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Beirut strikes suggest Israel's 'rejection' of ceasefire: PM

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Germany to close Iranian consulates: FM

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Spain's Alcaraz exits from Paris Masters

Detailed News On Page-06



Attracting Gulf investments

Qatar to invest \$3bn in Pakistan after PM's visit

The minister termed the development an outcome of effective foreign policy and a milestone in Premier Shehbaz's economic agenda

ANSAR MAHMOOD BHATTI

ISLAMABAD: Qatar will invest \$3 billion in diverse sectors of Pakistan, including trade, investment, culture, and others following a successful visit of Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif, Information Minister Attaullah Tarar said on Friday. "Qatar had earlier pledged to invest \$3 billion in Pakistan," said Tarar while addressing a press conference in Islamabad today. The announcement came after PM Shehbaz returned to the country after concluding his two-day official visit to Doha. During the presser, the information minister referred PM Shehbaz's recent visit to Saudi Arabia where he met Saudi Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman and Minister for Investment Sheikh Khalid Bin Abdul Aziz Al Faleh. The Saudi Arabia has increased investment from \$2.2 to \$2.8 billion after the signing of 34 memorandums of understanding (MoUs), he said, adding that the additional investment of \$600 million will make a positive impact on the national economy. The Saudi investment will be made in diverse fields, including minerals, energy, agriculture, livestock, IT, human resources and skill development, the minister said. There was also a significant progress seen in terms of bilateral ties between Pakistan and Qatar during the premier's visit where he was given a cordial and warm welcome by top leaders in Doha, he further said. "PM Shehbaz had met Qatari emir Tamim bin Hamad Al Thani, counterpart Mohammed bin Abdulrahman bin Jassim Al Thani, and business delegations there. They agreed on enhancing cooperation in multiple sectors, including investment, trade, culture, and others." During his visit, Premier Shehbaz also met

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Pak, Qatar stress for enhanced economic coop

The Prime Minister expressed his gratitude for the warm reception and generous hospitality

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan and Qatar have stressed the need to enhance mutual economic partnership, trade and investments. This was stated in a joint statement issued by the Foreign Office today after the conclusion of Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif's visit to Qatar. During the visit, the Prime Minister met with Amir of the State of Qatar Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad Al Thani in Doha, where the Amir welcomed Shehbaz Sharif and accompanying delegation. The Prime Minister expressed his gratitude for the warm reception and generous hospitality, expressing his keenness to strengthen bilateral relations and develop existing cooperation to broader horizons. He expressed his appreciation for the continuous support provided by the State of Qatar to Pakistan in various fields, and highlighted investment opportunities in

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ISLAMABAD: Ambassador of Azerbaijan, Khazar Farhadov meets Ahad Khan Cheema, Federal Minister for Economic Affairs and discussed strengthening economic cooperation. - DNA

High US early voter turnout gives both sides hope

Opinion polls show Democrat Harris, Republican Trump running neck-and-neck



AGENCIES

WASHINGTON: More than 62 million US voters have already cast their ballots in the 2024 election, breaking records in some states and leading both sides to hope it gives them an edge - even as experts warn the data is difficult to interpret. Opinion polls show Democrat Kamala Harris and Republican Donald Trump running neck-and-neck, including in the seven battleground states likely to decide the national vote.

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SBP to announce monetary policy on Nov 4

The MPC will review the overall economic and financial situation

NAZIR SIYAL

KARACHI: The State Bank of Pakistan (SBP) will announce the monetary policy on Monday, 24th November 2024, the central bank said on Thursday. In a press statement issued here, the SBP said that its Monetary Policy Committee (MPC) will meet on Monday, November 04, 2024 to decide about the Monetary Policy.

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After 26th Amendment

Senate body agrees to raise number of SC judges to 25

PTI, JUI-F senators strongly oppose the decision, term it an attempt to manipulate judiciary

KHAYAM ABBASI

ISLAMABAD: Amid opposition from the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) and Jamiat-Ulema-e-Islam Fazl (JUI-F), the Senate Standing Committee on Law and Justice agreed to increase the number of Supreme Court judges to 25 in order to clear the backlog of cases. The meeting, presided over by Senator Farooq H Naek, agreed to increase the sanctioned strength of SC judges to 25, including chief justice of Pakistan. During the committee's meeting, the former ruling party and JUI-F lawmakers strongly opposed the decision, with PTI Senator Hamid Khan saying that they have strong reservations over such legislation. "Such a method to appoint SC judges is an attack on judicial independence," he said. JUI-F Senator Kamran Murtaza, in a statement, said the legislation was meant to appoint "favourite judges" in the top court.

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ECP summons Imran and Nawaz Sharif on Nov 5

The ECP also summoned the PTI founder in a contempt case

MEHTAB PIRZADA

ISLAMABAD: The Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) has issued summons to two former Prime Ministers, Nawaz Sharif and Imran Khan citing cases related to electoral conduct. According to the ECP's case list released on Friday, hearings for the matters concerning the two political figures are

Continued on Page 06

Briefs

Single line can prolong cases: CJP

Chief Justice Yahya Afridi assures his rulings, avoid any observations that might lead to reopening of cases

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Chief Justice of the Supreme Court, Yahya Afridi, has stated that even a single line in a Supreme Court order can sometimes result in cases being prolonged for up to 18 years. He assured that in his rulings, he would avoid any observations that might lead to the reopening of cases, Express News reported. Chief Justice Afridi's remarks came during a hearing of a land dispute case, presided over by a two-member bench he led.

KP 'willing' to make highest PIA bid

As part of a \$7 billion International Monetary Fund program, Pakistan wants to sell 51-100% of the debt-ridden PIA

SHAMIM SHAHID

PESHAWAR: The Khyber Pakhtunkhwa government expressed interest in participating in the privatisation bid for Pakistan International Airlines (PIA). According to details, the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Investment Board wrote to Federal Minister for Privatisation Abdul Aleem Khan, expressing its intention to submit a bid.

Holiday Notice

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

Targeting polio workers School children among 9 killed in Mastung explosion

Emergency declared in hospitals; Balochistan CM condemns attack targeting innocent children; over two dozen injured

NEWS DESK

QUETTA: At least nine people, including five schoolchildren and a policeman, were killed in an explosion targeting security personnel guarding polio vaccinators in Balochistan's Mastung district on Friday. The incident took place near the Girls High School at the Civil Hospital Chowk in Mastung. After being informed, police and rescue officials rushed to the scene and shifted the injured and the bodies to the hospital for medico-legal formalities. The bomb disposal squad also reached the spot soon after the explosion and started collecting evidence. In a statement, the hospital administration added that 33 injured people were undergoing treatment at DHQ and Nawab Hospital in Mastung, among which most were schoolchildren. The ages of the deceased schoolchildren, which include girls and boys, are between 10 to 13 years old, while four policemen

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Anti-Terrorism Law amendment bill presented in NA

New amendment permits Pakistan's security forces to hold suspects for up to three months in serious cases

FAISAL SHEIKH

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan's National Assembly has introduced a proposed amendment to the Anti-Terrorism Act, granting the armed forces and paramilitary units the authority to detain individuals involved in serious crimes for up to three months. This amendment, put forth by Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi on Friday, aims to strengthen national security and public order, Express News reported. Under the amendment,

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Government slammed over increasing petroleum prices

Hafiz Naeem expresses strong disapproval over recent increase in petroleum prices, calling it "shameful"

SAIFULLAH ANSAR

ISLAMABAD: Opposition parties have severely criticised the federal government for increasing the price of petroleum commodities, noting that it would further increase the burden on the inflation-hit masses. Contrary to market expectations, the government raised the petrol price by Rs1.35 per litre on Thursday night, effective until November 15. As per the Finance Division's notice, petrol now costs Rs248.38 per litre, up from Rs247.03. High-speed diesel (HSD) increased by Rs3.85, now priced at Rs255.14 per litre from Rs251.29. However, kerosene oil saw a reduction of Rs1.48, bringing the price to Rs161.54, while light diesel oil dropped by Rs2.61 to Rs147.51 per litre. In a statement on X, the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) said that in advertisements, the government claims that all is well, but on the other hand, it keeps on increasing prices of basic necessities. "By increasing the prices of basic necessities significantly, the government is exploiting the masses already stuck in quicksand," the party said. Jamaat-Islami Emir Hafiz Naeem-ur-Rehman expressed strong disapproval over

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Pakistan's CPI-based inflation rises to 7.2%

Reading reinforces months of easing inflation, which hit a historic high of 38% last year, and was at 26.8% in Oct 2023

STAFF REPORT

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan's annual inflation rate punched in at 7.2% in October 2024, up from 6.9% in September but markedly lower than the 26.8% recorded in October 2023, data from the Pakistan Bureau of Statistics (PBS) showed on Friday. The reading reinforced months of easing inflation - which hit a historic high of 38% last year and was at 26.8% in October 2023 - ahead of a meeting of the country's central bank next week to review the policy rate, which stands at 17.5%. The consumer price index (CPI)

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KP govt signs agreement for power transmission line

The transmission line will deliver electricity generated from the 84 MW Matiltan Hydropower Project and other provincial projects in Swat to the national grid, or at discounted rates to local industries.

Upon completion of the first phase, the provincial government is projected to earn an annual revenue of 7 billion rupees

PESHAWAR: Khyber Pakhtunkhwa government has signed an agreement with a private company to lay down its own power transmission line.

