



# Islamabad POST

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### Lionel Messi equals Ronaldo's hat-trick record

Detailed News On Page-06

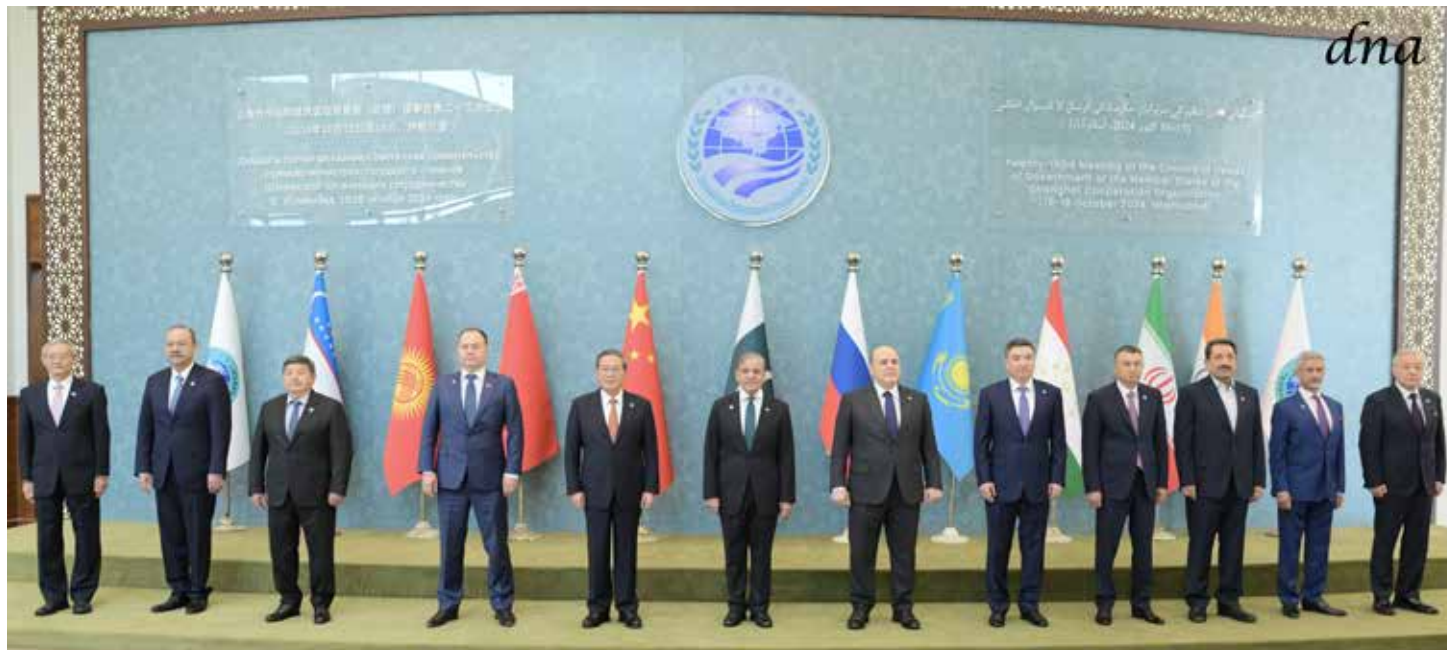
### Zelensky presents 'victory plan'

Detailed News On Page-08



### US state dep welcomes SCO summit

Detailed News On Page-08



ISLAMABAD: Group photo of Prime Minister of Pakistan Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif and Heads of delegations of the 23rd SCO Heads of Government Meeting. - DNA

## Abdullah becomes IIOJK's CM

India's Congress leader Rahul Gandhi and Priyanka Gandhi attend swearing in ceremony

SRINAGAR: National Conference leader Omar Abdullah on Wednesday was sworn in as the chief minister of Indian Illegally Occupied Jammu and Kashmir (IIOJK), after guiding his party to a massive victory in the September-October elections. The 54-year-old leader's party beat Prime Minister Narendra Modi's Bharatiya Janta Party (BJP) and won 42 seats in the 90-member assembly. It has the support of four Independents and one AAP legislator. The oath-taking ceremony was held at the Sheri-Kashmir International Conference Centre in Srinagar and was attended by several Indian leaders, and politicians, including India's opposition leader Rahul Gandhi and Congress's Priyanka Gandhi.

## Pakistan to export EV bikes soon

Urges transition towards green energy for sustainable future

NAZIR SIYAL

KARACHI: Sindh's senior Minister Sharjeel Memon stressed to focus on national development and progress ignoring negative propaganda. He inaugurated the launch of e-bike by the electric motorcycle company, E-Turbo and congratulated them. Minister expected the company to export e-bikes in all the countries. Memon recalled that e-buses were launched in Sindh, now, they aimed to launch EV-taxis. Transport minister disclosed plans that a Chinese transport company had been requested to manufacture EV-buses in Pakistan. EV-bikes would be exported from the country very soon, he highlighted.

## 4 policemen injured in IED attack

The injured policemen have been shifted to a hospital

SHAMIM SHAHID

PESHAWAR: Four policemen, including the in-charge of the police post, were injured on Wednesday when an IED went off near a police van in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa's Buner district, a police official said. Speaking to media, the spokesperson to the Buner district police officer, Israr Ahmad, said, "A police vehicle was on its routine patrol in the Nawagai area, and when it reached the Kanki Chowk, an IED exploded." The police official said that the in-charge of the police post at Ambela, Assistant Sub-Inspector (ASP), Shahid Zada, Constable Noor Mohammad, who was the driver, Constable Iftikhar Ali, and Constable Altaf Ahmad were injured in the attack.

## Shehbaz stresses enhanced connectivity

# Use of Afghan soil for terrorism must be stopped

urged SCO members to prioritise efforts aimed at eradicating poverty through addressing its root causes and expanding economic opportunities; calls for end to bloodshed in Gaza

ANSAR M BHATTI

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif, addressing the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) summit, has said that the use of Afghan soil for terrorism must be stopped as he urged stronger regional cooperation to address shared challenges. Addressing the 23rd session of the Council of Heads of Government on Wednesday, he welcomed the leaders of SCO member states and emphasised the importance of strengthening regional ties for long-term economic growth and stability, as reported by Express news. "Regional cooperation and connectivity are essential for sustainable development," Shehbaz Sharif said in his opening address. "We must seize the opportunities available to provide a better standard of living and amenities for our people." Shehbaz Sharif noted that SCO member countries make up 40% of the world's population, highlighting the organisation's potential to drive global progress. He also urged the need to focus on tourism, green development, and energy sectors. He also stressed that efforts to eradicate

Continued on Page 06

## Indian FM hails Pakistan's 'hospitality'

Indian foreign minister thanks PM Shehbaz, FM Dar for hospitality while departing from Islamabad

SAIFULLAH ANSAR

ISLAMABAD: Indian Foreign Minister Subrahmanya Jaishankar on Wednesday thanked Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif, Deputy Prime Minister and his Pakistani counterpart Ishaq Dar and the government for the "hospitality and courtesies" during the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) summit hosted by Islamabad. Jaishankar, who attended the SCO

Continued on Page 06

## After much twists and turns Khan out of Oxford chancellor's race

Nearly 40 contestants have been included in the coveted list without much-hyped former prime minister

FOREIGN DESK

LONDON: Oxford University has not included former Pakistani prime minister Imran Khan's name in the list of candidates to run for the position of the varsity's chancellor. Citing a university source a Pakistani news channel reported that, "More than 40 people applied and only 38 were approved. The candidates were only excluded according to the exclusion criteria of the university. 26,000 people have registered to vote in this election. Khan has been disqualified to run in the election over several factors including

Continued on Page 06

## Tax revenue stagnant at 2008 levels

FBR Chairman Rashid Mahmood Langrial says that 90% of people in Pakistan do not pay taxes

STAFF REPORT

ISLAMABAD: Federal Board of Revenue (FBR) Chairman Rashid Mahmood Langrial has said that the revenue collected in 2008 is where we still stand today. The FBR Chairman stated

Continued on Page 06

## CM Maryam orders crackdown on culprits involved in rape saga

PTI using social media to spread anarchy about Lahore's alleged rape, says chief minister

BUREAU REPORT

LAHORE: Punjab Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz on Wednesday ordered a crackdown on those spreading fake news that a girl had been allegedly raped at a private college in Lahore. Since the beginning of the week, students have staged protests in multiple cities of the country's largest province, demanding that alleged culprits of the claimed crime be brought to justice. While the protests caused injuries to students and police alike, the authorities had firmly stated that no girl had been raped, while the girl's family had also ruled out the sexual assault. During a press conference, the provincial chief executive said that a crackdown should be launched "regardless of whether they belong to the PTI [Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf] or Chaudhry Pervez Elahi's Q-League". She also blamed the former ruling party for

Continued on Page 06

## Dengue cases surge in Punjab, 172 new infections

Residents encouraged to cooperate with health teams actively working to control the outbreak

DNA

LAHORE: The Punjab Health Department reported 172 new cases of dengue fever in the province over the last 24 hours, with Rawalpindi accounting for the majority at 157 cases, as reported by local media. According to the latest statistics, Lahore recorded eight new cases, while Jhelum reported two. Gujranwala, Chakwal, Attock, Sargodha, and Okara each logged one case.

Continued on Page 06

## 'Definitely an honour'

# Hosting 23rd SCO summit a milestone for Pakistan: Tarar

He said by hosting this summit Pakistan had once again proved it had the capacity and capability to host such mega events

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Information, Broadcasting, National Heritage and Culture Attaullah Tarar on Wednesday termed Pakistan's hosting of 23rd Shanghai Cooperation Organization summit as a milestone in the context of international relations. Talking to media persons at Media Facilitation Center at Pak-China Friendship Center, he said some inimical elements were claiming that Pakistan has been isolated at international level but now the world can see that the heads of major countries had visited our country. "Russian and Chinese Prime Ministers' arrival in Pakistan is good omen for us Pakistan reputation has been restored with this summit", he added. He said that Pakistan had made excellent arrangements for the 23rd Shanghai Cooperation Organization summit being held in Islamabad. He said after 27 years an event of this

Continued on Page 06

## SCO Secy general commends Pak for hosting summit

DPM Dar expresses gratitude to all member countries that participated

MEHTAB PIRZADA

ISLAMABAD: Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Ishaq Dar has highlighted the significance of hosting the SCO summit, calling it a great honour for Pakistan. During a joint press conference with the secretary general of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) in Islamabad, Dar expressed gratitude to all member countries that participated.

Continued on Page 06

## Amendments fine tuned

# Idea of 'court within court' being mulled

PML N, PPP and JUI hopeful of consensus on the idea of court within court

DNA

LAHORE: The leadership of PML-N, PPP, and JUI met in Lahore to resolve their differences over proposed Constitutional amendments. Sources close to the discussions indicate that the parties are nearing a consensus and are expected to present a unified draft soon. According to these sources, PML-N has agreed to the proposal of establishing Constitutional benches within the provincial high courts. However, the party remains opposed to the idea of creating a dedicated Constitutional

Court. However, the plan is to create a 'court within court' in the Supreme Court by creating a special bench of five or more judges to head the Constitutional bench. According to the plan the judicial commission shall decide the formation of this bench, which may include any judge. Even the commission shall nominate head of the bench, which may not be the incumbent chief justice of the Supreme Court. During an October 15 press conference, both Maulana Fazlur Rehman and Bilawal Bhatto Zardari hinted at progress on

Continued on Page 06

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# Punjab Health Department confirms 172 new dengue cases

The health department assured the public that all necessary arrangements to counter the outbreak were in place, with a sufficient stock of medicine available in all public hospitals across the province. In response to the rising number of cases, the department issued a strong advisory urging the public to maintain clean and dry surroundings to prevent the spread of the Dengue virus. Citizens were also encouraged to fully cooperate with health teams actively working to control the outbreak

## STAFF REPORTER

LAHORE: The Punjab Health Department confirmed on Wednesday that 172 new cases of dengue were recorded across the province in the last 24 hours. According to the latest data, Rawalpindi reported 157 cases, Lahore 8, Jhelum 2, while Gujranwala, Chakwal, Attock, Sargodha, and Okara each reported one case. Over the past week, 904 new cases of dengue virus infection were identified, bringing the total number of cases in Punjab for the year 2024 to 3,771. The health department assured the public that all necessary arrangements to counter the outbreak were in place, with a sufficient stock of medicine available in all public hospitals across the province. In response to the rising number of cases, the department issued a strong advisory urging the public to maintain clean and dry surroundings to prevent the spread of the Dengue virus. Citizens were also encouraged to fully cooperate with health teams actively working to control the outbreak. For

those seeking treatment, information, or wishing to register complaints related to Dengue, the Health Department has provided a free helpline at 1033. Officials emphasized the importance of vigilance and proactive measures to contain the spread of the virus across Punjab. Meanwhile, a meeting of the District Emergency Response Committee for Dengue Control was held under the chairmanship of Additional Deputy Commissioner Revenue (ADC-R) Ameer Taimur, here on Wednesday. The meeting reviewed the measures taken for dengue control from October 1 to October 14. Chief Executive Officer (CEO) Health Dr. Aamir Bashir, District Health Officer Preventive Services Dr. Khalid Channar, District Focal Person Dr. Qudsiya Anwar, Deputy District Health Officers, entomologists from relevant departments, and focal persons attended the meeting, while the assistant commissioners from tehsils participated via video-link. The ADC-R emphasised ensuring implementation of preventive

measures against dengue. He instructed that water should not stand accumulated in one place, and cleanliness, including roof sanitation, should be maintained. He said that members of the indoor and outdoor teams formed for dengue control should work actively in the field, ensuring 100 per cent coverage of dengue larvae breeding hot spots throughout the district. The CEO Health, in his briefing, stated that from January 1 to October 14, a total of 8,371 suspected dengue cases have been reported district-wide, with 30 confirmed dengue patients. He also noted that during this period of surveillance from January 1 to October 14, dengue larvae were found at 112 locations. He mentioned that measures are being taken to eliminate dengue larvae. He added that there are 1,804 dengue hot spots in the district, all of which have been covered during this period. He reported that house-to-house surveillance for dengue larvae is being conducted, and both indoor and outdoor teams are active in the field.



