularly those who are disillusioned with the state and its policies. The BLA's ability to exploit the genuine grievances of the Baloch people has helped legitimize its cause and expand its recruitment efforts. Another critical factor in the strengthening of the BLA is the increasingly active participation of women in their ranks. The recruitment of women as suicide bombers is a stark indication of how deeply the BLA's cause has permeated the province's society. This development also reflects the militants' growing ability to mobilize and radicalize a broader segment of the population, including women and youth. In a province where 65% of the population is under the age of 30, the many frustrated, unemployed Baloch youth are prime recruits for the BLA. The involvement of women in the insurgency marks a significant and troubling evolution in the conflict, suggesting that the BLA's influence is expanding and becoming more deeply rooted in Baloch society. The government's reliance on a predominantly military-focused strategy to address the challenges posed by the Baloch uprising is unlikely to succeed in the long term. A more holistic approach is urgently needed—one that incorporates both hard and soft power strategies. This approach should focus on addressing the root causes of unrest, including the implementation of justice reforms, curbing corruption and improving the socioeconomic conditions in Baluchistan. The province's high poverty and mortality rates, poor literacy levels and insufficient infrastructure and job opportunities are all critical issues that need to be addressed. Failure to do so will likely result in the continued alienation of the Baloch population and play directly into the hands of both internal and external forces seeking to destabilize Pakistan. The current policies being implemented in Baluchistan are not only unwise but also potentially dangerous. They threaten the integrity of the Pakistani state and are unlikely to bring the desired stability, security and development to the province. If the government continues on its present course, the situation in Baluchistan could deteriorate further, with potentially catastrophic consequences for Pakistan as a whole. The need for a more nuanced and comprehensive approach to the Baluchistan issue cannot be overstated. The stakes are too high for the government to continue relying solely on military solutions. A sustainable peace in Baluchistan can only be achieved through genuine engagement with the Baloch people, addressing their grievances and providing them with a stake in their own governance and future.

Briefs

Pakistan, Russia vow to boost...

FROM PAGE 01
Mr Alexei Overchuk said that Russia was looking forward to improving cooperation with Pakistan in the areas of food security, science and technology, education, connectivity and railways. He stated that the upcoming visit of the Russian Prime Minister to Pakistan, in October, would provide another opportunity to further strengthen bilateral relations. He further said that Russia held tremendous respect for all religions and Muslim culture, and had condemned the desecration of the Holy Quran.

Constitutional package...

FROM PAGE 01
Throwing shade at the treasury benches, the opposition leader alleged that the government officials and their allies' role in the parliament's special committee was "negative". He went on to say that "these people are playing the role of puppets" and alleged the treasury benches were willing to give away all authority to "someone else". Praising the "positive role" of the Jamiat Ulema-e-Islam-Fazl (JUI-F) chief in the ongoing government-opposition tussle, he said that Maulana Fazlur Rehman gave a clear statement that the draft amendments were "unacceptable" for the opposition. The PTI and JUI-F, which have been arch-rivals traditionally, found common ground after the February 8 general elections as they both expressed mutual concerns over the alleged interference and manipulation during the polls.

Constitutional package...

FROM PAGE 01
Comments come after Fazl completely rejected the draft of the "controversial" constitutional package, aimed at making changes to Pakistan's judicial and parliamentary systems. "Maulana had no objection to the constitutional court or formula of appointment of judges," said the PML-N senator while speaking during Geo News programme 'Aaj Shahzeb Khanzada Kay Sath' on Wednesday. Siddiqui said that the JUI-F chief did not specifically point out the disagreements, adding that the constitutional amendments will not be possible without him. "Fazl maintains that constitutional amendments should not be rushed," said the senator. He further highlighted that there are at least five drafts circulating in the media, hoping that the JUI-F chief's draft is similar to the government. Lamenting the lack of "magic number" to table the amendments, Senator Siddiqui said it was expected the numbers would be completed due to Fazl's support, however "it was our credulity".

SC ruling can't be...

FROM PAGE 01
Pakistan's (ECP) decision denying the reserved seats to the Sunni Ittehad Council (SIC) The PTI candidates contested the Feb 8 general elections as independents after the top court upheld the ECP decision to deprive the opposition party of its iconic electoral symbol - bat - over "unlawful" intra-party polls. The decision forced the PTI-backed winning candidates to join the SIC in a bid to claim reserved seats. However, the ECP denied the reserved to the SIC over its failure to submit list of candidates within the stipulated time. The NA Speaker, in its letter to the electoral watchdog, noted that the Supreme Court had directed the election commission to allow independent returned candidates to join another political party months after already joining a political party as a result of the General Elections 2024. "In effect, the SC judgment has allowed a returned candidate to switch political parties," it noted.

City held by Inter as PSG pinch win in UCL

Pep Guardiola's side have won all four of their Premier League games this season but failed to break down Inter

SPORTS DESK

PARIS: Manchester City made a sluggish start to their Champions League campaign as they drew 0-0 against Inter Milan on Wednesday, while Paris Saint-Germain needed a last-minute goal to beat tournament newcomers Girona. Pep Guardiola's side have won all four of their Premier League games this season but failed to break down Italian champions Inter in a repeat of the 2023 final won by City. City lost Kevin De Bruyne to injury at half-time and Phil Foden fired straight at Inter goalkeeper Yann Sommer with their best chance as Erling Haaland was kept quiet on a night he was chasing his 100th goal for the English club. "It was a very intense game against a strong opponent. We knew what was coming, they are a top team as well and they are used to winning, so we were not going to have an easy job," City defender Ruben Dias told TNT Sports. Henrikh Mkhitaryan could have won it for Inter when he blazed over 15 minutes from time, allowing City to extend their unbeaten run in the competition to 24 matches - one off the record set by Manchester United between 2007 and 2009. It is just the second time in 42 home Champions League games under Guardiola that City have failed to score. "Our plan was to show that we're not scared to play here," said Inter midfielder Hakan Calhanoglu. PSG looked as if they would



also have to settle for a point against European debutants Girona, who are backed by the City Football Group and ran Real Madrid close for several months in Spain last season before coming third. However, a goalkeeping blunder from Paulo Gazzaniga in the 90th minute resulted in Nuno Mendes' cross squirming through his grasp and handed the French champions victory. "It was a difficult game, they're a team that plays well with the ball," Mendes told Canal Plus.