Under the leadership of Chief Minister Ali Amin Gandapur, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa has become the first province in the country to undertake this initiative. The signing ceremony took place at the Chief Minister's House in Peshawar, where officials from Pakhtunkhwa Energy Development Organization (PEDO) and the private company NetRecon inked the agreement in the presence of Chief Minister Ali Amin Khan Gandapur. In the first phase, a 40-kilometer-long 132/220 kV transmission line will be laid from Matiltan to Madian. This project, estimated to cost 8 billion rupees,

is expected to be completed within a year and a half. The transmission line will deliver electricity generated from the 84 MW Matiltan Hydropower Project and other provincial projects in Swat to the national grid, or at discounted rates to local industries. Upon completion of the first phase, the provincial government is projected to earn an annual revenue of 7 billion rupees. In the second phase of the Swat Corridor Transmission Line project, an additional 80-kilometer line will be extended from Madian to Chakdara. Currently, numerous high-capacity hydropower projects are underway under the provincial government in Swat. Ali Amin Gandapur said that this transmission line project is crucial for the sustainable development of

the province. He labeled it as one of the provincial government's flagship projects and a significant achievement. The project is expected to bring transformative changes in the energy and industrial sectors in KP. Through this transmission line, the provincial government will be able to supply electricity at lower rates to local industries, thereby attracting more investors to the province. Chief Minister Gandapur highlighted the immense potential for hydropower generation in KP and reiterated that the provincial government is working diligently to harness these resources effectively for development, prosperity, and job creation. He also mentioned that the provincial government is working on establishing its own Power Regulatory Authority.



ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Interior Mohsin Naqvi chairing a meeting in CDA Headquarters Islamabad.

KPRA collects Rs14.84b in 4 months, showing 40% growth

PESHAWAR: The Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Revenue Authority (KPRA) has succeeded in collecting Rs14.84 billion in the first four months of the financial year 2024-25, marking an impressive 40% growth compared to the same period last year. KPRA informed on Friday that last year it collected only Rs 10.58 billion in the first four months which shows Rs4.26 billion increase in the revenue. As per the details shared by the KPRA's media wing, the Authority has collected Rs11.25 billion from the sales tax on services, and Rs3.59 billion from the Infrastructure Development Cess (IDC). Last year, collections from sales tax on services amounted to Rs9.3 billion, while Rs1.28 billion was collected from the IDC, reflecting a 21% growth in sales tax on services and an astonishing 180% growth in IDC. Director General KPRA, Fouzia Iqbal, commended the KPRA staff for their hard work and dedication, which contributed to this encouraging start. She expressed confidence that with continued efforts, not only would the annual target be met.—APP

Kundi stresses business community's role

Kundi assured them that addressing the problems of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa residents is among his top priorities, saying, "I will advocate for your issues as your lawyer"

PESHAWAR: Governor Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Faisal Karim Kundi, highlighted the significant role of the business community and farmers in Pakistan's economic growth. He expressed a strong understanding of the challenges faced by these sectors in the province. He said this during a dinner hosted in honour of the Sarhad Chamber of Commerce and Industry. Leading the delegation were Group Leader Ghazanfar Bilour, President Fazal Muqeem, Senior Vice President Abdul Jalil Jan, and Vice President Shehryar Khan. They presented various issues concerning federal departments to the Governor. Kundi assured them that addressing the problems of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa residents is among his top priorities, saying, "I will advocate for

your issues as your lawyer." He emphasized that he would personally engage with relevant authorities to resolve federal issues faced by the business community, with the support of the Parliamentary Leader of the Pakhtan Peoples Party, Ahmad Karim Kundi, who will advocate for their rights in KP Assembly. The Governor mentioned that Federal Minister Musadiq Malik would soon visit Peshawar to work on a plan to address issues related to taxes and CNG. He proposed convening customs officials and representatives of the business community to collaboratively address the challenges they face. Kundi stressed the importance of promoting tourism in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa to enhance the province's economy and expressed his commitment to facilitating foreign traders'

entry into the province. He plans to discuss the issuance of NOCs with officials from the Ministries of Interior and Foreign Affairs. Addressing concerns about mismanagement, Kundi urged the provincial government not to use security as an excuse for inefficiencies. He emphasized the need to increase exports and expressed his intention to hold a meeting of the Special Investment Facilitation Council (SIFC) in Peshawar, as the province's interests have not received adequate attention. He highlighted the significance of the Chashma Lift Canal project, financed by Islamic banks, and shared his efforts to strengthen ties between Khyber Pakhtunkhwa traders and Saudi investors during the upcoming visit of a Saudi delegation next month.—APP

TCL new biggest flagship store in Islamabad

ISLAMABAD: TCL, Pakistan's No. 1 LED TV brand, proudly celebrated the grand opening of its flagship store in Islamabad, marking a significant step in expanding its presence in Pakistan. This new store represents TCL's dedication to bringing cutting-edge technology and immersive entertainment experiences directly to consumers. The launch event was attended by cricketers, key opinion leaders, influencers and TCL's valued Customers. Located in the heart of Islamabad, TCL proudly announced the opening of its flagship store, where visitors experienced the brand's leadership in innovative technology. Among the highlights was the world's largest QD Mini LED TV, the stunning 115" X955 Max. Majid Khan Niazi, Director of Marketing for TCL Middle East and Africa, stated, "—APP

Faysal Bank, Zaman Foundation to bring clean drinking water to Tharparker

ISLAMABAD: Faysal Bank Limited (FBL), one of the leading Islamic banks in Pakistan is privileged to collaborate with Zaman Foundation to bring clean drinking water to the people of Ramiyo Gajju through a solar-powered Reverse Osmosis (R.O) water filtration plant. This initiative not only addresses the village's 78-year struggle for safe drinking water but also empowers the community by fostering healthier living conditions and lifting participation in sustainable development. Farah Asim, Head of Corporate Affairs at Faysal Bank speaking at the inauguration of the R.O Plant said, "At Faysal Bank, our vision of sustainability is rooted in our Islamic value of Care/Khidmat, aiming to empower communities toward self-reliance.—APP

Collective role essential to eliminate corruption from society

DNA

KOHAT: Commissioner Kohat Division Syed Motasim Billah Shah said, "if we have to take our country towards prosperity, everyone must reform himself to start the process of self-accountability on a daily basis". He expressed these views while addressing a Seminar jointly organized by the NAB Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and District Administration Kohat on Friday as a chief guest. The topic of the Seminar was "Good Governance and Improvement in Public Service Delivery". The seminar beside the Deputy Commissioner Kohat Abdul Akram and Director NAB Khyber

Pakhtunkhwa Akhtar Ali was also addressed by the District Khatib Mufti Shafiullah, Professor Dr. Kaleemullah of KUST and Vice Principal of Iqra Public School Kohat. The speakers openly spoke on the topic and gave useful suggestions. On this occasion, students of government and private schools also presented their speeches on the menace of corruption. Deputy Commissioner Kohat in his address while stressing the need to start a Jihad against corruption from the classroom level to uproot corruption, said that the biggest responsibility in this respect falls on the teachers. He also announced the establishment of Reception Desks

in all district offices for the convenience and guidance of the public. Commissioner Kohat said, unfortunately our goal from education is only obtaining a certificate or position. He said the institutions alone cannot work to eliminate the scourge of corruption, but everyone will have to play its part in it. He said that there are 8760 hours in a year, but we waste 8000 hours by working only 760 hours, which is a tragedy. He said that corruption is a scourge that neither any civilized nor any constitution allows. Therefore, to achieve a dignified place in the comity of nations, we must have to say goodbye to corruption at all costs.

RCCI delegation calls on RPO Rawalpindi

Usman Shaukat emphasized reactivating the police post and patrol in Rawat Industrial Estate and reviving the Police-Chamber Coordination Committee

STAFF REPORT

RAWALPINDI: A delegation from the Rawalpindi Chamber of Commerce, led by President Usman Shaukat, met with Regional Police Officer Babar Sarfraz. Senior Vice President Khalid Farooq Qazi, Vice President Fahad Barlas, former President Manzar Khurshid Sheikh, and members of the Executive Committee were also part of the delegation. During the meeting, President Usman Shaukat invited the RPO, along with CPO and CTO, to visit the Chamber, to which RPO Babar Sarfraz agreed, planning a visit for next week to discuss business community concerns. President Usman Shaukat emphasized reactivating the police post and patrol in Rawat Industrial Estate,



finding lasting solutions for encroachment issues in city markets, reducing traffic congestion, and reviving the Police-Chamber Co-

ordination Committee. RPO Babar Sarfraz assured the delegation of ongoing police efforts to curb street crime,

theft, and other security concerns across the city, prioritizing the safety and well-being of the business community.