KARACHI: Artists performing in Theater play "Chaturagee" staged at ACP Auditorium during the World Culture Festival 2024 at Arts Council of Pakistan Karachi (ACP) late last night. —APP

## Senior Management Course participants visit Paraplegic Center

PESHAWAR: The participants of 36th Senior Management Course of the National Institute of Management (NIM) undertook a study visit to the Paraplegic Center Peshawar (PCP). According to a PCP press release on Wednesday, the purpose of the visit was to examine this unique national institution as a case study, which specializes in the rehabilitation of individuals affected by spinal cord injuries. Upon returning to the institute, participants will prepare individual reports with the objective of making national institutions self-sufficient and sustainable on this analogy. Fifteen participants from various federal and provincial services, including the Pakistan Administrative Service, Police Service, Secretariat Group, Foreign Service, Federal Board of Revenue, and PMS Group, along with two faculty members, took part in the visit, led by NIM's Chief Instructor Tariq Bakhtiar. The delegation was warmly received by the Chairman of the Board of Governors, Zia-ur-Rehman and the Chief Executive Officer, Dr. Syed Muhammad Ilyas. During the visit, the participants toured various departments, including the Orthotics Workshop, Autism Spectrum Disorder Section, Private and General Wards, and the College of Physical Medicine. Dr. Syed Muhammad Ilyas gave a detailed briefing, explaining that despite limited resources, the Paraplegic Center not only offers rehabilitation services for paraplegic patients but also provides free treatment for individuals affected by clubfoot, autism spectrum disorders and polio. He highlighted that 90% of the people affected by these conditions are from economically disadvantaged backgrounds—APP.

## Meena vows to soon make KP varsities financially stable

He said that the present provincial government is paying special attention to the better leadership of the new generation and their education and training. Efforts are being made to ensure the provision of educational facilities so that the best facilities can be provided

## STAFF REPORTER

PESHAWAR: Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Minister for Higher Education Meena Khan on Wednesday said that soon the public sector universities of the province would be made financially stable. He said that for this purpose, the provincial government has divided the universities into different categories. He was addressing the inaugural ceremony of the Jinnah Residential Colony in Islamia College University. The minister said that on the directions of Chief Minister Ali Amin Gandapur, vigorous measures have been taken to take the government

universities of the province towards academic excellence and have categorized 18 universities. "Very soon these universities which are suffering from financial crisis will be put on their feet," he asserted. The minister said that Islamia College University Peshawar has a prominent place and status among the national universities. He said that luckily this university was not in the high-risk category and hoped that in one or two years, Islamia College University would be running in surplus. On the occasion, he handed over keys of newly constructed houses to allottees in Jinnah Residential Colony. Provost

Syed Kamal, former squash world champion Qamar Zaman, Director Sports Ali Hoti, Administrator Rahatabad Sports Complex Abida Afridi, professors and staff were also present on the occasion. He said that the present provincial government is paying special attention to the better leadership of the new generation and their education and training. Efforts are being made to ensure the provision of educational facilities so that the best facilities can be provided. Later, the project director of Jinnah Residential Colony gave a detailed briefing on the project to the provincial minister.

## PPP HR Cell hosts 4th seminar on constitutional amendments

## STAFF REPORTER

PESHAWAR: The PPP HR Cell recently held its fourth seminar focused on constitutional amendments, bringing together civil society members, lawyers, women, and minorities. In his address, HR Cell President FB emphasized that these amendments are vital for ensuring equal judicial representation across all provinces. He noted that constitutional courts remain an unfinished aspect of the Charter of Democracy and reaffirmed PPP's commitment to fundamental rights and the rule of law. Ahmed Kundi highlighted that over 50 democratic nations have established constitutional courts, underscoring that every citizen of Pakistan is a stakeholder in these amendments. PLF President praised the HR Cell for fostering dialogue with legal professionals and civil society. Malaika Raza emphasized PPP's openness to public suggestions, stating that the Chairman is the only political leader sharing the draft with the public for input—APP

## 6 more banks added to the BISP to combat agent mafia : Rubina

Additionally, she announced that BISP has added six more banks to its network for cash transfers, which will reduce the reliance on a few banks and curb the influence of device agents

## STAFF REPORTER

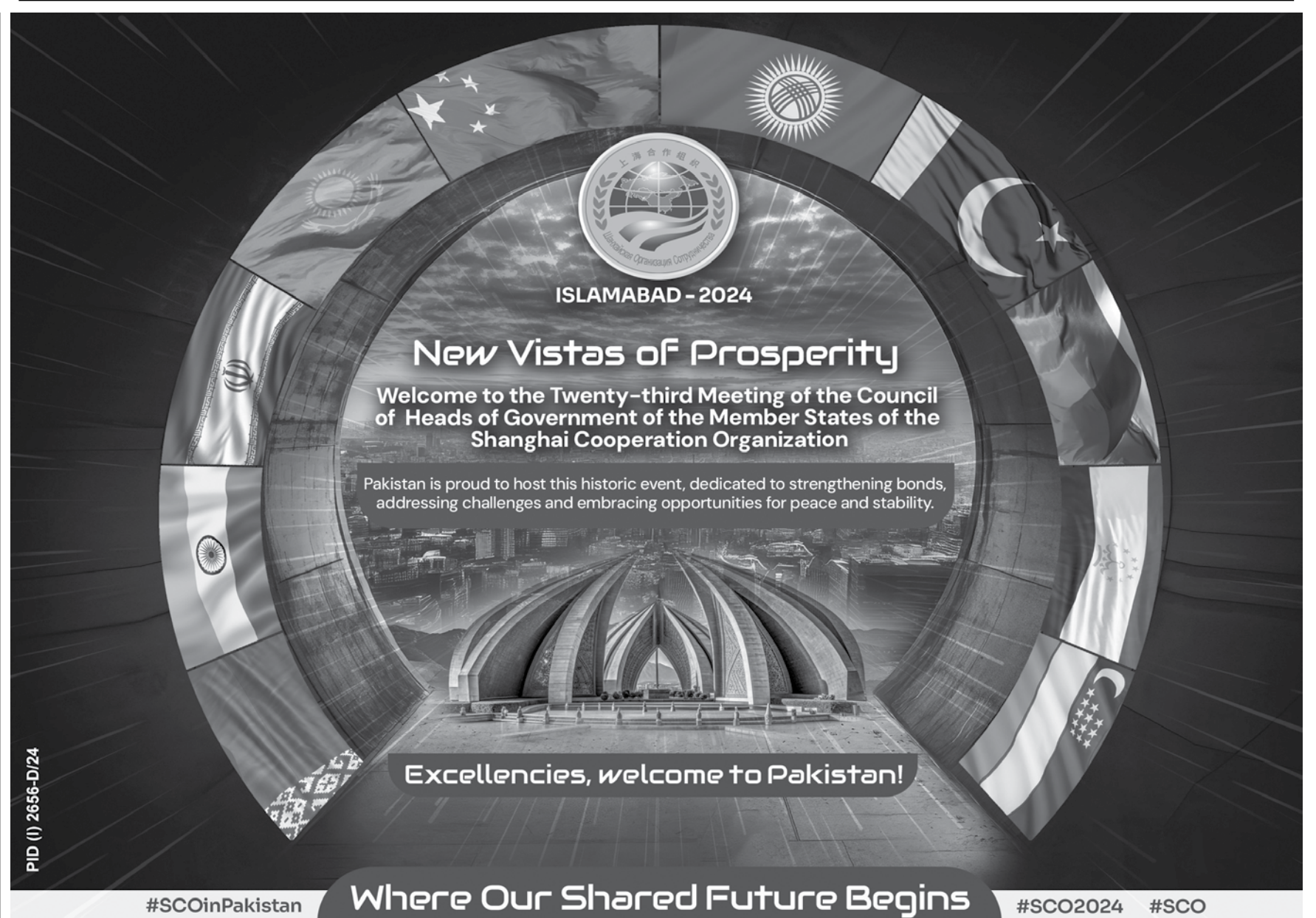
KARACHI: Chairperson of the Benazir Income Support Programme (BISP), Senator Rubina Khalid, visited the Benazir Nathonuma Center at Sindh Government Hospital PIB Colony in Karachi on 16th October 2024. During her visit, she inspected the facilities, interacted with the women beneficiaries of the program, and expressed satisfaction with the availability of adequate services. While speaking to media personnel at the hospital, Senator Rubina Khalid praised the Sindh Health Department for its support in providing necessary facilities and resources for the program.

She highlighted a significant issue that BISP is addressing by providing both cash and nutritional support to mothers of children up to two years of age. She further added that 9.3 million families are currently registered with the program, and this number is expected to reach 10 million by 2025. Addressing concerns that BISP promotes dependency, she firmly rejected this notion, stating that BISP is a visionary initiative of Shaheed Mohterma Benazir Bhutto and President Asif Ali Zardari, recognized globally for its impact. The programme aims to eradicate poverty, empower women, and reduce in-

come disparity. To ensure its effectiveness, she mentioned that an independent third-party survey and monitoring are conducted annually. Regarding the issue of the agent mafia and the limited number of banks handling cash transfers, Senator Rubina Khalid shared that BISP is in discussions with the State Bank of Pakistan to streamline cash transfers for beneficiaries. She hinted at upcoming positive developments in this area. Additionally, she announced that BISP has added six more banks to its network for cash transfers, which will reduce the reliance on a few banks and curb the influence of device agents.

## Canada unveils disturbing nexus involving Indian officials in targeting Sikh activists

ISLAMABAD: In a startling revelation, Canada has uncovered a troubling nexus among Indian officials, intelligence agents, and criminal organizations targeting Sikh activists within its borders. According to a report by Kashmir Media Service, this disclosure follows the murder of Hardeep Singh Nijjar, a prominent Sikh leader and ardent advocate for the Khalistan movement, whose assassination in June 2023 has drawn widespread condemnation and cast a spotlight on the Modi government's controversial international tactics. Reports indicate that high-ranking members of the Research and Analysis Wing (RAW) were allegedly authorized to carry out operations against Sikh activists, with the Washington Post citing Canadian officials reporting that Indian Home Minister Amit Shah was involved in the authorization of intelligence-gathering and attacks in Canada. Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau stated that the federal police uncovered "clear and compelling evidence" that Indian government agents had engaged in activities threatening public safety in Canada. He described India's actions as a "monumental mistake," underscoring the serious implications of employing diplomats and organized crime to conduct attacks on Canadian soil. The Canadian police investigation has uncovered alarming connections between individuals associated with the Indian government and a criminal network led by notorious gangster Lawrence Bishnoi. The investigation revealed that the criminal activities allegedly orchestrated by Indian diplomats included extortion, intimidation, coercion, harassment, and even targeted killings of Canadian citizens. Furthermore, Canadian authorities have disclosed evidence implicating India's top diplomat, Sanjay Verma, in the assassination of Hardeep Singh Nijjar. In response to these developments, Canada expelled six Indian diplomats, including the high commissioner, citing their involvement in Nijjar's assassination and suggesting a broader effort to target Indian dissidents in Canada. Canada had previously requested that India waive immunity for these diplomats so they could be questioned; however, India rejected this demand, prompting Ottawa's decision to expel them. This marks a significant escalation in diplomatic tensions between the two countries. Vina Nadjibulla, research director at the Asia Pacific Foundation of Canada, noted in a media interview that the expulsions represent "a serious escalation in the diplomatic tensions that have been ongoing for over a year now between Canada and India." She added, "We're seeing a diplomatic rupture," emphasizing Canada's continued calls for Indian cooperation in the investigation, which India has so far refused.—DNA



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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 Republic Day

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



Turkish Airlines.....8494949



### Emergency

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



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CAA.....9281092



### Hospitals

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DHQ.....5556311-4  
RGH.....9290301-7  
Holy Family.....9290322-7  
PIMS.....9261170-79  
Polyclinic.....9218300-09  
Shifa International 4603666



### Departments

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

### Water Tank

Islamabad.....0321-5744480

# PM Shehbaz Sharif welcomes SCO dignitaries at conference



## Mafia hikes ghee prices after flour, vegetables

Shahid Rashid Butt said that the oil prices have decreased in the global market, but the prices have been increased in Pakistan, which is surprising

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Business leader and former President of the Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry (ICCI), Dr. Shahid Rasheed Butt, said on Wednesday that action should be taken against the mafia that loots the people by artificially increasing the prices of ghee and vegetable oil. In this regard, he said, all relevant government machinery, including price control committees, should be mobilized, and

prices should be moderated by taking immediate action against profiteers. Shahid Rashid Butt said in a statement issued here that after the increase in the prices of fruits and vegetables, the flour mills mafia made the flour expensive, and now the prices of vegetable oil and ghee are skyrocketing. The majority in Pakistan are forced to use substandard third-grade ghee, and the ruthless mafia has increased the price of this quality ghee the most, he observed. The business leader said that with win-

ter's arrival, ghee consumption increases. The mafia is taking advantage of this, and if it is not stopped, other necessities of life will also start becoming expensive. On the one hand, people are being told that inflation is coming down; on the other hand, prices of ghee, flour, meat, fruits, and vegetables are increasing because the profiteers are plundering the masses openly, which needs to be dealt with iron hands. Shahid Rashid Butt further said that the oil prices have decreased

in the global market, but the prices have been increased in Pakistan, which is surprising. The oil prices have declined by three percent in the international market, and now British crude oil is selling at 75 dollars per barrel while US crude oil WTI is at 71 dollars per barrel, and the global gas price has decreased by 40 cents. Currently, gas is 2 dollars 47 cents per MMBtu. The government should immediately withdraw the increase in oil prices, as it will result in inflation.

## Climate-resilient farming critical for global food security

ISLAMABAD: Coordinator to the Prime Minister on Climate Change, Romina Khurshid Alam emphasized the necessity of sustainable agricultural practices to combat climate change, which is vital for global food security and the well-being of populations. In her World Food Day message, PM's aide highlighted that climate change adversely affects food security and sustainable agriculture through interconnected mechanisms. Increased temperatures, altered rainfall patterns, and extreme weather events jeopardize agricultural productivity, leading to higher food prices and increased vulnerability for low-income communities. Projections indicate that millions more could face hunger by 2050 due to these impacts. Emphasizing the critical need for climate-resilient farming, she highlighted that Pakistan, being one of the most climate-vulnerable countries, faces severe impacts from extreme weather events like floods and heatwaves, which threaten agricultural productivity and food security. Khurshid Alam noted that rising agricultural demands intensify competition for resources, necessitating a transformation in farming practices to support a growing population while addressing climate challenges. She advocated for adaptation strategies, such as crop rotation and drought-resistant varieties, which enhance resilience against climate variability and contribute to carbon sequestration and stressed the importance of community engagement, asserting that empowering local communities through education on sustainable practices strengthens local food systems and reduces dependence on external markets. Ms Alam also pointed out that climate change affects nutritional quality and food availability, particularly in vulnerable regions, exacerbating malnutrition and poverty levels and stressed urgent action to create sustainable food systems that can withstand climate impacts while ensuring nutritional adequacy for all populations. "The effects of climate change disproportionately impact marginalized groups, including women and low-income farmers," she stated, emphasizing the need to address these disparities for improved food security and community resilience.—DNA

## Oncologist stresses annual mammograms

ISLAMABAD: Oncologist Wednesday emphasized the crucial importance of annual mammography screenings for women and encouraged women to break free from societal taboos surrounding breast health and openly discuss their concerns, fostering a culture of awareness and empowerment. A renowned breast cancer surgeon from CMH Rawalpindi Professor Doctor Riffat Naqvi talking to a private news channel, she said, "The stigma associated with breast cancer and promote proactive measures can only way to ultimately improve survival rates and quality of life for those affected." Riffat Naqvi reminded, "October is dedicated for breast cancer month where awareness is crucial for saving lives." "By encouraging women to speak openly about their concerns and undergo regular screenings, we can break down the cultural and social barriers that often hinder timely diagnosis and treatment," she added.—APP

## 'SCO Summit to pave way for regional growth'

ISLAMABAD: Minister for Petroleum Dr Musadik Malik, has expressed high hopes for the 23rd Council of Heads of Government (CHG) of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) summit, emphasizing its potential to elevate the region's economic development and stability.