"I was surprised (by the goal). The goalkeeper was there and it got through." Supersub Gittens propels Dortmund last season's runners-up Borussia Dortmund, beaten by Madrid in the final, had English winger Jamie Gittens to thank as the 20-year-old came off the bench and scored twice in a 3-0 win at Club Brugge. Serhou Guirassy added a stoppage-time penalty for his first Dortmund goal since arriving in the summer from Stuttgart. Celtic began in style by thrashing Slovan Bratislava 5-1 in Glasgow, winning their open-

ing game in the Champions League for the first time in 13 attempts. Liam Scalls' powerful header put Celtic ahead and the hosts struck again through Kyogo Furuhashi early in the second half before Arne Engels converted a penalty for 3-0. Kevin Wimmer pulled one back with a fine strike for the Slovak champions, who came through four rounds of qualifying, but Celtic pulled away with further goals from Daizen Maeda and Adam Idah. "It's a fantastic night," Celtic captain Callum McGregor told TNT Sports. "I hope the supporters enjoyed

it because the managers and players did. This is the next level for the group in terms of growth and development." Bologna drew 0-0 at home to Shakhtar Donetsk in the Italian team's first ever Champions League match. Lukasz Skorupski saved an early penalty from Shakhtar's Georgiy Sudakov. Sparta Prague swept Red Bull Salzburg aside 3-0 with goals from Kaan Kairinen, Victor Olatunji and Qazim Laci, as the Czech champions won for the first time in the competition proper since 2003.

Centurion Ashwin lifts India to 339-6 against Bangladesh

Ashwin slammed sixth Test century after they were struggling at 144-6

NEW DELHI: A counter-attacking century from Ravichandran Ashwin propelled India to 339-6 on the opening day of the first Test after Bangladesh fast bowler Hasan Mahmud unsettled the hosts with four wickets on Thursday. India found themselves struggling at 34-3 within the first hour of play in Chennai, and later at 144-6 during the second session, before Ashwin, unbeaten on 102, and Ravindra Jadeja, on 86, forged an unbroken partnership of 195 runs. Hasan had justified captain Najmul Hossain Shanto's decision to bowl first under overcast skies, making an early impact with three wickets and adding another after lunch. The visitors, fresh from a 2-0 sweep in Pakistan, are seeking their first-ever Test victory against India. Chennai-born Ashwin and the left-handed Jadeja - India's key spin duo - defied the Bangladesh bowling attack to the delight of the home crowd. Ashwin, 38, reached his sixth Test century in 108 balls, hitting 12 boundaries. He removed his helmet and raised his arms to soak in the applause from the fans.



Hasan tore through India's top order, including dismissing captain Rohit Sharma and Virat Kohli - both scoring just six runs - leaving the hosts at 34-3 inside the first hour. Opener Yashvi Jaiswal, who scored 56, built a 62-run partnership with fellow left-hander Rishabh Pant, injecting some momentum into the Indian innings. Hasan broke the stand in the third over after lunch when wicketkeeper-batsman Pant, playing his first Test since a serious car accident in 2022,

was caught behind off a loose shot. He scored 39, including six boundaries. Jaiswal fell to Bangladesh's rising pace star Nahid Rana, while spinner Mehidy Hasan Miraz dismissed KL Rahul for 16. Hasan's opening spell of 3-14 immediately put India on the back foot, starting with Rohit caught on a second slip. Shubman Gill faced just eight deliveries before being caught behind for a duck, attempting a flick down the leg side. Kohli entered to loud cheers, but the crowd soon fell silent

as the former captain edged a length delivery from Hasan outside the off-stump to wicketkeeper Litton Das. It was a disappointing return for Kohli, who had missed India's 4-1 home series victory over England in March due to the birth of his second child. India are aiming to extend their lead at the top of the World Test Championship standings as they begin a new Test season with 10 matches. The second and final Test begins on 27th September in Kanpur. -Agencies

TTP emerging as...

FROM PAGE 01
that such inclusivity was vital for enhancing the prospects of stability and normalization within that country. However, the Pakistan UN envoy expressed deep concern about the ongoing violations of human rights by the Afghan Interim Government (AIG), particularly against women and girls. "The AIG has not only reneged on its commitments regarding women and girls but has exacerbated the situation by issuing new directives aimed at silencing their voices," he stated. Ambassador Akram said Pakistan strongly condemns these actions. He said that these backward measures violate the true essence of our enlightened religion, which was among the first to uphold equal rights for both men and women. The Pakistan envoy said that while we remain committed to constructive engagement with the Taliban regime, it is clear that the regime must not be allowed to manipulate regional and international dynamics to avoid its obligations. He also expressed deep concern over the ongoing humanitarian crisis in Afghanistan, three years after the Taliban assumed power. He said that with 23.7 million Afghans in desperate need of humanitarian assistance, Pakistan urges the international community to provide aid without conditions. The Afghanistan Humanitarian Needs and Response Plan, which seeks \$3.06 billion in assistance, has received less than 25% of the required funds, he stressed. "Immediate action is needed to fully fund this plan," the ambassador emphasized. "It is essential that all possible sources of funding are mobilized to alleviate the suffering of the Afghan people." In addition to addressing the humanitarian crisis, Ambassador Akram reiterated Pakistan's support for Afghanistan's economic revival, highlighting the urgent need to revive the Afghan banking system, resolve the liquidity crisis, and create the conditions necessary for unfreezing the country's national reserves. "Pakistan is committed to expanding trade and commercial relations with Afghanistan and remains a key partner in implementing regional infrastructure and connectivity projects that will enhance economic stability and growth in the region," he added. The Pakistani envoy urged the AIG to comply with its international responsibilities, warning that policies fostering internal, regional, and global instability cannot continue unchecked.

