



Islamabad POST

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Iran's leader defends strikes on Israel in rare public speech

Detailed News On Page-07

PTI not a political party: Azma

Detailed News On Page-08

Ben Stokes' participation remains doubtful

Detailed News On Page-06

PM to host APC on Gaza

Pakistan to observe Palestine Solidarity Day on October 7

The committee for the APC will include Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Ishaq Dar, Sherry Rehman, Khawaja Saad Rafique, and Nayyar Bukhari

KHAYAM ABBASI

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif met with Chairman Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) Bilawal Bhutto Zardari and a delegation of Jamaat-e-Islami led by Ameer Jamaat-e-Islami Hafiz Naeem ur Rehman at the Prime Minister's House, where it was decided to convene an All Parties Conference (APC) in solidarity with Palestine. According to a statement from the Prime Minister's office, Bilawal Bhutto Zardari and Hafiz Naeem ur Rehman met with Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif, and the political parties present decided to express national solidarity with Gaza and the Palestinians. It was decided during the meeting to hold an APC hosted by the Prime Minister to raise a unified voice against the ongoing oppression in Gaza and for the rights of the Palestinian people. The political leaders also agreed to observe a day of solidarity with Gaza and the Palestinians on October 7, condemning the brutal oppression faced by the defenseless Palestinian Muslims at the hands of Israel. A committee was approved to organize the day of solidarity and the APC. The committee for the APC will include Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Ishaq Dar, Sherry Rehman, Khawaja Saad Rafique, and Nayyar Bukhari.

It was also agreed to hold gatherings and seminars across Pakistan on October 7 to raise voices against the Israeli brutality and express solidarity with the Palestinian brothers and sisters. According to the Prime Minister's office, President Asif Ali Zardari and Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif will attend the APC. Bilawal Bhutto Zardari strongly supported the solidarity day for Palestine and Gaza, and the Jamaat-e-Islami's stance on standing with the oppressed Palestinian brothers and sisters was appreciated. Bilawal Bhutto Zardari

Continued on Page 06

JI Chief meets Malaysian PM

It was also agreed to hold a global protest against Israeli aggression on October 7

DNA

ISLAMABAD: On the invitation of Malaysian Prime Minister Anwar Ibrahim, a delegation led by Hafiz Naeem-ur-Rehman of Jamaat-e-Islami met with him in Islamabad for detailed discussions. The delegation also included Jamaat-e-Islami's Secretary General Amir ul Azeem and Director of Foreign Affairs Asif Luqman Qazi. During the meeting, both sides agreed that the leadership of Islamic countries must take immediate action to stop Israeli aggression in Gaza and Lebanon. It was also agreed to hold a global protest against Israeli aggression on October 7, marking the completion of one year of resistance. Hafiz Naeem-ur-Rehman praised the efforts of the Malaysian government, led by Anwar Ibrahim, in providing care for injured Palestinians. Prime Minister Anwar Ibrahim invited Hafiz Naeem-ur-Rehman to visit Malaysia, to which the Jamaat-e-Islami leader expressed gratitude and requested

Continued on Page 06



ISLAMABAD: Chairman Pakistan Peoples Party Bilawal Bhutto Zardari and a delegation of Jamaat-e-Islami led by Amir e Jamaat Hafiz Naeem ur Rehman called on PM Shehbaz Sharif. - DNA

Australian HC calls on Nawaz Sharif

Nawaz Sharif said that Pakistan-Australia partnership is very important



BUREAU REPORT

LAHORE: Australian High Commissioner Neil Hawkins called on PML-N President Nawaz Sharif at Jati Umrah, Lahore and discussed ways to boost bilateral relations between the two countries. On the occasion, Australian High Commissioner expressed his determination to further promote mutual cooperation between the two countries. He emphasized the need to expand cooperation in trade, IT, education and agriculture.

Continued on Page 06

'New terms' push PIA bidding forward

Bidders resist employee retention, seek tax clearance, and aircraft guarantees

FAISAL SHEIKH

ISLAMABAD: The Senate Standing Committee on Privatization was informed about new conditions set by the companies bidding for the Pakistan International Airlines (PIA) sell-off, leading to the postponement of the bidding date to October 31. The committee, chaired by Talal Chaudhry,

Continued on Page 06

Pak invited PM Modi FM Jaishankar to visit Pakistan for SCO conference

Islamabad to host SCO Council of Heads of Government meeting scheduled for October 15 and 16

SAIFULLAH ANSAR

ISLAMABAD: Minister of External Affairs of India S Jaishankar will travel to Pakistan to attend the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation's Council of Heads of Government (SCO-CHG) meeting, scheduled for October 15 and 16. "The external affairs minister will lead our delegation to Pakistan to participate in the SCO summit which will be held in Islamabad on 15 and 16 October," said Randhir Jaiswal, a spokesperson for Indian foreign ministry, but did not say if Jaishankar would meet any Pakistani leaders on the sidelines. This will be the first visit by an Indian foreign minister to Pakistan in nearly a decade. Speaking to a Pakistani channel, Indian journalist Umashankar Singh, citing an

Continued on Page 06

Army called out ahead of SCO summit

"Requisite strength" of troops in aid of civil power

MEHTAB PIRZADA

ISLAMABAD: In a bid to ensure law and order situation in the federal capital during the forthcoming Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) summit, the federal government approved

Continued on Page 06

Briefs

Israel can't attack 'nuclear' Pakistan

Defence minister says PTI agitating to sabotage SCO summit

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Defence Minister Khawaja Mohammad Asif has said that Pakistan is an atomic country and no one including Israel can dare attack it. Talking to newsmen in Islamabad on Friday, Khawaja Asif said "Israel is attacking us through PTI founder. Last time when CPEC project was being inked PTI was busy in holding sit-ins and protests in Islamabad." He further said that now SCO Summit is taking place and the PTI founder is planning to sabotage it. He advised the people to gather all this evidence and then they came to know that a conspiracy being hatched against Pakistan.

Dr Arif Alvi's clinic closure challenged in SHC

NAZIR SIYAL

KARACHI: The Sindh Building Control Authority (SBCA) decision to seal former president Dr Arif Alvi's dental clinic in the port city was challenged in the SHC on Friday. Following the development, the court's two-judge bench heard the petition, issuing notices to the provincial government, the authority and healthcare commission. The court, on the plea filed by Dr Alvi's wife Samina Alvi and son Awab Alvi, has sought a reply from all parties by October 7. Earlier today, the SHC had approved the petition against former president's dental clinic being sealed in Karachi by the SBCA.

Anwar praises Army's role

COAS Asim vows to boost military ties with Malaysia

Gen Munir, in return, thanked the prime minister "for the invitation and appreciated the successful visit to Pakistan"



STAFF REPORT

RAWALPINDI: Chief of Army Staff (COAS) General Asim Munir on Friday met with Malaysia's Prime Minister Anwar Ibrahim, who stressed the need to boost military ties between the two countries. PM Ibrahim is in Islamabad for his three-day official visit

aimed at reinvigorating the bilateral strategic partnership between Malaysia and Pakistan. According to Radio Pakistan, the Malaysian prime minister in a meeting with Gen Munir, emphasised the "need for increasing bilateral ties, particularly military relations between the two brotherly countries".

Continued on Page 06

Imran Khan's sisters arrested as marchers adamant to reach D Chowk

Worst shelling at D Chowk; scores of PTI workers arrested in Islamabad; Ganadpur says protest to be called off only on Imran Khan's orders

DNA

ISLAMABAD: The Islamabad Police on Friday arrested PTI founder Imran Khan's sisters Aleema Khan and Uzma Khan in D-Chowk. According to details, Aleema Khan and Uzma Khan were arrested in D-Chowk during the PTI protest call as Section 144 was already imposed in the federal capital. Both the sisters of former prime minister were shifted to the police station. Earlier, several incidents of clashes were reported between the PTI workers and police. The police also fired the tear gas shells to disperse the PTI workers who were adamant to reach the D-Chowk. At least 30 protesters have been arrested as police fire tear gas to disperse PTI protesters attempting to reach Islamabad's D-Chowk for a planned party rally. Incarcerated PTI founder Imran Khan earlier again called on his supporters to gather for a "peaceful protest" as his party amped up preparations for

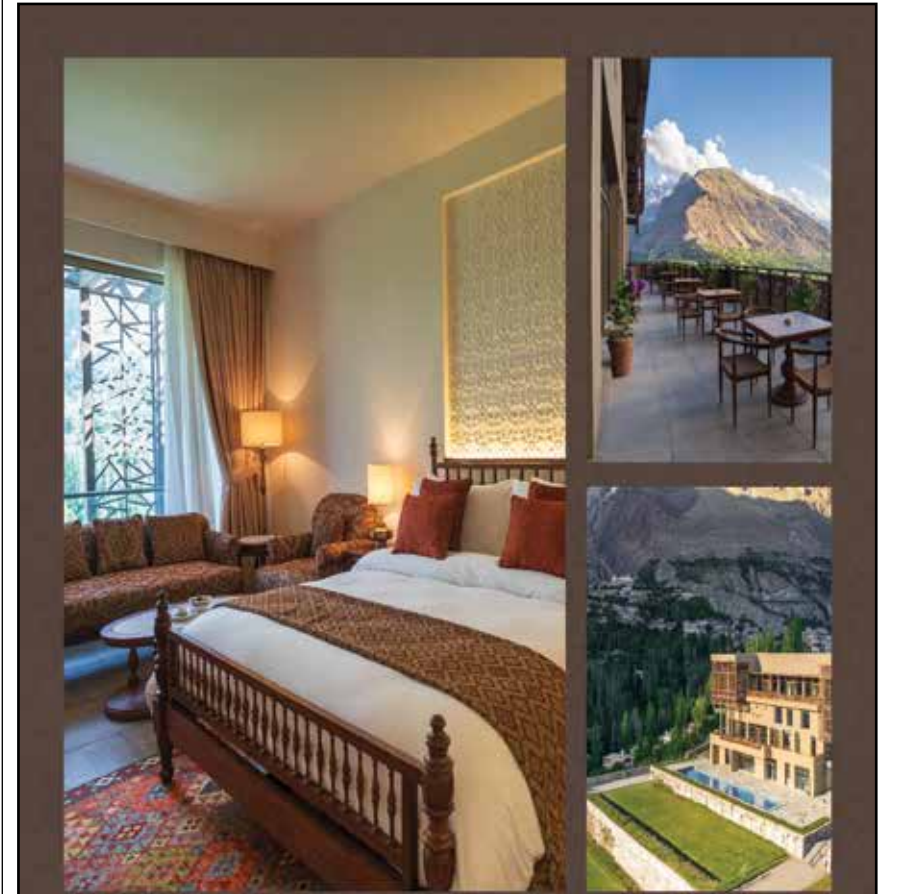
today's demonstration despite a ban on gatherings. Another one is also scheduled for Lahore's Minari-Pakistan on Saturday. The PTI has carried out multiple rallies across the country in recent weeks, protesting against the "illegal" imprisonment of its founder and the Election Commission of Pakistan's delay in implementing the reserved seats verdict, as well as to "save the Constitution". Ahead of its rallies in Islamabad and Lahore earlier this month, the government had issued a set of strict guidelines, which the PTI failed to follow fully, sparking clashes between its workers and the authorities. The PTI today shared updates of its caravans departing various cities, despite being warned by Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi a day ago not to hold any rally in Islamabad due to several high-profile visits by foreign dignitaries. Jamiat Ulema-e-Islam-Fazl Maulana Fazlur Rehman, with whom the PTI has

Continued on Page 06

Govt mulls Governor's rule in KP

DNA

ISLAMABAD: The federal government is mulling imposition of Governor rule in the KP province. The KP Governor Faisal Karim Kundi met with the Prime Minister on Friday. Sources close to this development revealed that both sides discussed as to how to control situation in the KP. Sources claim Governor Faisal Kundi also supported the idea of Governor rule, but it was not decided when the government will go for this extreme step. The sources are of the view that many ministers think any such step before the SCO summit may be avoided.



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Ombudsman launches awareness campaign in Hazara division

ABBOTTABAD: In an initiative to enhance public awareness about the Federal Ombudsman's institution, Advisor In-Charge regional Ombudsman office Abbottabad Rashid Ahmed on Friday has launched a campaign in Hazara Division. Awareness posters have been displayed in various federal and provincial departments, and letters have been sent to the chairmen of all union councils, urging them to refer local grievances for prompt resolution. Rashid Ahmed emphasized that the Federal Ombudsman, established in 1983 under a presidential decree, operates with 18 regional offices nationwide, with its headquarters located in Islamabad. The institution aims to address mismanagement in federal and provincial departments and resolve the legitimate rights of citizens that are pending. Federal Ombudsman functions as a public court, allowing complainants to submit their grievances simply by writing them down on paper along with required documents. For added convenience, complaints can also be filed online through the Federal Ombudsman's website or mobile app.

receiving complaints, notices are promptly issued to the senior officials of the relevant departments, ensuring that a decision is reached within 60 days after a 45-day investigation period. Importantly, individuals do not require legal representation, and no court fees are involved in the process. Rashid Ahmed urged the residents of Hazara Division to take advantage of the Federal Ombudsman's services for immediate redress of their legitimate rights, highlighting a commitment to ensuring that justice is accessible to all, particularly those in remote areas.—APP

Dengue cases surge in KP as 141 new cases reported

PESHAWAR: A notable surge has been witnessed in dengue cases across the province including in provincial metropolises as according to the Health Department Khyber Pakhtunkhwa on Friday, 141 new cases were reported during the last 24 hours. With 141 new cases, the tally of dengue cases in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa has reached 511, the Health Department report said, adding that the number of total so far reported cases was 1222 in the province. Till date, it said 709 dengue patients have recovered while only 34 were under treatment at various hospitals. About the district-wise numbers of dengue cases, the report said that from Peshawar, 373 cases were reported while from Abbottabad, 139, from Hangu 115, from Mansehra 104, from Nowshera 100 cases, from Charsadda 59 cases and from Kohat 49 cases such cases were reported. Likewise, from Haripur district 36 cases were reported while from Bannu 25, from Mardan 36, from Bajaur 25 and from Swabi district 36 dengue fever cases were reported. The dengue fever has caused two deaths in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa till date, the report said.—APP

CM Maryam launches first govt-led autism school

In addition to the autism school, Punjab CM Maryam Nawaz launched the Himat Card program, which will initially provide 65,000 deserving individuals with a quarterly allowance of Rs. 10,500