Alternative energy sources, industrialisation focus of Punjab govt, says Shafay

LAHORE: Provincial Minister for Industries, Commerce and Investment Chaudhry Shafay Hussain said on Friday that alternative energy sources and industrialisation were the prime areas of focus for the Punjab government. "An agreement with a Chinese group has been finalised for manufacturing of solar panels in Punjab, while the negotiations with Austria are also well on the way to build small hydel projects in Pakistan," he stated during a meeting here at Lahore Chamber of Commerce and Industry (LCCI). LCCI President Mian Abuzar Shad, Senior Vice President Engineer Khalid Usman and Vice President Shahid Nazir Chaudhry gave a detailed overview of the ongoing business situation and shared various solutions. Former

LCCI Presidents Mian Anjum Nisar, Muhammad Ali Mian, former Senior Vice President Ali Hussain Asghar and former Vice President Tahir Manzoor Chaudhry also spoke on the occasion. Provincial Minister said that his role as an industrialist offers him unique insights into business concerns, vowing to support and elevate the industrial sector through impactful and sustainable initiatives. He highlighted the significant ongoing projects such as the Punjab's largest industrial estate FIED-MC where infrastructure developments, including perimeter wall construction and telecommunication improvements are underway. "I have submitted a request to the Prime Minister to establish a railway station within the estate to streamline goods transportation, benefiting lo-

cal manufacturers." The minister shared further plans to drive energy efficiency and reduce operational costs for Punjab's industries. He said that a 30 MW solar power plant is being installed to provide affordable electricity to the Faisalabad Industrial Estate. He also expressed views about a new partnership with a Chinese company to manufacture solar panels locally to reduce reliance on imports and boosting the local green energy sector. Citing India's impressive solar panel export figures, he expressed optimism that Punjab's solar manufacturing could similarly contribute to the economy. LCCI President Mian Abuzar Shad underscored Punjab's crucial role in Pakistan's GDP, contributing over 50 percent. He said that rising production costs in Punjab

affected the entire country's industrial sector. He said that escalating gas, electricity and fuel prices, high policy rates and manufacturing charges that severely impacting operational budgets. He advocated for a more supportive financial environment for SMEs, which comprise over 65 percent of Punjab's business landscape, including accessible loans without excessive collateral requirements. To alleviate the pressure of rising land costs, he proposed a straightforward leasing policy to make land available to both new and existing SMEs at affordable rates, as industrial estate land prices have surged to nearly Rs 50 million per acre. LCCI Senior Vice President Engineer Khalid Usman and Vice President Shahid Nazir Chaudhry

called for greater representation of LCCI within the boards of industrial regulatory bodies. They highlighted that enhanced collaboration would streamline policy implementation and ensure timely support for industrial challenges. They recommended increased planting of trees within industrial estates and urged Punjab's Parks and Horticulture Authority to support reforestation efforts. Ch. Shafay Hussain also gave details about the plans to position Punjab at the forefront of electric vehicle (EV) manufacturing. The province now hosts a modern electric bike manufacturing plant in Sundar Industrial Estate, which aligns with the Chief Minister's commitment to advancing EV technology.

Diwali celebrations at Governor House Karachi

KARACHI: A grand Diwali celebrations were held here at the Sindh Governor House on Thursday night with the participation of a large number of people belonging to the Hindu community, international artists already present in the city to participate in the World Cultural Festival, Consuls General of different countries, and the Gold Medalist of world body-building event 'Mr. Universe

Competition' Ramiz Ibrahim. Governor Sindh also cut the cake with the Hindu community representatives. In the ceremony, a spectacular display of fireworks was also performed. Addressing the Diwali festival, Sindh Governor Kamran Khan Tessori said that Diwali is one of the festivals celebrated internationally before the arrival of the New Year, which is considered a symbol of joy, love,

and happiness for the Hindu community. He congratulated the Hindu community on the festival of Diwali. He said Pakistan is a bouquet, we all are its beautiful flowers and this bouquet will always be fragrant". He said that minorities have equal rights in Pakistan. Minorities, especially the Hindu community, are standing side by side in national development.—APP

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National Days and Armed Forces Days

NOVEMBER

- Nov 01/Algeria National Day
- Nov 04/Italy Armed Forces Day
- Nov 07/Russian Federation Socialist Revolution
- Nov 09/Cambodia National Day
- Nov 11/Poland Independence Day
- Nov 14/Jordan Birthday of King Hussein
- Nov 15/Belgium Kings Day
- Nov 15/Brazil Republic Day
- Nov 15/Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus National Day
- Nov 18/Oman National Day
- Nov 18/Morocco Independence Day
- Nov 21/Bangladesh Armed Forces Day
- Nov 22/Lebanon Independence Day
- Nov 25/Suriname National Day
- Nov 28/Mauritania National Day
- Nov 28/Albania Flags Day

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Turkish Airlines.....8494949



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



Enquiry

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



Hospitals

CMH.....5611111
MH.....5611116
Cantt Hospital.....9270907-11
DHQ.....5556311-4
RGH.....9290301-7
Holy Family.....9290322-7
PIMS.....9261170-79
Polyclinic.....9218300-09
Shifa International 4603666



Departments

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

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Islamabad.....0321-5744480

German embassy celebrates German Unity Day 2024

The Embassy of the Federal Republic of Germany extends its heartfelt gratitude to all participants for their presence and contributions, which greatly enriched the German Unity Day celebration, making it a memorable experience

DNA

ISLAMABAD: The Embassy of the Federal Republic of Germany in Islamabad joyfully observed German Unity Day today in a garden reception. This auspicious occasion commemorates the formal reunification of East and West Germany on 3rd October 1990, culminating in the end of 41 years of separation and uniting Germans into one cohesive nation. In his address, His Excellency Alfred Grannas, the German Ambassador, underscored the historical significance of German reunification, highlighting the remarkable achievements and progress made since that pivotal moment. The event, graciously hosted by the German Embassy, welcomed distinguished guests from Pakistan and the international community. Among the participants were representatives from German business-



es, foundations, and organizations operating in Pakistan. Esteemed attendees included dignitaries, high officials and representa-



tives from diplomatic, military, political, economic, humanitarian and media sectors, reflecting the strong ties between Germany and Pakistan. The Embassy of the Federal Republic of Germany extends its heartfelt gratitude to all participants for their presence

and contributions, which greatly enriched the German Unity Day celebration, making it a memorable experience.

Govt won't be derailed by PTI's conspiracies: Siddiqui

Siddiqui emphasized that the law will be equally applied to all prisoners, making no exceptions. He also referenced the May 9 incident and said that politicians should not create instability in the country, specifically pointing out PTI's role in doing so

ISLAMABAD: Parliamentary leader of Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) Senator Irfan Siddiqui Friday slammed the PTI's history of failed attempts to draw large crowds in Islamabad, said that the current government's progress can not be derailed by their conspiracy-driven attempts. In an exclusive talk with a private news channel, he pointed out that PTI has a history of using propaganda and conspiracy theories for political gains. Siddiqui emphasized that the law will be equally applied to all prisoners, making no exceptions. He also referenced the May 9 incident and said that politicians should not create instability in the country, specifically pointing out PTI's role in doing so. Senator further emphasized the importance of impartial courts, urging them to make decisions based solely on constitutional laws, without bias towards individuals or institutions. He hopes for a judiciary that upholds the principle of equality before the law, ensuring that justice is served fairly and without favoritism. Responding to a query about Bushra Bibi, Senator Siddiqui clarified that there will be no leniency or deal with PTI, however, as time passes, it may become evident that they have committed to avoiding participation in any political activities. Senator Irfan Siddiqui also clarified that Nawaz Sharif's recent trip to America was solely for personal medical check-ups, dispelling any notions of an official visit. Siddiqui added that Nawaz Sharif will spend 2-3 weeks in the United States and will also make a stopover in Dubai during his travels. While responding to another question, Senator Irfan Siddiqui criticized PTI's stance on Palestine, saying if they genuinely care, they should send their leaders to help resolve the issue. He pointed out that PTI did not take the matter seriously when a resolution was passed for Palestine, refusing to sign it - a move Siddiqui deemed shameful. The senator concluded his remarks on a strong note, emphasizing that Pakistan is making progress and will not tolerate any disruptions. He firmly stated that PTI cannot hold public gatherings without permission and if they defy this rule, they will face consequences.—DNA

CDNS attain Rs 232b mark in annual savings target

ISLAMABAD: Central Directorate of National Savings (CDNS) has achieved a target of Rs 232 billion in fresh bonds and achieved 12 percent of the annual target in the first quarter of the current fiscal year, from July 1 to October 31. The CDNS has set an annual target of Rs 1650 billion for the current Fiscal Year, 2024-25, which will promote the saving culture in the country, the senior official of CDNS told APP on Friday. Similarly, the CDNS has set a target of Rs 170 billion in investment in Islamic finance for the Current Fiscal Year, which will lead to the growth of the Islamic economy in the country. Replying to a question, he said that the CDNS has realized a target of Rs1.742 trillion in fresh bonds and exceeded 100 percent of the annual target in the last fiscal year 2023-24, from July 1 to June 30. National Savings has set an annual target of Rs 1.7 trillion for the year 2023-24; it is encouraging that this year, "We surpassed the 100 percent of the annual target." The CDNS surpassed the annual target and achieved the target of Rs 1.6 trillion in fresh bonds in the previous fiscal year 2022-23, he said. He said this was an Rs 200 billion additional annual target than the target of Rs 1300 billion for the previous financial year 2021-22. The CDNS has set a reviewed saving target of Rs 1.4 trillion for the financial year (2021-22) which will promote a savings culture in the country, he said, adding that given the current market trend in the country, the ambitious target had been set to further improve the savings culture. The official said that work was being done on institutional reforms in CDNS and new reforms and innovations were being introduced. At this time Automated Teller Machine (ATM) has also been introduced in CDNS which will provide enough facilities to the users," he added. The official said that the directorate had set a target of Rs 75 billion for the new financial year 2023-24 for Islamic finance bonds. Replying to a question; he said the CDNS aimed to introduce new dimensions in the Islamic finance sector. Islamic finance has a very important role in the global financial sector at this time and a large part of the economy of many major countries currently includes Islamic finance," he added.—DNA