CDA Chairman meets IAP delegation

The draft MoU outlines a shared vision for enhancing the architectural landscape and urban planning of the capital city

STAFF REPORT

ISLAMABAD: Chairman of the Capital Development Authority (CDA), Muhammad Ali Randhawa met with delegation of Institute of Architects Pakistan (IAP). The delegation was led by President Ar. Zulfikar Ali accompanied by Vice President IAP and other senior members of IAP. The delegation presented a draft Memorandum of Understanding (MoU), outlining the future cooperation between IAP and CDA for the improving urban development of city and the architectural innovation and designs. The draft MoU outlines a shared vision for enhancing the architectural landscape and urban planning of the capital city. It was agreed to make collective efforts that will support sustainable urban growth, promote architectural innovation, and improve the quality of life. Chairman CDA Muhammad Ali Randhawa said that CDA always

welcome and supports such initiatives. He urged that a follow up meeting be arranged to discuss the

practical steps for further proceeding in the matter. The delegation underscored willingness to con-

tribute expertise and resources towards elevating architectural standards in the city. Both parties

expressed their resolve to work together on initiatives that support sustainable urban development,

promote architectural innovation, and improve the service delivery for residents of Islamabad.



Terror incidents on rise in Khyber...

FROM PAGE 01
terrorist group in Afghanistan, routinely conducting cross border attacks into Pakistan. "Pakistan fears that the TTP's growing alliance with Al Qaeda could soon elevate it to a central role in regional and global terrorist activities." Analyst Syed Akhtar Ali Shah believe, "banned TTP militants encouraged after empowering of Taliban in Afghanistan on August 15th 2021 last. He believes that government needs to review its policies regarding tackling issues of terrorism and extremism. Amidst increasing terror and violent acts, security forces are also losing its credibility amongst civilians including police force. Peace marches and rallies against alleged terrorist are taking place throughout the province.

Constitutional courts a must...

FROM PAGE 01
Banazir Bhutto, warned against the politicisation of the judiciary as it would harm the public interests. He stressed that the constitutional court should focus on interpreting that the system of appointments in judiciary was formalised by the 18th Amendment. Bilawal criticised the lack of transparency in judges' appointments and called for reforms in the process. He reaffirmed his commitment to fulfilling the promises made in the Chartered of Democracy, ensuring swift and fair justice for the public. He urged the lawyers to prepare for continued struggle for judicial reforms.

Pak-US ties crucial for 'regional...

FROM PAGE 01
bilateral relationship and strengthen" ties moving forward. Biden's statement comes at a time when his government continues to impose sanctions on entities involved in advancing Pakistan's arms and weapons capabilities. State Department Spokesperson Matthew Miller, during a press briefing on Tuesday, reiterated Washington's 'longstanding policy' denying support to the country's ballistic missile programme. He said that while Pakistan has been a long-term partner of the US, there are disagreements. "... and when we have disagreements, we won't hesitate to act on those to protect America's interests." Miller added that the US will continue to use sanctions and other tools to ensure its national security remains unimpacted and that the country's financial system is not used by proliferators. Biden, meanwhile, termed the "enduring partnership" between Pakistan and the US as "critical to ensuring the security of our people and people around the world". "The United States will continue to stand with Pakistan to tackle the most pressing global and regional challenges of our time," he added. The 81-year-old US president highlighted that both countries "stand united in the face of significant challenges posed by climate change, regional security threats, and global health security." "We should continue highlighting common interests in security, trade and investment, economic growth, the US-Pakistan 'Green Alliance' framework, and prosperity," he said. Welcoming Ambassador Sheikh back to Washington, DC, Biden said that his arrival was significant on many levels.

IHC nullifies ECP's decision

FROM PAGE 01
It must be noted that the ECP had appointed the retired judge in the election tribunal to which the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) leaders had approached the IHC and filed a petition against the appointment of the retired judge. It is worth remembering that PTI leaders Shoaib Shaheen, Amir Mughal and Ali Bukhari had submitted the petition in this regard.

Briefs

World better positioned against Mpxo than for Covid

GENEVA: Lessons learned from the Covid pandemic have left the world in a much better position to tackle the current mpxo epidemic raging in Africa, according to the Gavi vaccine alliance. The Covid catastrophe brought with it "important learnings, and those learnings were drawn upon", said Gavi chief Sana Nishtar. "Those learnings cascaded into specific instruments that are now coming into play" against mpxo, the former Pakistani health minister told AFP in an interview this week. When Covid emerged in early 2020 and quickly began its deadly rampage around the globe, it revealed how completely unprepared the international community was to face such a global health crisis. It also shone a light on glaring global vaccine inequity, as wealthy countries snapped up most doses, leaving Africa far behind. Countries are still struggling to agree on a new pandemic treaty that could ensure the world is better prepared next time. But Gavi, which works to swell vaccine access in poorer countries, has not waited for a global agreement to put in place measures to better position it to respond to emergencies, Nishtar said. The organisation in June set up a \$500-million First Response Fund, designed to make cash rapidly available for vaccines during health emergencies.—APP

China's 'full-time dads' challenge patriarchal norms

SHANGHAI :Cooking, cleaning, and caring for the kids during the day, Chen Hualing takes on household tasks many Chinese fathers tend to leave to their wives, bucking a deep-rooted patriarchal tradition and even inspiring a hit TV show. The former project manager gave up the rat race to join a growing number of "full-time dads", as they are known in China. "When you work, you dream of a great career and that this money will help your family," he told AFP from a villa in the suburbs of Shanghai, his four-year-old daughter and 11-year-old son playing nearby. "But nothing is certain, and a salary is not necessarily what your family needs the most." Social norms in China have for centuries dictated that men are the breadwinners, while women take care of the household and children. "My father was just a father. I never felt like he could help me, except financially," said Chen. "I want to be like a friend to my children, so they can share things with me." Over half of the Chinese men now say they would agree to become a stay-at-home dad, a 2019 survey cited by state media suggested — up from just 17 percent in 2007.—APP