In an exclusive interview with APP, Malik stressed the importance of regional cooperation, drawing parallels between successful international bodies such as the European Union and the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC). Malik highlighted the significant economic potential of the nations participating in the summit, representing 44% of the world's population and contributing nearly 30% to global GDP. He believes that by enhancing trade and cultural ties, these nations can unlock new opportunities for growth. "There is a tremendous opportunity for these countries to evolve strategies through dialogue. Together, we can enhance economic activity, create new businesses, and ultimately provide more jobs for the youth," Malik said, outlining one of the summit's key objectives. The minister also encouraged major players, particularly China, to bring innovative proposals to the table that could integrate into global value chains, further boosting the region's economic potential. Regarding the participation of India's Minister of External Affairs, S. Jaishankar, Malik welcomed India's involvement as an SCO member, reaffirming Pakistan's commitment to constructive engagement within the forum.—APP

## Islamabad transforms into city of lights

ISLAMABAD: Capital Development Authority (CDA) has illuminated the Federal Capital with breathtaking decorations during 23rd Council of Heads of Government (CHG) of the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) Summit, creating an atmosphere of festivity and national pride. The city's stunning transformation highlights Islamabad's scenic beauty while paying homage to the prestigious event, which saw heads of state and dignitaries from member nations gathering to discuss regional cooperation and development. The 3D illumination effort spearheaded by the CDA is a feast for the eyes, with vibrant lights bathing the city's landmarks and key thoroughfares. Buildings and monuments in key areas such as Constitution Avenue, Sarena-Chowk, and Rawal Dam Chowk adorned with intricate floral patterns and glowing motifs that represent both Pakistan's rich cultural heritage and the unity of SCO member states. These installations offer a spectacular view, especially during the evening, when the cityscape comes alive with vivid hues of light. Visitors and citizens alike are captivated by the artistic lighting and floral designs, which blend modern technology with traditional aesthetics. From twinkling lights lining roads and bridges to large-scale projections on buildings, Islamabad has been transformed into a city of beauty, befitting the importance of the summit. The beautification is not only a visual spectacle but also a representation of Pakistan's commitment to hosting international leaders. The summit will focus on crucial issues such as regional security, economic cooperation, and cultural exchange among SCO member states. As Islamabad continues to shine under the glow of these vibrant lights, the 23rd SCO Summit stands as a beacon of Pakistan's commitment to fostering regional unity and cooperation. The carefully planned decorations serve as a warm welcome to the visiting delegations, offering a glimpse of Pakistan's hospitality and its dedication to playing a key role on the global stage.—APP

## SCO provides unique: Bilal

ISLAMABAD: PML-N leader & Convener of the National Parliamentary Task-force on Sustainable Development Goals Bilal Azhar Kayani Wednesday emphasized the vital role of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) in promoting inter-national dialogue to shape regional policies. Talking to a Private news channel, he said the SCO indeed provides a unique platform for countries to engage in dialogue and cooperation, shaping regional policies and addressing common challenges. By engaging in dialogue and cooperation, the SCO aims to create a more stable and prosperous region, with its member states working together to address shared challenges and interests, he mentioned. Kayani noted, the SCO provides a valuable opportunity for nations including India and Pakistan to come together and find peaceful solutions to regional issues. He said regional countries, including China, Russia, and Iran are set new convene and exploring ways to tackle challenges and bolster cooperation across various sectors including climate change and economy. He said this collaborative effort aims to foster economic growth, security and cultural exchange among participating nations. Pakistan's involvement with the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) presents a significant opportunity for the country to strengthen its relationships with participating nations, he mentioned. This includes fostering closer ties with Russia, China, and Iran, among others. By collaborating on regional security, economic development and cultural exchange initiatives, Pakistan can enhance its diplomatic and economic standing within the region, he further explained. Responding to a query, he said Pakistan's friendly gesture towards India presents a prime opportunity for dialogue and cooperation on pressing issues such as climate change and the longstanding Kashmir conflict. By engaging in peaceful discussions, both nations can work towards mutually beneficial solutions, he stressed.—APP

## 73rd death anniversary of Liaquat Ali Khan observed

ISLAMABAD: The 73rd death anniversary of Pakistan's first Prime Minister Shaheed-e-Milal, Khan Liaquat Ali Khan, was observed on Wednesday. Born in Karnal, East Punjab, Liaquat Ali Khan got education from Aligarh Muslim University, India and Oxford University, United Kingdom. He joined All India Muslim League and participated along with Quaid-e-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah in the struggle for a separate homeland for Muslims of the sub-continent. After Pakistan came in to being, he became first prime minister of the country. Liaquat Ali Khan was assassinated on October 1951 during a public meeting at Company Bagh in Rawalpindi which was later named after him as Liaquat Bagh.—APP

## IRSA releases 99,300 cusecs water

ISLAMABAD: Indus River System Authority (IRSA) on Wednesday released 99,300 cusecs water from various rim stations with inflow of 72,400 cusecs. According to the data released by IRSA, water level in River Indus at Tarbela Dam was 1535.71 feet and was 137.71 feet higher than its dead level of 1,398 feet. Water inflow and outflow in the dam was recorded as 38,100 cusecs and 37,000 cusecs respectively. The water level in River Jhelum at Mangla Dam was 1201.70 feet, which was 151.70 feet higher than its dead level of 1,050 feet. The inflow and outflow of water was recorded 7,000 cusecs and 35,000 cusecs respectively. The release of water at Kala-bagh, Taunsa, Guddu and Sukkur was recorded as 45,500, 66,900, 52,800 and 17,100 cusecs respectively. Similarly, from River Kabul, a total of 15,600 cusecs of water released at Nowshera and 4,800 cusecs released from River Chenab at Marala.—APP

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## Briefs

## Gilani for raising awareness for reducing food waste

ISLAMABAD: Chairman Senate Syed Yousaf Raza Gilani, on Wednesday, called for raising awareness about reducing food waste and advocated for policies that encourage innovation in food production and distribution. In his message on World Food Day, Gilani highlighted the critical importance of food security and the need for sustainable practices to ensure every individual has access to sufficient and nutritious food. He said that the day serves as a reminder of the shared responsibility to combat hunger and malnutrition within communities. The Chairman also acknowledged Pakistan's rich agricultural heritage and stressed the need to support farmers while promoting sustainable agricultural methods that protect the environment. "Together, we can build a resilient food system that nourishes our people and secures our future," he added. He called for collaborative efforts to create a more sustainable and equitable food landscape for future generations. —APP

## Depression over west-central Arabian Sea moves northwestward: PMD

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan Meteorological Department (PMD) Wednesday revealed that the depression over West-central Arabian Sea has moved further northwestward during past 12 hours. According to an advisory issued by the PMD, the depression was lying at around Latitude 18.6N and Longitude 58.4E, at a distance of about 1150km southwest of Karachi, 830km southwest of Gwadar, 130km southeast of Duqm, Oman, 190km south-southwest of Masirah, Oman and 490 north-east of Salalah, Oman. —APP

## 5 outlaws arrested, drugs and weapons recovered

ISLAMABAD: Islamabad Capital Territory (ICT) Police apprehended five criminals involved in different criminal activities, including drug peddling and possessing illegal weapons recovered drugs and weapons with ammunition from their possession. A public relation officer told APP under the special directives of the Inspector General of Police (IG) police Syed Ali Nasir Rizvi, the search and combing operations are being conducted in different areas of the city, to ensure the safety and security of the Islamabad citizens. In this regard, the Islamabad Police Margalla, Sumbal and Bani Gala police station teams took legal action against accused involved in drug peddling and possessing illegal weapons and arrested five accused, he said. —

## Huawei showcases intelligent security solutions

ISLAMABAD: Huawei, a leading global provider of information and communications technology (ICT) infrastructure and smart devices, reinforced its position as a frontrunner in end-to-end cybersecurity solutions at the Security Next Congress held during GITEX Global in Dubai. The event, themed "Safeguarding Cyberspace Ascension in the Age of AI," showcased Huawei's comprehensive cybersecurity capabilities and offerings, highlighting the company's commitment to securing the digital landscape across cloud, network, device, and storage domains, said news release received here on Wednesday. As enterprises navigate the challenges and opportunities of the rapidly evolving digital ecosystem, Huawei demonstrated its ability to provide robust, intelligent security solutions

## SCO summit: Catalyst for Pak regional, global supremacy: Nasir

Congratulates PM, his entire team for the successful conduct of mega event

DNA

ISLAMABAD: President Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry Nasir Mansoor Qureshi has termed the successful hosting of Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) summit a matter of immense pride for Pakistan which provided it a distinctive platform to strengthen its journey economic growth and regional integration. Similarly, it served as a platform for advancing cooperation in technology, especially in areas like digital transformation, cyber security, and e-commerce. He also commended the Prime Minister Shahbaz Sharif for highlighting the significance of peace and stability in Afghanistan for the growth of trade and development among all the stakeholders

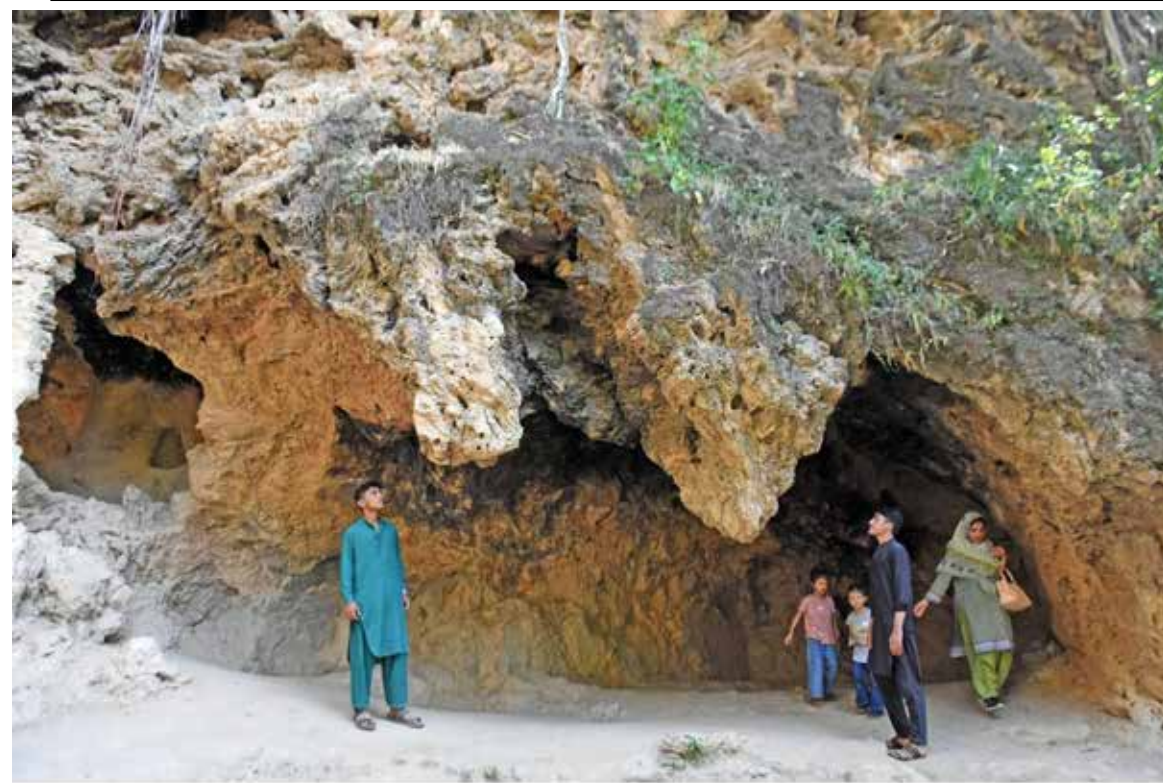
as well as exercising the collective wisdom for fostering progress and prosperity for the shared community. In a statement issued here on Wednesday Qureshi congratulated the Prime Minister and his entire team for the hard work for the Summit which manifested the collective voice and wishes of over 40 percent of world population. He said that SCO remained the beacon of stability and development for the mutual benefit of the people in the region. He appreciated that the participants acknowledged the importance of developing ports, logistics and railway infrastructure, scientific and technological innovations, the development of multi- and inter-modal transport, modern logistics centres and human resources, digitalization, ensuring safety, including environmental initiatives,



in railway transport, as well as the development of Interconnectivity and Creation of Efficient Transport Corridors, development of micro, small and medium-sized enterprises is important to stimulate economic growth and create

jobs, which will serve as impetus for the economic development of the member states as well as the other countries. He expressed the hope that all the member states will whole heartedly collaborate to address the shared challenges and work hand-in-hand for promoting cross-border infrastructure projects, expanding transport networks, and streamlining customs procedures to enhance connectivity which in turn will ultimately prove a driving force for the growth of worst affected businesses and trade. Pakistan, with its burgeoning IT sector and thriving startup ecosystem, can play a pivotal role in driving this collaboration, he added. The region's vast energy resources, including Central Asia's and Russia's oil and gas reserves, present valuable opportunities for energy

cooperation, he further said, cooperation in overcoming poverty and increasing the well-being of the population ICCI President went on to say that now Pakistan has to focus on creating an integrated regional economic zone, which would not only boost trade but also strengthen people-to-people links, cultural exchanges, and tourism among SCO member states, adding that Pakistan's agricultural sector holds tremendous potential for collaboration with Central Asian countries, which have a growing demand for agricultural products and could benefit from Pakistan's expertise in farming technology. He also congratulated the Russian leadership on assuming the chairmanship of the Council and holding the next CHG meeting in Russia next year.



ISLAMABAD: Citizens visiting Buddha caves at Shah Allah Ditta, a centuries-old village located at the foothills of the Margalla Hills in the Federal Capital.