PTV brings innovation in presentation with new logo

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan Television Corporation has taken steps for innovation and upgradation in its presentation by introducing new logo and graphics. The overall look of PTV screen has become more attractive with the innovative steps including the launch of new programs with new anchors, an important milestone in PTV, said a press release issued here on Friday. The change seen in the presentation of Pakistan Television was a reflection of the technological improvement in the institution. The PTV News keeps its viewers across the country informed about the latest national and international news as its news coverage

and scope has grown exponentially over the past few years. Considering the current market trend, PTV has further improved its programs. For this purpose, new anchors have been hired from the market and new programmes were being launched with a new screen look and a new logo. There has been a change in the news sector not only in terms of quantity but also in the style of presentation from Islamabad and other centres. The PTV has been prominently highlighting daily events, proceedings of parliament, political activities of government and opposition and issues of public interest. For maximum coverage of global events, PTV News has also

entered into agreements with leading media organizations of the world that provide round-the-clock coverage to PTV via satellite. Pakistan Television has been broadcasting all the news of foreign visits of the country's leadership and important personalities, international conferences and other important events in a timely manner. The programmes of PTV World have also been significantly changed and it has been playing an important role in presenting the narrative of Pakistan at the global level. The Information Technology Department of the PTV has constantly been striving to further improve the PTV screen.—APP

No change in bank hours

ISLAMABAD: Islamabad Capital Territory (ICT) Police on Friday clarified that no instructions have been issued to alter the operating hours of banks, and all banks continue to function per their usual schedule. A public relations officer told APP that, ICT Police emphasized that recommendations have been provided to financial institutions to strengthen their security protocols. He said these suggestions aim to enhance security within banks and financial institutions across the capital, especially in light of the recent spike in bank robberies over the past few days. The ICT police have reaffirmed that they are actively implementing measures to support the safety of financial institutions and to address security concerns following these incidents. In light of recent incidents, the Islamabad Police are actively working on measures to improve security for all financial institutions," the public relations officer added.—APP

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Tarar greets newly elected PBA office bearers

The Principal Information Officer hoped that the newly elected body would play its role in resolving the issues of media workers by ensuring development of the media industry

ISLAMABAD: Minister for Information, Broadcasting, National Heritage and Culture Attaullah Tarar has felicitated the newly elected office bearers of the Pakistan Broadcasters Association (PBA), stressing that the free and active media is indispensable for strengthening the democracy. The minister, in a news release, specifically congratulated PBA Chairman Mian Amir Mahmood, Senior Vice Chairman Salman Iqbal, and Vice Chairman Mir Ibrahim Rehman. He also extended felicitation to other newly elected office bearers including Secretary General Shakeel Masood, Joint Secretary Ahmed Zuberi, and Finance Secretary Azhar Qazi. Tarar noted that the media is a crucial pillar of the state, expressing the hope that the newly elected officials would play their due role for uplift of the media industry. He said the government would continue its efforts for the freedom, development and promotion of the media institutions in the country. Meanwhile, Federal Secretary for Information and Broadcasting Amreen Jan and Principal Information Officer Mubashir Hasan also extended heartfelt congratulations to the newly elected office bearers and expressed the best wishes for them. The Federal Secretary acknowledged the critical role of the PBA in provision of a correct information to the masses. The Principal Information Officer hoped that the newly elected body would play its role in resolving the issues of media workers by ensuring development of the media industry.—DNA

Blind murder case solved, 2 killers held

RAWALPINDI: The Pirwadhai Police resolved the blind murder by tracing the two killers involved in the incident using all means including human intelligence. The accused Falak and Hasnain had killed Azizuddin and injured a passer-by Akhtar Khan by firing after exchange of hot words a month ago, a police spokesman said on Friday. The Pirwadhai Police had lodged a case against the unknown accused on the complaint of the victim's cousin, and after using the latest techniques, including human intelligence, traced the killers, the spokesman said. The weapon and motorcycle used in the incident were also recovered from the accused, he added.—APP

EV's policy to be announced on Nov 30

ISLAMABAD: Minister of Food Security, Industries and Production Rana Tanveer Hussain on Friday told the Senate that the Electric Vehicle (EV) policy would be announced on November 30 to promote local manufacturing of EVs and ensure a sustainable transport system. Replying to the question of Senator Zeeshan Khanzada in the 343rd session of the Upper House, the minister informed that the Engineering Development Board mandated for issuance of certificates had issued 51 certificates to produce two and three-wheeler EVs (motorcycles and rickshaws) in Pakistan. He added that for the manufacturing of EV 4-wheeler, licences had been issued to two companies including Eco Green Motors Pvt Ltd and Regal Automobile Pvt Ltd. The minister informed that 40 sites had been selected for setting up the Charging stations on the Motorway and a viable and acceptable electricity tariff had been fixed on which work would be started soon. Rana informed that 31 companies had applied for the assembling of the 4-wheeler plant on which work was under progress. He added that the government was determined to promote energy efficiency and transition to clean technologies in the automotive sector.—APP



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Briefs

Jabbar's books 'streams, Shade & Light' launched

ISLAMABAD: Former senator and federal minister Javed Jabbar with an illustrious career in writing, media, film-making and voluntary services unveiled two more books, "Streams" and "Shade & Light" at a ceremony held at Islamabad Policy Research Institute (IPRI) on Friday. The ceremony was attended by book-lovers, academicians, diplomats, retired services personnel and notables of the city, said a press release. Javed Jabbar, in his remarks, said that solutions to media ills are practical, and are in need of being explored. He said that books are all about being nostalgic, as the art of communication is in writing it as an ideal form of solitude. "It's all about communicating with yourself as you involve in writing," the celebrated writer of 21 books to this date observed. He said that the intrinsic value of content matters and not likes or dislikes of readers. He threw light on the evolution of Pakistani society and as to how it has struggled to keep the passion of word and thought alive. The book "Streams" brings together selected writings from 2016 to 2023 on media, Europe, USA, environment, development, culture and society. It includes new, original explorations of media and content in an insightful essay titled: "Knowledge and Knowledge".

Likewise, the book "Shade and Light" presents selected writings from the same era on aspects of the remarkable life and legacy of the Founder of Pakistan, reflections on diverse aspects of ideology, national identity, security, and on international affairs, including Pakistan's relations with Bangladesh, India, and on terrorism, extremism and radicalism.—APP

Minorities enjoying freedom, HRs in Pakistan: Kumar

ISLAMABAD: Senator Danesh Kumar has said that minorities in Pakistan are enjoying fundamental freedoms without discrimination and have equal human rights. Speaking on the occasion of Diwali in the upper house meeting on Friday, he said that Diwali is a major festival of the Hindu community. He lauded and paid tribute to Punjab Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz Sharif for the way she celebrated Diwali festival in the province. He said, "I do not belong to her party but the way she won the hearts of Hindu minority, she has become my leader". Danesh Kumar expressed regret that the Chief Minister of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa did not celebrate this festival in his province, unlike the three provinces. They should have invited the minorities and cut the cake with them, he lamented. "Pakistani land is our birthplace and we will always be devoted to it. We will hesitate to sacrifice our lives for this holly land", he remarked.—APP

Gilani for int'l best practices to improve governance

The Acting President advised the bureaucrats to adopt a service-oriented attitude, adding that government service required empathy, humility, and a genuine desire to improve the lives of others

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Acting President Syed Yousuf Raza Gillani has called for adopting international best practices, focusing on innovation, and using the latest technology to improve governance in Pakistan. He underscored the need for embracing digital governance, data-driven decision-making, and using artificial intelligence to improve service delivery. The Acting President expressed these views while talking to the participants of the 36th Senior Management Course of the National Institute of Management, Karachi, who called on him, at Aiwan-e-Sadr, on Friday. Addressing the participants, the Acting President highlighted that Pakistan faced multiple challenges, including economic issues, high inflation, rising population, unemployment, climate change, and



social injustice. He said that bureaucracy needed to play a proactive and constructive role to help address various challenges faced by the country. He emphasised the need to position Pakistan internationally as a competitive and forward-think-

ing nation, while also ensuring that every citizen benefitted from the fruits of our policies. Syed Yousuf Raza Gillani said that bureaucracy should build strong networks, both within the government and with external stakeholders, to find sus-

tainable solutions to Pakistan's socio-economic problems. He stated that civil servants were required to be problem solvers, innovators, and leaders who could help the governments steer the country out of its present socio-economic and

governance challenges. The Acting President advised the bureaucrats to adopt a service-oriented attitude, adding that government service required empathy, humility, and a genuine desire to improve the lives of others.

5 MoUs with KSA now concrete contracts, create jobs: Musadik

Dr. Musadik Malik further stated that some opponent had previously mocked the signing of Memorandum of Understanding (MOUs) with Saudi Arabia, suggesting it was merely a routine practice with little tangible outcome. However, he emphasized that this time would be different

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Minister for Petroleum Dr. Musadik Malik is optimistic about the Memorandum of Understanding (MOUs) signed with Saudi Arabia, predicting significant outcomes where around five of these MOUs have evolved into concrete contracts and transactions, which will likely boost employment and investment opportunities. In an exclusive interview with a private news channel, he said Pakistan's economy has received a significant boost of \$2.2 billion thanks to five Mem-

orandum of Understanding (MOUs) signed with Saudi Arabia, which have now become concrete contracts. This development is expected to bring in substantial investments and create new job opportunities in various sectors, including industry, agriculture, IT, education, health, petroleum, mining, energy and food, he mentioned. Dr. Musadik Malik further stated that some opponent had previously mocked the signing of Memorandum of Understanding (MOUs) with Saudi Arabia, suggesting it was merely a routine practice with little tangible outcome. However, he emphasized that this time would

be different. "Now, people will see that these are not just MOUs on paper but actual transactions and investments materializing," Dr. Malik asserted. He highlighted that around five of the MOUs have already translated into concrete contracts and transactions, paving the way for increased employment and investment opportunities in Pakistan. Pakistan and Saudi Arabia have a long-standing "brotherly" relationship, sharing common interests, values and a shared foreign policy outlook, particularly in regional and international events, he added