Russian Deputy PM's visit to boost trade

LAHORE :Pakistan Furniture Council (PFC) Chief Executive Officer Mian Kashif Ashfaq Thursday said that Russian Deputy Prime Minister Alexey Overchuk's visit will further promote trade ties between the two countries with a special focus on energy sector and infrastructure, paving the way for closer economic collaboration in the future. Commenting here on the visit, he said Overchuk's visit comes at a crucial time when both countries were looking to deepen economic cooperation in key areas, including energy, transportation, and logistics. He said Russia, as one of the world's largest energy producers, was keen to expand its energy exports, while Pakistan was looking to secure reliable energy sources for its growing industrial needs. This collaboration could lead to the signing of new energy agreements and projects that could benefit both nations economically and strategically, he added.—APP

Enhancing Pak-Swiss trade ties top priority: Envoy

United Business Group Secretary-General Zafar Bakhtawari appreciated the Swiss Ambassador's presence at ceremony, emphasizing economic diplomacy as Pakistan's need. He urged Pakistani missions to proactively promote local products globally

STAFF REPORT

ISLAMABAD: Swiss Ambassador to Pakistan, George Steiner emphasized that promoting trade relations between Pakistan and Switzerland is a priority. He highlighted vast opportunities for cooperation in sectors like tourism, medicine, and agriculture.

Speaking at the launch of Swiss homeopathic medicines in Pakistan, Steiner praised the successful partnership between Pakistani and Swiss companies. He expressed hope for increased collaboration and investment from Swiss companies, leveraging Pakistan's 25 million population and diverse industries.

Pakistan and Switzerland have close trade ties, with Switzerland being Pakistan's third-largest direct investor. Steiner encouraged further expansion of bilateral trade and investment. President Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry Ahsan Bakhtawari welcomed Swiss investment, calling Pakistan an attractive destination for global

investors. He urged Swiss companies to explore Pakistan's potential and establish manufacturing plants to promote local industry and employment. President Homeopathic Pharmaceutical and Chemists Association Aman ullah bismil praised Swiss homeopathic medicines for meeting international standards and suggested

inviting German and French companies to Pakistan. United Business Group Secretary-General Zafar Bakhtawari appreciated the Swiss Ambassador's presence at ceremony, emphasizing economic diplomacy as Pakistan's need. He urged Pakistani missions to proactively promote local products globally.



ISLAMABAD: Switzerland's Ambassador to Pakistan, George Steiner, President ICCI Ahsan Zafar Bakhtawari, President HPCA Amanullah Bismil, and UBG Secretary-General Zafar Bakhtawari are cutting the ribbon to launch Swiss homeopathic medicines at a renowned pharmacy chain in Pakistan. — DNA

India's Modi to visit US for Quad meeting, UN summit

NEW DELHI: Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi will take part in the Quad Leaders' Summit hosted by US President Joe Biden and attend the UN's Summit of the Future in New York as part of his upcoming visit to America, the Ministry of External Affairs said on Thursday. Modi's three-day visit to the US will begin on Sept. 21 in Wilmington, Delaware — Biden's hometown — for the Quad meeting comprising also Japan and Australia. "The Quad has a very, very full and substantive agenda on this occasion," India's Foreign Secretary Vikram Misri told journalists at a press conference in New Delhi. Misri added that the leaders would also cover health security, climate change, critical and emerging technologies, maritime security and counterterrorism. "This upcoming visit offers ... the Quad leaders the opportunity to review progress achieved in the last one year and set the agenda for the next year." Modi is expected to hold bilateral meetings with Biden, Japanese PM Fumio Kishida and Australian PM Anthony Albanese on the sidelines of the Quad summit. This is the fourth leaders' summit of the Quad — a four-state strategic security dialogue — which positions itself against China's growing assertiveness in the Asia-Pacific region. Modi's US trip will also see the 74-year-old premier attend a gathering organized by the Indian diaspora in Long Island, New York, as well as a business roundtable with leaders of US tech companies. "The prime minister will also be attending a business roundtable with CEOs of leading US companies in the cutting-edge areas of artificial intelligence, semiconductors, quantum computing and biotechnology," Misri said, adding that details of attendees are still being finalized. On his last day in the US, Modi will speak at the UN's Summit of the Future, where world leaders are expected to address current and emerging global challenges. India's foreign ministry did not confirm that Modi would meet with former US President Donald Trump as a part of the visit, after the Republican presidential nominee announced it on Wednesday. In 2019, Trump joined Modi at a "Howdy Modi" rally in Houston, Texas, that drew about 50,000 people and was billed as one of the largest receptions of a foreign leader in the US. When Trump made his inaugural visit to India in February 2020, Modi hosted him in his home state of Gujarat.—APP

LPP distributes toolkits among 537 skilled youth for economic empowerment

LODHARAN :Lodhran Pilot Project (LPP) held a Toolkit distribution ceremony aimed at empowering the youth of South Punjab and enhancing their economic stability. The event witnessed the distribution of toolkits to 537 graduates who had received technical and vocational training in fields such as Electrician, Beautician, Domestic Tailoring and some others. These young individuals acquired their skills through TEVTA institutes, with financial support from organizations including European Union and some others. The ceremony was graced by Mr Amir Aziz, Director General of TEVTA (Punjab), who attended as the chief guest. He lauded the Lodhran Pilot Project for providing crucial opportunities to the region's youth, enabling them to achieve economic independence. Mr. Aziz expressed his appreciation for TEVTA's partnership with LPP, stressing that such collaborations were instrumental in providing cutting-edge technical and vocational training to young people in South Punjab. "Technical and vocational education plays a pivotal role in the economic development of youth," he said. He also stressed that realizing its importance, technical education was now being integrated into formal school curricula across the province. Mr. Aziz further announced that internationally recognized IT courses were launched at 40 training institutes in 17 districts of Punjab. He highlighted TEVTA's focus on environmental resilience, mentioning that special initiatives were being undertaken to address this growing concern. "TEVTA is committed to supporting green and environment-friendly initiatives in collaboration with the Lodhran Pilot Project," he added, promising full backing for future joint ventures. Dr. Abdul Saboor, Chief Executive Officer of the Lodhran Pilot Project, thanked TEVTA, the District Administration, government departments, and Civil Society Organizations for their unwavering support. Addressing the audience, Dr. Saboor outlined LPP's ongoing efforts toward youth empowerment in the region.—Agencies