## Arrangements at SCO media facilitation center lauded

ISLAMABAD: The foreign media correspondents arrived here to cover 23rd meeting of the Council of the Head of Governments (CHG) of the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) on Wednesday lauded the arrangements made for international journalists at the SCO Media Facilitation Center. The media correspondents while requesting anonymity said the thematic setting, digital

library, high speed internet facility, computers and printing facilities with multiple TV screens providing live news coverage of different news channels from the member states of the SCO were all well planned to ensure all out coverage arrangements at Pak China Friendship Center. The SMDs and digital media screens projecting banners of member states with their national monuments

extended a warm gesture of solidarity by the host country, said a foreign media scribe. She added that the clock wall with time zones of different member states was also another attraction to give on spot time zone information to foreign journalists. Another journalist commented that the studio and podcast cabin was really a great facility on the site as many of them had recorded podcasts and live

interviews on the SCO updates. The foreign journalists expressed their great admiration for the musical night on the inaugural day where the qawali night hosted left all the participants spellbound. A running cafeteria was also established to provide finger food and refreshments to the participants which was availed by local and international journalists. —DNA

## Bright economic prospects for Pakistan with China's help

ISLAMABAD: Former governor Sindh Mohammad Zubair Wednesday expressed optimism about Pakistan's economic future, hoping that China's leadership will play a significant role in making Pakistan's economy brighter and believes that Pak-Russia relations will also provide better opportunities for the country's economic growth. Talking to a Private news channel, he highlighted the benefits of the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) which is a flagship project of China's Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) and how it will connect Pakistan with the entire world. Zubair also elaborated on the enduring friendship between Pakistan and China, describing it as a shining example of cooperation and mutual respect. He highlighted the multifaceted relationship between the two nations, which has grown from strength to strength over the years. Zubair emphasized that China's unwavering support for Pakistan on regional and international platforms has been a source of strength for the country. He also noted that the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) has been a game-changer for Pakistan's economy, creating new opportunities for growth and development. The former governor expressed his optimism that the Pakistan-China friendship will continue to flourish in the years to come, bringing prosperity and progress to both nations. Responding a query, he said that we are aware that certain countries seek to undermine China's stability and jeopardize the thriving economic relationship between Pakistan and China, however, we are committed to thwarting their attempts and safeguarding our partnership." Zubair noted that CPEC will not only link Pakistan with China but also connect the country with Central Asia, Europe and other parts of the world through a network of roads, railways and sea routes. He added that CPEC will boost trade, commerce and investment in Pakistan, creating new opportunities for economic growth and development. By connecting Pakistan with the global economy, CPEC will help the country become a hub of trade and commerce, promoting regional prosperity and stability, he added. —DNA

## AIU extends admission deadline

ISLAMABAD: Allama Iqbal Open University (AIU) has extended the admission deadline for the second phase of the Autumn 2024 semester until November 5. According to Director Admissions, Syed Zia-ul-Hasnain Naqvi, new students can apply for admission with late fee charges until November 5. The previous deadline was October 15. Existing students can enroll until October 22. This phase includes Associate Degree programs, BS, BBA, B.Ed, and Post-Graduate Diploma programs. Prospectuses and admission forms are available on the university's website. AIU has an open-door policy, welcoming students of all ages, genders, and regions, in line with its teaching philosophy "Education at People's Doorstep." Vice Chancellor, Prof Dr Nasir Mahmood expressed hope that aspiring students will avail this opportunity and register themselves by November 5. —APP

## HEC warns against scam calls, fake social media pages

ISLAMABAD: The Higher Education Commission (HEC) has issued a public warning about increasing incidents of fraudulent activities involving scam calls and fake social media pages falsely claiming affiliation with the commission. In a public alert, the HEC stated that some imposters, claiming affiliation with the HEC, are defrauding the public by making scam calls to extract personal information for degree attestation or re-verification of already attested documents. Some individuals, posing as HEC Attestation Agents, are offering services for degree attestation, demanding excessive fees for services, far beyond the prescribed charges. Fake social media pages are also being used to deceive the public by promoting unauthorized degree verification services. The HEC has clarified that it does not employ any agents or representatives for attestation purposes and does not make unsolicited calls or contact individuals regarding these services. The public is urged to use only the official HEC website (www.hec.gov.pk) or the HEC attestation portal (eservices.hec.gov.pk) for any degree-related verifications. —APP

## Pakistan introduces new grading system for SSC, HSSC exams

STAFF REPORT

ISLAMABAD: The Inter Board Committee of Chairmen (IBCC) has introduced a new grading system for Secondary School Certificate (SSC) and Higher Secondary School Certificate (HSSC) examinations, aiming to promote fairness, transparency, and accuracy in student evaluation. Sharing the details of key features of the new grading system, IBCC said that it will be a 10-point grading system (A++, A+, A, B++, B+, B, C, D, E, U) replaces the 7-point system (A-1, A, B, C, D, E, F). However, passing marks increased to 40% from 33%, while grades and grade points reported instead of absolute scores. IBCC further said that grade points calculate Grade Point Average (GPA) and Cumulative Grade Point Average (CGPA). As per objectives of the grad-

ing system it will control grading inflation, minimize competition for maximum marks, and ensure accurate reflection of student learning and achievement. The phased introduction starting from the 2024 academic year. It will be applicable to grades 9 (SSC) and 11 (HSSC) initially. However universities will consider both old and new grading systems during admissions for 2024-2025. Meanwhile from 2025, colleges and universities will refer to CGPA and grades only. As per the impact of the new grading system, it will be increased difficulty level to pass examinations, while grace marks policy introduced to support students. Similarly, teaching practices may require adjustments and students will receive descriptive feedback. The Higher Education Commission (HEC), Pakistan Medical and Dental Council (PMDC), and Pakistan Engineering Council (PEC) have been informed.

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<p><b>ULTIMATE WOMENS HEALTH SCREEN ADD ON</b></p> <p>Breast Ultrasound/ Mammogram Ultrasound Abdomen &amp; Pelvis Cervical Smear Ovary Tumor Marker</p>	<p><b>ULTIMATE MEN HEALTH SCREEN ADD ON</b></p> <p>Prostate tumour marker (PSA) Testosterone Ultrasound Abdomen &amp; Pelvis (Including Prostate)</p>	

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## Nazi-Israeli parallels

**R**EACTIONARY Western agencies get upset at the Nazi Israeli comparison; but why and what is wrong with that? After all, we are talking about regimes which carry out large scale racial massacres based on racist ideology. Of course, the particular histories are different, yet by parallels, we are talking about similarities in character, tactics, and crimes. Normally, what is most forbidden by many Western regimes (i.e. sponsors of the Israelis) is normalizing the right of colonised and occupied peoples to resist (they like to brand resistance to colonisation, occupation, and apartheid as 'terrorism'), but that is not the case here. The sore point here seems to be harsh criticism of the Zionist colony. The repression of Nazi-Israeli parallels begins with media censorship, extends to 'de-platforming' or dismissal from employment, and has even taken the form of criminal penalties. The rationale for this is typically vague, reverting to general claims of "causing offence" which, by itself, is meaningless. Gratuitous (pointless) abuse is certainly anti-social; however, the fact that some people may be offended by political statements has little meaning in itself. Indeed there is such a thing as "salutary" offence, a provocation which may lead to benefit, e.g. where people may be shamed by exposure to the implications or character of their political views or allegiances. That is part of everyday political discussion and relevant to the Israeli debate. Let's look a bit more carefully at the main possible objections to Nazi-Israeli comparisons. The Nazi-Israeli parallels in character and tactics centre on a common thread which runs from racist ideology through systematic discrimination to racial massacres and genocide. A recent British legal ruling in the case of anti-Zionist academic David Miller, while pretending agnosticism on the matter, recognised that anti-Zionism was a set of views which were "worthy of respect in a democratic society". That ruling effectively sinks attempts in Britain to equate anti-Zionism with anti-Jewish expression. Zionism certainly begins, like Nazism, with extreme racist ideology. We can see striking similarities between the essentialist racism of, for example, Nazi ideologist Julius Streicher and the Zionist historian Ben Zion Netanyahu (father of the politician Benjamin). They set up classes of superior and inferior peoples, demonising their 'racial' enemies. Streicher wrote that "the essence of the Jew was a peculiar one ... Who were the money lenders? They were those who were driven out of the temple by Christ himself ... [they] never worked but live on fraud ... The God of the Jews is ... the God of hatred." Similarly, Ben Zion Netanyahu wrote about "the essence of the Arab ... he has no respect for any law ... in the desert he can do as he pleases. The tendency towards conflict is the essence of the Arab. He is an enemy by essence ... It doesn't matter what kind of resistance ... what price he will pay. His existence is one of perpetual war." These parallel racist ideologies laid a common foundation for systematic discrimination followed by ethnic cleansing and the genocidal assault on what an Israeli minister called "human animals". Racial 'science' came to obsess many Zionists, as it had the persecutors of the Jews in Nazi Germany. That ideology created a basis for state missions and policies. The Israeli group Adalah cites more than 60 racially discriminatory Israeli laws, which include bans on intermarriage (miscegenation), punishment for the Palestinian families of stone throwers, and the demolition of houses of families of those convicted over some security offence.

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## Six questions Brics must answer

**G**OLDMAN Sachs economist Jim O'Neill could not have foreseen that his acronym Brics (Brazil, Russia, India and China), used in his November 2001 paper "Building Better Global Economic BRICs", would inspire those four emerging economies to form an organisation with the same name, holding their first summit in 2009. In 2011, South Africa was admitted to the bloc, thus changing its name to Brics. This year, more countries – Egypt, Ethiopia, Iran and the United Arab Emirates – have joined. Expansion of the grouping's membership might be on the agenda for the 16th Brics summit in Kazan, Russia, scheduled for October 22-24. Nobody knows what the outcome will be but there are a few questions worth asking as the summit approaches. First, how will Brics carry out economic cooperation? Cooperation among members has been driven by the three wheels of political security, economics and people-to-people exchanges. With more members, can the grouping still make progress in these areas? For political cooperation, it's not difficult to publish a joint statement at a summit outlining positions and objectives on global issues. When it comes to cultural exchanges, members can just as easily organise a sporting event or co-sponsor a film. However, economic cooperation is easier said than done. With the exception of the New Development Bank, there hasn't been much to show for economic cooperation within Brics. As such, the group has been described by many people as being all talk and no action. It is unrealistic to form a free-trade area for Brics because of two main obstacles. Some members like India lack the political and/or economic will to do so. And Brazil's ratification of free-trade deals is constrained by the country being part of the Southern Common Market (Mercosur), which mandates a common trade policy among its members. With more members, Brics might find it more difficult to reach a consensus on economic matters. Without economic cooperation, Brics risks becoming the developing world's equivalent of the Group of 7. Second, can Brics be institutionalised? Unlike the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (Apec) forum or the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation, Brics has no permanent secretariat. When a member undertakes the rotating presidency of the group, it is responsible for nearly everything, from hosting that year's summit to setting the calendar of events. Yet the Brics presidency seems to lack both the authority and responsibility to scrutinise how decisions are implemented. Some might say a permanent secretariat increases bureaucracy, decreases flexibility and creates inefficiency. However, these arguments are not well-grounded. If run professionally, a permanent secretariat won't necessarily cause such problems. In fact, institutionalising Brics has become more urgent as the group expands. Third, can Brics achieve the goal of de-dollarisation? The negative impact of dollar supremacy on the world economy is well-known. In recent years, the dollar has been increasingly weaponised. That is why Brics and many other countries wish to see de-dollarisation. But realising that goal is another story.

# Trump's Immigrant Xenophobia and the US Constitution

Qamar Bashir



Additionally, Trump's rhetoric around the Muslim travel ban and his discriminatory remarks about Mexican immigrants contradict the First Amendment, which protects religious freedom. The Establishment Clause prohibits the government from favoring or disfavoring a particular religion, as emphasized in *Church of the Lukumi Babalu Aye, Inc. v. Hialeah* (1993), where the Court ruled that laws targeting specific religious practices are unconstitutional.

**I**N his latest tirade against immigrants in the Denver suburb of Aurora, Colorado, on October 5, 2024, Trump vowed to "rescue America" from what he described as "rapists," "bloodthirsty criminals," and the "most violent people on earth," claiming they are destroying the fabric of the country and its culture. This rhetoric is yet another example of his xenophobic and racist attacks on migrants and minority groups, whom he portrayed as genetically predisposed to criminal behavior. He positioned himself as the only one capable of saving the country from these individuals, whom he labeled as "animals," "stone-cold killers," "the worst people," and "the enemy from within." He is no longer just discussing keeping immigrants out of the country, building a wall, or banning Muslims from entering the United States. Now, he warns that migrants have already "invaded," destroying the country from within its borders. He uses this narrative to justify a second-term policy agenda that includes constructing massive detention camps and carrying out mass deportations. During his inflammatory speech, which resonated well with his supporters who endorse white supremacist views, Trump launched a broadside against thousands of Venezuelan migrants in Aurora. He declared that he would invoke the Alien Enemies Act, which allows a president to authorize the roundup or removal of individuals from enemy nations during times of war, to target migrant gangs and criminal networks. He also blamed Kamala Harris for "importing an army of illegal alien gang members and migrant criminals from the dungeons of the third world," claiming that she had resettled individuals from prisons, jails, insane asylums, and mental institutions into American communities to prey on innocent citizens. Since the September 10 presidential debate, Trump has increasingly used dark, graphic language to demonize minority groups, particularly migrants, in his speeches. His rhetoric can be described as political fear mongering, echoing authoritarianism and even elements of Nazi ideology. This consistent vilification of both legal and illegal immigrants has instilled a widespread sense of fear, uncertainty, and insecurity within immigrant communities across the country. Trump's rhetoric on immigration, particularly his de-

monization of migrants and minorities, represents a significant deviation from the core principles of the U.S. Constitution. The 14th Amendment's Equal Protection Clause guarantees that "no state shall... deny to any person within its jurisdiction the equal protection of the laws." By broadly labeling immigrants as "rapists" or "animals," Trump undermines this constitutional mandate, promoting discrimination based on nationality and ethnicity. His language, which paints entire groups of people as inherently criminal, conflicts with the Supreme Court's interpretation of the Equal Protection Clause, which requires that laws and policies must not unfairly target specific groups without justification. The 5th and 14th Amendments also enshrine the right to due process, stating that no person shall be "deprived of life, liberty, or property, without due process of law." Trump's proposals for mass deportations and the construction of detention camps raise serious concerns about violating due process. Historically, due process has been interpreted to mean that all individuals, including immigrants, must be given a fair hearing before being subjected to punitive measures such as deportation. The Supreme Court has consistently ruled in cases such as *Zadvydas v. Davis* (2001) that even non-citizens are entitled to procedural fairness under the Constitution. Additionally, Trump's rhetoric around the Muslim travel ban and his discriminatory remarks about Mexican immigrants contradict the First Amendment, which protects religious freedom. The Establishment Clause prohibits the government from favoring or disfavoring a particular religion, as emphasized in *Church of the Lukumi Babalu Aye, Inc. v. Hialeah* (1993), where the Court ruled that laws targeting specific religious practices are unconstitutional. Trump's Muslim ban, justified through rhetoric that broadly frames Muslims as potential terrorists, flies in the face of this protection and has been widely criticized as unconstitutional. Beyond constitutional violations, Trump's rhetoric sharply diverges from the broader societal and political norms of American democracy. The U.S. is historically a nation of immigrants, and the American civic identity has long embraced diversity and multiculturalism. Trump's statements that immigrants

are "destroying the fabric" of the country contradict the American ethos of being a "melting pot," where people from diverse backgrounds contribute to society. The Pew Research Center has shown that immigrants—both legal and undocumented—are integral to the labor force, with over 17% of the U.S. workforce consisting of immigrants. Deporting large numbers of people, particularly without due process, risks destabilizing communities and entire industries that rely on immigrant labor. Furthermore, Trump's inflammatory language undermines the norms of respect and civil discourse that have long been foundational to U.S. politics. His labeling of immigrants as "animals" and "stone-cold killers" deviates from the accepted standards of political debate, where even contentious issues have typically been discussed within a framework of civility. This kind of rhetoric can have real consequences: studies by the FBI and Southern Poverty Law Center show that hate crimes surged following the 2016 election, fueled in part by inflammatory political language. Such outcomes illustrate how rhetoric that deviates from constitutional norms and societal expectations can foster a dangerous atmosphere of division, hatred, and violence. Economically, mass deportations would severely disrupt industries that rely heavily on immigrant labor, such as agriculture, manufacturing, and services. Immigrants contribute billions of dollars in taxes and are integral to the workforce, and their removal would lead to labor shortages and increased costs for businesses and consumers. Moreover, the financial burden of implementing such policies, including the establishment of detention camps, would fall on taxpayers. Politically, Trump's alienation of immigrant voters could mobilize them to vote against him in large numbers, particularly in swing states like Michigan, where immigrant communities play a key role. His divisive agenda not only threatens the economy and public order but also risks deepening polarization in an already fractured society.