STAFF REPORT

LAHORE: Punjab Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz laid the foundation of Pakistan's first government-run autism school and launched the Himat Card program, which aims to support differently-abled individuals. Both initiatives reflect her commitment to improving the lives of those with special needs across the province. During her visit to the site of the autism school, CM Maryam Nawaz was briefed on the state-of-the-art facilities being constructed. The school will feature a ground and first floor, with 11 classrooms for the junior section and 10 for the senior section. In addition to classrooms, the school will include a cubical speech session room, therapy room, pre-vocational training room, a daily living activity room, and a computer lab. The first floor will house three classrooms, a multi-purpose hall, committee room, library, and resource room. Notably, the building is designed to accommodate two additional floors for future expansion, ensuring capacity for growth. Security features, such as fire alarms and a telephone exchange, will also be installed, and construction is set to be completed within one year under Maryam Nawaz's direction. The chief minister has also instructed the immediate recruitment of autism experts and emphasized that consultation with specialists will shape the school's operational plans. Expressing her dedication to the cause, Maryam Nawaz said that autistic children deserve "kindness, empathy, and love" and that the school holds a special place in her heart. In addition to the autism school, CM Maryam Nawaz launched the Himat Card program, which will initially



provide 65,000 deserving individuals with a quarterly allowance of Rs. 10,500. The Himat Card will also serve as a travel card, enabling free rides on the Orange Line and Metro Buses in Lahore, Multan, and Rawalpindi, starting from October 15. At the launch event, the chief minister announced that more cards would be made available through applications sent directly to her office. In a symbolic gesture of inclusivity, she invited differently-abled individuals to sit beside her, while ministers and officials were seated behind them. Maryam Nawaz distributed the Himat Cards to attendees and personally engaged with recipients, highlighting her affection for the children present. One young boy, Muhammad Azeem, expressed his gratitude by gifting the CM a pencil drawing, calling the Himat Card a "blessing"

for him and his peers. The chief minister emphasized the importance of the Himat Card for those unable to earn a livelihood, noting that it would alleviate financial burdens for families. She reassured attendees that artificial limbs and other assistive devices would also be provided to those in need. During the ceremony, CM Maryam praised her team for their efforts in launching the Himat Card and acknowledged the resilience of differently-abled individuals, applauding their hope and courage. "The Rs. 10,500 may not seem substantial, but it provides essential support," she said, affirming her dedication to improving the lives of differently-abled people. She also highlighted the achievements of the PML-N government, stating that welfare and progress initiatives have

been consistently prioritized despite economic challenges. The event featured a documentary titled Hope and Success Journey, showcasing the Punjab government's initiatives, including the Himat Card project. Attendees were also treated to a presentation of the national anthem in sign language, celebrating the differently-abled community. Notable attendees included Senator Pervaiz Rashid, Senior Minister Murrum Aurangzeb, Information & Culture Minister Azma Zahid Bukhari, Provincial Education Minister Rana Sikandar Hayat, MPA Sania Ashiq and Parliamentary Secretary for Education Nausheen Adnan attended the meeting. Chief Secretary, Secretary Construction, SMBR, Secretary Special Education, DG Special Education, DGPR and other relevant officers were also present. Farmers are advised to manage their activities keeping in view the weather forecast. Travelers and tourists are advised to remain extra cautious and manage their travelling according to weather conditions and avoid any untoward situation during the wet spell. All concerned authorities are advised to remain alert and take necessary measures to avoid any untoward situation.

higher education. During the launch event, she emphasized that the programme was designed to ensure equal access to quality education for talented individuals across the province. Under the programme, scholarships were set to be awarded to 30,000 students across 68 disciplines, aligning with the demands of the global job market. The chief minister highlighted that the initiative would play a key role in enabling the youth to pursue higher education and secure better employment opportunities. The Honahaar Scholarship Programme was aimed at students from 50 public sector universities, 16 medical colleges, and 131 graduate colleges. This extensive initiative showcased the Punjab government's commitment to empowering the youth and fostering academic excellence across a wide range of disciplines. Senator Pervaiz Rashid, Senior Provincial Minister Murrum Aurangzeb, Information & Culture Minister Azma Zahid Bukhari, Provincial Education Minister Rana Sikandar Hayat, MPA Sania Ashiq and Parliamentary Secretary for Education Nausheen Adnan attended the meeting. Chief Secretary, Secretary Construction, SMBR, Secretary Special Education, DG Special Education, DGPR and other relevant officers were also present. Farmers are advised to manage their activities keeping in view the weather forecast. Travelers and tourists are advised to remain extra cautious and manage their travelling according to weather conditions and avoid any untoward situation during the wet spell. All concerned authorities are advised to remain alert and take necessary measures to avoid any untoward situation.

Date to encash withdrawn prize bonds extended up to Dec 31

KARACHI: The Government of Pakistan extended the last date for encashment, conversion or replacement of withdrawn prize bonds of Rs40,000, Rs25,000, Rs15,000 and Rs7,500 denominations up to December 31, 2024. The State Bank of Pakistan's Banking Services Corporation advised all commercial banks to accept requests for encashment, conversion or redemption of cited denominations from general public at all branches till the extended date. The Rs. 40,000, Rs. 25,000, Rs. 15,000 and Rs. 7,500 denomination National Prize Bonds (bearer) were withdrawn from circulation in June 2019. However, the government has kept extending the deadline to facilitate the holders of the withdrawn bonds. For the last time, the Finance Department has fixed June 30, 2024 as the final date for the purpose but for another time the last date of encashment, conversion or replacement of the mentioned denominations of the bonds was extended up to December 31, 2024. The investors of aforesaid prize bonds have three options i.e. Encashment at Face Value; Conversion to registered Premium Prize Bonds; or Replacement with Special or Defense Savings Certificates (SSC and DSC). The prize bonds can be redeemed from SBP Banking Services Corporation office and branches of commercial banks across the country till the final date.—APP

BISP, WFP sign agreement to extend Benazir Nashonuma programme

ISLAMABAD: Benazir Income Support Programme (BISP) and United Nations World Food Programme (WFP) have extended their partnership for another two years under the Benazir Nashonuma Programme. The agreement was signed in a ceremony held today at BISP Headquarters, witnessed by Senator Rubina Khalid, Chairperson of BISP Secretary BISP Mr. Amer Ali Ahmad and Ms. Coco Ushiyama, Country Director and Representative of WFP exchanged the agreement documents. This collaboration highlights the critical need to address malnutrition in Pakistan, where nearly 40% of children under five suffer from stunting due

to poor nutrition. Benazir Nashonuma Programme aims to reduce stunting among pregnant and lactating women (PLW) and their children under two years of age by providing additional cash support to BISP beneficiary families. PLW and boy child will receive PKR 2,500 per quarter, while girl child will receive PKR 3,000 per quarter. Speaking on the occasion, Chairperson of BISP, Rubina Khalid emphasized the significance of this new agreement, describing it as a key step in the country's fight against malnutrition. She said "The Government of Pakistan is proud to strengthen this vital partnership with WFP. Our commitment to the Benazir

Nashonuma Programme remains unwavering, and we are dedicated to expanding its reach and effectiveness to ensure that every child in Pakistan gets the opportunity of a healthy start in life, setting the foundation for a brighter and more prosperous future". The first phase of the agreement concluded in June 2024, and under the second phase, the program will expand to cover 157 districts with 562 facilitation centers. WFP will continue to implement the program following the approved design and protocols, with an increased focus on quality. The second phase will run for two years, concluding in June 2026. The key participants at the signing ceremony included Ms.

Rathi Palakrishnan, Deputy Country Director; Mr. Eric Kenefick, Head of Programme; Ms. Rie Ishii, Head of Supply Chain; Ms. Mamoonah Ghaffar, Programme Policy Officer; Dr. Yasir Ihtesham, Head of Nutrition; Dr. Asma Badar, Programme Policy Officer, Nutrition; Dr. Ijaz Habib, Nutritionist, WFP KP office; and Mr. Ahmed Hassan, Procurement Officer. The official signing of the new two-year agreement took place in Rome on 28 August 2024 between WFP's Assistant Executive Director for Partnerships and Innovation, Ms. Rania Dagash-Kamara, and Secretary BISP, Mr. Amer Ali Ahmed.—APP

Federal govt to hand over Green Line Bus Service to Sindh govt

KARACHI: The Federal government will hand over the Green Line Bus Service to the Sindh government in December 2024. The Sindh government has finalized preparations to assume control of the Green Line's operations, said a communique on Friday. A high-level meeting was held in Karachi under the chairmanship of Sindh Senior Minister Sharjeel Inam Memon. The meeting was attended by Transport Secretary Asad Zamin, Managing Director of Sindh Mass Transit Authority Kamal Hakeem Dayo, Trans Karachi CEO Shumaila Mohsin, and other officials. In the meeting, the operations of the Green Line Bus Service were thoroughly reviewed, and Sindh Senior Minister Sharjeel Inam Memon received a comprehensive briefing on

the Green Line project. A detailed discussion was also held on the plan to connect the Green Line with the Orange Line project. During the meeting, Sharjeel Inam Memon directed the swift completion of the project connecting the Green Line with the Orange Line. The meeting also covered discussions on the Sindh Government's ongoing operations in the public transport sector, utility services, and subsidies for the Green Line Bus Service. Speaking at the meeting, Sindh Senior Minister and Provincial Minister for Information, Transport, Mass Transit, Excise, Taxation, and Narcotics Control, Sharjeel Inam Memon, emphasized that the Green Line project is a vital component of Karachi's public transport system.—APP

Wildlife netted seven illegal birds hunters

SARGODHA: In line with special directives of Director General (DG) wild life Punjab, Deputy Director (DD) Wild life Sargodha region Arooj Zaheer directed wild life raiding teams to raid against illegal hunters, here on Friday. According to a spokesperson, raiding teams under the supervision of wildlife inspector Syed Sajid Abbas Shah and head voucher officer, Shahid Hussain raided at Kotmomin river side area and Nour purr thal area and nabbed seven illegal Falcon and quails hunters including Ghulam Abbas, Adnan Haider, Muhammad Nawaz, Parvaiz Akhtar, Muhammad Imran and two others and recovered rare birds from them.—APP

Rain to lash upper parts of the country from Oct 05-08: PMD

ISLAMABAD: After the days-long hot and dry weather across the country, the Pakistan Meteorological Department (PMD) has forecast rain-wind/thunderstorm for the upper parts of the country. As per the synoptic situation, a westerly wave was likely to approach upper parts of the country on October 05. Under the influence of this weather system, rain-wind/thunderstorm with isolated hailstorm are expected in Islamabad, Rawalpindi, Murree, Galliat, Attock, Chakwal, Jhelum, Mandi Bahaudin, Gujrat, Gujranwala, Lahore, Kasur, Okara, Sheikhpura, Sialkot, Narowal, Hafizabad, Wazirabad, Khushab, Sargodha, Mianwali, Jhang, Toba Tek Singh, Chiniot, Faisalabad during from October 05, October 07 and October 08 with occasional gaps. While rain-wind/thunderstorm is expected in Sahiwal, Pakpattan, Dera Ghazi Khan, Layyah and Bhakkar from October 06-08 with occasional gaps. In Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa, rain-wind/thunderstorm with isolated heavy fall /hailstorm are expected in Chitral, Dir, Swat, Kohistan, Shangla, Battagram, Mansehra, Abbottabad, Haripur, Buner, Malakand, Bajaur, Mohmand, Khyber, Peshawar, Swabi, Charsadda and Nowshera from October 05-08. While, rain-wind/thunderstorm is expected in Mardan, Kurram, Orakzai, Kohat, Hangu, Bannu, Lakki Marwat, Waziristan and Dera Ismail Khan from October 05-07 with occasional gaps. In Kashmir, rain-wind/thunderstorm with isolated moderate to heavy rainfall/hailstorm are expected in Neelum valley, Muzaffarabad, Rawalakot, Poonch, Hattian, Bagh, Haveli, Sudhanoti, Kotli, Bhimber and Mirpur from October 05-08. In Gilgit-Baltistan, rain-wind/thunderstorm with few heavy fall is expected in Diamir, Astore, Skardu, Gilgit, Hunza, Ghanche and Shigar from October 05-08. In Balochistan, rain-wind/thunderstorm is expected in Quetta, Zhoab, Barkhan, Lasbella, Panjgur and Awaran on October 06 and 07. In Sindh, hot and dry weather is expected in most parts of the province. About the possible impacts, the PMD said that moderate to heavy rains may increase flow in local nullahs or streams in Murree, Galliat, Mansehra, Abbottabad, Kohistan, Chitral, Gilgit-Baltistan, Kashmir, Dir, Swat, Mala Kand, Shangla, Bajaur, Mohmand and Khyber during the forecast period. Landslides may disrupt roads in the vulnerable points of upper Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Murree, Galliat, Kashmir and Gilgit-Baltistan during the forecast period. Windstorm and lightning may affect/damage weak structures like roof/wall of Kacha houses, electric poles, bill boards, vehicles, and solar panels etc. during the forecast period.—APP

First Pakistan Int'l Date Palm festival kicks off to bolster country's production, export

KARACHI: The 1st Pakistan International Date Palm Festival and Exhibition aimed at bolstering country's production and export of dates and its value-added products kick starts here at Expo Center Karachi on Friday. The festival and exhibition are being organized by Ministry of National Food Security and Research and Trade Development Authority of Pakistan in collaboration with Embassy of United Arab Emirates in Pakistan and Khalifa International Award for Date Palm and agriculture innovation. Besides local growers and processors of date palm, 150 delegates from 8 different countries were taking part in the festival and exhibition. The Sindh Governor Kamran Khan Tessori, Chief Minister Syed Murad Ali Shah, UAE



Envoy to Pakistan Hamad Obaid Ibrahim Salem Alzaabi, Federal secretary NFSR Ali Tahir, Chief Executive TDAP Zubair Motwala and Secretary General Khalifa International Award Dr. Abdel Wahhab Zaid cut the ribbon

to inaugurate the two-day festival and exhibition. Sindh Governor Kamran Khan Tessori, speaking at the inaugural ceremony of the festival, termed the festival as a reflection of friendly ties of Pakistan and UAE and said that

it would not only open new avenues of sharing and cooperation for both the brotherly countries but also help in the promotion of Pakistani dates. He said that there was a vast potential for Pakistani dates in the global market

and full access of Pakistani dates to the global market could earn precious foreign exchange for the country. Tessori while stressing on the unity and collaboration among the Muslim countries said that these countries possessed enormous capital, resources and power and they could gain their due share in international trade through unity, coordination and collaborative efforts. The governor stressed on need of commercial plantation, reducing post-harvest losses, value addition and provision of technical assistance to farmers for enhancing production as well as export of dates. He urged the local growers, manufacturers and exporters to leverage form the technical expertise of UAE friends.—APP

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National Days and Armed Forces Days

OCTOBER

- Oct 01/China National Day
- Oct 01/Cyprus National Day
- Oct 01/Republic of Korea Armed Forces Day
- Oct 01/Nigeria Armed Forces Day
- Oct 02/Guinea National Day
- Oct 03/Germany Unification Day
- Oct 03/Republic of Korea National Foundation Day
- Oct 05/Indonesia Armed Forces Day
- Oct 06/Egypt Armed Forces Day
- Oct 09/Uganda Independence Day
- Oct 12/Spain National Day
- Oct 23/Hungary National Day
- October 24/United Nations United Nations Day
- Oct 25/Romania Armed Forces Day
- Oct 26/Austria National Day
- Oct 27/Turkmenistan Independence Day
- Oct 28/Czech Republic National Day
- Oct 29/Turkey Republican Day