A gold mining town in Congo has become an mpxo hot spot as a new strain spreads

Mpxo causes mostly mild symptoms like fever and body aches, but can trigger serious cases. Lack of funds, vaccines and information is making it difficult to stem the spread

KAMITUGA: Slumped on the ground over a mound of dirt, Divine Wisoba pulled weeds from her daughter's grave. The 1-month-old died from mpxo in eastern Congo in August, but Wisoba, 21, was too traumatized to attend the funeral. In her first visit to the cemetery, she wept into her shirt for the child she lost and worried about the rest of her family. "When she was born, it was as if God had answered our prayers — we wanted a girl," Wisoba said of little Maambi Katengy. "But our biggest joy was transformed into devastation." Her daughter is one of more than 6,000 people officials suspect have contracted the disease in South Kivu province, the epicenter of the world's latest mpxo outbreak, in what the World Health Organization has labeled a global health emergency. A new strain of the virus is spreading, largely through skin-to-skin contact, including but not limited to sex. A lack of funds, vaccines and information is making it difficult to stem the spread, according to alarmed disease experts. Mpxo — which causes mostly mild symptoms like fever and body aches, but can trigger serious cases with prominent blisters on the face, hands, chest and genitals — had been spreading mostly undetected for years in Africa, until a 2022 outbreak reached more than 70 countries. Globally, gay and bisexual men made up the vast majority of cases in that outbreak. But officials note mpxo has long disproportionately affected children in Africa, and they say cases are now rising sharply among kids, pregnant women and other vulnerable groups, with many types of close contact responsible for the spread. Health officials have zeroed in on Kamituga, a remote yet bustling gold mining town of some 300,000 people that attracts miners, sex workers and traders who are constantly on the move. Cases from other parts of eastern Congo can be traced back here, officials say, with the first originating in the nightclub scene. Since this outbreak began, one year ago, nearly 1,000 people in Kamituga have been infected. Eight have died, half of them children. Challenges on the ground last month, the World Health Organization said mpxo outbreaks might be stopped in the next six months, with governments' leadership and cooperation. But in Kamituga, people say they face a starkly different reality. There's a daily average of five new cases at the general hospital, which is regularly near capacity. Overall in South Kivu, weekly new suspected cases have skyrocketed from about 12 in January to 600 in August, according to province health officials. Even that's likely an underestimate, they say, because of a lack of access to rural areas, the inability of many residents to seek care, and Kamituga's transient nature. Locals say they simply don't have enough information about mpxo. Before her daughter got sick, Wisoba said, she was infected herself but didn't know it. Painful lesions emerged around her genitals, making walking difficult. She thought she had a common sexually transmitted infection and sought medicine at a pharmacy. Days later, she went to the hospital with her newborn and was diagnosed with mpxo.—DNA

Labour dispute stops Canadian freight railroads and could cause major economic disruption in the US

TORONTO : Both of Canada's major freight railroads have come to a full stop because of a contract dispute with their workers, an impasse that could bring significant economic harm to businesses and consumers in Canada and the U.S. if the trains don't resume running soon. Canadian National and CPKC railroads both locked out their employees after the deadline of 12:01 a.m. Eastern Thursday passed without new agreements with the Teamsters Canada Rail Conference that represents some 10,000 engineers, conductors and dispatchers. All rail traffic in Canada and all shipments crossing the U.S. border have stopped, although CPKC and CN's trains will continue to operate in the U.S. and Mexico. Billions of dollars of goods each month move between Canada and the U.S. via rail, according to the U.S. Department of Transportation. "If rail traffic grinds to a halt, businesses and families across the country will feel the impact," Jay Timmons,



president and CEO of the National Association of Manufacturers, said in a statement. "Manufacturing workers, their communities and consumers of all sorts of products will be left reeling from supply chain disruptions." There will be other impacts as well, including on the more than 30,000 commuters in Vancouver, Toronto and Montreal who will be scrambling to find a

new way into work because their trains won't be able to operate over CPKC's tracks while the railroad is shut down. Business groups had urged the government to intervene, but Prime Minister Justin Trudeau has declined to force both sides into arbitration yet. CN said it was waiting for a response on one final offer made late Wednesday when it locked the workers out. CPKC

spokesperson Patrick Waldron said the union rejected its last offer that CEO Keith Creel made at the table in person. Both railroads have said they would end the lockout if the union agreed to binding arbitration. "Despite the lockout, the Teamsters remain at the bargaining table with both companies," the union said in a statement. CN had been negotiating with the Teamsters for nine months while CPKC had been trying to reach an agreement for a year, the unions said. Many companies across all industries rely on railroads to deliver their raw materials and finished products, so without regular rail service they may have to cut back or even close. That's why the U.S. government kept rail workers from going on strike two years ago and forced them to accept a contract despite their concerns about demanding schedules and the lack of paid sick time. Canada's railroads have sometimes shut down briefly in the past dur-

ing contract negotiations — most recently CPKC was offline for a couple days in March 2022 — but it is rare for both railroads to stop at the same time. The impact on businesses will be magnified because both CN and CPKC have stopped. Both CN and CPKC had been gradually shutting down since last week ahead of the contract deadline. Shipments of hazardous chemicals and perishable goods were the first to stop, so they wouldn't be stranded somewhere on the tracks. As the Canadian contract talks were coming down to the wire, one of the biggest U.S. railroads, CSX, broke with the U.S. freight rail industry's longstanding practice of negotiating jointly for years with the unions. CSX reached a deal with several of its 13 unions that cover 25% of its workers ahead of the start of national bargaining later this year. The new five-year contracts will provide 17.5% raises, better benefits and vacation time if they are ratified.—Agencies