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

## Diplomatic privilege or shield for abuse

Dr. Muhammad Akram Zaheer



The legal proceedings in Washington D.C. have highlighted the challenges in addressing labor exploitation when diplomatic immunity is involved. Under the Vienna Convention on Diplomatic Relations (1961), diplomats are generally shielded from prosecution in the host country, which means they cannot be held accountable under local laws for most actions. This immunity is designed to ensure that diplomats can perform their duties without interference but can also complicate efforts to seek justice when allegations of serious...

**T**HE case of Hüsnü Sinan Ertay, a senior Turkish diplomat, and his wife An I Özge Ertay, who are facing accusations of human trafficking, fraud, and labor law violations in a Washington D.C. court, has drawn significant attention. The allegations against the couple revolve around the exploitation of their nanny, Sharon Thomas Agdipa, whom they reportedly subjected to emotional and physical suffering, underpayment, and threats of deportation. This case underscores critical issues related to diplomatic immunity and labor abuse, sparking debates about the need for stricter enforcement of labor rights and a reassessment of diplomatic protections in cases involving serious allegations. The case is emblematic of broader, systemic issues related to labor abuse and the legal privileges enjoyed by diplomats under international law. Diplomats are granted immunity to safeguard their ability to perform their duties without the risk of legal harassment in host countries. However, this immunity can sometimes shield individuals from accountability, even when serious crimes like human trafficking and exploitation are alleged. The allegations against the Ertay couple have prompted discussions about the balance between diplomatic immunity and the need to uphold human rights standards. The accusations suggest that diplomatic immunity has, in some cases, been misused to evade responsibility for labor exploitation. This scenario reflects a pattern observed worldwide, where domestic workers employed by diplomats are often vulnerable to exploitation due to their lack of legal protections, isolated working conditions, and dependency on their employers for visas and residence. The case raises questions about how international law can address such abuses without undermining the diplomatic privileges that are essential for maintaining international relations. Hüsnü Sinan Ertay and An I Özge Ertay are accused of luring Sharon Thomas Agdipa, a nanny from the Philippines, with promises of better working conditions and pay in the United States. Agdipa was reportedly assured of reasonable working hours and a fair salary but faced a vastly different reality upon her arrival. According to court documents, she was forced to work over 80 hours per week, was underpaid, and was denied basic rights, including rest periods and adequate compensation. The allegations further claim that Agdipa was subjected to emotional manipulation and threats of deportation, creating a situation where she felt she had no choice but to endure the abuse. Such tactics are commonly used in cases of labor trafficking, where employers exploit the power imbalance and the employee's lack of familiarity with local laws to maintain control. In Agdipa's case, the alleged threats of deportation were particularly powerful, as her residency in the U.S. was contingent upon her employment with the Ertay family. This dependency on employers for legal status is a significant factor that often prevents domestic workers

from reporting abuse. The case also sheds light on the recruitment practices employed by some diplomats, who may use false promises to attract workers from countries with high rates of labor migration, like the Philippines. Many workers from these regions seek opportunities abroad to support their families back home, making them susceptible to exploitative employment arrangements. The international recruitment process, often facilitated by agencies that may not operate transparently, can further obscure the terms of employment and the rights available to workers, leaving them vulnerable to abuse. The legal proceedings in Washington D.C. have highlighted the challenges in addressing labor exploitation when diplomatic immunity is involved. Under the Vienna Convention on Diplomatic Relations (1961), diplomats are generally shielded from prosecution in the host country, which means they cannot be held accountable under local laws for most actions. This immunity is designed to ensure that diplomats can perform their duties without interference but can also complicate efforts to seek justice when allegations of serious crimes arise. In this case, the legal process has been further complicated by the fact that the Ertay couple has returned to Turkey, effectively placing them outside the jurisdiction of U.S. courts. During their time in the U.S., they enjoyed full diplomatic immunity, which prevented any legal action from being taken against them. Now that they have left the country, it is unclear how the case will proceed. U.S. authorities could request Turkey to waive the immunity and cooperate in investigating the allegations, but such requests are rarely granted. This raises the possibility that justice may not be served, despite the serious nature of the accusations. The case has prompted calls for labor rights advocates and legal experts for reforms to international protocols on diplomatic immunity. There is a growing recognition that while immunity is essential for the functioning of diplomatic missions, there should be mechanisms to address cases where diplomats are accused of severe human rights violations. Some propose amending the Vienna Convention to include specific provisions that limit immunity in cases involving serious crimes, such as human trafficking, sexual abuse, or violent crimes. Others suggest that countries should be more proactive in scrutinizing the employment practices of their diplomats and ensuring compliance with labor laws. The case against the Ertay couple is not an isolated incident but rather part of a broader pattern of labor exploitation involving diplomats. Similar cases have been reported across the globe, where domestic workers employed by foreign embassy staff have accused their employers of mistreatment, non-payment of wages, and psychological abuse. In many instances, the victims are migrant workers from countries in South Asia, Southeast Asia, and Africa, who

are lured by promises of good pay and working conditions abroad but end up in exploitative situations. For instance, several lawsuits have been filed in the U.S. and Europe over the years, where domestic workers alleged that they were subjected to forced labor by diplomats from various countries. In some cases, the courts have been able to bypass immunity claims when the diplomats' tenure has ended, or their home countries have waived immunity. However, these instances are rare and often depend on diplomatic negotiations, which can be lengthy and uncertain. The exploitation of domestic workers by diplomats also raises questions about the accountability of sending states. While host countries may face legal and diplomatic constraints in prosecuting diplomats, the sending states have a responsibility to ensure that their representatives uphold international labor standards. This includes monitoring employment practices, enforcing fair treatment, and cooperating with investigations if accusations arise. Unfortunately, this responsibility is often overlooked, and few countries have implemented robust mechanisms to monitor the treatment of domestic workers employed by their diplomats abroad. The case of Hüsnü Sinan Ertay and An I Özge Ertay underscores the urgent need for reforms to protect domestic workers from exploitation. Several steps could be taken at national and international levels to address these concerns. First, countries hosting diplomatic missions could introduce mandatory orientation programs for domestic workers to inform them of their rights and available resources in case of abuse. These programs could be conducted in cooperation with non-governmental organizations that specialize in labor rights. Second, there should be more stringent monitoring of employment contracts, with embassies required to submit detailed contracts that outline working hours, wages, and terms of employment. Regular audits could help identify potential abuses and ensure compliance with labor laws. Third, the international community could consider revising aspects of the Vienna Convention to introduce accountability measures for diplomats accused of serious crimes. This could include an independent arbitration mechanism where allegations of human trafficking and labor abuse are investigated without compromising the overall framework of diplomatic immunity. Ultimately, cases like the one involving the Ertay couple serve as a reminder that while diplomatic immunity is essential for international relations, it must not be a shield for exploitative practices. Protecting the rights and dignity of workers, regardless of their nationality or employment situation, should be a priority for all nations. Without effective safeguards, labor abuse and human trafficking will continue to be significant issues, even within diplomatic circles, affecting the credibility of international human rights commitments.



## Briefs

## Indian FM hails Pakistan's 'hospitality'

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moot held in Islamabad, was the first foreign minister of the neighbouring nation to visit Pakistan in nearly a decade. Hours after the conclusion of the two-day regional huddle, Jaishankar wrote on his X handle: "Departing from Islamabad. Thank PM @CMShahbaz, DPM & FM @MishaqDar50 and the Government of Pakistan for the hospitality and courtesies." Meanwhile, sources told media that FM Dar and his Indian counterpart Jaishankar had a brief exchange during the lunch hosted for the leaders attending the SCO summit. The sources, however, said the details of the discussions between the top officials cannot be revealed at this time.

## Khan out of Oxford chancellor's race

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his conviction and political role." The prominent names wanting to become the next Chancellor were Lord William Hague, Lady Elish Angiolini, Lord Peter Mandelson, Khan, Dr Margaret Casely-Hayford and Dominic Grieve but only Khan has been disqualified from the top five well-known figures. The source didn't elaborate further but channel had reported exclusively on Tuesday that a King's Counsel at UK's leading law firm Matrix Chambers has opined that former prime minister Khan is not eligible for Oxford Chancellorship according to the university's own regulations. Hugh Southey, King's Counsel at Matrix Chambers in London said: "In my opinion, Khan is unlikely to be eligible to be a candidate in light of one of his criminal convictions."

## Tax revenue stagnant at 2008 levels

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that the entire year's tax collection was being utilised for paying interest on loans. While addressing a ceremony at the Federation of Pakistan Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FPCCI), Langrial noted that there has been an improvement in the country's economic indicators. He credited this economic progress to the cooperation of the business community, following two to three years of extremely challenging conditions. He said that as the inflation rate decreased, the policy rate also began to decline. There should not be a difference of more than 3 to 4 percent between the inflation rate and the policy rate. Economic experts are also predicting a reduction of up to 2 percent in the interest rate, and this decrease in the interest rate has provided significant support to the economy.

## CM Maryam orders crackdown..

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spreading fake news and spreading anarchy to damage the state, especially at a time when the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) summit was underway. "I call them [PTI] a terrorist organisation for some reason. Who will compensate for the loss that the child and her family suffered as a result of her name being used to spark unrest," she said, slamming the Imran Khan-founded PTI. Maryam said an attempt was made to run a campaign in Punjab by misleading the students on the basis of lies, adding that a very "vile and dangerous plan was made" after the failure of protest, siege, and anarchy. "I know very well who is behind this incident and will not leave anyone who was involved in this," she stressed. A high-level committee, formed by the Punjab government, has also stated in its report that the girl had not been raped and that she sustained injuries at her home.

## England stunned by Pak spin after Duckett century

Visiting side scores 239/6 within 53 overs against hosts on second day of second Test

DNA

MULTAN: The second day of the second Test came to an end with England scoring 239/6 within 53 overs against Pakistan at the Multan Cricket Stadium on Wednesday. The day ended with Jamie Smith (12\*) and Brydon Carse (2\*) on strike. The Ben Stokes-led side will be resuming their first innings on the third day of the second test. The touring side were 88 for one at tea with Ben Duckett unbeaten on 53 and Ollie Pope on five. Scoring the most runs, Duckett made a century with 114 runs off 129 balls after smashing 16 boundaries solely. He was dismissed after Agha Salman caught the catch by first slip when Sajid Khan delivered the first ball of the 43rd over. Pope, on the other hand, couldn't score much for the team, making 29 after taking 16 runs from his four boundaries. Aiming for a half-century, Joe Root (34) was dismissed after Sajid, eyeing his third wicket, hit the stumps on the third ball of the 41st over. Players including Harry Brook and English skipper Ben Stokes scored less than 10 runs in the first innings. With Brook scoring 9 and Stokes making one run and leaving the stadium at the second ball of the 44th over delivered by Noman Ali. The Shan Masood-led side so far played good with the ball, taking six wickets down of the



visitors. With Sajid taking four wickets solely while Noman dismissed two players in the innings so far. Earlier today, England's Duckett smashed a rapid unbeaten fifty as he opened for the visitors, leading their robust reply to Pakistan's first-innings 366. Duckett combined in a breezy 73-run opening stand with Zak Crawley, who led a charmed life before he fell for 27. Crawley survived a run-out after a mix-up with Duckett only because bowler Sajid had broken the stumps before he could collect the ball. Sajid appeared to have redeemed himself in

the next over when his lbw appeal against Crawley was upheld. Pakistan's joy was short-lived, however, as Crawley, convinced by Duckett, reviewed the decision, which was reversed after replays confirmed the ball would have narrowly missed the stumps. Crawley could not make the most of the reprieves, though, and fell to Noman Ali. After the caught-behind appeal against Crawley had been turned down, left-arm spinner Noman cajoled his captain Shan Masood to review the decision and replays confirmed an edge. Earlier, Pakistan were

all out for 366 in their first innings on day two of the second Test with debutant Kameran Ghulam top scoring for the hosts with a fluent 118 and Saim Ayub contributing 77. Spinner Jack Leach (4-114) and seamer Brydon Carse (3-50) impressed with the ball for England, who are 1-0 up in the three-Test series. Aamer Jamal and Noman Ali showcased the resilience of Pakistan's lower order, reaching 358 for eight at lunch on day two of the second Test against England in Multan on Wednesday. Mohammad Rizwan and Salman Agha opened the second day at 37 and five, respectively, on 259-5. However, the Green Shirts soon lost Rizwan to Brydon Carse for 41 as England dominated the opening hour. Rizwan had survived a strong lbw appeal in the previous over from Matthew Potts but edged Carse and Jamie Smith took a sharp catch behind the stumps. Meanwhile, Agha contributed 31 but failed to convert the start into a big knock. He also fell caught behind after Potts managed to extract some extra bounce from a docile track, inducing an edge that nestled into Smith's gloves. Leach removed Khan for two but Jamal frustrated England even though the batter struggled to get going and needed on-field treatment. Jamal is the lone specialist seamer in Pakistan's spin-heavy attack and his fitness is crucial for the home side's hopes of levelling the series in Multan.