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Emergency

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



Enquiry

Edhi Ambulance.....115
PIA Flight Info.....114
PIA Cargo.....9280979
Railway Inquiry.....117
Railway Exchange.....9270831-5
WASA Rawalpindi.....5555489
CAA.....9281092



Hospitals

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



Departments

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

Water Tank

Islamabad.....0321-5744480

ISSI hosts special talk on Pak investment landscape

Former Board of Investment (BOI) chairman Azfar Ahsan emphasized that investment success in Pakistan hinged on supporting and facilitating existing investors which was a crucial step towards creating a sustainable investment climate

STAFF REPORT

ISLAMABAD: The China Pakistan Study Centre (CPSC) at the Institute of Strategic Studies Islamabad (ISSI) organized a Special Talk on "Pakistan's Investment Landscape: Challenges, Opportunities and Way Forward." The Guest Speaker on the occasion was Mr. Azfar Ahsan, former Minister of State & Chairman Board of Investment (BOI). In his remarks at the outset, Director General ISSI Ambassador Sohail Mahmood outlined Pakistan's unique advantages, emphasizing the country's strategic geographical location at the crossroads of key regions such as the Middle East, Central Asia, and South Asia. He pointed out that Pakistan's youthful population provides an unmatched demographic advantage, while its vast natural resources make it an attractive destination for investors. Ambassador Sohail Mahmood also acknowledged the challenges preventing Pakistan from fully realizing its investment potential. He noted that while Pakistan has made progress in improving its ease of doing business ranking, significant hurdles remain, including regulatory complexities and concerns about policy continuity. These factors, along with lingering perceptions of security issues, contribute to investor hesitation. Despite these challenges, Ambassador Sohail Mahmood remained optimistic, highlighting



sectors such as IT, agriculture, and textiles as ripe for enhanced investment. He underscored the importance of fostering trust and stability to attract long-term investments and called for collaboration among all stakeholders - including government institutions, private sector, business leaders, and the media and civil society - to create an environment conducive to sustainable growth and turn Pakistan into a truly attractive investment destination. During his address, Mr. Azfar Ahsan stressed the critical need for a comprehensive strategy to attract both local and foreign investors. He empha-

sized that investment success in Pakistan hinges on supporting and facilitating existing investors, a crucial step toward creating a sustainable investment climate. He strongly advocated for a long-term national approach including framing of a "country strategy" to improve investor confidence and ensure economic stability. Furthermore, Mr. Ahsan highlighted the importance of foundational reforms across all sectors of the economy. He argued that Pakistan must move away from reactive policies and focus on creating a business- and investment-friendly environ-

ment. This requires consistent policy frameworks, regardless of political changes, as well as a commitment to improving infrastructure, governance, institutional capacity, and law and order. These efforts, he noted, would not only attract new foreign direct investment (FDI) but also strengthen relationships with existing investors, which was critically important. Mr. Azfar Ahsan's address also highlighted the potential for joint ventures between Pakistani and foreign investors, particularly in sectors like technology, agriculture, and manufacturing. Mr. Ahsan empha-

sized Pakistan's strategic location and youthful population as key assets that could be leveraged for future growth. He encouraged policymakers to learn from neighboring countries such as China and Uzbekistan, where strategic planning and collaboration with global businesses have led to rapid economic development. He also emphasized the importance of imbibing from the Saudi experience and working closely with Saudi authorities to significantly expand the Kingdom's investment profile in Pakistan. Earlier, Director of the China Pakistan Study Centre Dr. Talat Shabbir, in his introductory remarks.

Export of sport goods increases 4.27% to US 61.982 m

ISLAMABAD: The export of sport goods from the country witnessed an increase of 4.27 percent during the first two months of the current fiscal year (2024-25) as compared to the export of corresponding months of last year. The country exported sport goods worth US\$ 61.982 million during July-August (2024-25) as opposed to the export of US\$ 59.442 million during July-August (2023-24), showing growth of 4.27 percent, according to the data released by the Pakistan Bureau of Statistics (PBS). Among the sports products, the exports of footballs rose by 8.35 percent, surging from US\$ 35.728 million last year to US\$ 38.713 million during the current year. The gloves exports, however, dropped by 1.38 percent by going down from US\$ 9.429 million last year to US\$ 9.299 million during the current year, the PBS data revealed. Likewise, the exports of all other sports goods also dipped by 2.21 percent to US\$ 13.970 million from US\$ 14.285 million last year. Meanwhile, on a year-on-year basis, the sports goods export witnessed a decrease of 2.18 percent in August 2024 as opposed to the export of the same month of last year.

Awareness about viral infections stressed

ISLAMABAD: Health experts on Friday stressed the importance of being aware of viral infections, particularly conjunctivitis or Pink Eye during changing weather patterns. Talking to a Private news channel Prof Tipu Sultan MD Children Hospital said that continuous changes in weather conditions and rapid temperature fluctuations between day and night can have severe health consequences. He explained viral infection prevention awareness is essential to safeguard public health. The fluctuating temperatures, humidity, and wind patterns create an ideal breeding ground for viruses, increasing the risk of outbreaks, he added. Respiratory tract infections, conjunctivitis (pink eye), and gastrointestinal viral infections are among the most common viral infections that spread rapidly during this time. —APP

Faizabad, Murree Road closed for vehicular traffic: CTP

RAWALPINDI: In view of the law and order situation, Faisabad, Murree Road has been closed for all kind of vehicular traffic, a City Traffic Police (CTP) spokesman said here on Friday. He informed that traffic advisory has been issued and the citizens have been requested to avoid unnecessary travel. The citizens have been requested to contact CTP numbers, 051-9274843 and 051-9273678 in case of any emergency, he added. Stadium Road (Double Road) is closed for all kind of traffic, he said adding, 6th Road Chowk, Chandni Chowk and C-Block Chowk are closed for traffic. Similarly, Khannapal, Sahi Chowk, Naz Cinema, Kohati Bazar Mor and Liaqat Bagh are closed. DAV College Chowk, Marrir Chowk, MH Chowk, Haider Road are also closed for all traffic while Kutchery Chowk and Kutchery to Korai, old Airport Road is open for all types of traffic. Sowan Bridge is also open for traffic, he said. T-Chowk Rawat and Margalla Mor, Pirwadhai are closed for all kind of vehicular traffic. Khayaban, Shah Najaf, Carriage Factory and Chungi No. 26 road is also closed for all vehicular traffic. Charing Cross and Dhama Sydan roads are also closed for the traffic. The citizens can use Khawaja Corporation chowk which is open for all kind of vehicular traffic. Chak Beli Mor, Rawat-Mandra Mor, Masa Kaswal, G.T Road Gujar Khan is closed for all kind of traffic. The spokesman informed that Daultala Mor and G.T Road Chakwal are also closed. Korai Chowk has been closed for vehicular traffic, he said and informed that the roads would be opened as the law and order situation improves in the city. City Traffic Officer (CTO) Rawalpindi Beenish Fatima urged the citizens to avoid unnecessary travel. The emergency portal of CTP Rawalpindi is working 24 hours to facilitate the citizens, she added. The citizens in case of any emergency can contact on emergency portal's numbers 051-9274843 and 051-9273678, the CTO said. The ambulances and fire brigade vehicles would be allowed to move, the CTO said adding, the citizens in case of emergency can contact on the emergency portal of the city traffic police. The CTP is fully cooperating with the citizens and providing alternative routes, she added. Moreover, Rawalpindi district police would ensure law and order situation and over 4000 police personnel have been deployed under security arrangements finalized to maintain law and order in Rawalpindi, said City Police Officer (CPO), Rawalpindi, Syed Khalid Hamdani. He informed that police personnel were deployed on all entry and exit points and main roads. Trained squads were also on high alert to deal with such elements who try to disturb law and order. The CPO said that strict legal action would be taken against the rules violators. —DNA

On World Teachers Day Zardari emphasises teachers' empowerment

ISLAMABAD: As the international community observes World Teachers' Day on Saturday, President Asif Ali Zardari urged the countrymen to reaffirm their commitment to empowering the teachers, besides ensuring their respect and recognition. "On this day, let us reaffirm our commitment to empowering our teachers and ensuring that they receive the respect, support, and recognition they deserve. Let's commit to improving our education system by investing in the capacity building and professional development of our teachers," the president said in his message to the nation on the Day. He said the teachers were the architects of any society as they helped nurture young minds and the Day was meant to celebrate the contributions of teachers in shaping our future generations. "Capable teachers inculcate critical thinking, creativity, and ethical values in their students, helping them become responsible and productive citizens. They should help in the moral development of students by promoting ethical values, love, tolerance, mutual respect and brotherhood," he stressed. The president also acknowledged the challenges being faced by teachers, including inadequate training and lack of professional development opportunities. —DNA

Govt won't tolerate PTI's attempts to destabilize country: Azma warns

ISLAMABAD: Provincial Information Minister Azma Bokhari Friday issued a stern warning to Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI), emphasizing that the government will not tolerate any attempts to undermine the rule of law and destabilize the country, particularly during visits from foreign dignitaries. Talking to a private news channel,

she said the government was committed to maintaining peace and stability, and its resolve to prevent any disruptions to the country's diplomatic engagements. Bokhari dared PTI leaders to engage in a performance-based competition, confident that her government would emerge victorious. Replying to a query, she expressed con-

cerns that PTI will not hold peaceful protests, which is why the government will not allow them to reach D-Chowk. Bokhari accused PTI leaders of planning to spread unrest in the country, alleging that PTI has a history of using violent protests to achieve its goals. Azma criticized the Chief Minister of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KPK)

for allegedly utilizing government resources, including vehicles, 1122 ambulances and government employees for Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) protests. She also accused the CM of failing to deliver on development projects in the province. She mentioned that CM Punjab Maryam Nawaz has initiated around 77 development projects, with another one set to be inaugurated today. In contrast, the performance of the Chief Minister of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KPK) has been questioned, she added. Citizens of Punjab and other provinces are reportedly satisfied with the current. —APP

Maintaining law and order in capital utmost priority: DIG

ISLAMABAD: Islamabad Capital Territory (ICT) Deputy Inspector General (DIG) Syed Ali Raza Thursday instructed the police officials to be highly alert and ready to deal with any emerging law and order situation. Addressing the police officials, he said, "Will take every possible necessary measures to protect the lives and property of citizens as well as private and commercial property and ready to thwart adventurism from any elements." Maintaining law and order in capital utmost priority; DIG Islamabad Senior Superintendent of Police (SSP) Operations Muhammad Arslan Shahzaib, zonal SPs, SDPOs, SHOs, and other officials were also present on this occasion, said a police statement. DIG said that all the officers were putting their best efforts to maintain law and order situation in the capital adding that Islamabad Police will never allow anyone to disturb the peaceful environment of the city and will

take all necessary steps to protect the lives and property of the citizens and private and commercial property. Syed Ali Raza said all the officers have been instructed to stay vigilant in their respective areas and brief the personnel time to time to deal with any untoward situation and check their duties themselves,

he added. He said all personnel deputed should be sent on duty with proper kits. He urged citizens to report any suspicious activity to the relevant police station, emergency helpline "Pukar-15," or the "ICT 15" app to help make the city crime-free through cooperation between the police and the public. —APP





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Briefs

Lawmakers briefed about healthcare facilities at Nori hospital

ISLAMABAD: The Secretary Women's Parliamentary Caucus (WPC) Shahida Rehmani along with women parliamentarians visited the Nuclear Medicine, Oncology and Radiotherapy Institute (NORI) hospital in Islamabad to commemorate the start of Breast Cancer awareness month. The delegation was briefed by Director NORI, Dr. Muhammad Faheem, and Head of the Department of Oncology, Dr. Humaira Mahmood, said a news release. The visit was organized to acknowledge the critical issue of breast cancer in Pakistan, assess the current state of healthcare delivery, and discuss the support mechanisms available for patients facing challenges in affording treatment. The Women Parliamentarians also evaluated the hospital's capacity to manage the increasing patient load and reviewed the use of advanced technologies and medications that offer cutting-edge treatments. During the visit, Dr. Humaira presented detailed statistics on breast cancer in Pakistan, highlighting that breast cancer remains the most prevalent form of cancer, affecting one in every eight women. She emphasized that the country has a significantly lower rate of early detection compared to Western nations, attributing this disparity to a lack of awareness, poverty, and cultural barriers. The members stressed the urgent need for effective awareness campaigns, particularly for encouraging early detection, to help reduce the alarming number of cases. The WPC underscored their commitment to amplifying awareness on breast cancer and acknowledged the efforts of NORI Hospital in providing comprehensive cancer care.

NUST confers honorary PhD degree upon Malaysia's PM

ISLAMABAD: National University of Sciences and Technology (NUST-Islamabad) conferred honorary degree of Doctor of Philosophy upon the Malaysian Prime Minister, Dato' Seri Anwar Ibrahim, during a special convocation held at the NUST main campus, the other day. At the occasion, the honourable dignitary also delivered a keynote address on Allama Iqbal, demonstrating a deep understanding of Iqbal's thought, and its continuing relevance to balanced development, inclusive growth, and individual well-being. The Prime Minister said, "I am sincerely thankful for the warmth and hospitality extended to me by the government and people of Pakistan, and I hope that our two nations will continue to grow even closer, forging stronger ties for the future." Expressing his heartfelt gratitude upon conferment of the doctorate degree honoris causa by NUST, he said, "With great humility, and in the spirit of Iqbal, I accept this honour on behalf of the people of Malaysia as a symbol of the deep intellectual and cultural connection between our nations."—APP

Pak, China ink material transfer to boost citrus industry

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan, China inked a material transfer agreement to boost citrus industry. The Material Transfer Agreement (MTA) signed between Huazhong Agricultural University, Wuhan (HZAU) and the University of Agriculture, Faisalabad (UAF). According to Gwadar Pro on Friday, the signing ceremony for citrus rootstock and scion budwood was held at UAF on September 30. Prof. Dr. Liu Yongzhong, a collaborative scientist from HZAU, handed over nine citrus varieties budwood to Prof. Dr. Iqbal Ahmad Khan, Vice Chancellor of UAF, under the Higher Education Commission-funded project (CEPC-CRG-447). The agreement marks a major step in the ongoing collaboration between the two universities aimed at enhancing the citrus industry in Pakistan. Last year, UAF and HZAU signed a memorandum of understanding to establish a China-Pakistan Horticulture Research and Demonstration Center with the urgent objective of improving citrus production and fruit quality and ultimately increasing profitability. Citrus holds a prominent position among the thirty fruit crops grown in Pakistan, ranking first in terms of area (approximately 200,000 hectares) and production (2.29 million tonnes). In 2021, Pakistan generated \$171 million through citrus fruit exports, accounting for one-third of the total value of fruit exports. Punjab stands out as the largest citrus producer in the country, contributing over 95% of the total production. The mandarin fruit 'Kinnow' is the most cultivated citrus variety in Pakistan, accounting for over 80% of other citrus genotypes, due to its attractive peel color, size, ease of peeling, high juice



content, and excellent taste and aroma. However, citrus trees are sensitive and prone to both biotic and abiotic stresses. Climate change poses serious challenges to citrus growth and productivity due to abiotic stresses. Additionally, recent years have seen an increase in insect pest infestations on fruit plantations. Pakistan's citrus production per unit area is significantly lower (11.4 tonnes/hectare) compared to developed countries (25 tonnes/hectare), with

reduced tree lifespan and compromised fruit quality adversely affecting export potential. Only 10% of the total citrus production is exported, leading to severe financial constraints for citrus producers who must sell their produce locally at lower prices. Moreover, the Kinnow mandarin, a late variety, has a short harvest window of 2-3 months, further limiting production and export opportunities. The MTA signed

between UAF and HZAU aims to address these challenges by introducing new citrus varieties and technologies that can improve productivity, manage diseases, extend the harvest window, and diversify varieties to reduce the risk associated with Kinnow monoculture. This collaboration is expected to have a significant positive impact on the citrus industry in Pakistan, ultimately benefiting farmers and the economy.