Rupee gains 13 paise against dollar

ISLAMABAD: Pakistani rupee on Thursday appreciated by 13 paise against the US dollar in the interbank trading and closed at Rs 277.91 against the previous day's closing of Rs 278.04. However, according to the Forex Association of Pakistan (FAP), the buying and selling rates of the dollar in the open market stood at Rs 279.20 and Rs 280.70 respectively. The price of Euro increased by 36 paise to close at Rs 309.83 against the last day's closing of Rs 309.47, according to the State Bank of Pakistan (SBP). The Japanese yen remained unchanged and closed at Rs1.95, whereas an increase of Rs 1.22 was witnessed in the exchange rate of the British Pound, which traded at Rs368.19 as compared to the last day's closing of Rs 366.97. The exchange rates of the Emirates Dirham and Saudi Riyal decreased by 04 paise and 02 paise to close at Rs 75.66 and Rs74.05 respectively.—APP

Gold rates increases by Rs.800 per tola

ISLAMABAD: : The per tola price of 24 karat gold increased by Rs.800 and was sold at Rs.268,500 on Thursday compared to its sale at Rs.267,700 on the last trading day. The price of 10 grams of 24 karat gold also increased by Rs.685 to Rs. 230,195 from Rs. 229,510 whereas the price of 10 gram 22 karat gold went up to Rs.211,012 from Rs. 210,384, the All Sindh Sarafa Jewellers Association reported. The price of per tola and ten gram silver remained unchanged at Rs.2,950 and Rs.2,529.14, respectively. The price of gold in the international market increased by \$8 to \$2,577 from \$2,569, the Association reported.—APP

Sudanese refugees in Egypt caught between conflict and crackdown

CAIRO: Abdallah Bahr waited with his family for hours in the scorching sun outside the UN refugee agency' Cairo office, hoping to receive the asylum identification cards that would allow them to stay in Egypt after fleeing Sudan's war. They had arrived at 2 a.m. in the morning, and finally got the precious yellow cards at 1 p.m. "It was like hell over the past months. We were barely leaving home and walking on the streets. Today it is a little bit of a sigh of relief for us," Bahr, a 32-year-old father of two, told Context. The long wait was just the latest ordeal for the family, who arrived in Egypt in early January after four days traveling through the desert fleeing war in the Sudanese capital Khartoum. The cards should offer a degree of legal protection, prevent forced returns and entitle holders to some services, including health care. But refugees fear the cards will not shield them from the xenophobia in Egypt that has risen since Sudanese refugees started arriving in large numbers after war broke out in their homeland in April last year. "It is still not safe for us even after we took this card. We are afraid that a police officer would stop us and ask for our residency cards which cannot be issued now and take two years," said Bahr's wife, Afrah Idris.—APP

Jaffar urges opposition to unite

STAFF REPORT

ISLAMABAD: A senior leader of the Pakistan Muslim League-N, Chaudhry Jaffar Iqbal Thursday called upon opposition parties to put aside their differences and work together to propose constitutional amendments that will benefit Pakistan as collaboration among parties is significant, especially in a political landscape where diverse parties often hold differing views. Talking to PTV news channel, Chaudhry Jaffar Iqbal advised that all political parties must put the nation's interest above their own and use Parliament as a platform for public welfare where they can achieve far more than they can alone.

Briefs

Bulls dominate PSX

At one point, stocks touched all-time high of 82,000 points around 11:45am

NAZIR SIYAL

KARACHI: The Pakistan Stock Exchange (PSX) witnessed a bullish session on Thursday as the KSE-100 shares surpassed the 82,000 mark with hopes of interest rate cuts. The benchmark KSE-100 Shares Index reached 81,927.59 points during the intraday trading, up by 1,466.26 points or 1.82% from the previous close of 80,461.33. Samiullah Tariq, the head of research at Pak-Kuwait Investment Company, attributed the gain to reduction in fear from foreign selling and expectations of further interest rate cuts. Tariq said that the expectations of rate cuts are "emanating from yesterday's rejection of t-bill auctions along with cut in rate by the federal reserve". EFG Hermes Pakistan CEO, Raza Jafferi, while speaking to Geo.tv, said: "The current account delivering a surplus in August, together with expectations of more interest rate cuts in coming monetary policies, is pulling domestic liquidity into equities and driving the KSE-100 higher."

Germany stopped war weapons exports to Israel

BERLIN: Germany has put a hold on new exports of weapons of war to Israel while it deals with legal challenges, according to a Reuters analysis of data and a source close to the Economy Ministry. A source close to the ministry cited a senior government official as saying it had stopped work on approving export licences for arms to Israel due to legal and political pressure from legal cases arguing that such exports from Germany breached humanitarian law. The Economy Ministry said on Thursday there was no ban on arms exports to Israel and there would not be one, with decisions made case-by-case after careful review, adding that international law, foreign and security policy were key factors in their assessments. - Agencies

Netanyahu slams UK's Starmer

WEB DESK

LONDON: Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu has accused his UK counterpart Keir Starmer of "sending a horrible message" to Hamas with the decision to suspend dozens of licenses for exporting weapons to Israel, Al Jazeera reported. "After the October 7 Hamas massacre, the previous British government was clear in its support," the Israeli premier told the Daily Mail newspaper. But he accused the incumbent government of "sending mixed messages" on its support for Israel. "They say that Israel has the right to defend itself, but they undermine our ability to exercise that right both by reversing Britain's position on the absurd allegations made by the [International Criminal Court] prosecutor against Israel and by blocking weapons sales to Israel," Netanyahu said.

Aliya Hamza's interim bail extended

COURT REPORTER

ISLAMABAD: A local court of Islamabad on Thursday extended the interim bail of PTI leader Aliya Hamza in the controversial tweet case. Additional District and Sessions Judge Afzal Majoka heard the petition seeking interim bail of Aliya Hamza. She appeared in court with her lawyers. Hamza's lawyers requested court to extend her interim bail till next week as they needed more time to prepare the case.