## WI thrash England to reach Women's T20 WC semis

South Africa also made it to last four from Group B while England eliminated from competition

WEB DESK

DUBAI: An opening blitz by Qiana Joseph and Hayley Matthews helped West Indies thrash England by six wickets and storm into the semi-finals of the Women's T20 World Cup on Tuesday. Joseph smashed 52 for her first T20 international half-century and skipper Matthews hit a 38-ball 50 as West Indies overhauled England's 141-7 with 12 balls to spare. South Africa also made it to the last four from Group B while England were eliminated from the competition. "Incredibly proud of the group. Up against the odds tonight but to put up a performance like that with the bat, with Joseph scoring her first T20I fifty - what a time to do that," said Matthews. "We have been chasing [before in this tournament] and we back ourselves to knock off what



ever runs are put on the board." Matthews launched the West Indies chase with aplomb, hitting a six and two boundaries in the first over by Lauren Bell. Joseph too joined the party, smashing left-arm spinner Sophie Ecclestone for two fours

in a row as West Indies raced to 55-0 in five overs. Matthews picked Charlie Dean for some special treatment, dispatching the ball over the square leg fence for three boundaries in the sixth over. England were sloppy in the field, dropping as many as five

regulation catches. Joseph, named player of the match, was dismissed in the 13th over after hitting two sixes and six fours in her 38-ball innings. Matthews also departed soon after but Deandra Dottin made 27 to give West Indies their first win against England in 14 matches and the first away from home in 10 years. "Credit to them, they came at us hard, played the conditions well and put us under the pump. Tough to take but credit to Hayley and her team," said England skipper Heather Knight. "We bowled too short and they played it well." Put in to bat, England lost Danni Wyatt-Hodge (16) early with the opener being caught brilliantly just inches off the ground by Dottin (1-16) off Matthews (2-35). Dottin was in the thick of action soon again when she ran out Alice Capsey for one with a sharp one-handed throw to wicketkeeper Shemaine Campbelle.

## Use of Afghan soil...

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poverty should be prioritised, considering it a moral and economic issue. The summit, held at Jinnah Convention Centre, brought together leaders from key member states, including Chinese Premier Li Qiang, Russian Prime Minister Mikhail Mishustin, and counterparts from Tajikistan, Kyrgyzstan, Belarus, Kazakhstan, and Uzbekistan. Iran's Vice President Mohammad Arif and India's External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar were also in attendance, with Mongolia participating as an observer. Shehbaz Sharif outlined several key areas of focus for the summit, including economic cooperation, regional stability, and climate change. He pointed out that Pakistan had been heavily impacted by the effects of climate change, referencing the devastating 2022 floods which displaced millions and caused severe damage to agriculture and infrastructure. He urged SCO nations to devise a collective strategy to mitigate these effects and strengthen regional resilience. "The impact of climate change is being felt worldwide, and Pakistan has been particularly hard-hit," Shehbaz Sharif said. "We must work together to address these challenges," he added. Addressing the issue of Afghanistan, Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif stressed the need to prevent the use of Afghan soil for terrorism, calling for international attention to humanitarian assistance in the country. "Afghanistan plays a crucial role in regional stability, but terrorism from Afghan soil must stop," he said. He also highlighted opportunities for cooperation in transportation and energy sectors within the region. Shehbaz Sharif reiterated Pakistan's commitment to the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC), now entering its second phase, as a significant contributor to regional development. He called the Belt and Road Initiative a key driver for economic growth across the region. In his address, Shehbaz Sharif also focused on poverty alleviation, describing it as both an economic and moral issue. He urged SCO members to prioritise efforts aimed at eradicating poverty through addressing its root causes and expanding economic opportunities. The prime minister concluded by thanking the heads of state for their participation in the summit, expressing hope that the discussions would lead to productive outcomes for all member states.

## Haq wins silver at Asian Taekwondo Championship

Pakistan's Maleeha Ali earns bronze medal after reaching semi-finals in women's -73 kg category

NAZIR SIYAL

KARACHI: Pakistan's IkhtshamulHaq secured a silver medal in the (-87 kg) category on the first day of the 6th Asian Taekwondo Open Championship, being played in Tangerang, Indonesia. He was narrowly defeated by Malaysia's Zubair MS in the final, with scores of 5-7 and 7-12. Ikhtsham had earlier advanced to the final after a strong performance in the semi-finals, where he defeated Indonesia's Azhar Salim with a commanding 13-10 and 10-0. In the men's 68 kg quarter-finals, Pakistan's Arbaz Khan faced Kazakhstan's Kassanovlyzat. Arbaz won the first round 8-6, but Kassanov came back to win the next two rounds 9-7 and 19-7, securing his spot in the semi-finals. Meanwhile, in the women's -73 kg category, Pakistan's Maleeha Ali earned a bronze medal after reaching the semi-finals. She was defeated by Korea's Shin Jeongeun, who won 3-0 and 4-1, advancing to the final.

## Sri Lanka level T20 series with record-breaking West Indies win

COLOMBO: Sri Lanka stormed back to level the three-match T20 series with an emphatic 73-run win over the West Indies on Tuesday, marking their largest ever margin of victory against the Caribbean side. The dominant performance at Dambulla was Sri Lanka's sixth-largest T20 win against any team, surpassing their previous best over West Indies - a 57-run triumph in London in 2009. Sri Lanka, after setting a competitive target of 163, unleashed a relentless assault from their spinners, skittling the visitors for just 89 runs in 16.1 overs. This score marked the West Indies' lowest total against Sri Lanka in T20 internationals, and their sixth lowest ever. The spin-dominated attack claimed nine wickets, with only three overs of pace bowled, capitalising on a worn pitch that deteriorated quickly, leaving West Indies with no foothold in the chase. Sri Lanka's spin magic struck early, removing both openers within the first four overs. Evin Lewis and Brandon King, who had been the architects of West Indies' explosive start in the first match with a 107-run partnership, were neutralised by Sri Lanka's bowlers. Debutant all-rounder Dunith Wellalage made an immediate impact, dismissing King with a sharp stumping in his first over, while almost sending Lewis packing on his first ball - though a missed review kept Lewis briefly in play. Wellalage struck again, claiming Roston Chase at slip, as the West Indies stumbled to 17-3, and struggled to 21-3 by the end of the power play. Wellalage's stunning debut saw him finish with figures of 3-9 in four overs. Sri Lankan captain Charith Asalanka called it a "very pleasing win", and hailed Wellalage's performance as "sensational". Maheesh Theekshana, Charith Asalanka and Wanindu Hasaranga supported Wellalage's efforts with two wickets each, cementing Sri Lanka's grip on the game. Sri Lanka's total of 162 was built on the solid foundation set by openers Kusal Mendis and Pathum Nissanka, who combined for a 72-run stand. Nissanka top-scored with 54 off 49 balls, peppering the boundary with nine fours and a six. "It was a tough wicket to bat on," Nissanka said. "I took some calculated risks - we had a target of 160 and were glad we got there." Contributions from Kusal Perera (24) and Kamindu Mendis (19) helped push the total past 160, setting up a challenging chase for the West Indies. On the visitors' side, spinners Chase and Gudakesh Motie were economical, giving away only 37 runs in their combined eight overs, raising questions about the West Indies' decision not to include an additional spinner. The stage is now set for a thrilling series decider on Thursday, also at Dambulla, with eighth-ranked Sri Lanka eyeing an upset series victory over the third-ranked West Indies. - Agencies

## Lionel Messi hits hat-trick as Argentina beat Bolivia

Messi has scored 112 goals in 189 games for Argentina - second only to Ronaldo, who has 133, in men's internationals. Raphinha scored twice as struggling Brazil made it back-to-back victories with a 4-0 win over Peru in Brasilia

SPORTS DESK

BUENOS AIRES: Lionel Messi scored his 10th international hat-trick as Argentina thrashed Bolivia 6-0 in World Cup qualifying. The 37-year-old Inter Miami forward, who also set up two goals at Monumental Stadium in Buenos Aires, moved level with Portugal's Cristiano Ronaldo for the most hat-tricks in men's international football. Argentina are three points clear of Colombia at the top of the South American qualifying group for the 2026 World Cup, despite losing to Colombia in September and drawing with Venezue-

la last week. "It's really nice to come here, to feel the affection of the people. It moves me how they shout my name," Messi said. "This drives me - enjoying being happy where I am. Despite my age, when I'm here, I feel like a kid because I'm comfortable with this team. As long as I feel good and can keep performing the way I want, I'll keep enjoying it." Messi, making only his second appearance for Argentina since suffering an injury at the Copa America in July, capitalised on a defensive error to put them ahead after 19 minutes. He set up Lautaro

Martinez and then Julian Alvarez before substitute Thiago Almada made it



4-0. Messi struck twice in two minutes late on, beating two defenders

to fire in his second and completing his hat-trick by finding the bottom corner. Messi has scored 112 goals in 189 games for Argentina - second only to Ronaldo, who has 133, in men's internationals. Raphinha scored twice as struggling Brazil made it back-to-back victories with a 4-0 win over Peru in Brasilia. Brazil, record five-time World Cup winners, had lost four of their past five qualifiers before defeating Chile on Thursday. Dorival Junior's side are fourth in the table - six points behind Argentina - after 10 games. The top six teams qual-

fy automatically for the 2026 World Cup in the United States, Mexico and Canada. Raphinha converted a penalty in each half before late goals from Fulham's Andreas Pereira and Luiz Henrique. "We needed this. It was really important winning both games to get back on track," Raphinha told TV Globo. In-form Aston Villa striker Jhon Duran scored his seventh goal of the season in all competitions as Colombia beat Chile 4-0. Davinson Sanchez, Liverpool's Luis Diaz and Bournemouth's Luis Sinisterra also scored in Barranquilla.

## Dengue cases surge in Punjab, 172 new infections

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Over the past week, Punjab has seen a total of 904 new dengue infections, bringing the annual tally for 2024 to 3,771 cases. In light of the escalating outbreak, the health department assured the public that adequate measures are in place to combat the spread of the virus, with sufficient medicine stock available in all public hospitals across the province. The department has issued a strong advisory urging citizens to maintain clean and dry surroundings to help prevent dengue transmission. Residents are encouraged to cooperate with health teams actively working to control the outbreak. For those seeking treatment, information, or wishing to register complaints related to dengue, the Health Department has established a free helpline at 1033. Officials emphasised the need for vigilance and proactive measures to contain the spread of the virus across Punjab.

## Hosting 23rd SCO summit a milestone...

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magnitude was being hosted by Pakistan. "It is definitely an honour for Pakistan to host the 23rd summit of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization, chaired by Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif", he remarked. He said that Islamabad, one of the most beautiful cities of the world, has been specially decorated for this summit and the foreign delegates have given good remarks about the city. He said by hosting this summit Pakistan had once again proved it had the capacity and capability to host such mega events. "World leaders and delegates will take away good impressions from Pakistan which would help further promote the soft and positive image of the country." The minister said last night, the Prime Minister hosted a dinner in honour of the distinguished guests attending the SCO Summit and cultural event also marked the occasion portraying the culture of the member countries.

## SCO Secy general commends Pak for...

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He praised their positive contribution to the summit and noted the approval of several proposals aimed at sustainable development, including discussions on trade, investment, and the creative economy. Despite regional and global challenges, Dar emphasized Pakistan's commitment to implementing the SCO Charter and underscored the improvement of trade, investment, and development of youth and women for regional prosperity. SCO Secretary General Zhang Ming commended Pakistan for successfully hosting summit, highlighting its active role in the organisation and the country's efforts to improve regional connectivity.

## Idea of 'court within court' being mullied

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the draft but refrained from disclosing any specific details about the agreement. Meanwhile, JUI continues to view the proposal for Constitutional courts as unnecessary. The legal experts however are of the view that it is very much likely that the final draft that lands in the parliament for approval surprises all as it may not contain any of the amendments proposed especially by the JUI.



## Briefs

## Rupee lowers marginally against US dollar

ISLAMABAD: The Pakistani rupee recorded a marginal decline against the US dollar, depreciating 0.04% in the inter-bank market on Wednesday. At close, the currency settled at 277.84, a loss of Re0.10 against the greenback. On Tuesday, the rupee had settled at 277.74, according to the State Bank of Pakistan (SBP). Globally, the Australian and New Zealand dollars slumped on Wednesday as scepticism grew about top trading partner China's stimulus, while the greenback hovered near two-month peaks versus major peers on wagers US interest rate cuts will be gradual. The US dollar index, which measures the currency against six major rivals, was steady at 103.25, sticking close to Monday's high of 103.61, a level previously not seen since Aug. 8. Recent data indicating a resilient economy coupled with slightly hotter-than-expected inflation in September has led traders to trim bets for aggressive Federal Reserve easing. Traders currently lay about 94% odds for a 25 basis-point cut when the Fed next decides policy on Nov. 7, with about 6% probability of no change, according to CME Group's FedWatch Tool. Atlanta Federal Reserve President Raphael Bostic said he has pencilled in just one more interest rate reduction of 25 basis points this year. Investors are pricing two 25 bps rate cuts this year. Oil prices, a key indicator of currency parity, steadied on Wednesday, supported by OPEC+ cuts and uncertainty over what may happen next in the Middle East conflict, although an outlook for ample supply next year added downward pressure. Crude fell more than 4% to a near two-week low on Tuesday in response to a weaker demand outlook and after a media report said Israel would not strike Iranian nuclear and oil sites, easing fears of supply disruptions.—APP

## Gold price ups by Rs.2,200 per tola

ISLAMABAD: The price of 24 karat per tola gold increased by Rs.2,200 and was sold at Rs.277,200 on Wednesday compared to its sale at Rs. 275,000 on last trading day. The price of 10 grams of 24 karat gold also increased by Rs. 1,886 to Rs. 237,654 from Rs. 235,768 whereas the price of 10 gram 22 karat gold went up to Rs. 217,850 from Rs. 216,121, the All Sindh Sarafa Jewellers Association reported. The price of per tola and ten gram silver remained unchanged at Rs. 3,050 and Rs. 2,614.88, respectively. The price of gold in the international market increased by \$22 to \$2,675 from \$2,653, the Association reported.—APP

## UK govt looking at sanctioning far-right Israeli finance, security ministers

LONDON: British Prime Minister Keir Starmer said on Wednesday that the government was weighing up sanctions against far-right Israeli ministers Itamar Ben-Gvir and Bezalel Smotrich. Asked in parliament if the government would sanction the pair, Starmer said: "We are looking at that because there are obviously abhorrent comments along with other really concerning activity in the West Bank" National Security Minister Ben-Gvir and Smotrich, the finance minister, are vocal supporters of settlements in the West Bank, which are considered illegal under international law. Smotrich has also triggered an international uproar by suggesting it would be justified to starve two million Gazans to free Israeli hostages in the Palestinian territory. Earlier this week, former foreign secretary David Cameron revealed that the previous Conservative government had been "working on" sanctions against the "extreme" politicians. Starmer's Labour government announced separate sanctions against seven Israeli settler outposts and organisations on Tuesday.—APP