Devastating consequences of climate change on Wildlife warned

ISLAMABAD: A renowned wildlife biologist, Dr Uzma on World Animal Day on Friday sound the alarm for ending cruelty and raise public awareness about animal welfare, emphasizing the urgent need for collective action to improve standards globally. In an interview with a private news channel, she highlighted how climate change exacerbates existing threats, such as habitat destruction, pollution, and human-wildlife conflict. She further explained that sea-level rise is also destroying coastal habitats, droughts are decimating food sources and extreme weather events are shattering delicate balances within ecosystems. The consequences are far-reaching with climate change projected to wipe out up to 1 million species by 2050, she added. Dr. Uzma urged immediate collective action to mitigate climate change, protect natural habitats and support climate-resilient conservation efforts. "The future of our planet's precious biodiversity hangs in the balance; we must act now to ensure a livable world for all species," she stressed. As a wildlife expert, I have witnessed firsthand the devastating impact of human activities on species and ecosystems, she said. Habitat destruction, pollution, climate change and wildlife trafficking threaten the very survival of countless animals, she mentioned. Moreover, billions of animals suffer in factory farms, laboratories, and entertainment industries, subjected to inhumane conditions and treatment, she added. To address this crisis, I call upon individuals, organizations, and governments to take practical concrete steps, she appealed. "We must promote compassion, empathy and sustainability in our daily choices, supporting eco-friendly practices and cruelty-free products" she further stressed. Governments must strengthen laws and enforcement to protect wildlife and domestic animals, while organizations should prioritize animal welfare in their operations and advocacy, she mentioned. Together, we can create a world where animals are valued, respected, and protected for generations to come, she added. Replying a question, she lamented that iconic species like the Nayab Markhor and colorful parrots are rapidly disappearing in Pakistan due to relentless poaching, habitat destruction and climate change. Nayab Markhor, Pakistan's national animal is endangered due to hunting and habitat loss, while parrots are being captured for the pet trade and suffering from deforestation. Other species, such as the snow leopard, Indus dolphin and Himalayan brown bear are also facing extinction, she mentioned. Human activities like deforestation, pollution, and infrastructure development are pushing these majestic creatures to the brink, she explained. Furthermore, she stressed that there is urgent need to pay attention for animals in rural areas and conservation efforts, stricter laws and community engagement are necessary to protect these precious species and preserve Pakistan's rich biodiversity, she concluded.—DNA

Shehbaz, Siddiqui discuss political situation

ISLAMABAD: The Pakistan Muslim League-N Parliamentary Leader in the Senate Senator Irfan Siddiqui on Friday called on Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif here and discussed the matters related to the parliamentary party in Senate and the country's overall political situation. Senator Irfan Siddiqui briefed the prime minister about the performance of the PML-N's parliamentary party in the Senate, according to a PM Office press release. Discussing the political matters, he apprised the prime minister of the details of his recent meeting with Jamiat Ulama-Islam-F chief Maulana Fazlur Rehman. Senator Irfan Siddiqui also congratulated



the prime minister for highlighting the stance of Pakistan as well as the Muslim Ummah in his address at the recent session of the United Nations General Assembly.—DNA

World Space Week activities kicks off on Friday

ISLAMABAD: World Space Week 2024 celebrations kicked off across the country including Islamabad on Friday through a number of activities highlighting this year's theme "Space and Climate Change". The Space and Upper Atmosphere Research Commission (SUPARCO) has arranged an inauguration ceremony of World Space Week 2024 at the National Centre for Remote Sensing and Geo-Informatics (NCRG), SUPARCO Complex, Karachi. Vice Chancellor of Fatimiyah International University, Dr. Jamil Kazmi was the chief guest of the ceremony. As the national coordinator of World Space Week since 2005, SUPARCO has taken the lead in organizing a series of activities and

contests to raise awareness and promote interest in space science across Pakistan. SUPARCO's Space Education and Awareness Drive (SEAD) is engaging schools, colleges, universities, astronomy and science societies, and the general public through various contests and activities including the 'Best Space School Contest', 'Space Ambassador Contest', 'University Contest', and 'Contests for the Public'. A series of webinars are being conducted, focusing on the role of space technology in monitoring climate change, managing resource sustainability, and developing climate adaptation strategies. Space Vans will also visit schools in Islamabad, Karachi, and Lahore to deliver lectures and academic visits will also be arranged. Additionally, live

astronomical observations will be broadcast on SEAD's Facebook page. The Spacecademy Society has also commenced an exciting series of interactive space science activities for students from different schools. Spacecademy Society is arranging various activities under the theme "Explore the Universe - A Journey to the Cosmos" in coordination with the Space Education and Awareness Drive of Space and Upper Atmosphere Research Commission (Suparco). Maintaining its past trend of celebrating World Space Week, IST has planned to mark this important occasion through a number of activities from October 08-10. Designed for students from Grades 6 to 12, the event will feature 10 categories and 70 educational modules,

offering a range of activities including space recitations, trivia, creative writing, technology demonstrations, models and collectibles, art and design, performing arts, life and sustainability, and space for climate change. IST and NCGSA continue to empower the next generation of scientists, innovators, and climate leaders by providing an exciting platform for students to explore the intersection of space technology and climate action. For the past 19 years, the Institute of Space Technology (IST) has proudly led the celebration of World Space Week (WSW), a global event endorsed by the United Nations to honor the remarkable achievements in space science and technology and their profound contributions to humanity.—APP

UNODC, EU for enhanced police, levies and prosecution collaboration

ISLAMABAD: The United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), with support from the European Union under its Deliver Justice Project, organized a concluding workshop on investigators-prosecutors coordination in Quetta on October 4. This initiative is part of wider efforts aimed at bolstering cooperation between the law enforcement and prosecution services in Balochistan. The workshop, attended by a cross-section of participants from the Balochistan Police, Levies, and Prosecution Department, addressed key challenges that prevent effective collaboration during criminal investigations and trials. Building upon previous successful engagements, it aimed to solidify a joint platform for investigators from police and levies, and prosecutors to work together seamlessly, ultimately leading to fairer and more efficient trials. The highlight of the workshop was the endorsement of a newly developed Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs), designed to formalize the coordination between police and levies investigators and prosecutors prior to the submission of a challan. The SOPs provide a crucial framework to ensure that investigations are comprehensive and that cases are prepared with the highest standards of legal scrutiny, paving the way for smoother prosecution processes. This workshop is the culmination of a series of training initiatives undertaken over the past two years across the province, including in Gwadar, Naseerabad, and Quetta. Each of these efforts has contributed to improving institutional cooperation, as the concluding workshop marking a milestone in formalizing a sustainable partnership between the police, levies and prosecution services in Balochistan.—DNA

Gilani highlights literature's role in capturing history, culture

ISLAMABAD: Chairman Senate, Syed Yousaf Raza Gilani has emphasized the essential role of literature in capturing history, reflecting cultural diversity, and inspiring meaningful change. Speaking at the launch of Testament of Love, a captivating collection of short stories by Dr. Nasir Hussain Bukhari, he said, "Testament of Love beautifully encapsulates the essence of the human experience, shedding light on the struggles faced by ordinary individuals in our society." The event celebrated Dr. Bukhari's remarkable literary achievement and the profound impact storytelling has on society. Gilani praised Dr. Bukhari for his exceptional talent and unwavering commitment to education, democracy, and literature. He commended Dr. Bukhari's ability to create authentic characters whose stories resonate deeply with readers, fostering empathy and understanding across societal divides. Gilani also recognized the invaluable contributions of the Foundation for Education, Entrepreneurship, and Literature (FEEL), led by Engr. Dr. Zakaullah Khan and Dr. Salahuddin Darwesh, for their dedicated efforts in promoting literature and addressing pressing social issues.—APP

IESCO catches 288 power pilferers in September

ISLAMABAD: Detection teams of Islamabad Electric Supply Company (IESCO) caught a total of 288 individuals using direct electricity supply while 28 meters were found tampered in various circles of the company during September. Sharing details, IESCO CEO Muhammad Naem Jan said that IESCO's detection teams checked over 93,000 meters across the region. The detection teams also imposed fines of over Rs 25.83 million on them while police arrested 33 electricity thieves, he added. The CEO said that on the directives of the government and the Ministry of Power Division, the company had launched a comprehensive drive against power pilferers and a recovery drive in September 2023.—DNA



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US blaming China

SOMETIMES you just don't know whether to laugh or cry when you read comments about China made by US officials. They must think most of us can't add 2 + 2 together. The latest is made by Kurt Campbell, the on-his-way-out deputy secretary of state, about Beijing's diplomatic – rather than military – response to almost year-long attacks made by the Yemeni Houthis on cargo ships in the Red Sea and Gulf of Aden. It would have been amusing but for the background to his remarks. And that has to do with the United States' potentially criminal complicity in suspected war crimes, crimes against humanity and genocide alleged to be committed to this day by its closest ally, Israel, against the civilian population in Gaza for a year. In a wide-ranging interview, Campbell – who is most responsible for Joe Biden's Indo-Pacific strategy – also complained about Chinese state propaganda and twisted narratives. Of course, when he and his US colleagues say it, it's information. But when you say something else, it's disinformation. "We realised that what the Chinese had tried to do – rather than joining with any kind of international naval consortium – would be to instead take actions to communicate directly with the Houthis about, 'look, these are our ships, these aren't our ships, target different ships'," he said. "Now that's just profoundly unhelpful, and suggests an approach to the global commons that we have real concerns over." What "international naval consortium"? What "global commons"? The real point is the singular failure of the Biden administration to put together an international naval consortium. So why just pick on China? Actually, most of the world simply refused to join any US-led naval countermeasure against the Houthis. And most did it not because they failed to recognise or contribute to the "global commons" of international shipping lanes, but because they recognised a higher morality and obligation – which is to stop or at least not condone or support potential genocide. What the Yemeni Houthis, usually portrayed as Iranian puppets or Islamic terrorists in the Western news media, have been doing is, in reality, form a blockade – the poor man's version of sanctions – and try to stop the mass killings of fellow Muslims in Gaza. It has caused minimal casualties, unlike hi-tech sanctions imposed by the US against some poor countries. The Houthis are no longer militants, but an actual governing body that controls most Yemeni territories. Many countries outside the Anglo-American sphere recognise the fundamental justice of the Houthis' cause. That's one reason Biden failed to put together an international naval mission in January, and ended up issuing his embarrassing White House statement with just 13 countries, that is, the usual faithful followers of Washington: "A Joint Statement from the Governments of the United States, Australia, Bahrain, Belgium, Canada, Denmark, Germany, Italy, Japan, Netherlands, New Zealand, Republic of Korea, Singapore, and the United Kingdom." Japan and Korea were token signatures to make the list of countries appear longer. Bahrain did provide logistical support and local amenities such as room, board and food to European naval officers. Notice the absence of France, which actually has a naval base in Djibouti, a country strategically located at the intersection of the Red Sea and Gulf of Aden. Incidentally, the French base is within spitting distance of that of China's.

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Editor-in-Chief: Ansar Mahmood Bhatti

Deputy Editor: Abid Raza

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Email: dailyisbpost@gmail.com

Phone: 051-2266165 / 051-2261960

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



'Israel's' terror plot in N. Gaza

ISRAELI occupation Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu is reportedly considering a plan to force Palestinians out of northern Gaza and push for the 'surrender' of the Palestinian Resistance. This criminal plot, proposed by a series of retired Israeli military generals, aims to transform Palestine's northern Gaza into a so-called 'military territory.' Talk of surrender is nothing new: the occupation uses this rhetoric to threaten Palestinian solidarity, when the Resistance – and its regional allies – stand united in defense of Palestinian lives, liberties, and inalienable rights. Several factors merit consideration as dozens of occupation parliament members – including three sitting ministers – press on Netanyahu to adopt the siege plan. First, "Israel's" unwarranted strikes in Yemen, continued bombardment of Lebanon, and attempts to dial-up terrorism in northern Gaza, are all part of a larger, multifront war of "Israel's" own making. Second, the plan is also a sign of growing domestic desperation for Netanyahu. His administration is keen to divert attention to the North, as striking failures on hostage release appear clear as day. The pressure is mounting. Families of Israeli hostages continue to oppose Netanyahu's hostage release rhetoric, and see it as an excuse to expand "Israel's" onslaughts across Gaza and even Lebanon. Netanyahu's latest plan to step up occupation terrorism in the north is an extension of this brutal approach and is overwhelmingly focused on retaining power at home. Scores of Israelis rallied once again in Tel Aviv, demanding a hostage swap deal while Netanyahu pushes for outright obliteration. By contemplating occupation-backed terrorism in northern Gaza, the war criminal is simply adding to his collision course with the public. After all, it doesn't change the fact that Netanyahu has consistently failed to paint himself as a champion of hostage releases, given his own role in scuttling indirect negotiations. Thus, Israeli plans to terrorize and lay siege on northern Gaza could expose more falsehoods in Netanyahu's domestic hostage rhetoric, and extend more strategic rationales to a multifront resistance to act on. Let there be no doubt about "Israel's" broader genocidal motivations in the North. For instance, the occupation is adamant on leveraging survival resources, such as food and water, as weapons of war against Palestinians once again. Early signs include condemnable remarks from Giora Eiland, a former occupation general, who has threatened to hold back supplies for Palestinians that wish to stay in the north. By opting for these measures in the name of combatting threats, Israel is willing to acquire a carte blanche for occupation-sponsored terrorism. Ramped up terrorism in the north also serves wider Israeli goals to control key corridors within the Gaza Strip, a condemnable move that runs counter to demands for a full Israeli withdrawal. There is no justification for Washington's criminal silence over "Israel's" potential onslaught on Palestinians. Efforts to declare northern Gaza as a 'closed military zone' aim to entrench the occupation, derail future negotiations, and force occupation control over Palestinian lands. This is important because during indirect ceasefire talks, Washington has been very quick to call on parties to remove obstacles to a potential deal. And yet, it is making a criminal exception for "Israel's" ongoing plans.