Major interchange projects set to launch in Capital

ISLAMABAD: On the special instructions of Federal Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi two mega projects will be launched to solve the long-standing traffic problems in Islamabad, providing great convenience to the citizens of Islamabad and other cities. The foundation stone of Serena Chowk Interchange and F-8 Exchange Chowk Interchange projects will be laid on November 5. Serena Chowk Interchange will be completed in just 3 months instead of 10 months, with two underpasses and connecting roads. F-8 Exchange Chowk Interchange will be completed in just 4 months instead of 12 months, with one flyover, one underpass, and connecting roads. The Interior Minister has directed the Capital Development Authority (CDA) to complete the projects within the stipulated time frame. The CDA had earlier set a deadline of 10 months for Serena Chowk Interchange and 12 months for F-8 Exchange Chowk Interchange. Mohsin Naqvi has approved the

alternative traffic plan before the start of construction work. He chaired an important meeting at the CDA, where the layout plans of Serena Chowk and F-8 Exchange Chowk Interchanges were reviewed. Interior Minister directed that the relocation of various service lines from the interchange site be completed as soon as possible, and the projects be completed within the stipulated time frame by working 24/7. He emphasized the need for the best traffic management to maintain traffic flow, and a special unit has been formed for duty on the projects. He said that the special unit's personnel will be deployed 24/7 around the projects to maintain traffic flow. Mohsin Naqvi also directed comprehensive planning to improve traffic flow at Faizabad Interchange. He was given a detailed briefing on the construction of Serena Chowk and F-8 Interchanges, and Chief Traffic Officer Islamabad Sarfraz Virk briefed him on the traffic plan during the construction work.—DNA

Diplomatic business club hosts 8th Int'l Day of Diplomats

Fahd highlights diplomats' proactive role in shaping peaceful future

DNA

ISLAMABAD: The Diplomatic Business Club, led by Chairman Muhammad Umar Shah, hosted the 8th Annual International Day of Diplomats in Islamabad. This distinguished event celebrated and honored diplomats worldwide, reinforcing unity and cooperation among nations. The theme, "Diplomats - Defuse Crises and Shape Peace", highlighted the crucial role of diplomacy in promoting global stability. Chairman Muhammad Umar Shah and Secretary General Ali Vazir warmly received guests comprising a diverse array of foreign

dignitaries, including His Excellency Mr. Mohamed Thoha, High Commissioner Maldives; Dr. István GRAFJÓDI, Dy Head of Mission Hungary; Mr. Nasser Al Sulaimani, Dy Ambassador Oman; Mr. Abdurraheem Hasan, Dy Head of Mission Jordan; Mr. Soita Khatwenge, Minister Counselor, High Commission Kenya; Mr. Ali Bhatti, Director French Cultural Center, Mr. Sanzharbek Amanbai, Consul of Kyrgyz Republic Embassy; Mr. Mohsen Shahbazi, First Secretary of Iran Embassy, Ms Happy Gupta, Consul, High Commission India; Mr. Ishtiaq Baig, Honorary Consul Morocco, as well as Ms Rie Ishii, Head of Supply Chain, UN World

Food Program. Chief Guest was Mr. Fahd Haroon, Special Assistant to the Prime Minister of Pakistan and Minister of State. The Guests of Honor were Senator Mushahid Hussain Sayed, Mr Tariq Khan Jadoon, Vice President of FPCCI, and Mr Nasir M. Qureshi, President of Islamabad Chamber of Commerce. Representatives from Rawalpindi Chamber of Commerce and Khyber Chamber of Commerce were also present, alongside more than 80 members of the business community from the whole of Punjab region. The vote of thanks was delivered by Ishtiaq Baig, Patron of the Diplomatic Business Club and Hon-

orary Consul General of Morocco. He expressed deep appreciation to Chief Guest Fahd Haroon, Senator Mushahid Hussain, Nasir M. Qureshi (President of Islamabad Chamber of Commerce), and all attendees. Baig also highlighted the success of Pakistan-Morocco trade relations, reaching \$800 million in the past year. After short speeches, the evening concluded with the presentation of mementos to all foreign diplomats serving in Islamabad, symbolizing appreciation for their dedicated service. A delightful dinner featuring Pakistani and continental dishes offered a perfect setting for cultural exchange and camaraderie.

Dengue affects 131 more patients

RAWALPINDI: Dengue fever's consistent acceleration has added 131 new patients during last 24 hours. According to the details released by the District Health Authority Rawalpindi on Friday, majority patients includes 47 from Pothohar Town Peri Urban areas while 36 from Rawalpindi Cantt Board localities and 12 patients were reported from Municipal Corporation areas. Specialized dengue wards established in various allied hospitals contain 290 patients under treatment including 84 patients are admitted in Holy Family Hospital, 80 in Benazir Bhutto Hospital, 42 in Rawalpindi Teaching Hospital, 25 in Fauji Foundation Hospital and 25 patients are under treatment in different private hospitals. Since January this year, as many as 4839 patients have been diagnosed with dengue fever. Financial penalties/ fine on dengue SOPs violators has reached Rs. 21.48 million. Besides imposing financial penalties, 5179 cases have also been registered against the violators. The data shows dengue fatalities remain 11 in the district.—APP

Inconsistent economic policies triggers Industry closures: Nasir

ISLAMABAD: Nasir Mansoor Qureshi, President Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry (ICCI) has called for collective efforts to enhance Pakistan's export capabilities and pull it out of the current economic crisis. To achieve this, he proposed utilizing various marketing strategies, including delegations and webinars, to promote exports. In a statement issued here on Friday, Qureshi identified rising business costs, such as inflated energy prices, increased policy rates and inconsistent economic policies, as major obstacles to doing business in Pakistan, leading to unemployment and industry closures. To address these issues, Qureshi highlighted the need to tap the untapped export potential in sectors like, Halal Food, Pharmaceuticals, Information Technology, Engineering, Surgical Instruments and Sports Goods. He emphasized the importance of strategic partnerships in international markets and advocated for private sector facilitation in marketing products globally, including participation in trade exhibitions and exchanging business delegations. He proposed that the export development fund should be utilized to provide subsidies to the SME sector especially the women entrepreneurs for the growth of their businesses. The ICCI President also recommended the strict evaluation of the performance of the commercial attaches abroad. He proposed that they must be assigned exports related specific tasks and that if any of them fails to achieve the given targets, he must be replaced. He also stressed the need for rational taxation instead of harassment of the business community by the Federal Board of Revenue (FBR), emphasizing that broadening the tax net is crucial, rather than burdening existing taxpayers.—DNA

NA speaker condemns bomb blast near school in Mastung

ISLAMABAD: Speaker National Assembly Sardar Ayaz Sadiq Friday strongly condemned the bomb blast near a school in Mastung, Balochistan, expressing deep sorrow over the loss of precious lives. The Speaker conveyed heartfelt condolences and sympathy to the grieving families of the police officer and innocent children who lost their lives in the attack. In condolence message, Ayaz Sadiq expressed solidarity with the families of the victims, sharing in their grief. "The perpetrators who target innocent citizens and children are enemies of humanity and peace," said Sardar Ayaz Sadiq. He condemned the targeting of innocent children and civilians by terrorists for their nefarious purposes. Ayaz Sadiq praised the enduring sacrifices made by security forces and police officers in the fight against terrorism, emphasizing that such shameful acts by malicious elements cannot shake the nation's resolve in the war against terror. The Speaker also prayed for the speedy recovery of the injured and sought divine blessings for the martyrs, praying for strength and patience for their families.—APP

IG orders crackdowns on criminal elements

ISLAMABAD: Islamabad Capital Territory (ICT) Police, under the chairmanship of Inspector General of Police (IGP) Syed Ali Nasir Rizvi, convened a late-night meeting attended by senior command officials to assess the security situation and crime dynamics in the city. During the meeting, IG Rizvi directed an intensified crackdown on criminal elements across the city, a police spokesperson told APP. IG Rizvi instructed the Dolphin and Ababeel squads to increase patrolling in targeted areas of Islamabad. In addition, he ordered that security checks be strengthened at all entry and exit points of the city to effectively monitor movement. Syed Ali Nasir Rizvi emphasized that all officers must be physically present in their respective areas to ensure close monitoring of security duties. He directed officers to conduct thorough checks on any suspicious individuals, vehicles, and motorcycles within their jurisdictions.—APP

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

Messages of resilience

WE promise we will rebuild them." These words were written by a Palestinian on the walls of a house demolished by Israeli airstrikes in northern Gaza, sending a message of resilience and defiance against the occupation, which has been trying to empty the region of its inhabitants for the past 28 days. The drawings and writings on the walls have become a means of expressing perseverance, resistance, and defiance against the occupation in northern Gaza, which is facing one of the fiercest campaigns of Israeli ethnic cleansing since October 5. On the wall of one home, a Palestinian artist painted a picture of a Palestinian woman holding her child around a pool of blood, with destroyed houses in the background, along with the words in English: "Stop the war." "We remain and will not leave," said Amer Khalil to the Palestinian Information Center: "The occupation is trying to kill us and displace us, and we are telling it through all means, including these words and drawings, that we are staying and will not leave. We are the rightful owners of the land, and we will rebuild our homes." On the walls of another house, someone wrote, "My home, even if you destroy it, I will not leave," to express the Palestinians' determination to stay despite the genocide and brutal massacres being carried out by the Israeli occupation forces for the past 28 days, aiming to displace the residents and turn northern Gaza into a buffer zone. On one of the mosques, someone wrote, "Gaza will remain ours, even if the whole world fails us." During the past month, the occupation forces issued five eviction orders, the latest on Friday morning, targeting citizens in northern Gaza. They committed dozens of massacres in homes and shelters, killing more than 1,200 Palestinians and injuring over 2,000 others. Activists and local media circulated a video showing how the walls of destroyed homes in northern Gaza have turned into murals of resilience; murals standing against the siege and the Israeli military operation. The phrases and drawings on the walls varied between rejecting forced displacement and calls to stop the war on Gaza. Among the most prominent phrases were: "Stop the war," "Freedom for Palestine," "Tomorrow we will rebuild it," "Even the birds in Gaza have wings and do not migrate," "My son is still under the rubble," "Sufficient for us is Allah, and He is the best disposer of affairs," "I will not leave," and "We remain like thyme and olives." Since October 5, the Israeli army has begun unprecedented bombing operations on the Jabalia camp, town, and large areas in northern Gaza, before invading it the next day, warning of its intention to implement the Generals' Plan to empty the region. Since October 7, 2023, Israel, with absolute American support, has been waging war on Gaza, resulting in over 144,000 Palestinian martyrs and injured, most of whom are children and women, and more than 10,000 missing, amid massive destruction and famine that has killed dozens of children and the elderly, in one of the worst humanitarian disasters in the world.