Lawyers ask govt to make public proposed amendment bill

Legislation, constitutional amendments should not conflict with basic structure of the constitution, says resolution

STAFF REPORT

ISLAMABAD: Through a unanimous resolution, the All Pakistan Lawyers Representatives on Thursday demanded the government to make the proposed constitutional amendment public through advertising. The lawyers' body said they held a meeting with Law Minister Azam Nazeer Tarar wherein the latter gave detailed answers to the questions posed by the body's members. The resolution was adopted by the All Pakistan Lawyers Representatives in a meeting at the Supreme Court Bar Complex in Islamabad, which was attended by scores of legal practitioners from across the country. "The parliament has the power to legislate and amend the constitution. However, legislation or constitutional amendments should not conflict with the basic structure of the constitution," the resolution said, adding that the constitutional package would be unfruitful without taking the lawyers into confidence.

The proposed constitutional changes — which allegedly included the potential extension in the tenure of Chief Justice of Pakistan (CJP) Qazi Faez Isa and judges' retirement age — have become a challenge for the coalition government to pass in the parliament as it lacked a two-thirds majority.

JJ rejects constitutional amendment bill

BUREAU REPORT

LAHORE: Former president Dr Arif Alvi and Jamaat-e-Islami (JI) emir Hafiz Naeemur Rehman on Thursday condemned the proposed constitutional amendment. Both of the leaders strongly opposed the proposed constitutional amendment, calling it an attempt to undermine the Constitution. During a media briefing in Lahore, Dr Alvi and Hafiz Naeemur Rehman, blasted the amendment, saying, "This is not just a bill; it is an attempt to bury the constitution." Alvi expressed gratitude to Maulana Fazlur Rehman for blocking the amendment, demanding transparency and insisting that the draft be made public. Alvi further asserted that the current government lacks popular support and is attempting to dangerously change the constitution. "Many issues in Pakistan are escalating, and this amendment will only worsen the situation," he forewarned. Repeating Alvi's concerns, Hafiz Naeemur Rehman declared that Jamaat-e-Islami would oppose the amendment under any circumstances. "This is not about negotiating aid; it's about protecting the constitution of Pakistan," he emphasised, noting that the Chief Justice's tenure is nearing its end. Rehman also alleged that many officials hold questionable credentials, pointing to Form 47 parliamentarians. He warned that if the constitution is upheld, numerous parliamentarians could be dismissed. "If all parties adhere to the constitution, they will be safeguarded; otherwise, they will face the consequences later," Rehman asserted. He also stressed that all political parties have the right to hold rallies in Lahore and Islamabad. Earlier, Dr Arif Alvi visited Jamaat-e-Islami's headquarters, Mansoorah, in Lahore, where he was warmly welcomed. The leaders discussed the country's overall political situation and the proposed constitutional amendment.

Moreover, the lawyers demanded fixing the Supreme Court Bar Association's constitutional petition on Article 63-A for hearing. They also said the perpetrators should refrain from putting the democracy and Constitution into danger through their nefarious activities. The counsels asked the government to finalise the 26th constitutional amendment only after consulting the lawyers unions. Treasury and opposition benches have engaged in a tug-of-war in both houses of the parliament over the incumbent government's prospective constitutional amendment bill. The government needs to secure a two-thirds majority in parliament to successfully pass any constitutional amendment. The ruling coalition has apparently failed to manage the required numbers in a two-thirds majority in parliament despite strenuous efforts which arguably centred around Jamiat Ulema-e-Islam-Fazl (JULF) chief Maulana Fazlur Rehman's assent to the proposed amendments. After failing to woo the JULF chief, the government decided to "indefinitely postpone" the tabling of the constitutional package. On the other hand, the opposition parties — PTI and JULF — criticised the government for being secretive over the content of the constitutional amendments whose original draft should be presented in the parliament for a debate before its approval.

PA speaker calls for upholding parliament's supremacy

After NA speaker, Malik Ahmad Khan also writes letter to ECP, urging the implementation of amended Election Act

BUREAU REPORT

LAHORE: Following the lead of the National Assembly speaker, Punjab Assembly Speaker Malik Ahmad Khan has written to the Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP), urging the implementation of the amended Election Act and the reinforcement of parliamentary supremacy. In his letter, Speaker Malik Ahmad Khan emphasised the importance of ensuring the integrity of the revised Election Act. "The democratic process relies on the sovereignty of parliament, which forms the foundation of our democratic system," he stated. "It is essential that this principle is upheld in all decisions and actions."

He warned that undermining parliamentary sovereignty would be detrimental to democracy, reiterating the need for all constitutional institutions to respect and adhere to the laws established by parliament. Referring to the Supreme Court's recent decision, Malik Ahmad Khan noted that parliament had subsequently passed the Second Amendment to the Election Act, which reflects the sanctity of party affiliation.

SL to vote in first poll since economic collapse

COLOMBO: Cash-strapped Sri Lanka will vote for its next president Saturday in an effective referendum on an unpopular IMF austerity plan enacted after the island nation's unprecedented financial crisis. President Ranil Wickremesinghe, 75, is seeking a fresh mandate after claiming credit for stabilising the economy and bringing an end to months of food, fuel and medicine shortages. He has also restored calm to the streets after civil unrest spurred by the downturn in 2022 saw thousands storm the compound of his predecessor, who promptly fled the country. "Think of the time when all hope was lost... we didn't have food, gas, medicine, or any hopes," Wickremesinghe said in the closing days of the campaign. - Agencies

Pakistan committed to Indus Water Treaty: FO

Pakistan has reaffirmed its condemnation of Israeli airstrikes and reiterated its support for Int'l Court of Justice (ICJ) advisory opinion on the illegal nature of Israel's occupation of Palestinian territories

KHAYAM ABBASI

Islamabad: Responding to the queries of media persons at her weekly news briefing regarding India's notice seeking reassessment of the treaty, Foreign Office Spokesperson Mumtaz Zahra Baloch said Pakistan considers the Indus Water Treaty as an important one and hopes that India will also comply with its provisions. The spokesperson pointed out that the two countries have a mechanism of Indus Water Commissioners and all issues pertaining to this treaty can be discussed in it. The spokesperson described the election exercise in Indian illegally occupied Jammu and Kashmir as farcical, reminding India that given the internationally recognized disputed status of IIOJK, any so called elections conducted in pursuance of the Indian constitution carries no legal value in the eyes of international law. She said the relevant UN Security Council resolutions clearly state that final disposition of Jammu and Kashmir dispute will be made in accordance with the will of the