Supreme Court's 2022 Ruling vs. 2024 Ruling on Article 63-A

Qamar Bashir



The rationale by the Supreme Court's judgment 2024 was that votes cast by defecting lawmakers must be counted, even if they go against the party's directives.

The new ruling shifted the focus from protecting party discipline to ensuring individual lawmakers' democratic rights. The bench reasoned that failing to count defectors' votes would infringe on their fundamental right to vote, a core aspect of democratic governance.

The court questioned whether a judge could strip a parliamentarian of this basic right, emphasizing that political parties should be subordinate to their leaders..

THE controversial bench of the Pakistan Supreme Court recently overturned an earlier ruling announced in May 2022, which had declared the defection of a political party member to another party or voting against the declared policy of their party as unlawful. However, the formation of the review bench was questioned from the outset on legal, constitutional, and ethical grounds, casting doubt on the integrity of the proceedings. Critics argued that the inclusion of certain judges, particularly those who had previously dissented in the original decision, raised concerns about impartiality and fairness. This led to objections that the review process lacked a solid legal or ethical foundation, contributing to the perception that the case's proceedings were shaky and undermining confidence in the judiciary's handling of the matter. The controversy was sparked primarily due to the inclusion of judges Justices Mazhar Alam Khan Miankhal and Jamal Khan Mandokhail—both of whom had expressed opposition to the 2022 decision and conveniently easing out Mr. Justice Munib Akhtar who was part of the majority judgment. This raised objections, particularly from PTI, whose lawyer, Ali Zafar, argued that the participation of these judges compromised the impartiality of the bench. Zafar and PTI questioned whether judges who had already voiced their dissent in the earlier decision could fairly review the ruling.

The rationale by the Supreme Court's judgment 2024 was that votes cast by defecting lawmakers must be counted, even if they go against the party's directives. The new ruling shifted the focus from protecting party discipline to ensuring individual lawmakers' democratic rights. The bench reasoned that failing to count defectors' votes would infringe on their fundamental right to vote, a core aspect of democratic governance. The court questioned whether a judge could strip a parliamentarian of this basic right, emphasizing that political parties should be subordinate to their leaders, but not the judiciary. The ruling criticized the 2022 ruling for placing excessive power in the hands of party leaders and undermining the autonomy of individual lawmakers. It pointed out that defection is not necessarily a betrayal of voters but can sometimes reflect individual conscience or political strategy, as is allowed in other democracies like the UK and Canada. The court found that labeling horse trading as a "cancer" in the 2022 ruling was inappropriate, indicating that such language was politically charged and not legally grounded. The 2024 ruling was diametrically opposite to the original ruling of May 2022 ruled headed by the supreme court Mr. Justice Umar Ata Bandial, CJ, Mr. Justice Ijaz ul Ahsan, Mr. Justice Mazhar Alam Khan Miankhal, Mr. Justice Munib Akhtar, Mr. Justice Jamal Khan Man-

dokhail. The ruling declared that any vote cast by a defecting member of a political party (in specific cases like elections of the prime minister, votes of confidence or no-confidence, budget votes, and constitutional amendments) would not be counted. The court also disqualified defecting members, forcing them to vacate their seats. This decision aimed to prevent defections, or "floor crossing," which was characterized as a form of horse trading that destabilizes political parties and weakens parliamentary democracy. The ruling emphasized that such defections eroded party discipline, undermined democratic processes, and allowed undue influence over lawmakers. The 2022 judgment sought to protect the integrity of parliamentary democracy by penalizing defections harshly. Defection was seen as a betrayal of the voters' mandate, which was granted based on party affiliation and policies. The 2022 ruling aligns most closely with Bangladesh's and India's approaches to controlling defections but even exceeds their stringency by invalidating votes outright. These countries aim to maintain party discipline, yet they respect the principle that all votes cast by elected representatives should be counted before any punishment is imposed. However, in established democracies like the UK, US, and Australia, there is greater emphasis on individual autonomy, with no legal consequences for defectors. The 2024 ruling allowed defectors' votes to be counted, marking a significant shift towards protecting legislative autonomy, aligning it more closely with international practices in countries like the UK, USA, and Australia. In these democracies, the right of individual legislators to vote freely is respected without the immediate legal threat of disqualification. However, the ruling also aligns to some degree with India and Bangladesh, where votes are counted before lawmakers are disqualified, maintaining a balance between party discipline and individual rights. In Pakistan, where the political landscape is marked by the influence of undemocratic forces, including coercion, threats, and manipulation of parliamentarians, interpreting Article 63-A to protect democracy is a nuanced issue. The environment in Pakistan, unlike established democracies such as the UK, US, or Australia, is more prone to "horse trading" (the buying and selling of votes) and manipulation by powerful establishments. In this context, both interpretations of Article 63-A—those of 2022 and 2024—offer different paths for safeguarding democracy, but their effectiveness depends on the specific challenges of the political system. In a political environment like Pakistan's, where lawmakers can be coerced or bribed to switch allegiances, this 2022 ruling aimed to prevent destabilization by ensuring that defectors'

votes did not count in critical decisions, such as votes of no confidence or prime ministerial elections. This strict approach reflected an attempt to shield democracy from manipulation by undemocratic forces. It sought to enforce party loyalty and avoid external actors' influence on parliamentarians, which has historically undermined governments that do not fully reflect the people's mandate. However, this interpretation has drawbacks in terms of limiting individual legislators' autonomy. It centralizes power within party leadership, giving party heads significant control over their members and potentially stifling internal dissent or independent decision-making. While it tries to prevent external coercion, it could reinforce internal party coercion, as lawmakers are forced to toe the party line under threat of disqualification. The 2024 interpretation in the Pakistani context, where coercion and horse trading are rampant, risks enabling the very destabilization it seeks to avoid. If votes by defectors are counted without strict penalties, powerful external actors could exploit weak party structures to manipulate outcomes, especially in situations where the government does not reflect the genuine electoral mandate.

This interpretation might provide more legislative freedom, but in an environment where coercion is common, it could weaken democratic institutions by making them more susceptible to external manipulation. The decision leaves the control of defections to party leaders, which may not be sufficient to protect the system from widespread political engineering. In a fragile democracy like Pakistan's, where undemocratic forces often play a decisive role in political outcomes, the 2022 interpretation might provide a stronger bulwark against destabilization by enforcing party discipline and minimizing external interference. Although it limits individual lawmakers' freedom, it better insulates the democratic process from coercive forces that undermine the people's mandate. Conversely, the 2024 interpretation, while more aligned with democratic principles in theory, risks exacerbating instability in the Pakistani context by allowing more room for horse trading and external interference. Thus, the 2022 interpretation—despite its limitations on individual autonomy—may better protect Pakistan's democracy from manipulation in the current political climate, while the 2024 interpretation, although more democratic in principle, may expose the system to greater risk of coercion and undue influence.

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

Tech Paradox: AI and Human Nature

Afnan Wasif

Mobile technology, too, reflects this dichotomy. While smartphones have made communication instantaneous and have provided tools for education and empowerment, they have also been implicated in privacy violations and surveillance. The Pegasus spyware scandal illustrates the potential for abuse, where technology intended to enhance security is turned into a weapon against civil liberties. The tragic incidents of mobile-triggered attacks, like the recent Pagers blasts in Lebanon

IN recent years, the discourse surrounding artificial intelligence (AI) has reached a fever pitch, with opinions sharply divided over whether it is a dangerous force or a beneficial innovation. To grapple with this dilemma, one must first delve into the complexities of human nature, our historical precedents, and the duality inherent in all technological advancements where they have been both a boon and a bane. Human nature is inherently curious and driven by a complex mix of cooperation and competition. Philosophers like Thomas Hobbes posited a rather brutish view of humanity, suggesting that without social contracts, humans would devolve into chaos. In contrast, liberalism offers a more optimistic outlook, highlighting our capacity for collaboration and mutual benefit. Both perspectives reveal that technology, in itself, is neutral—it is the application by humans that determines whether its impact is constructive or destructive. From the wheel to the internet, every innovation has been a double-edged sword, capable of serving both noble and nefarious purposes. Take the wheel, for instance. This invention revolutionized transportation and logistics, facilitating the movement of goods and people. An ambulance equipped with wheels can save lives, while a military vehicle uses the same technology to transport missiles and weaponry. The technology itself does not possess intent; it is the human hand that wields it. In essence, the moral implications of any invention lie not within the technology but in the intentions of its users. Fast forward to the digital age, where computers have permeated every aspect of life. From hospitals and schools to corporate offices and airports, computers have enabled tremendous advancements. However, they have also been employed in missile

guidance systems and cyber warfare, causing destruction and chaos. Similarly, the internet was created to foster connectivity and communication, yet it has also facilitated cyber-attacks and the spread of misinformation. The infamous hacking of the National Bank of Pakistan's serves in 2021 as a stark reminder that technological advancements can also serve as instruments of warfare and subterfuge. Mobile technology, too, reflects this dichotomy. While smartphones have made communication instantaneous and have provided tools for education and empowerment, they have also been implicated in privacy violations and surveillance. The Pegasus spyware scandal illustrates the potential for abuse, where technology intended to enhance security is turned into a weapon against civil liberties. The tragic incidents of mobile-triggered attacks, like the recent Pagers blasts in Lebanon. Each instance illustrates a critical truth: technology itself is not inherently dangerous or destructive; it is the user—human beings—who shape its impact on society. This brings us to nuclear technology, a quintessential example of the dual nature of innovation. The development of nuclear energy offers the promise of vast amounts of clean energy, yet the same scientific principles have led to the creation of devastating nuclear weapons. The history of nuclear technology is a somber reminder of humanity's capacity for both creation and destruction. It is not the technology itself that is to blame for catastrophic outcomes, but rather the choices made by those who wield it. In the context of AI, we face a similar crossroads. AI can be a transformative force for good, with the potential to revolutionize industries, improve healthcare, and enhance our daily lives. Yet, there are valid concerns about its misuse, including surveil-

lance, job displacement, and autonomous weaponry. However, these concerns should not lead to a blanket condemnation of AI. Instead, we must recognize that AI is merely a tool—an extension of human ingenuity. The moral and ethical implications of AI will depend on how we choose to develop and deploy it. The responsibility lies with humanity to ensure that AI is harnessed for constructive purposes rather than destructive ones. This can be achieved through regulation, ethical guidelines, and an emphasis on transparency in AI development. It is crucial for global powers and policymakers to collaborate on establishing international norms and regulations governing the use of AI. Just as with nuclear technology, the potential for misuse is significant, but so too is the potential for peaceful applications that can advance society. Encouraging a culture of responsibility and ethical considerations in technological development will be pivotal in shaping a future where AI serves as a force for good. The conversation surrounding AI must shift from one of fear to one of responsibility. Technology is neither inherently good nor evil; it is the application of technology that determines its impact on humanity. Just as the wheel, the computer, and the internet have been employed for both beneficial and harmful ends, AI will follow suit. Our focus should be on nurturing the ethical use of AI and ensuring that its benefits are shared broadly, minimizing the risks associated with its misuse. By understanding the complex interplay between technology and human nature, we can better navigate the challenges of today and harness AI's potential to advance human civilization rather than undermine it. The future is not something to fear; it is a canvas for us to shape, guided by our choices and values.

Briefs

Pakistan to observe Palestine...

FROM PAGE 01
welcomed the decision of the President and Prime Minister to host the APC on October 7 for Palestine and said that the war, which began with the brutal massacre in Gaza, has now expanded to Lebanon. He added that the war, which started with the barbaric killings in Gaza, threatens to engulf the entire region, and the entire nation should unite and speak out against the imperialist Zionist agenda.

JI Chief meets Malaysian...

FROM PAGE 01
special measures to address the issues faced by Pakistanis living in Malaysia. Anwar Ibrahim recalled his fond memories of visiting Pakistan during his student days and his meetings with the Islamic student organization Islami Jamiat Talaba and Syed Abul A'la Maududi. The meeting took place in a friendly and informal atmosphere.

COAS Asim vows to boost...

FROM PAGE 01
The Malaysian premier also praised the Pakistan Army's "role in regional peace and stability, acknowledging their professionalism and sacrifices in combating terrorism". According to the statement, PM Ibrahim also extended an invitation to the army chief to visit Malaysia. Gen Munir, in return, thanked the prime minister "for the invitation and appreciated the successful visit to Pakistan". Additionally, the chief noted that the visit "will help further improve the enduring and historic ties between the two countries and the militaries". PM Ibrahim had earlier met his Pakistani counterpart, Shehbaz Sharif, and vowed to enhance cooperation between their countries, discussing a wide range of bilateral, regional and international issues.

Imran's sisters arrested...

FROM PAGE 01
been in frequent amicable contact recently, has also urged the party to postpone its planned gatherings till the foreigners have left. The police have blocked all entry and points to the cities and tear gas shelling has also begun in an attempt to disperse protesters. Talking to the media at D-Chowk, Islamabad Inspector General of Police Syed Ali Nasir Rizvi said: "Proceedings are under way wherever there are attempts to hurt police or damage property. Till now, there have been over 30 arrests. We are updating the exact numbers. It is very clear that we have a clear message that we will not allow the law to be taken into own hands." Footage shared by the PTI showed arrests of its supporters. "Release Imran! Release Imran!" dozens of protesters chanted, holding pictures of Imran and PTI flags, less than a kilometre from the red zone. Visuals also showed Imran's sister Aleema Khanum being taken away by the police while the party claimed that she was arrested. KP government spokesperson Barrister Saif alleged that Uzma Khanum was also arrested. The party also alleged that the police had laid caltraps on the roads, sharing footage as well.

Australian HC calls on Nawaz...

FROM PAGE 01
The former PM Nawaz Sharif said that Pakistan-Australia partnership is very important. He urged Australian investors to explore investment opportunities in Pakistan as the government was providing business-friendly environment for the foreign investors in Pakistan.