Trump victory and the world

SUPPORT Donald Trump, but not for the reasons you might think. Supporting the Republican presidential nominee and former US president exclusively based on a four-year term loses sight of the possible impact of his protectionist policies and his preference for withdrawing the United States from its traditional spheres of influence in global commerce and diplomacy, and from its military commitments. This has allowed other players, like China and Russia, to fill the void, democratising the international landscape as organisations like Brics and the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation begin to overshadow the US-led Western order by providing countries with an alternative framework. Trump's "America first" policy is crucial to ushering in a multipolar world. A key feature of the Trump administration was tariffs. Trump imposed tariffs of up to 25 per cent on about three-quarters of Chinese imports to reduce a trade deficit, bring jobs back to the US and stop China from allegedly exploiting US intellectual property. However, US importers faced US\$4.4 billion in extra monthly costs from tariffs, totalling US\$52.8 billion annually and costing US\$414 per household. Of this, US\$282 per household went to taxes, while US\$132 per household ended up causing a net loss to the US economy each year. When tariffs are levied at 10 per cent, most firms will absorb the cost in their margins, but once scaled up, they are inevitably passed on to the consumer. Moreover, US firms seeking alternative supply chains faced inefficiencies, and some Chinese firms established factories in Southeast Asia and Mexico to circumvent tariffs. Trump wants to impose a 10 per cent tariff on imports to the US from all countries and 60 per cent duties on imports from China. This would benefit China in the long-term by pushing it to diversify its trade partners, focusing on developing economies in Asia, Africa and South America, and to negotiate trade agreements that would be more equitable for all parties, further reducing the attractiveness of trading with the US. This would have a flow-on effect on US global trade agreements, as evidenced by Trump's withdrawal from the Trans-Pacific Partnership, which had been designed to counter China's influence in the Asia-Pacific region. In 2016, then-US president Barack Obama stated, "America should write the rules ... Other countries should play by the rules that America and our partners set, and not the other way around". The TPP aimed to address China's emissions, labour standards and low-cost manufacturing that undermined US competitiveness. It also sought to prohibit subsidies to Chinese state-owned enterprises and prevent technology transfer from US companies. However, after Trump's withdrawal from the TPP, China and 14 other countries, some of which were TPP members, signed the world's largest free-trade deal, the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership. Even US allies such as Japan and South Korea signed on, showing that East Asia was indifferent to the China-US economic rift when it came to business. Then there are Trump's moves to retreat from certain conflicts. Trump reached a deal with the Taliban to end the war in Afghanistan, creating a timetable for a withdrawal, which happened under the Biden administration.

Pakistan-US relations through the lens of American elections

Muhammad Mohsin Iqbal



Democratic administrations, on the other hand, have often highlighted concerns such as human rights, democracy, and nuclear non-proliferation. For instance, during President Carter's term, Pakistan's nuclear program came under scrutiny, leading to economic sanctions. Later, under President Clinton, the U.S. imposed additional sanctions on Pakistan due to nuclear testing, making the 1990s a challenging period for bilateral ties

THE United States presidential election has always held significant interest for Pakistan, as American foreign policy shapes Pakistan-U.S. relations in ways that affect Pakistan's economic stability, security, and diplomatic standing. Each election in Washington brings renewed anticipation in Islamabad, prompting policymakers to question whether the next administration will foster closer cooperation or introduce new challenges. Historically, Pakistan-U.S. relations have followed cycles of collaboration and divergence, with each American presidency adopting its own stance, largely determined by U.S. strategic interests. The question of which American party might hold a "soft corner" for Pakistan often surfaces with each election cycle. The perception in Pakistan has long been that Republican administrations are more aligned with Pakistan's strategic needs, especially concerning defense and security. This view dates back to the Cold War, when President Nixon supported Pakistan during the 1971 crisis with India, aligning with Pakistan at a time when India was closer to the Soviet Union. The Reagan administration later cemented this impression, viewing Pakistan as a critical ally against Soviet forces in Afghanistan. During this period, Pakistan received substantial military aid, which many Pakistanis saw as a symbol of strong bilateral ties with Republican leadership. Democratic administrations, on the other hand, have often highlighted concerns such as human rights, democracy, and nuclear non-proliferation. For instance, during President Carter's term, Pakistan's nuclear program came under scrutiny, leading to economic sanctions. Later, under President Clinton, the U.S. imposed additional sanctions on Pakistan due to nuclear testing, making the 1990s a challenging period for bilateral ties. However, Democrats have also been willing to cooperate with Pakistan when strategic interests align, as seen during the Obama administration. Although Obama's

approach was cautious regarding defense, his administration continued to provide economic support, recognizing Pakistan's role in regional stability. Regardless of which party occupies the White House, U.S. interests dictate the tone and depth of its relations with Pakistan. This interest-based approach was especially evident post-9/11 when Pakistan became a crucial ally in the war on terror. The Bush administration offered extensive military aid in exchange for Pakistan's cooperation, underscoring the transactional nature of the relationship. As the U.S. drew down in Afghanistan, Washington's interest in Pakistan lessened, illustrating how quickly shifts in American priorities can alter the dynamics of bilateral relations. Pakistan-U.S. relations have roots dating back to 1950, when Prime Minister Liaquat Ali Khan visited the U.S., choosing Washington over Moscow as a first step toward alignment with the West. This decision laid the foundation for decades of partnership based on strategic alignment. Through periods of both collaboration and conflict, Pakistan and the U.S. have navigated a complex relationship shaped by global politics, mutual benefits, and changing needs. Today, as Pakistan observes the upcoming American election, it does so with several expectations. Foremost is the hope for continued economic aid and trade support to help stabilize Pakistan's economy, especially amid current challenges. Defense cooperation remains a priority as well, given the complex security landscape in South Asia. Pakistan seeks American support to counterbalance India's growing defense capabilities and strategic influence. The Kashmir issue is also a focal point for Pakistan, as it hopes the U.S. will assume a balanced approach, encouraging dialogue and stability in South Asia. However, Pakistan is realistic about the strong U.S.-India alliance, shaped by Washington's view of India as a counterbalance to China, which has complicated American engagement in the Kashmir dispute.

Looking forward, Pakistan recognizes that it must navigate an increasingly multipolar world where reliance on one major power is insufficient. To this end, Islamabad has bolstered ties with China through projects like the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC), which offers infrastructure investment and economic benefits that complement its longstanding relationship with the U.S. Pakistan's leaders understand the importance of maintaining balanced ties with both countries, leveraging China's support for economic development while recognizing the unique advantages of partnering with the U.S. in defense, higher education, and global diplomacy. Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif's administration has maintained this balanced approach, pursuing diplomatic engagement with the U.S. while strengthening relations with China and other global partners. Recognizing the complexity of modern geopolitics, Pakistan is focused on maintaining a constructive and respectful relationship with the U.S., regardless of which party holds office. Ultimately, Pakistan's experience with American administrations underscores the reality that U.S. interests drive foreign policy, especially when it comes to international alliances. Republican administrations may have historically offered closer defense cooperation, while Democrats have prioritized issues like human rights and nuclear non-proliferation. However, Islamabad's understanding of this dynamic ensures that its approach to the U.S. remains pragmatic, focused on strengthening diplomatic channels, enhancing economic cooperation, and maintaining security partnerships wherever possible. As the U.S. election unfolds, Pakistan watches with cautious optimism, hoping for a respectful and mutually beneficial relationship that acknowledges its unique regional concerns and strategic needs. In a rapidly changing global environment, Pakistan aims to build a resilient, adaptable partnership with the U.S., recognizing that sustained cooperation rests on shared goals and mutual respect.

The catastrophic implications of Israel's anti-UNRWA laws

Dr. Abdel Aziz Aluwaisheg

The US-based Human Rights Watch stated: "The Israeli government's use of starvation as a weapon of war has proven deadly for children in Gaza." It warned that children in Gaza have been dying from starvation-related complications. Doctors and families in Gaza have described children, as well as pregnant and breastfeeding mothers, suffering from severe malnutrition and dehydration, with hospitals ill-equipped to treat them. The World Health Organization has also found "children dying of starvation" and UN High...