Kashmiri people expressed through a UN supervised plebiscite. Any other process, cannot, therefore, serve as a substitute to the grant of the right of self-determination of the Kashmiri people. Responding to a question, the foreign office spokesperson rejected Acting Afghan Consul General's explanation for not standing during the Pakistani national anthem at an event in Peshawar, terming the action a violation of diplomatic norms. She said Pakistan considers the act of the Acting Afghan Consul General as reprehensible, saying this has hurt the sentiments of the people of Pakistan. She said Pakistan has conveyed its strong protest to the Afghan authorities on the matter. She said decisions will be taken after due internal deliberations and conclusion of talks with the Afghan government. She said Pakistan reserves the right to take action in accordance with diplomatic norms and practices. Pakistan has reaffirmed its condemnation of Israeli airstrikes and reiterated its support for the International Court of Justice (ICJ) advisory opinion on the illegal nature of Israel's occupation of Palestinian territories.

Founder group sweeps ICCI annual elections

ISLAMABAD: In the annual election 2024-26 of the Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industries held on Thursday, the Founders Group won all the seats of the executive committee with a huge majority. According to the details the Founder Group's CM class, Nasir Mansur Qureshi, sardar Tahir Mahmood, Mohammad Zakria A. Zia, Ali Nawaz, Amir Rahim Qureshi, Atiq ur Rehman Khan, Faisal Muzammal, Malik Aqeel Ahmed, Mohammad Kaleemullah, Mohammad Najeeb Ellahi Malik Raja Naveed Akhtar Satti, Sanaullah Khan, Umair Abdul Nair and Umer Hussain Malik stood victorious. Whereas Am Class Founder Group's Abdur Rehman Siddiqui, Nasir Mehmood Chaudhry, Ch. Mohammad Waseem, Malik Mohsin Khalid, Tahir Ayub, Mohammad Irfan Chaudhry, Mohammad Ishaq Sial, Mohammad Zulqurnain Abbasi, Rohail Anwar Butt, Umer Khayyam Abbasi, Aftab Ahmed Gujjar, Ch. Nadeem Ahmed, Malik Abdul Aziz and Mohammad Imran bagged victory. Ahsan Zafar Bakhtawari President, Faad Waheed Senior Vice President and Eng. Azhar ul Islam Zafar Vice President, Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry have congratulated the candidates of Founder Group for achieving landslide victory in election and hoped that as Executive Members of ICCI, they would play effective role in promoting the interests of business community and deliver up to the expectations of their voters. Khalid Iqbal Malik, Chairman, Founder Group congratulated the newly elected Executive Members of ICCI and expressed best wishes for them. He also thanked all ICCI members for giving landslide victory to the candidates of Founder Group with the power of their votes. Former President ICCI and Secretary General United Business Group Zafar Bakhtawari said that the clean sweep of Founder Group in the annual elections of ICCI showed that the business community of Islamabad has complete trust and confidence in the leadership of Founder Group and is fully satisfied with its good performance. - DNA



ISLAMABAD: President Asif Ali Zardari, Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif and Ambassador of People's Republic of China to Pakistan Mr Jiang Zaidong cutting a cake to mark the 75th anniversary of the founding of the People's Republic of China. - DNA

KSA will not recognize Israel without Palestinian state: MBS

NEWS DESK

RIYADH: Saudi Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman said on Wednesday that the Kingdom would not recognize Israel without the establishment of a Palestinian state. During an address to the Shoura Council, he also strongly condemned the "crimes of the Israeli occupation" against the Palestinian people. "The Kingdom will not stop its tireless work toward the establishment of an independent Palestinian state with East Jerusalem as its capital, and we affirm that the Kingdom will not establish diplomatic relations with Israel without that," the crown prince said. Prince Mohammed thanked "countries that recognized the Palestinian state in embodiment of international legitimacy," and urged other countries who had not done so to "take similar steps." The Kingdom sought to enhance regional and international security and peace by making efforts to reach political solutions to the crises in Yemen, Sudan, Libya and Ukraine, the crown prince said. Turning to the Kingdom's domestic situation, the crown prince said that any achievement made through Saudi Vision 2030's comprehensive umbrella of various paths was an elevation for the nation, a benefit for the citizen, and immunity from fluctuations and changes for future generations. "We are proceeding with optimism and confidence in continuing the journey to achieve our targets, according to a comprehensive and integrated approach based on careful review and prioritization," the crown prince said. "Our nation has made significant strides during this transformative period. Non-oil activities have reached a new pinnacle, contributing 50 percent of the real GDP last year. This achievement fosters sustainable and inclusive growth, solidifying our economic diversification efforts."

Enemy crossed all red lines: Nasrallah

BEIRUT: Hezbollah Secretary General Sayyed Hassan Nasrallah says Israel crossed all redlines in its explosions in booby-trapped radios and pagers in Lebanon. "The enemy has crossed all red lines and all laws in this attack. This is a massive terrorist attack, genocide, a massacre," Nasrallah said in a televised address on Thursday. "The Tuesday and Wednesday massacres are a war crime, a declaration of war...you can call it anything," he added. Israel's willful intent, he said, was to kill 4,000 Lebanese people within minutes but many of the pagers were out of service, turned off or stored away. "When the enemy planned out this attack, they assumed there were at least 4,000 pagers spread out across all of Lebanon. This means that the enemy had the intention of murdering 4,000 people in a single minute. The same was repeated on the second day with the aim being to kill thousands of people carrying radio devices," Nasrallah said. "Some of the attacks took place in hospitals, pharmacies, marketplaces, commercial shops and even residential homes, private vehicles and public roads where thousands of civilians, including women and children, are present," he added. Nasrallah said an extensive investigative committee had been formed to study all scenarios, possibilities, and theories, and have reached an almost-definitive conclusion. - Agencies

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