Sirbaz becomes first Pakistani to conquer 14 world's highest peaks

This remarkable achievement places him in world's most accomplished high-altitude mountaineers

SPORTS DESK

KARACHI: Pakistani mountaineer Sirbaz Khan has made history by becoming the first Pakistani to summit all 14 of the world's 8,000-metre peaks, a feat accomplished by only a few elite climbers globally. Khan's latest triumph came on Friday when he scaled Shishapangma, an 8,027-meter peak in Tibet, marking the completion of his 14th "eight-thousander." This remarkable achievement places him in the ranks of the world's most accomplished high-altitude mountaineers. Hailing from Hunza, Khan began his 14-peak journey in 2017 when he successfully summited Nanga Parbat, a notoriously dangerous 8,126-meter peak. This marked the start of his journey to scale all of the world's highest mountains. Over the years, he has conquered some of the most challenging peaks, including K2 in July 2018 and Lhotse in May 2019, where he became the first Pakistani to summit the 8,516-meter peak. In July 2019, Khan added Broad Peak to his list of accomplishments, reaching its 8,051-meter summit without the use of supplementary oxygen, a feat that would become a hallmark of his climbs. Later that



same year, in September, he scaled Manaslu in Nepal, becoming only the second Pakistani to reach its 8,163-meter summit. Khan's determination was unwavering, and in April 2021, he became the first Pakistani

Khan led an all-Pakistani team to the summit of Gasherbrum II, standing at 8,035 meters, further cementing his reputation as a leader in high-altitude mountaineering. Just a few months later, in October 2021, he became the first Pakistani to summit Dhaulagiri, an 8,167-meter peak. Khan continued to break barriers in 2022, summiting Kangchenjunga in May and Makalu later that month, becoming the first Pakistani to conquer both of these formidable mountains. In August of the same year, he led another successful expedition to Gasherbrum I, marking his 12th summit of an 8,000-meter peak. In October 2023, Khan added Cho Oyu to his list of conquests, becoming the first Pakistani to summit the 8,188-meter peak. Finally, with his successful ascent of Shishapangma on October 4, 2024, Khan completed his mission, becoming the first Pakistani to conquer all 14 of the world's highest peaks. Khan's extraordinary achievements, including summiting 11 of these peaks without supplementary oxygen, have brought him national and international recognition. His journey is a testament to his skill, determination, and resilience, making him a true icon in the world of mountaineering.

'Fakhar, Saud among potential candidates for Pakistan captaincy'

Previously, Muhammad Rizwan was considered as a replacement

DNA

LAHORE: Following Babar Azam's resignation from captaincy of the Pakistan cricket team, the Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) is set to appoint some potential candidates for the role. As per sources, Saud Shakeel, top-order batter Fakhar Zaman, and all-rounder Salman Ali Agha are being seriously consid-

ered for key positions.

It is to be noted that Shakeel was recently named vice-captain in place of Muhammad Rizwan during the two-Test series against Bangladesh, where his performance impressed the selectors. Meanwhile, aggressive opener Fakhar Zaman, who has previously captained Lahore Qalandars in the Pakistan Super League (PSL), is also being consid-

ered. However, despite his skills, all-rounder Salman Ali Agha has yet to take on a leadership role at the domestic level. Previously, Muhammad Rizwan, the wicketkeeper was being considered as a replacement. In regard to this, Gary Kirsten stated that Rizwan would not be able to handle the workload of playing as well as leading all three formats. In July, Kirsten came to Pakistan

for meetings and sharing a report on T20 World Cup, said the sources, adding that the coach also met Babar in the same month to discuss captaincy matters. Kirsten, as per the sources, kept persuading Babar to continue captaincy in ODIs even during the connection camp. The 29-year-old remained unconvinced about retaining the captaincy following distance with the team and a lack of value for himself, said the sources, adding that he was not in touch with the board after the World Cup.

Babar was also not included in any consultation process. He, however, had informed a top official of the board about his decision before announcing his resignation. Notably, Babar's resignation from captaincy comes amid severe criticism directed at him, particularly after Pakistan failed to perform in the Asia Cup and continued the same performance into the World Cup — where the team crashed out before reaching the semis.

SA thump West Indies to script triumphant

West Indies got off to a dismal start after opting to bat as they slipped to 18-2 inside five overs

DUBAI: Laura Wolvaardt and Tazmin Brits scored unbeaten half-centuries to steer South Africa to a thumping ten-wicket victory over West Indies in the third match of the ICC Women's T20 World Cup 2024 here on Friday. Chasing a modest 119-run target, South Africa comfortably achieved the total in 17.5 overs to kick off their Women's T20 World Cup with a crushing win. South African captain Laura Wolvaardt scored a dominant 59 from 55 balls with the help of seven boundaries. Meanwhile, Tazmin Brits played a 57-run knock from 52 balls, which included six boundaries. West Indies got off to a dismal start after opting to bat as they slipped to 18-2 inside five overs. Stafanie Taylor held on to one end after the fall of the first wicket, however, she could not find a reliable partner. Deandra Dottin showed some spark with her 13-run knock which featured three boundaries but Marizanne Kapp ended her brief stay at the crease. West Indies captain Shemaine Campbelle joined Taylor and they stitched a 30-run stand for the fourth wicket. However, Nonkululeko Mlaba halted the West Indies' progress, casting Campbelle (17) followed by Chinelle Henry's wicket on the next delivery. Taylor was joined by Aaliyah Alleyne (7) for a 20-run partnership for the sixth wicket before Mlaba removed the latter. Zaida James then joined Taylor and together they helped West Indies post 118-6 in their allocated 20 overs with an unbeaten partnership of 35 runs. Taylor top-scored for West Indies with an unbeaten 44 off 41 which included two boundaries and one six, while James scored 15 off 13 with two fours. — Agencies



Sohail sisters shine at Commonwealth powerlifting

Sybil Sohail clinches gold medal while her sister Veronika wins bronze

WEB DESK

JOHANNESBURG: Pakistan's powerlifter Sybil Sohail on Friday earned a gold medal in the Commonwealth Powerlifting Championship taking place in Sun City, South Africa. The powerlifter was able to achieve this after lifting 47kg category of the classic bench press event, securing a top podium finish for Pakistan. Meanwhile, her sister Veronika Sohail clinched a bronze medal after showcasing her power and lifting 52kg category. However, the gold medal in the 52kg category was awarded to an English powerlifter, while an Indian lifter won a silver medal. It is worth mentioning that the event, scheduled from October 4 to 13, will see participation from 15 Commonwealth nations. The three-member team consists of sisters Sybil, Veronika, and Twinkle Sohail. The championships will feature teams from Australia, England, Canada, India, Isle of Man, Sri Lanka, Northern Ireland, Wales, Singapore, New Zealand, Scotland, Trinidad & Tobago, and hosts South Africa.

De Bruyne out from Belgium squad

BRUSSELS: Belgium coach Domenico Tedesco named his squad on Friday that will take on Italy and France in the Nations League, with Manchester City star Kevin De Bruyne missing out due to injury. The 33-year-old midfielder had left the question of his international future somewhat up in the air but told Tedesco that he would still be available for selection for the next two years. "I had a long telephone talk with Kevin where, first of all, now he is injured but in general he is very motivated to continue to be with us and to play also the World Cup," said the Italian coach. "He asked me to be out for this camp and for the November camp to take care of his body." Napoli star Romelu Lukaku's name was also missing from the list of 23 as Tedesco decided to rest the striker and allow him "to work individually" as he settles into life in the southern Italian club, which he joined in late August. Belgium will play Italy in Rome on October 10, before travelling to Brussels to face France four days later.

Squad: Goalkeepers: Koen Casteels (Al Qadsiah/KSA), Matz Sels (Nottingham Forest/ENG), Maarten Vandevordt (RB Leipzig/GER) Defenders: Sebastiaan-Bornauw (Wolfsburg/GER), Timothy Castagne (Fulham/ENG), Zeno Debast (Sporting Portugal/POR), Maxim De Cuyper (Club Bruges), Wout Faes (Leicester/ENG), Matte Smets (Genk), Arthur Theate (Eintracht Frankfurt/GER), Koni De Winter (Genoa/ITA) Midfielders: Charles De Ketelaere (Atalanta/ITA), Amadou Onana (Aston Villa/ENG), Orel Mangala (Lyon/FRA), Youri Tielemans (Aston Villa/ENG), Arne Engels (Celtic/SCO), Malick Fofana (Lyon/FRA) Forwards: Johan Bakayoko (PSV/NED), Jeremy Doku (Manchester City/ENG), Dodi Lukebakio (Sevilla/ESP), Lois Openda (RB Leipzig/GER), Cyril Ngonge (Naples/ITA), Leandro Trossard (Arsenal/ENG). — Agencies



Muhammad Munir Khanani appointed PSBA Chairman

NAZIR SIYAL

KARACHI: The Pakistan Stock Brokers Association (PSBA) held its Annual General Meeting (AGM) on October 4, 2024, under the Chairmanship of Dr. Yasir Mahmood, the Senior Vice-Chairman. The members adopted all resolutions submitted. The financial statements for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2024, were also presented during the AGM. Members unanimously approved and adopted; a) the audited financial statements & reports 2023-24; b) the appointment of auditor, M. Saleem Associates, for the year 2025; c) the minutes of the 3rd AGM; and d) the Annual Report 2024. A critical highlight of the AGM was the election of new directors/members to the Board/Executive Committee. The elections were conducted in accordance with the rules and regula-

tions laid down by the Director General of Trade Organizations (DGTO), ensuring transparency and fairness. The following individuals have been successfully elected as Directors/EC Members, as announced by the Election Commission:

1. Mr. Muhammad Munir Khanani - Chairman
2. Mr. Zahid Latif Khan - Senior Vice-Chairman

3. Mr. Ammar Ul Haq - Vice Chairman
4. Chaudhry M. Afzal - Director/EC Member
5. Mr. Abdul Qadir - Director/EC Member
6. Mr. Asad - Director/EC Member

7. Mr. Ghulam Mujtaba Sakarwala - Director/EC Member
8. Mr. Muhammad Adnan - Director/EC Member
9. Mr. Omer Khalil Malik -

Director/EC Member
10. Mr. Zubair Ghulam Hussain - Director/EC Member

The elections were supervised by the Election Commission of PSBA, which adhered to all applicable legal frameworks to ensure a smooth and orderly process. After the charge, in his concluding remarks, the newly elected Chairman, Mr. Khanani, emphasized the need for a continued focus on innovation, regulatory alignment, and member advocacy. He reiterated the Board's commitment to engaging with regulatory authorities, and tax bodies to create a more conducive environment for brokers and investors alike. The AGM concluded with a vote of thanks to all outgoing directors for their dedication and service, and a renewed commitment from the incoming Board to uphold the values and objectives of the Association.



FM Jaishankar to visit Pakistan...

FROM PAGE 01

Indian external ministry spokesperson, affirmed that Jaishankar would attend the SCO summit in the federal capital of Pakistan. However, according to Singh, Indian foreign ministry official in his statement also emphasised that Jaishankar's upcoming visit should be seen in the context of regional summit. Islamabad extended invitations to all the government heads of the member states, including Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi, for the upcoming SCO-CHG meeting in Islamabad, Foreign Office Spokesperson Mumtaz Zahra Baloch confirmed in a statement in July. Pakistan currently holds the rotating Chairmanship of the SCO-CHG, which is the regional organisation's second-highest decision-making forum. "Islamabad has also received some confirmations for the moot to be hosted by Pakistan on October 15-16," Baloch said addressing a news briefing. Last year in May, the then-foreign minister, Bilawal Bhutto-Zardari visited India to attend the two-day meeting of the SCO Council of Foreign Ministers. It was the first visit to India by a top Pakistani official since then-prime minister Nawaz Sharif attended Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi's swearing-in in 2014.

Army called out ahead of SCO summit

FROM PAGE 01

the deployment of Pakistan Army's troops in Islamabad under Article 245 of the Constitution. Islamabad is all set to host the SCO Council of Heads of Government meeting on October 15 and 16 with major foreign leaders, including Indian External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar visiting the country. According to the notification — a copy of which is available with Geo News, a "requisite strength" of the Pakistan Army, in aid of civil power, will be deployed from Oct 5 to 17 to maintain law and order situation with respect to SCO moot and visits of VVIP delegations for the said meeting. "The exact area of deployment along with an additional number of troops, if the requirement arises, will be worked out by Islamabad administration in consultation with concerned stakeholders," it stated. The federal government had approved a comprehensive plan to ensure foolproof security during the forthcoming huddle of regional leaders.

'New terms' push PIA bidding...

FROM PAGE 01

also discussed the privatization of power sector distribution companies (DISCOs), with members raising questions about the privatization of K-Electric. Privatization Commission (PC) officials provided a detailed briefing on the PIA process. In response to a query about the scheduled October 1 bidding, the officials explained that the interested parties had jointly requested an extension, citing ongoing "due diligence." They added that the bidding would now take place on October 31, though they could not confirm whether this would be the final date. The panel chairman expressed concern over the date change, noting that it negatively impacted the national airline's reputation. The chair inquired whether a pre-bid meeting had been held with the bidding companies. The officials replied that four pre-bid meetings had taken place, adding that some bidders were interested in acquiring 65% of the airline's shares, while others sought 76%. The chair told the officials that some newspaper reports have indicated that bidders did not want to retain the existing PIA employees. The officials responded that they were currently discussing with the bidders the issue of employees as well as taxes. They further informed the panel that bidders also wanted the government to clear all the taxes.

Briefs

Rupee gains 23 paise against dollar

ISLAMABAD: Pakistani rupee on Friday appreciated by 23 paise against the US dollar in the interbank trading and closed at Rs277.51 against the previous day's closing of Rs277.74. However, according to the Forex Association of Pakistan (FAP), the buying and selling rates of the dollar in the open market stood at Rs278.50 and Rs280 respectively. The price of Euro decreased by 82 paise to close at Rs305.94 against the last day's closing of Rs306.76, according to the State Bank of Pakistan (SBP). The Japanese yen remained unchanged and closed at Rs1.89, whereas an increase of 96 paise was witnessed in the exchange rate of the British Pound, which traded at Rs365.39 as compared to the last day's closing of Rs364.43. The exchange rates of the Emirates Dirham and Saudi Riyal decreased by 06 paise 12 paise to close at Rs75.55 and Rs73.87.—APP

Gold price ups by Rs.1,800 per tola

ISLAMABAD: The per tola price of 24 karat gold increased by Rs.1,800 and was sold at Rs.276,200 on Friday compared to its sale at Rs. 274,400 on last trading day. The price of 10 grams of 24 karat gold also increased by Rs 1,543 to Rs. 236,797 from Rs. 235,254 whereas the price of 10 gram 22 karat gold went up to Rs 217,064 from Rs. 215,650, the All Sindh Sarafa Jewellers Association reported. The price of per tola and ten gram silver remained constant at Rs.3,050 and Rs.2,614.88 respectively. The price of gold in the international market increased by \$18 to \$2,660 from \$2,642, the Association reported.—APP

PSX continues with bullish trend, gains 810 more points

ISLAMABAD: The 100-Index of the Pakistan Stock Exchange (PSX) continued with bullish trend on Friday, gaining 810.19 more points, a positive change of 0.98 percent, closing at 83,531.96 points against 82,721.77 points on the last working day. A total of 381,529,555 shares were traded during the day as compared to 319,879,266 shares the previous trading day, whereas the price of shares stood at Rs 20.523 billion against Rs. 16.414 billion on the last trading day. As many as 444 companies transacted their shares in the stock market, 201 of them recorded gains and 167 sustained losses, whereas the share price of 76 companies remained unchanged. The three top trading companies were Pace (Pak) Limited with 59,298,044 shares at Rs 6.29 per share, Pak Petroleum with 21,636,537 shares at Rs 118.60 per share and Kohinoor Spinning with 19,496,228 shares at Rs 8.12 per share. Hallmark Company Limited witnessed a maximum increase of Rs 91.85 per share price, closing at Rs 1,175.34, whereas the runner-up was Sapphire Fibres Limited with Rs 79.00 rise in its per share price to Rs 1,349.00.—APP

SBP injects Rs1,012b into market

KARACHI: State Bank of Pakistan (SBP), Friday, injected Rs1,012.3 billion in the market through reverse repo purchase Open Market Operation (OMO). According to OMO results issued here, the SBP conducted Open Market Operation, Reverse Repo Purchase (Injection) on October 4, 2024 for 7-day and 28-day tenors and accepted 11 bids totaling to Rs1,012.3 billion. The central bank received 9 bids for 7-day tenor cumulatively offering an amount of Rs82.3 billion at the rate of return ranging between 17.56 to 17.65 percent while 2 bids amounting to Rs130 billion were received for the 28-day tenor at the rate of return ranging between 17.60 to 17.61 %.—APP

MWD celebrates top performers at Annual President's Award ceremon

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Metropolitan Warehouse & Delivery Corp. (MWD), a leader in the furniture logistics and delivery industry, hosted its annual President's Award Ceremony on October 3, 2024, at the Serena Hotel. The event led by CEO & President Shahid Latif Khan celebrated the outstanding achievements of the company's employees and recognized their unwavering commitment to excellence. Established in 1989, MWD has grown into a premier provider of White Glove furniture delivery services across the USA, with a global presence that includes offices in the United States, El Salvador, Pakistan, and the Philippines. MWD's Pakistan subsidiary, MSP, established in 2006, plays



a crucial role in supporting the company's U.S. operations with over 200 employees. Key leader-

ship figures, including MWD's CFO Peet Van Der Schyff and Vice President Mark Alttop along with the

President Shahid Khan, distributed Long Service Awards and Top Performer Awards to honor em-

ployees who have shown exceptional dedication and performance throughout the year.