ON Monday evening, Israel's Knesset approved two bills essentially barring the UN Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East from operating in Israel and severely curtailing its activities in Gaza and the West Bank. The new measures are expected to come into force within 90 days. The Knesset's action was taken despite global appeals, including from the US and other friends of Israel, against this move. It is believed to be part of a larger plan to dismantle UNRWA and tighten the siege of Palestinians in the Occupied Territories, deliberately increasing the suffering of the Palestinians in an attempt to force them to leave and to make the realization of a two-state solution more difficult. If implemented, the new measures would have disastrous results for most of Gaza's 2 million beleaguered residents, as UNRWA is their only lifeline – as it has been for the past 75 years, since the organization was established by the UN in 1949. It is the main provider of education and health services in the Strip. In addition to Gaza, UNRWA is responsible for Palestinian refugees in the West Bank and beyond. In 2023, about 6 million people were registered with the relief agency and eligible to receive its assistance. The votes were shocking. One bill barring UNRWA from operating in Israeli territory was approved with 92 votes in favor and just 10 against, while the other – curtailing its activities in the Gaza Strip and the West Bank by banning state authorities from having any contact with the agency – passed by 87 votes to nine. According to UNRWA officials, it will be almost impossible for the agency to work in Gaza or the West Bank if Israel stops issuing entry permits to those territories or allowing coordination with its security forces. Since taking over the Gaza-Egypt border post and deploying its troops along the border in May, Israel controls all points of access to Gaza and the West Bank. Israel has already de facto curtailed UNRWA's activities in Gaza, where the population is facing starvation and dwindling supplies of medicines and vaccines. The new laws will make it worse. Obstructing the work of UNRWA is a clear breach of the UN Charter. Member states have a duty to cooperate with the UN and its organs, especially those of a humanitarian, economic, social or

cultural nature. Articles 1, 2, 55 and 56 of the charter, as well as many UN treaties and resolutions, make that duty unambiguous. There is a higher duty to refrain from obstructing their work. Failure to cooperate with UN agencies, let alone actively barring them from carrying out their duties, is thus a serious violation of the UN Charter. Chapter II makes membership of the UN itself conditional on respecting its charter. UNRWA Commissioner-General Philippe Lazzarini said in Riyadh on Wednesday that the bills were part of a larger effort by Israel to dismantle UNRWA, tighten the siege of Palestinians in the Occupied Territories and make a two-state solution more difficult. Israel has made the dismantling of UNRWA an objective of the war, "in defiance of the General Assembly and Security Council resolutions and of the International Court of Justice, including with a plan to replace UNRWA in East Jerusalem with settlements," Lazzarini said. He added that, in the past year, "at least 237 of our colleagues have been killed, many with their families," and nearly "200 of our buildings have been damaged or destroyed, killing hundreds of displaced people seeking UN protection." Besides breaching the UN Charter, Israel's action could trigger war crimes prosecutions, as it is likely that barring UNRWA from carrying out its duties will intensify the catastrophic conditions in Gaza, including starvation, with famine looming not far behind. The US-based Human Rights Watch stated: "The Israeli government's use of starvation as a weapon of war has proven deadly for children in Gaza." It warned that children in Gaza have been dying from starvation-related complications. Doctors and families in Gaza have described children, as well as pregnant and breastfeeding mothers, suffering from severe malnutrition and dehydration, with hospitals ill-equipped to treat them. The World Health Organization has also found "children dying of starvation" and the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights Volker Turk said that Israel bore significant blame. He added that there was a "plausible" case that Israel was using starvation as a weapon of war in Gaza and that, if intent were to be proven, that would amount to a war crime. International humanitarian law prohibits the starvation of civilians as a method of war-

fare. This prohibition is clearly spelled out in the Geneva Conventions' additional protocols and has become part of customary international law. In addition, Article 8 of the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court provides that intentionally starving civilians by "depriving them of objects indispensable to their survival, including willfully impeding relief supplies," is a war crime. At the core of the request for arrest warrants against Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and Defense Minister Yoav Gallant made by the International Criminal Court's prosecutor are allegations that the two were part of a plan to use "the starvation of civilians as a method of warfare" in Gaza. Barring UNRWA from providing basic services will only add to the levels of starvation already observed in Gaza. The international community should heed Lazzarini's call for help by using "all the political, diplomatic and legal tools" to reject Israel's attempts to dismantle UNRWA, sideline the UN and undermine multilateralism. This means that the bills need to be rescinded or their application put on hold. Secondly, he asked that UNRWA's role is safeguarded "today and during the inevitably long and painful transition between a ceasefire and the day after." Late on Wednesday, the UN Security Council expressed "grave concern" over Israel's new legislation and "strongly warned against any attempts to dismantle or diminish UNRWA's operations and mandate, recognizing that any interruption or suspension of its work would have severe humanitarian consequences for millions of Palestinian refugees who depend on the agency's services and also implications for the region." Norwegian Foreign Minister Espen Barth Eide said on Tuesday that Oslo was "initiating a UN resolution asking the International Court of Justice to clarify Israel's legal obligations to ensure that aid reaches Palestinians," adding that "UNRWA must survive. No country is above international law." There is a special obligation on Israel's closest friends, such as the US, UK and Germany, to make sure that it rescinds the new legislation or suspends its implementation. – Dr. Abdel Aziz Aluwaisheg is the Gulf Cooperation Council assistant secretary-general for political affairs and negotiation

Briefs

Pak, Qatar stress for enhanced..

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vital economic sectors in Pakistan. The meeting focused on strengthening bilateral relations between the two brotherly countries, with a particular emphasis on investment and trade, alongside discussions on cooperation in other fields. The two sides discussed key opportunities in a number of fields in Pakistan in the context of previous investment pledges. Key regional and global developments of mutual concern were also discussed. The Amir of Qatar stressed the importance of fraternal relations between the two countries and the two sides' aspiration to enhance economic partnership, increase trade exchange, and promote investments. Besides, Qatari Prime Minister Sheikh Mohammed bin Abdulrahman Al Thani held a meeting with Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif where the two sides discussed ways to enhance bilateral relations and explore various avenues of collaboration in the areas of economy, trade, investment and cultural exchange.

Government slammed over...

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the recent increase in petroleum prices, calling it "shameful." The top IJ leader, in a statement, criticised the government, claiming it has shown no willingness to provide relief to either the general public or the industrial sector. Hafiz Naeem highlighted that while international prices are decreasing, Pakistan is witnessing price hikes. He further urged the government not to "take out its frustration over PIA's privatisation failures" on the public through price increases. Petrol is primarily used in private transportation, including small vehicles, rickshaws, and two-wheelers. Higher fuel prices deeply affect middle and lower-middle-class budgets since these groups mostly rely on petrol for commuting.

Pakistan's CPI-based inflation...

FROM PAGE 01
data beat the market as well as government forecasts of 6.8%, bringing the average inflation for the first four months of FY2025 to 8.7%, down from 28.5% in the same period of FY2024. On a monthly basis, the CPI increased 1.2% in October, reversing from a 0.5% decline in September and up from a 1.0% increase in October 2023. Core inflation, excluding food and energy, increased by 9.8% year-on-year in October, slightly lower than September's 10.4% rise and well below the 21.8% recorded a year earlier. Month-on-month, core CPI edged up 0.6% in October, compared to a 0.3% increase in September and a 1.1% rise in October 2023. Ministry of Finance in its monthly economic outlook released on Wednesday projected the inflation to hover around 6-7% in October and was optimistic that it would fall as low as 5.5-6.5% in November 2024.

School children...

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are among the injured. After the initial investigations, Mastung DSP revealed that the bomb was installed in a motorcycle parked on the footpath near the crime scene. "The blast was aimed at targeting police personnel guarding a team of polio vaccinators." Ten to eight kilograms of explosive material was used in the blast, the police officer added. Soon after the blast, an emergency was declared across all Quetta hospitals including the Civil Hospital, BMC Hospital and Trauma Centre, said the provincial health department spokesperson, adding that all doctors, pharmacists, staff nurses and other medical staff have been summoned. The spokesperson said that nine people injured in the blast, among which the condition of three is critical, were shifted to the Trauma Center in Quetta. The injured were being treated at the hospital.

Carlos Alcaraz exits Paris Masters, Zverev through to face Tsitsipas

Spain's world number two refused to go quietly and took a 5-2 lead before closing out the second set with a hold to love

SPORTS DESK

PARIS: French Open and Wimbledon champion Carlos Alcaraz failed to reach the Paris Masters quarter-finals after a thrilling 6-1 3-6 7-5 defeat to local favourite Ugo Humbert on Thursday. The Frenchman, ranked 18th in the world, wrapped up the first set in 26 minutes as Alcaraz struggled to find his rhythm. Spain's world number two refused to go quietly and took a 5-2 lead before closing out the second set with a hold to love. But Humbert, buoyed by the home crowd, managed to overpower Alcaraz in the third set and become the first Frenchman to beat a top-five player at the Paris tournament since 2019 when his coach Jeremy Chardy downed Daniil Medvedev in the second round. "I have to congratulate Ugo. I think his performance has been really high. You know, the way he hits the ball is unbelievable. It's amazing," Alcaraz told a press conference. The four-times Grand Slam winner added that the speed of the court was a surprise and one of the main factors for his poor performance, saying it had changed a lot from previous years. "It is the fastest court in the Masters 1000,

probably on the tour right now. Probably the fastest one in the last 10 years in this tournament. I play the Davis Cup indoor court, and the court was way slower than this one," Alcaraz said. Earlier,

third seed Alexander Zverev defeated 20th-ranked Frenchman Arthur Fils 6-4 3-6 6-3 after recovering from a second-set wobble to set up a clash with Stefanos Tsitsipas. The 10th-seeded Greek came back from a tight first set to ousted Argentine Francisco Cerundolo 6-7(1) 6-4 6-2. Ninth seed Alex de Minaur of Australia also managed to come from behind to beat Britain's Jack Draper 5-7 6-2 6-3. His compatriot Jordan Thompson reached the last eight with a 7-5 7-6(5) victory over Frenchman Adrian Mannarino. However, Australia's Alexei Popyrin failed to join his countrymen as he fell to Karen Khachanov 7-6(5) 6-4. Unseeded Russian Khachanov will meet eighth seed Grigor Dimitrov in the quarter-finals after the Bulgarian survived a nail-biting third set tiebreak against Frenchman Arthur Kinderknecht to secure a 6-2 4-6 7-6(5) victory. Holger Rune struggled against