## Pakistan, Kyrgyzstan vow to boost bilateral trade

The discussion for improving bilateral trade was made during a meeting between Federal Minister for Economic Affairs Ahad Cheema and Minister of Finance of the Kyrgyz Republic, Daniyar Amangeldiev and his delegation on the sidelines of SCO Summit. Pakistan's exports to Kyrgyzstan stand at US\$ 3.33 million, while imports from the Central Asian nation reached US\$ 5.3 million in the fiscal year

DNA

ISLAMABAD: In a bid to boost economic cooperation, Pakistan and Kyrgyzstan here on Wednesday recognized significant potential for increasing trade between the two countries, which currently is valued at just US\$ 8.63 million. The discussion for improving bilateral trade was made during a meeting between Federal Minister for Economic Affairs Ahad Cheema and Minister of Finance of the Kyrgyz Republic, Daniyar Amangeldiev and his delegation on the sidelines of SCO Summit. Pakistan's exports to Kyrgyzstan stand at US\$ 3.33 million, while imports from the Central Asian nation reached US\$ 5.3 million in the fiscal year 2022-23. On the occasion, Cheema vowed to enhance trade between Pakistan and Kyrgyzstan and highlighted the need to enhance these figures and address the existing trade imbalance. He expressed appreciation for the Kyrgyz delegation's participation in the 23rd Council of Heads of Gov-



Government meeting of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) in Islamabad, according to press release issued by Economic Affairs Division (EAD). The Minister acknowledged the productive outcomes of the 4th Session of the Pak-Kyrgyz In-

ter-Governmental Commission (IGC) held in November 2023 and reaffirmed Pakistan's commitment to following up on these agreements. Moreover, various sectors for mutual cooperation were discussed, including trade, agriculture, energy, mining, digital development, tourism, health, banking, and education. He also emphasized on the importance of convening Joint Working Groups (JWGs) to foster collaboration in key sectors such as agriculture and trade. The Minister expressed eagerness to host the upcoming 5th Session of the IGC in Islamabad and reiterated Pakistan's dedication to strengthening ties through this mechanism. The meeting also focused on finalizing the 'Transit Trade Agreement' and related MoUs for cooperation in agriculture and trade. According to EAD press release, this fruitful discussion marks a significant step forward in enhancing economic ties between Pakistan and the Kyrgyz Republic, reflecting a shared commitment to collaboration and mutual growth.

## Food, medicines running out in North Gaza hospitals

Palestinian health officials said the new Israeli offensive has killed around 350 Palestinians in Jabalia and nearby areas

GAZA: Palestinian health officials called on Wednesday for a humanitarian corridor to three hospitals in northern Gaza that have come close to collapse as Israeli troops have cut off the area during almost two weeks of heavy fighting against Hamas. Doctors at the Kamal Adwan, Al-Awda and the Indonesian hospitals have refused to leave their patients despite evacuation orders issued by the Israeli military at the start of a major push into the Jabalia area of northern Gaza 12 days ago. "We are calling on the international community, the Red Cross and the World Health Organization, to play their humanitarian role by opening up a corridor toward our health care system and allow the entry of fuel, medical, delegations, supplies and food," said Hussam Abu Safiya, director of the Kamal Adwan Hospital. "We are talking about more than 300 medical staff working at Kamal Adwan Hospital, and we can't provide even a single meal for them to be able to offer medical services safely." Jabalia, home to one of Gaza's eight historic refugee camps, was cleared early in the war by Israeli troops pushing through northern Gaza but Hamas fighters have re-established themselves in the area. Palestinian health officials said the new Israeli offensive has killed around 350 Palestinians in Jabalia and nearby areas. In Gaza City on Wednesday, an Israeli airstrike on a house killed 13 people, medics said. In its daily update, the Gaza health ministry said Israeli military strikes had killed 65 Palestinians across the enclave in the past 24 hours. The dire humanitarian situation has prompted worldwide alarm, with the United States issuing one of its strongest warnings to Israel that it must improve the situation or face potential restrictions on military aid. The Israeli military says it has killed more than 50 Palestinian fighters over the past days in airstrikes and close quarters combat as troops try to root out Hamas forces operating as guerrillas in the rubble. It has told people to evacuate to what it said were safer areas in the south, fueling fears among Palestinians that the drive is aimed at clearing them from northern Gaza permanently as part of a plan to control the enclave. Israel has denied the evacuation orders are part of a systematic clearance plan, saying they have been issued to ensure people's safety and separate them from militants. Aid supplies The Israeli military denies restricting supplies, saying that since Oct 1, more than 9,000 tons of humanitarian aid including food, water, gas, shelter equipment, and medical supplies have entered Gaza through various crossings. It said some of that aid was transferred directly into northern Gaza, where the United Nations estimates some 400,000 Palestinians remain. However, how much of that has reached those in need in northern Gaza remains unclear. "Nothing entered northern Gaza. People in northern Gaza are starving," said Hadeel Obeid, a supervisor nurse at the Indonesian Hospital, where 28 patients were being treated.—DNA

## Israeli strikes kill 21 in Lebanon

BEIRUT: Israeli airstrikes pounded areas across Lebanon, killing at least 21 people, officials said Wednesday, including more than a dozen in a southern town where Israeli bombardments in previous conflicts are seared into local memory. Elsewhere in the south, a city's mayor was among the dead in a strike that Lebanese officials said targeted a meeting coordinating relief efforts. There was no immediate comment from the Israeli military on the strikes late Tuesday on the southern town of Qana, where 15 people were killed. Associated Press photos and video of the scene showed several flattened buildings and others with their top floors collapsed. Rescue workers carried away the remains of dead people and used a bulldozer to remove rubble, as they searched for more victims. In 1996, Israeli artillery shelling on a United Nations compound housing hundreds of displaced people in Qana killed at least 100 civilians and wounded scores more people, including four UN peacekeepers. During the 2006 war, an Israeli strike on a residential building killed nearly three dozen people, a third of them children. Israel said at the time that it struck a Hezbollah rocket launcher behind the building. "Qana always gets its share," Mayor Mohammed Khrasht told the AP, referring to the town's grim history. Lebanon's caretaker prime minister, Najib Mikati, meanwhile accused Israel of "intentionally targeting" a municipal council meeting to discuss relief efforts in Nabatieh, where six people were killed. "What solution can be hoped for in light of this reality?" he asked in a statement. The Israeli military said it targeted Hezbollah command centers and weapons facilities that had been embedded in civilian areas of Nabatieh in Wednesday's strikes, without providing evidence.—APP

## KSA, Egypt agree deeper investment ties, urge Gaza truce

The leaders also discussed regional developments, particularly the situations in Gaza and Lebanon, the presidency said, adding that "they demanded to start taking steps to reach calm that include a ceasefire in Gaza and Lebanon"

CAIRO: Saudi Arabia's Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman and Egypt's President Abdel Fattah el-Sisi agreed to deepen trade and investment cooperation and called for a ceasefire in Gaza and Lebanon in talks in Cairo on Tuesday. Egypt's presidency said the leaders signed an agreement to encourage and protect mutual investments between the countries, and witnessed the signing of an accord to form a supreme coordination council between Riyadh and Cairo to deepen cooperation. The visit is taking place amid speculation about potential Saudi investments in Egypt, which has received a major influx of external financing this year including a record \$35 billion deal with UAE sovereign fund ADQ. The crown prince, known as MbS, made his last official visit to Egypt in 2022. Saudi Arabia, which has provided financial support to Sisi's Egypt in the past, later indicated it was shifting towards investing rather than providing direct aid to allies. Tuesday's presidency statement said the two leaders reviewed efforts to develop economic partnership between Cairo and Riyadh particularly in investment, trade and economic integration in the energy, transport and tourism sectors. The leaders also discussed regional developments, particularly the situations in Gaza and Lebanon, the presidency said, adding that "they demanded to start taking steps to reach calm that include a ceasefire in Gaza and Lebanon". Egypt's sovereign dollar bonds rallied by early afternoon on Tuesday, with longer-dated maturities gaining the most. The 2059 maturity added 1.73 cents by 1128 GMT to bid at 77.80 cents on the dollar. Egypt's prime minister said last month that Saudi Arabia was planning to invest \$5 billion in Egypt, independently from funds the Gulf state has deposited in the Egyptian central bank. Possible targets of investment include two sites for tourism developments on Egypt's Red Sea coast and in the south of its Sinai peninsula, both of which are opposite Saudi Arabia. Egypt has been seeking large investments as it tackles a long-running economic crisis that led to record inflation, a rising debt burden and sharp currency devaluations over the past two years.—DNA

## E Turbo Motors launches cheapest EV motorbikes in Pakistan

E Turbo Motors (eTurbo Motors) has introduced various types of electric motorcycles to meet the needs of the market. The ECO variant is equipped with a 60-volt lithium battery, while the motorcycle has a top speed of 70 km and a range of up to 200 km on a single charge

DNA

KARACHI: E Turbo Motors has set a new benchmark in Pakistan's electric vehicle (EV) industry by introducing the cheapest and fastest EV motorcycles in the country. In this regard, an inaugural ceremony was held here on Wednesday, the senior minister Sindh Sharjeel Inam Memon was the special guest of the event. Consuls General of various countries, CEOs of various organizations belonging to the corporate sector, media representatives and other guests also participated in the event. The motorcycles introduced by eTurbo Motors can easily travel up to 300 km on a single charge, which is an affordable and eco-friendly solution to the growing transportation needs in Pakistan. With the vision of Green Pakistan, the

company has set up a state-of-the-art manufacturing facility with an initial production capacity of 10,000 units per annum with an extensive capital investment of Rs 500 million in the SITE area to expand the market demand base. Senior Minister Sindh Sharjeel Inam Memon expressed his best wishes for the project and said that the launch of eTurbo Motors is an important step towards fulfilling Pakistan's green energy ambitions. This investment will not only help meet the country's environmental goals but also create employment opportunities. He felicitated eTurbo Motors on achieving important milestone. The CEO of eTurbo Motors, Sheikh Osama Nadeem said that our vision is to provide affordable, environment-friendly and reliable means of transportation for every Pakistani. We have designed our motorcycle

range to meet the needs of different segments including young boys and girls and middle-aged men and women, he said and added this is just the beginning and our aim is to take Pakistan towards a sustainable future. E Turbo Motors (eTurbo Motors) has introduced various types of electric motorcycles to meet the needs of the market. The ECO variant is equipped

with a 60-volt lithium battery, while the motorcycle has a top speed of 70 km and a range of up to 200 km on a single charge. Similarly, the Warrior and EVO variants introduced by the company are equipped with a 72-volt battery. Both these motorcycles have a top speed of 120 km, while both motorcycles can easily travel up to 300 km on a single charge. Another motorcycle introduced by the company, PULSAR, provides a balanced option. This motorcycle can easily travel up to 230 km on a single charge with a speed of 90 km. For short trips, the company has introduced motorcycles like Thunderbolt and Thunderbird. Both these motorcycles are capable of traveling up to 110-120 km in a single charge with a speed of 95 km. Keeping in view the market needs, eTurbo Motors plans to increase its investment in the coming years to increase its production.



## Iran's president urges Muslims to unite against Zionist regime

TEHRAN: Iranian President Masoud Pezeshkian said increased pressure on the supporters of the Zionist regime can stop its "killing machine." In a phone conversation with Oman's Sultan Haitham bin Tariq Al Said on Wednesday, President Pezeshkian thanked Muscat for its stance on Israeli violations in Gaza and Lebanon, urging "greater unity" among Muslim countries. "If Muslim countries act as one, the Zionist regime will not dare commit violations so easily, nor will the US and Western countries be able to support it," he said. Pezeshkian also reiterated Tehran's willingness to strengthen bilateral ties with Muscat, noting that relations with Oman are among the Islamic Republic's top priorities and lie within the framework of expanding cooperation with neighboring states. "Strengthening friendly and amicable relations between regional countries, and expanding regional cooperation, guarantee a shared vision and language to solve our region's problems. This also provides a platform for collective development, promoting the welfare, peace, and comfort of our nations," he added. For his part, Sultan bin Tariq hailed Iran's stance on regional issues, including Gaza and Lebanon, and stressed the need for Western countries to avoid double standards in addressing such issues. He also emphasized that supporting the rights of the oppressed people of Gaza and Lebanon remains a priority for Oman, saying, "Oman has always maintained that the continued support by Western countries for Israel's crimes is neither acceptable nor justified in any way.—APP

## Earthquake with 5.9 magnitude shakes eastern Turkiye

ISTANBUL: A moderately strong earthquake struck eastern Turkiye on Wednesday, causing widespread panic, officials said. There were no immediate reports of any serious injury or damage. The earthquake with a magnitude 5.9 struck the town of Kale in Malatya province at 10:46 a.m. (07:46 GMT), according to the government-run Disaster and Emergency Management Presidency, or AFAD. It was felt in the nearby cities of Diyarbakir, Elazig, Erzincan and Tunceli, HaberTurk television reported. "We have not received any reports of any problems so far," Malatya Mayor Sami Er told the state-run Anadolu Agency, adding that officials were still assessing possible damage in more remote areas. People rushed out of homes and offices in panic throughout the region, HaberTurk reported. Many were waiting in the streets and parks, reluctant to return indoors. Schools were ordered closed in Elazig. Malatya was one of 11 provinces that was devastated by a powerful earthquake that hit struck parts of Turkiye and northern Syria last year. More than 53,000 people were killed in Turkiye.—APP

## West Bank facing 'most dangerous olive season ever': UN experts

GENEVA: Palestinian farmers in the occupied West Bank are facing "the most dangerous olive season ever," UN experts said Wednesday, urging Israeli settlers and forces not to interfere with the harvest. They also recommended a "foreign presence" to act as a buffer between the two sides. A dozen United Nations experts said farmers were facing intimidation, restriction of access to lands, severe harassment and attacks by armed Israeli settlers and Israeli security forces. "In 2023, the harvest was marred by a sharp increase in movement restrictions and violence by Israeli forces and settlers," the independent experts said in a statement. Last year, they said, "Palestinians in the occupied West Bank, including East Jerusalem, faced the highest level of Israeli settler violence." Settlers had assaulted Palestinians, set fire to or damaged their crops, stolen sheep and blocked them from getting to their land, water and grazing areas, the statement added. "Last year, Israel also seized more Palestinian land than in any year in the past 30 years," they said, adding that the situation was "expected to worsen.—APP



## Briefs

### Sindh introduces grading policy

NAZIR SIYAL

KARACHI: Sindh becomes the first province in Pakistan to approve the grading policy, which will take effect in 2025. The Sindh government introduced a new grading system for matriculation and intermediate levels, replacing traditional marks and positions, it is reported. The passing marks will increase from 33% to 40% next year. Inter Board Committee of Chairmen (IBCC) chairman, Dr Ghulam Ali Mallah, announced that under the new system, first, second, and third positions will be eliminated. Instead, top performers will receive an "Excellent A" grade for scores of 95 and above, while an "A" will denote scores of 90. Other categories include "Very Good B" for 80, "B" for 75, and "Fair C" for 70, with a "C" grade for scores above 60. However, students scoring below 40 receive an "Unsatisfactory F" grade.