President Shahid Khan, distributed Long Service Awards and Top Performer Awards to honor em-

Libya to resume oil production after central bank dispute ends

CAIRO: Libya's state-run oil company said Thursday it was restarting full oil production, almost two months after shutting down operations in two of its major fields amid a political crisis. The National Oil Corporation said in a statement that it would resume production at the Sharara and El-Feel oil fields, and export shipments from Es Sider, the country's largest port. In August, the company declared "force majeure," a legal maneuver that lets a company get out of its contracts because of extraordinary circumstances. As part of the review of the force majeure situation, NOC confirmed in its statement that it "can resume the operations of crude oil production and exporting operations to its customers." The National Oil Corporation previously blamed the shutdown on the Fezzan Movement, a local protest group. It came as the country's rival authorities were locked in a dispute over the governance of its Central Bank, which distributes the country's oil revenues. In August, the UN warned that the country was poised to face even greater instability due to the dispute. But that was resolved in recent days, when the country's parliament appointed a new governor to the bank. Libya produces more than 1.2 million barrels of oil per day, and Sharara is the country's largest field, producing up to 300,000 barrels per day. It was exporting most of it. In September, exports averaged 460,000 bpd according to oil analytics firm Kpler. The oil-rich country has been in political turmoil since a NATO-backed uprising toppled and killed longtime dictator Muammar Qaddafi in 2011. Since then, Libya has been split between rival administrations in the east and the west, each backed by militias and foreign governments. NOC declared force majeure on Aug. 7 at Sharara oilfield — one of Libya's largest production areas with a capacity of about 300,000 barrels per day — and on Elfeel oilfield on Sept.2. Sharara is located in southwestern Libya and operated by a joint venture of NOC with Spain's Repsol, France's TotalEnergies, Austria's OMV, and Norway's Equinor. Elfeel has a capacity of 70,000 barrels per day and is operated by Mellitah Oil and Gas, a joint venture between NOC and Italy's Eni. Two engineers at the field told Reuters the oilfield resumed production but not with full capacity due to maintenance work. Earlier, three engineers said there were some "technical problems" at Elfeel. The government in Benghazi in the east said oil production and exports would resume normal operations, after the rival authorities agreed last month to appoint Issa as new central bank governor. Authorities in the second-largest city had closed oilfields and halted most of crude exports on Aug. 26 in protest against a move by the Presidential Council, which sits in Tripoli in the west, to replace veteran central bank chief Sadiq Al-Kabir. The head of the Presidential Council, Mohamed Al-Menfi, met with Issa on Wednesday and stressed "the need for the central bank governor to commit to the technical role of the bank, stay away from politics, and not surpass the legal jurisdictions of the board of directors." The United Nations Support Mission in Libya UNSMIL welcomed in a statement NOC announcing the lifting of force majeure on oil production. The mission emphasized that "it is essential that revenues from this vital resource be channeled through the appropriate institutional framework, and ultimately to the Central Bank of Libya." Indian FM meets Sri Lanka's new leadership, assures support in economic rebuilding New Delhi: India's Foreign Minister S. Jaishankar arrived in Colombo on Friday to meet Sri Lanka's new president and government and assure New Delhi's continued support. Sri Lanka's new President Anura Kumara Dissanayake took office on Sept. 23, after winning the country's first presidential vote since its financial collapse in 2022. A day later, he appointed his three-member government and dissolved the parliament, clearing the way for new parliamentary elections scheduled for Nov. 14. The Indian foreign minister is the first top foreign official to pay an official visit to Sri Lanka since its regime change. He took to X after meeting Dissanayake, Prime Minister Harini Amarasuriya and Foreign Minister Vijitha Herath. "Discussed ways to deepen ongoing cooperation and strengthen India-Sri Lanka ties for the benefit of people of two countries and the region," Jaishankar said, as he also expressed "India's continued support to Sri Lanka's economic rebuilding." The Indian Ministry of External Affairs said the visit aimed to "further deepen the longstanding partnership" between the countries under India's Neighborhood First Policy and Prime Minister Narendra Modi's geopolitical framework of cooperation in the Indian Ocean region. Dissanayake, the country's first Marxist-leaning leader, took over the job on the promise of change, as the island nation of 22 million is still reeling from the crisis and austerity measures imposed by his predecessor as a part of a bailout deal with the International Monetary Fund.—APP

France, Italy launch project to exchange migrant trafficking information

PARIS: The interior ministers of France and Italy signed a declaration on their intention to exchange information related to migrant trafficking, the French interior ministry said on Friday. The project will be modeled after a similar deal between France and Britain, launched in 2020 in the north of France in a bid to stop attempts to reach the United Kingdom. France's new Interior Minister Bruno Retailleau, a law-and-order politician from the conservative Republican party (LR), said it was his priority to further toughen immigration laws, echoing remarks from the prime minister who said the country needed to control its border better. Immigration is also a tense domestic issue in Italy, where far-right Prime Minister Giorgia Meloni has pledged to drastically curb entries, though has not yet proved successful. "Its objective is clear: to trigger judicial investigations, often combined, aimed at dismantling the networks underpinning the illegal flow through Italy to the rest of the European Union, in which France remains a sought-after destination," the French interior ministry said in a statement. In November 2022, tensions flared between France and Italy after Italy refused to let a charity ship with migrants dock, forcing it to go instead to a port in southern France. The countries share a 500 km (300 mile) land border, mainly cutting through the Alps. Both countries are in the EU's Schengen area with no border controls between them, though individual countries are responsible for asylum seekers who arrive in them.—APP

Most of Lebanon's displacement shelters are full: UN

GENEVA: UN officials said on Friday most of Lebanon's nearly 900 shelters were full and that people fleeing Israeli military strikes were increasingly sleeping out in the open in streets or in public parks. "Most of the nearly 900 government established collective shelters in Lebanon have no more capacity," the UN refugee agency's Rula Amin told a Geneva press briefing. She said that they were working with local authorities to find more sites and that some hotels were opening their doors. "People are sleeping in public parks, on the street, the beach," said Mathieu Luciano, the International Organization for Migration's office head in Lebanon. He confirmed that most shelters were full, including those in Beirut and Mount Lebanon.—APP

Sentiment in the occupied Jammu & Kashmir to defeat BJP

HAIDER ABBAS

ISLAMABAD : During a round table discussion on recently concluded elections in Illegally Indian Occupied Jammu and Kashmir (IOJK), held at the Institute of Regional Studies, eminent speakers shed light on the intricacies of the sham elections held recently and the broader implications for IOJK's future. Maryam Mastoor, research analyst at Institute of Regional Studies introduced the topic highlighting reorganization Act of 2019, whereby much of the executive power is with the Lieutenant Governor of IOJK, appointed by the Center, hence the role of Chief Minister and the sham assembly has become merely ceremonial. Ambassador Jauhar Saleem, President of the Institute of Region-

al Studies emphasized that despite a multilayered control of India, through illegal legislation and intense military presence, the people of IOJK have voted to voice their protest and defiance — in the farcical assembly elections in IOJK— against oppressive policies of the BJP. Prof. Mujeeb Afzal in his detailed remarks noted that BJP was not interested in governing the people of IOJK, but rather was bent upon promoting a Hindu centric agenda. "Therefore the sentiment in the Muslim majority Kashmir Valley is to defeat BJP," he emphasized. He also felt that discontent over BJP's anti-Muslim policies, and issues such as unemployment and security were major concerns of the people of IOJK. Kashmiri leader Altaf Hussain Wani emphasized the importance of preserving Kashmiri identity

amidst the pressures of political hegemony. "The fight isn't just about the number of voters; it's about ensuring our voices are heard and our rights are preserved," Wani remarked. Dr. Waleed Rasool, drawing attention to the evolving nature of political leadership in occupied Jammu & Kashmir, underscored that genuine leadership must confront military control of India and advocate for the right of self determination. In his concluding remarks, President Institute of Regional Studies called for continued engagement with the Kashmiris in IOJK and carrying forward informed dialogue on the evolving situation. "This conversation is important for the future of millions of Kashmiris." The visit of Malaysian Prime Minister to Pakistan will promote mutual trade: Atif

Short term inflation goes up 0.44%

ISLAMABAD :The weekly inflation, measured by the Sensitive Price Indicator (SPI), witnessed an increase of 0.44 percent for the combined consumption groups during the week ended on October 03, the Pakistan Bureau of Statistics (PBS) reported on Friday. According to the PBS data, the SPI for the week under review in the above-mentioned group was recorded at 319.17 points as compared to 317.76 points during the past week. As compared to the corresponding week of last year, the SPI for the combined consumption group in the week under review witnessed an increase of 13.18 per cent.

The weekly SPI with the base year 2015-16 =100 covers 17 urban centres and 51 essential items for all expenditure groups. Likewise, SPI for the lowest consumption group of up to Rs 17,732 witnessed increase of 0.68 per cent and went up to 313.20 points from last week's 311.09 points. The SPI for consumption groups of Rs 17,732 to 22,888; Rs 22,889-29,517; Rs 29,518-44,175 and above Rs 44,175, increased by 0.63 percent, 0.53 percent, 0.49 percent and 0.36 percent respectively. During the week, out of 51 items, prices of 21 (41.18%) items increased, 10 (19.61%) items decreased and 20 (39.21%) items remained stable. The items, which recorded major decrease in their average prices on a week-on-week basis included eggs (1.45%), sugar (1.39%), diesel (1.32%), bananas (1.29%), potatoes (1.08%), petrol (0.81), pulse mash (0.80%), gur (0.59 %), rice basmati broken (0.53%) and pulse masoor (0.38%). The commodities which recorded major increase in their average prices on week-on-week basis included tomatoes (18.51%), onions (5.89%), chicken (3.72%), wheat flour (3.63%), garlic (2.47%), pulse gram (1.41%), LPG (0.98%), match box (0.97%), pulse moong (0.92%), mustard oil (0.58%), firewood (0.51%) and cigarettes (0.10%). On-year basis, the commodities that witnessed decrease included wheat flour (35.67%), petrol (23.51%), diesel (22.48%), chilies powder (20.00%), electricity charges for q1 (13.47%), sugar (12.65%), cooking oil 5 litre (10.74%), rice basmati broken (10.34%), pulse masoor (7.90%), vegetable ghee 2.5 kg (6.04%), gur (5.66%) and LPG (3.94%).—DNA

President Shahid Khan, distributed Long Service Awards and Top Performer Awards to honor em-

Malaysian PM visit to Pakistan to promote mutual trade: Atif

Federation President Atif Ikrum said that there is a lot of potential to promote cooperation in the field of agriculture between Malaysia and Pakistan

STAFF REPORT

ISLAMABAD: President of the Federation of Pakistan Chambers of Commerce and Industries Atif Ikrum Sheikh has said that the visit of the Malaysian Prime Minister to Pakistan will promote mutual trade, bilateral economic cooperation and trade, Agreements to enhance cooperation in key sectors and address trade imbalances is welcome. There is a lot of scope for investments and joint ventures in this sector to meet Pakistan's growing energy needs. In addition, discussions are expected to increase investment and collaboration in transport links and digital infrastructure to boost trade and tourism. Federation President Atif Ikrum said that there is a lot of potential to promote cooperation in the field of agriculture between Malaysia and Pakistan. Both the countries can share their experience and skills in this sector which can boost exports. Through bilateral cooperation and common goals, both countries can benefit not only their economies but also the entire Muslim world. Atif Ikrum Sheikh added that the visit of Malaysian Prime Minister Anwar Ibrahim reflects the commitment to deepen the partnership between the two countries. Advertisement. Prime Minister Shahbaz Sharif's proposal to increase the export of halal meat from Pakistan to Malaysia to \$200 million annually is feasible as the halal industry is an important sector for both countries with vast opportunities for cooperation, especially certification. Cooperation can be promoted in the areas of standardization and access to new markets.