### PHC fixes plea against poor law and order

SHAMIM SHAHID

PESHAWAR: The Peshawar High Court (PHC) has scheduled a hearing about a petition filed against the deteriorating law and order situation in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. The Peshawar Bar Council (PBC) submitted the petition, naming the provincial government, the Inspector General of Police of KP, the chief secretary, and the Ministry of Interior as respondents. The petition highlights the worsening security situation, especially in the southern districts, where recent attacks on judicial officers have occurred. The deteriorating conditions led to the transfer of courts from Tank and Waziristan to Dera Ismail Khan. The petitioner further claimed that unprecedented attacks on civilians in Kurram were frequent, while the provincial government failed to take effective measures.

### UK 'looking at' sanctioning Israeli ministers

LONDON: British Prime Minister Keir Starmer said on Wednesday that the government was weighing up sanctions against far-right Israeli ministers Itamar Ben-Gvir and Bezalel Smotrich. Asked in parliament if the government would sanction the pair, Starmer said: "We are looking at that because there are obviously abhorrent comments along with other really concerning activity in the West Bank." National Security Minister Ben-Gvir and Smotrich, the finance minister, are vocal supporters of settlements in the West Bank, which are considered illegal under international law. - Agencies

# Pakistan thanks Russia for supporting BRICS membership

Prime Minister holds a bilateral meeting with Prime Minister of Russian Federation at the SCO margins

STAFF REPORT

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif today had a cordial and substantive meeting with the Prime Minister of Russian Federation, Mr. Mikhail Mishustin, at the Prime Minister's House, at the margins of the 23rd SCO CHG meeting. The Prime Ministers discussed the entire spectrum of bilateral cooperation and noted the positive momentum in Pakistan-Russia relations over the last two decades. They agreed to pursue robust dialogue and cooperation in the areas of trade, industry, energy, connectivity, science, technology and education. Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif fondly recalled his first foreign visit to Moscow, expressing a desire to transform these warm memories into a lasting friendship with Russia. He reaffirmed Pakistan's commitment to strengthening political, economic, and defense ties with the Russian Federation. Both sides agreed to enhance cooperation at multilateral forums, including the United Nations and the Shanghai Cooperation Organization. He also thanked Russia for sup-



porting Pakistan's BRICS membership bid, marking a step toward deeper collaboration on the global stage. The Prime Minister recalled his productive meeting with President Vladimir Putin in July this year in Astana during the course of which they had agreed to meaningful enhancement of relations between the two countries. He also emphasized on the need of direct flights between Russia and Pakistan for enhanced connectivity between the two countries. The Russian Prime Minister appreciated the remarkable arrangements done by Pakistan for the 23rd SCO Council of Heads of Government meeting. Furthermore, he thanked the Government and the people of Pakistan for warm welcome and exemplary hospitality extended to him and the Russian delegation. He expressed his desire to further bolster the existing cooperation between Russia and Pakistan to next level. The two Prime Ministers agreed to maintain close cooperation on all areas of mutual interest. Both leaders also agreed on lingual exchanges among the two countries to enhance people to people relations and an increased cooperation among the banking sectors of the two countries to facilitate trade and investment.

## US respects every country's right to form alliances

US is aware of Pakistan's request to UN Security Council to probe theft of nuclear matter in India, says spox

WEB DESK

WASHINGTON: The United States (US) has said that it respects every nation's sovereign right to form alliances and associations of its own choosing. Responding to a question about the ongoing Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) summit in Islamabad, State Department's spokesperson Matthew Miller said that the US encourages every country to ensure that its participation in multilateral fora upholds and respects international law and reaffirms the sovereignty, territorial integrity and independence of all nations. Pakistan is

hosting a two-day meeting of the Council of Heads of Government of the SCO in the federal capital that will conclude this evening. Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif will preside over the high-level meeting, for which the South Asian nation has made stringent arrangements to ensure the event proceeds smoothly. The prime ministers and high-ranking officials from the SCO member states, including Russia, Belarus, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Uzbekistan, and the First Vice President of Iran will attend today's moot. To another question about Pakistan's demand to the UN Security Council to investigate theft and illicit sale of nuclear materials in India, the spokesperson said: "We are aware of Pakistan's request to the UN Security Council."

"We are committed to tracking, developing and implementing effective policy responses to proliferation threats and we will continue to work with our partners to shape the international security environment," the spokesperson added. Pakistan on October 11 called on the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) to thoroughly investigate the "recurring" incidents of theft and illicit sale of nuclear and other radioactive materials in neighbouring India. The move came after a recent Indian media report

said that police had arrested three smugglers in the western Gopalganj district of Bihar with a rare Californium stone which is highly radioactive and fetches a high price in the international market. "The Security Council should be deeply concerned at the recurring incidents of theft and illicit sale of nuclear and other radioactive materials in our Eastern neighbour," permanent representative of Pakistan to the UN Ambassador Munir Akram told a committee established by the 15-member Council pursuant to its resolution 1540 that requires UN member states to take specific steps to prevent the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction (WMD).

## HEC warns public against scam calls

Deceiving public by promoting unauthorised degree verification services

MEHTAB PIRZADA

ISLAMABAD: The Higher Education Commission (HEC) has issued a public warning about increasing incidents of fraudulent activities involving scam calls and fake social media pages falsely claiming affiliation with the commission. In a public alert, the HEC stated that some imposters, claiming affiliation with the HEC, are defrauding the public by making scam calls to extract personal information for degree attestation or re-verification of already attested documents. Some individuals, posing as HEC Attestation Agents, are offering services for degree attestation, demanding excessive fees for services, far beyond the prescribed charges. Fake social media pages are also used to deceive the public by promoting unauthorised degree verification services. The HEC has clarified that it does not employ any agents or representatives for attestation purposes and does not make unsolicited calls or contact individuals regarding these services. The public is urged to use only the official HEC website (www.hec.gov.pk) or the HEC attestation portal (eservices.hec.gov.pk) for any degree-related verifications. The individuals are encouraged to refrain from responding to any such calls or invitations and not to trust any person or social media page claiming to provide HEC attestation services. They must report scam calls at the helpline of their telecom providers for blocking the fraudulent number or register complaint at PTA website www.pta.gov.pk or toll-free number 0800-55055. If financial fraud has occurred, the individuals must contact the State Bank of Pakistan at cpd.helpdesk@sbp.org.pk.



## Zelensky presents 'victory plan' to Ukrainian parliament

Key elements include a formal invitation to join Nato, the lifting by allies of restrictions on long-range strikes on Russia, a refusal to trade Ukraine's territories and sovereignty, and the continuation of the incursion into the Kursk region of Russia

FOREIGN DESK

KIEV: Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky has presented MPs with a long-awaited "victory plan" that aims to strengthen his country's position enough to end the war with Russia. Zelensky told parliament in Kyiv that the plan could finish the war - which began with Russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine in February 2022 - no later than next year. Key elements include a formal invitation to join Nato, the lifting by allies of restrictions on long-range strikes on Russia, a refusal to trade Ukraine's territories and sovereignty, and the continuation of the incursion into the Kursk region of Russia. The Kremlin dismissed the plan with a spokesman saying Kyiv needed to "sober up". Addressing MPs, Zelensky also criticised China, Iran and North Korea for their backing of Russia, and described them as a "coalition of criminals". He said he would present the victory plan at an EU summit on Thursday. "We are at war with Russia on the battlefield, in international relations, in the economy, in the information sphere, and in people's hearts," Zelensky told parliament. The plan outlined by Zelensky consists of five key points:

- Inviting Ukraine to join Nato
- The strengthening of Ukrainian defence against Russian forces, including getting permission from allies to use their long-range weapons on Russian territory, and the continuation of Ukraine's military operations on Russian territory to avoid creation of the "buffer zones" in Ukraine
- Containment of Russia via a non-nuclear strategic deterrent package deployed on Ukrainian soil
- Joint protection by the US and the EU of Ukraine's critical natural resources and joint use of their economic potential
- For the post-war period only: replacing some US troops stationed across Europe with Ukrainian troops

Three "addendums" remain secret and will only be shared with Ukraine's partners, Zelensky said. The plan was presented to US President Joe Biden, as well as presidential candidates Kamala Harris and Donald Trump, back in September. Key allies such as Britain, France, Italy and Germany have also reportedly been shown the plan. However Zelensky's conditions for peace are increasingly at odds with the situation which surrounds him. In front of MPs he acknowledged the growing fatigue in his country. His own tiredness was etched across his face as he said that "victory has become for some an uncomfortable word and it's not easy to achieve." National morale has gradually been crumbling under the weight of a mounting death toll, a controversial mobilisation law and never-ending Russian assaults on Ukrainian territory.

## Israeli strikes kill 21 in Lebanon, including mayor

NEWS DESK

BEIRUT: Israeli airstrikes pounded areas across Lebanon, killing at least 21 people, officials said Wednesday, including more than a dozen in a southern town where Israeli bombardments in previous conflicts are seared into local memory. Elsewhere in the south, a city's mayor was among the dead in a strike that Lebanese officials said targeted a meeting coordinating relief efforts. There was no immediate comment from the Israeli military on the strikes late Tuesday on the southern town of Qana, where 15 people were killed. Associated Press photos and video of the scene showed several flattened buildings and others with their top floors collapsed. Rescue workers carried away the remains of dead people and used a bulldozer to remove rubble, as they searched for more victims. In 1996, Israeli artillery shelling on a United Nations compound housing hundreds of displaced people in Qana killed at least 100 civilians and wounded scores more people, including four UN peacekeepers. During the 2006 war, an Israeli strike on a residential building killed nearly three dozen people, a third of them children. Israel said at the time that it struck a Hezbollah rocket launcher behind the building. "Qana always gets its share," Mayor Mohammed Krashit told the AP, referring to the town's grim history. Lebanon's caretaker prime minister, Najib Mikati, meanwhile accused Israel of "intentionally targeting" a municipal council meeting to discuss relief efforts in Nabatiyeh, where six people were killed. "What solution can be hoped for in light of this reality?" he asked in a statement. The Israeli

### Iran warns of 'decisive' response if Israel strikes

TEHRAN: Iran's top diplomat has warned UN chief Antonio Guterres that Tehran is ready for a "decisive and regretful" response if Israel attacks his country in retaliation for a missile attack. The Islamic republic fired about 200 missiles at Israel on October 1 in revenge for the killing of two of its closest allies, Hamas leader Ismail Haniyeh and Hezbollah leader Hassan Nasrallah, as well as an Iranian general. Israeli Defense Minister Yoav Gallant vowed last week that his country's retaliatory measure would be "deadly, precise and surprising." "Iran, while making all-out efforts to protect the peace and security of the region, is fully prepared for a decisive and regretful response to any adventures" by Israel, Iran's Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi said during a phone call with Guterres, according to a statement from his office on Wednesday. During the call on Tuesday evening, Araghchi also appealed to the United Nations to use its resources "to stop the crimes and aggressions of the Israeli regime and to send humanitarian aid to Lebanon and Gaza." Over the past week, the Iranian foreign minister has visited Lebanon, Syria, Saudi Arabia, Qatar, Iraq and Oman in an effort to ease tensions. - Agencies

military said it targeted Hezbollah command centers and weapons facilities that had been embedded in civilian areas of Nabatiyeh in Wednesday's strikes, without providing evidence. Israel also resumed its barrage on Beirut's southern suburbs after a six-day pause, hitting what it said was an arms warehouse under an apartment building, without providing evidence. The military warned residents to evacuate before the strike, and there were no reports of casualties. Israel resumes strikes on Beirut: The strikes on southern Beirut came after Mikati said the United States had given him assurances that Israel would curb its strikes on the capital. Hezbollah has a strong presence in southern Beirut, known as the Dahiyeh, which is also a residential and commercial area home to large numbers of civilians and people unaffiliated with the militant group. The Israeli military posted an evacuation warning on the social media platform X ahead of the strike in Beirut. An Associated Press photographer saw three airstrikes in the area, the first coming less than an hour after the notice. In Nabatiyeh, more than half a dozen strikes hit the city and surrounding areas, according to Lebanon's Health Ministry, which said at least six people were killed and 43 wounded, with rescue efforts still underway. The city's mayor, Ahmad Kahil, was among those killed, provincial governor Huwaida Turk told The Associated Press. In his statement about Nabatiyeh, Mikati, the caretaker prime minister, said the international community has been "deliberately silent" about Israeli strikes that have killed civilians. UN Special Coordinator for Lebanon Jeanine Hennis-Plasschaert called reports of Kahil's death "alarming."

## Committee combines proposed drafts

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Special committee, which met in Islamabad on Wednesday, has combined the proposed drafts of PML-N, PPP, JUI and ANP which will be presented before PML-N president Nawaz Sharif. Talking to media, PPP MNA Syed Khurshid Shah said that special committee has combined the draft of four parties today. He said BNP and Balochistan Awami Party have also given their drafts to the committee. Khurshid Shah said PTI chief whip Amir Dogar has contacted the committee and demanded cancellation of the meeting. He said PTI has convened its own meeting to review proposed amendments therefore PTI should be given one day. Khurshid Shah said on the request of PTI, Special committee session has been postponed for one day. Meanwhile, After hosting SCO summit and foreign dignitaries in Islamabad, Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif along with Interior Minister Syed Mohsin Naqvi has reached Lahore to attend PML-N President Nawaz Sharif's dinner at Jati Umra, reported 24NewsHD TV channel.

## Government approves sugar export

DNA

ISLAMABAD: The federal cabinet has approved export of another 5 lakh metric tons of sugar, the approval of the Cabinet was obtained through circulation of the summary, reported 24NewsHD TV channel. The government has given the approval of the import on several conditions. The export of sugar will be immediately canceled if the prices exceed the fixed benchmark while the export is also subject to sugar mill owners promise that they will resume the production from Nov 21. Benchmark retail price of sugar for export is fixed at Rs 145.15 per kg. If the retail price rises above the benchmark, the export of sugar will be cancelled immediately. Moreover, Sugar Advisory Board has been given the task to monitor the entire process of sugarcane prices, production as well as export. The provincial governments have also been asked to monitor the prices.

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