On call of PUC

Solidarity expressed for people of Palestine, Lebanon

STAFF REPORT

ISLAMABAD: Ulemas Mashaykh and religious scholars in Friday congregations all across the country express solidarity with the people of Palestine and Lebanon and denounce brutality of the Israeli forces. The Ulemas Mashaykh noted that war frenzy of Israel have crossed all the limits, which has put the entire world peace at stake. The Ulemas said that during the last one year, fifty thousand Palestinians have been martyred in brutal Israeli attacks. The Ulemas Mashaykh said that if the United Nations, International Court of Justice and World Community did not interfere for ceasefire in Palestine and Lebanon, it is feared that fire erupted in Lebanon and Palestine could take the entire world under it. Hafiz Muhammad Tahir Mehmood Ashrafi addressing Friday congregation said that declaration on part of Kingdom of Saudi Arabia to form World Alliance to settle the Palestine issue is positive and good omen. The noted religious scholars while addressing the Friday sermons in their respective areas and districts all over Pakistan said that Zionism is the ultimate reason that has caused unrest in Middle East and main hindrance for the settlement of the Palestine issue. The Ulemas said that Zionist Prime Minister Nathanyahu is modern day Hitler and worst enemy of the Muslims.—APP

Leader hails 'brilliant work' of Iran's armed forces in striking Israel

TEHRAN: Leader of the Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Seyyed Ali Khamenei has hailed "the brilliant work of our armed forces" in launching a missile strike on the Tel Aviv area, saying it was "completely legal and legitimate". Ayatollah Khamenei delivered a public sermon at the weekly Friday prayer to a huge number of worshippers gathered at the Imam Khomeini Grand Mosalla mosque in central Tehran. "The brilliant work of our armed forces was completely legal and legitimate. What our armed forces did was the least punishment for the usurping Zionist regime over the astonishing crimes of this wolf-like regime and rabid dog of America," he said. Ayatollah Khamenei, "Whatever duty the Islamic Republic has in this regard, it will fulfill with strength and fortitude. We will neither delay nor hurry in carrying out the task." "What is logical and reasonable and the opinion of the political and military decision makers will

be done in the future if necessary just like it was done" on Tuesday, he added. The prayer in Tehran followed a commemoration ceremony for Hezbollah leader Sayyed Hassan Nasrallah who was assassinated in an Israeli airstrike in Beirut. Ayatollah Khamenei last led Friday prayers in January 2020 after Iran fired missiles at a US army base in Iraq, in response to a strike that martyred anti-terror commander Brigadier General Qassem Soleimani. Ayatollah Khamenei described Nasrallah "my brother, my dear and my pride, the beloved face of the Islamic world, and the eloquent voice of the nations of the region, [and] the shining jewel of Lebanon". "I felt it necessary to pay tribute to Mr. Sayyed Hassan Nasrallah (May God bless him and grant him peace) in the Friday prayer in Tehran, and to convey some notifications to everyone," the Leader said. "The audience of this sermon is the whole Islamic world, but it is specially addressed

to the dear nation of Lebanon and of Martyrs Hussein ibn Ali. It is



Palestine. "We are all saddened and mournful for the martyrdom of Dear Sayyed. This is a great loss and we are deeply saddened, but our mourning does not mean depression, distress and despair. "It is a kind of mourning for the Master

enlivening, instructive, motivating, and hopeful," the Leader said, referring to Imam Hussein (AS), the third Imam of Shia Muslims. Ayatollah Khamenei said though Nasrallah's body has left this world, "his true personality, his soul, his way, and his expres-

sive voice are still among us and will be with us forever." "He was the high flag of resistance against oppressive and predatory demons - an eloquent voice and a brave defender of the oppressed. He was a source of encouragement and valor for fighters and rights seekers. His popularity and influence had gone beyond Lebanon, Iran and Arab countries, and now his martyrdom will increase this influence." Ayatollah Khamenei said all Muslims are bound to "pay their debt to the wounded and bloody Lebanon". "Hezbollah and the Martyr Sayyed, by defending Gaza and Jihad for Al-Aqsa Mosque and striking the usurping and tyrannical regime, took a step in the path of vital service to the entire region and the entire Islamic world," the Leader said. The relentless defense of the Lebanese people for the Palestinians, he said, is "legal, reasonable, logical and legitimate, and no one has the right to criticize them for entering this battle". —Agencies

Briefs

Kim Jong threatens to use nukes if attacked

PYONGYANG: North Korean leader Kim Jong Un said his country would use nuclear weapons "without hesitation" if attacked by the South and ally the United States, state media reported on Friday. Relations between the two Koreas are at one of their lowest points in decades, with Seoul this week staging a military parade where it showcased its bunker-busting "monster" missile and President Yoon Suk Yeol warned Kim that using nukes would mean the end of his regime. Pyongyang has also been bombarding the South with balloons carrying bags of trash, and a fresh flurry was seen floating over Seoul early on Friday by AFP reporters. Seoul's military confirmed it had detected the balloon launches overnight. If an enemy's forces were "encroaching upon the sovereignty" of the North, Pyongyang would "use without hesitation all the offensive forces it has possessed, including nuclear weapons," Kim said, according to the official Korean Central News Agency. Images in state media showed Kim, clad in his customary leather jacket, speaking at a training event for special operations forces. There, he slammed Yoon for his "end of regime" comments and "clamouring" about his country's alliance with the United States. - Agencies

Blind people's sit-in continues

LAHORE: The protest by blind people in Lahore has entered its 12th day as the demonstrators continue to demand the fulfillment of their rights. The talks initiated by the Punjab government on the direction of Punjab Chief Minister Punjab with the protesters a day ago remained fruitless as the blind people were adamant about continuing their protest until their demands were addressed. They blocked a main road leading to the CM secretariat on Mall Road, significantly disrupting traffic flow in the city. While they opened one lane at Club Chowk to allow partial traffic movement, the sit-in continues outside the secretariat, causing serious inconvenience to the city's residents. Citizens are facing delays, with traffic in the area moving slowly due to the blockade. The protesters, who had previously held a sit-in at Faisal Chowk near the Lahore Press Club, have now shifted their demonstration to the CM Secretariat. Despite facing police action in recent days, including reported violence, the blind individuals have refused to back down, emphasizing that they will not be silenced by intimidation.

Malaysian PM concludes Pak visit with 'productive outcome'

"The state visit to Pakistan holds great significance for me and the delegation," says Premier Anwar Ibrahim

STAFF REPORT

ISLAMABAD: Malaysian Prime Minister Anwar Ibrahim departed on Friday after completing his three-day state visit to Pakistan which he said held a "great personal significance". Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif, who had received his Malaysian counterpart on his arrival on Wednesday, also saw him off at the airport, accompanied by Deputy PM and Foreign Minister Ishaq Dar, federal cabinet members and senior officials. During the visit, Ibrahim, accompanied by a high-level delegation of ministers, deputy ministers and senior officials, held a one-on-one meeting with PM Shehbaz, led the delegation-level talks and held a "productive discussion" with President Asif Ali Zardari. Following the visit, PM Ibrahim wrote on his X timeline that the "engagements with my counterpart Shehbaz Sharif and President of Pakistan Asif Ali Zardari, alongside discussions with industry representatives, resulted in productive outcomes encompassing a wide array of mutual interests." He said that these interactions underscored the commitment of the highest leadership to enhance relations. Both sides signed three MoUs to enhance bilateral cooperation in varying sectors. It was also agreed that Pakistan would export halal meat worth \$200 million and 100,000 tonnes of Basmati rice to Malaysia. "Certainly, there will be increased cooperation in all areas of trade and agricultural technology including meat, rice and palm oil imports by Pakistan, and the two countries will also expand cooperation in the skilled worker sector through critical areas



such as artificial intelligence (AI), digital and semiconductor," Ibrahim added. In another X post, he said: "The state visit to Pakistan holds great significance for me and the delegation, given the longstanding history of friendship between our two countries over the past 67 years." Premier Ibrahim was also conferred the Nishan-i-Pakistan award by President Zardari in a special investiture ceremony. He was also conferred an honorary PhD Degree by the National University of Science

and Technology, where he also delivered a public lecture. Later, PM Shehbaz said that during the visit, Pakistan and Malaysia agreed to further strengthen the bilateral relations and that the visit would usher in a new era of bilateral cooperation, according to a PM Office press release. Mentioning the positive outcome of the Pakistan-Malaysia Business Forum, he said that the enhanced bilateral trade would help boost exports and create job opportunities. Shehbaz said both countries signed MoUs

to promote trade and investment. Pakistan would increase its processed meat and rice export to Malaysia and ensure ease in the processes. The premier detailed that both sides agreed to enhance IT cooperation, manufacturing of electric vehicles and enhancement of bilateral trade. He said Premier Ibrahim was also a great admirer of Allama Muhammad Iqbal which was a matter of pride for Pakistan. He also thanked the visiting premier for his good wishes for the government and the people of Pakistan.

Israel to receive 'harsher' response, warns FM

WEB DESK

BEIRUT: Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi vows that Iran will deal the Israeli regime with a "harsher response" if it takes any further aggressive measures against the Islamic Republic. The top diplomat made the remarks on Friday, addressing reporters in the Lebanese capital Beirut, to which he has travelled to hold bilateral meetings with senior Lebanese officials. "We do not intend to continue [our] attacks," he said, adding, "If Israel takes any further action against Iran, our response will be harsher, and we will definitely retaliate." He highlighted that Iran's retaliation against such violation would be "proportionate and completely calculated." The remarks came after the Islamic Republic launched hundreds of missiles towards the Zionist entity's military, and espionage and intelligence bases all over the occupied Palestinian territories as part of Operation True Promise II on Tuesday in response to the regime's deadly aggression against the country and other regional nations. The aggression has seen the regime waging a genocidal war against the Gaza Strip, escalating its deadly attacks on Lebanon, and violating regional countries' sovereignty to carry out targeted assassination operations against senior regional officials. The atrocities have claimed tens of thousands of lives, including those of Hamas chief Ismail Haniyeh, Hezbollah's leader Sayyed Hassan Nasrallah, and Abbas Nilforoushan, a senior commander of Iran's Islamic Revolution Guards Corps (IRGC).

Russian General praises Pak Army's anti-terrorism efforts



Both sides expressed satisfaction on positive trajectory of bilateral defence cooperation

STAFF REPORT

RAWALPINDI: Col General Sergey Yuravich Istrakov, Deputy Chief of General Staff of Armed Forces of Russian Federation who is on an official visit to Pakistan,

US Deputy Chief of mission explores Lahore

BUREAU REPORT

Lahore: On her inaugural visit to Lahore, U.S. Deputy Chief of Mission (DCM) Natalie Baker, joined by U.S. Consul General Kristin Hawkins, explored how U.S.-Pakistan partnerships have been strengthening bilateral trade and investment, cultural preservation efforts, and educational opportunities for youth in Punjab. DCM Baker met with representatives of U.S. businesses to discuss how Amer-

ican companies are generating high-quality jobs for Pakistani youth and giving back to Pakistani communities through a wide range of corporate initiatives. In a strong show of support for gender equity, DCM Baker and Consul General Hawkins played cricket with female athletes at the National High-Performance Center (NHPC), where DCM Baker highlighted U.S.-funded initiatives empowering young Pakistani women through sports, exchange programs, and more. Over the past year, the United States has supported efforts at 14 schools and universities across Punjab to expand opportunities for women and girls to participate in sports and develop leadership skills. "The United States is deeply committed to advancing gender equity, and ensuring that everyone - regardless of gender or gender identity - has the opportunity to succeed," DCM Baker said. "Through programs like the Academy for Women Entrepreneurs, the TechGirls exchange initiative, and the Women in Energy Scholars program, we are equipping women and girls with the knowledge, skills, and opportunities they need to thrive."

PTI not a political party, should be dealt as terrorists

Punjab minister says she believes interior minister will not let PTI protestors enter federal capital

FAISAL SHEIKH

ISLAMABAD: Following the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI)'s insistence on holding a rally at Islamabad's D-Chowk today despite Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi's warning against it, Punjab Minister for Information Azma Bokhari on Friday said the party was not a political party and it should be treated as a terrorist entity. "The [PTI] is not a political party," Bokhari said during an interview on a private news channel. To a query, the information minister said she heard the interior minister last day and she believed he would not let the PTI supporters enter the federal capital. Naqvi on Thursday warned the PTI against holding the public gathering as visits of foreign dignitaries were planned in Islamabad, including the Malaysian prime minister. Amid its anti-government campaign, the former ruling party - founded by Imran Khan - is holding protests for the "independence" of the judiciary and the release of the former prime minister from jail. The protest will coincide with the final day of the Malaysian prime minister's visit to Pakistan and the upcoming Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) summit. The authorities have already enforced Section 144 and "the Peaceful Assembly and Public Order Act, 2024", regulating holding of public assemblies at certain places in Islamabad. "The PTI's top leadership should review its protest call [...] No one will be allowed for an onrush on Islamabad," the security czar said while addressing a presser along with officials of the federal police. Meanwhile, the provincial information minister the PTI had always worked against Pakistan's development. "The country is progressing and inflation is dropping, but they cannot sit with peace," she said. She blamed PTI of using teargas shelling on police officials during last protest, adding that they would not have been stopped if they held peaceful protest. But they came for creating anarchy, she maintained. "The people of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa should ask them why they did not do work. You cannot use public resources for vandalism," she said.

Hezbollah launches barrages of missiles at Haifa

BEIRUT: Lebanon's Hezbollah resistance movement has launched barrages of missiles at Haifa in the northern part of occupied territories. In a statement issued on Friday, Hezbollah said it fired missiles at Krayot, north of Haifa City, at 07:00 am local time. The statement noted that that attack took place in solidarity with the Palestinian people who are subjected to a genocidal war in Gaza, and in retaliation for the Israeli strikes on Lebanon that claimed the lives of hundreds of civilians. According to Israeli media, sirens were sounded in Haifa, Caesarea, the Western Galilee, the Lower Galilee, Acre (Akko) and Nahariya. The resistance fighters also launched a barrage of missiles on mortar emplacements in southern Kiryat Shmona. They also fired a missile at a Merkava tank in the vicinity of Malkiya post, leaving its crew members either killed or injured. - Agencies

Russia has decided to remove Taliban from terror group list

Russia has been slowly building ties with the Taliban since it seized power in Afghanistan in August 2021 as US-led forces withdrew after 20 years of war but the movement is still officially outlawed in Russia

NEWS DESK

MOSCOW: Russia's Foreign Ministry said on Friday that a decision to remove the Taliban from a list of terrorist organizations had been "taken at the highest level," the state TASS news agency reported. The decision needs to be followed up with various legal procedures in order to make it a reality, President Vladimir Putin's special representative on Afghanistan, Zamir Kabulov, was quoted as saying. Putin said in July that Russia considered Afghanistan's Taliban movement an ally in the fight against terrorism. Russia has been slowly building ties with the Taliban since it seized power in Afghanistan in August 2021 as US-led forces withdrew after 20 years of war but the movement is still officially outlawed in Russia. No country has formally recognized the Talib-

an as the country's legitimate leadership, although China and the UAE have accepted its ambassadors. Russia added the Taliban to its list of terrorist organizations in 2003. Removing it would be an important step by Moscow toward normalizing relations with Afghanistan. The Taliban's acting foreign minister Amir Khan Muttaqi said in a speech in Moscow that recent decisions by Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan to remove the former insurgents from a list of banned groups was a welcome step. "We also appreciate the positive remarks by the high-ranking officials of the Russian Federation in this regard and hope to see more effective steps soon," he said. In separate comments on Friday, Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov said Moscow was convinced of the need to maintain "pragmatic dialogue" with the current Afghan government. "It is obvious that it is impossible to solve problems or even discuss an Afghan settlement without Kabul," Lavrov said. "Moscow will continue its course on developing political, trade and economic ties with Kabul," he added, speaking at a meeting in Moscow with Muttaqi and representatives of neighboring countries.

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