French lucky loser Arthur Cazaux, who had replaced Jannik Sinner after the world number one pulled out with a virus. However, Danish 13th seed Rune recovered from a set down to win 3-6 6-3 6-4. Rune next faces De Minaur while Thompson meets Humbert. British number one Katie Boulter powered through to the Hong Kong Open semi-finals with a 6-4 6-0 win over Anastasia Zakharova. Boulter, ranked 29 in the world rankings, saved two break points in the seventh game of a tight first set, before making the crucial break herself in the 10th. The second set was one-sided with Boulter winning it in just 30 minutes. The highlight was a stunning cross-court forehand after a lengthy rally in the fourth game. "The first set I think I was on another planet," said Boulter, who also reached the Pan Pacific Open semi-finals last week. "She was playing some good tennis. I picked up at 5-3 and played some really good stuff after that. I was free and relaxed on the court." Second seed Boulter will play Yue Yuan in the semi-finals after the Chinese sixth seed beat American Sofia Kenin 6-3 6-3. The 28-year-old is seeking a third WTA Tour title this season after victories in Nottingham and San Diego.



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Hamna Amjad wins ladies' event at CNS Golf Cup

In the amateur category, defending champion Muhammad Irtaza Hussain emerged as the sole leader with a score of 67 on the opening day



AFZAL JAVED

ISLAMABAD: Talented golfer Hamna Amjad clinched the top position in the ladies' category of the ongoing 17th edition of the CNS Amateur Golf Cup at Margallah Greens Golf Club. The ladies' event concluded on Friday, showcasing Hamna's stellar performance as she secured victory with impressive scores of 79 and 71, totaling 150. Her five-stroke lead over defending champion Ami Qun, who finished with 159, and third-place finisher Zebunnisa, who scored 166, underscored Hamna's dominance on the course. In the amateur category, defending champion Muhammad

Irtaza Hussain emerged as the sole leader with a score of 67 on the opening day, establishing a four-stroke lead over his nearest competitor, Shuaib Ahmed Zafar Hayat, who carded a 69. Alam Afzal led the senior amateur category, finishing with a score of 73, three strokes ahead of Shoaib ud Din. Amin Raja followed closely, one stroke behind, with a score of 77. In the junior category, Abdullah Khan led with a par score of 71, while Muhammad Abbas trailed by two strokes, finishing with a score of 73. The main categories, amateur gross and net, will conclude on Sunday, showcasing the country's best amateurs competing over 54 holes for the coveted trophy.

Pakistan 'gear up' for white-ball series against Australia

Rizwan was deeply involved in assisting the players during the training session

WEB DESK

MELBOURNE: Pakistan's squad for the upcoming ODI series against Australia took part in a robust training session at the iconic Melbourne Cricket Ground (MCG) on Friday. In a video released by the Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB), the national cricketers were seen training in the nets at full potential. The players also participated in several fielding drills. Pakistan's newly-appointed white-ball captain Mohammad Rizwan was deeply involved in assisting the players during the training session and was also seen bowling to star batter Babar Azam, who is going through a rough patch. Remember, Rizwan was appointed as Pakistan's white-ball captain on Sunday, replacing Babar, who relinquished the role last month, in a bid to focus more on his batting. Reflecting on the team's preparations for the stiff Australia challenge, Rizwan banked on the combination of young and senior players but acknowledged that the team will miss top-order batters Fakhar Zaman and Imam-ul-Haq. "We have created a combination of young and senior players. We've included some players from the Champions Cup, while Fakhar Zaman and Imam-ul-Haq are excellent players, we will miss their contributions," said Rizwan. The wicketkeeper batter also commented on Gary Kirsten's resignation as Pakistan white-ball head coach, stating the team is focused to deliver good results on a tough tour. "Whoever is the coach we need to combine well and bring good results on a tough tour," said Rizwan.

Anti-Terrorism Law..

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armed forces and paramilitary units may detain suspects linked to offences affecting national security, extortion, targeted killings, and kidnapping. The proposed legislation specifies that any detention beyond three months will require transparent trial rights under Article 10-A of Pakistan's constitution. A Joint Investigation Team (JIT) would oversee the inquiry into the allegations against suspects. The JIT would include officials from law enforcement, the armed forces, intelligence agencies, and senior police officers, focusing on rigorous and collaborative investigation. In September, the federal cabinet approved an amendment to the Anti-Terrorism Act of 1997, granting special powers to security forces in Balochistan.

Senate body agrees to...

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"After Oct 25, the judges are working in a smooth manner [...]. There is no need to increase the sanctioned strength," he added. However, Pakistan People's Party (PPP) Senator Shahadat Awan emphasised the need to raise the number SC judges to at least 21. Speaking to Geo News, Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) Senator Khalil Tahir said that Senator Abdul Qadir had presented the private member bill, seeking increased SC judges' strength. During the meeting, he said, the majority of members of the Senate Standing Committee supported enhancing the number to 25 for "speedy justice". He pointed out that more than 60,000 cases were pending in the apex court, while also stressed the need to increase number of judges in the high courts.

ECP summons...

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set for November 5. PML-N president Nawaz Sharif submitted a reference to the National Assembly speaker ten days ago against MNA Adil Bazaï for failing to vote on the 26th Constitutional Amendment in favor of PML-N's stance. NA Speaker Ayaz Sadiq has written a letter to the ECP, demanding the disqualification of Bazaï and declaring his seat vacant under Article 63-A, which pertains to the defection clause, emphasizing strict adherence to party lines in crucial parliamentary votes. Bazaï was absent from the session and did not cast his vote during the voting for 26 constitutional amendments on Oct 21. He had initially joined the PML-N before later switching to the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf.

High US early voter...

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Harris's campaign has encouraged early voting, with her running mate Tim Walz, outgoing President Joe Biden, and former president Barack Obama all having already cast their ballots. Trump had earlier cast skepticism — without proof — over the fairness of early voting, but has since embraced it, encouraging his supporters to cast ballots whenever suits them. As of Thursday, at least 62.7 million people had cast votes early, accounting for almost 40% of the total vote count in 2020. In Georgia, for example, more than 3.5 million people had voted, or 45% of registered voters — a record, according to Republican Secretary of State Brad Raffensperger.

SBP to announce...

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"Later on, SBP will issue the Monetary Policy Statement through a press release on the same day," it added. The MPC will review the overall economic and financial situation, major indicators, data of different sectors, and major developments taken place since the announcement of the previous monetary policy. Earlier on September 12, the SBP made a major cut by reducing 200 basis points in its policy. The central bank slashed the interest rate by two percent to 17.5% in policy announced two months back.

Qatar to invest \$3bn in Pakistan after PM's visit

FROM PAGE 01

the delegation of the Qatar Businessmen Association (QBA) where he highlighted numerous opportunities in Pakistan's energy, infrastructure, and finance sectors, presenting the country as an attractive investment destination. The QBA delegation, led by Sheikh Faisal Bin Qassim Al-Thani, comprised leading Qatari business figures, each representing influential sectors within Qatar's economy. He added that the Qatari leadership had honoured the premier by hosting a Pakistan-specific art and architecture exhibition — referring to the "MANZAR" exhibition in Doha jointly inaugurated by PM Shehbaz and Sheikhha Al Mayassabint Hamad bin Khalifa Al Thani at the National Museum of Qatar and organised by the Art Mill Museum. The exhibition offers a rich exploration of Pakistan's evolving artistic journey from the 1940s to today and reflects the deep cultural ties between both countries. Tarar said that the moves showed Qatari leadership's goodwill gesture towards Pakistan. The minister termed the development an outcome of effective foreign policy and a milestone in Premier Shehbaz's economic agenda. Tarar said that foreign investment would assist the government in economic stability which is gradually improving with inflation dropping to 6.9%, record remittances, interest rate decline, and uptrend in investments.

Lahore Qalandars appoint Darren Gough as head coach

Gough's first assignment as Qalandars' head coach will be Global Super League

BUREAU REPORT

LAHORE: Lahore Qalandars appointed former England fast bowler and Darren Gough as head coach ahead of their participation in the inaugural Global Super League, scheduled to commence on November 26. The former managing director of Yorkshire County Cricket Club brings a wealth of experience both on and off the field. He enjoyed a distinguished international career, representing England from 1994 to 2006. He retired as England's leading wicket-taker in ODIs and was a key contributor in Test cricket; his name is among the top four leading bowlers from England across all formats. After his playing career, he transitioned into the media as a respected cricket commentator and pundit before moving into coaching and cricket administration. He served as Managing Director of Cricket for Yorkshire following a stint as England's bowling consultant in 2020. On being appointed as head coach, Darren Gough

said: "It's an absolute honour to have been asked by the Lahore Qalandars to be the head coach for the upcoming Global Super League in Guyana. I'm really excited about this opportunity because I've been fortunate to work with the Qalandars in Lahore on several occasions, assisting with their PDP program. We know that Lahore Qalandars are all about giving young players opportunities they've never had before—developing their skills and shaping them into players who can go on to represent the Qalandars and hopefully make Pakistan cricket proud. I'm really, really looking forward to this. Can't wait for the tournament; let's play well and enjoy the game!" Sameen Rana, Lahore Qalandars' owner, expressed confidence in Darren's ability to guide the team through this exciting new league and said, "We are thrilled to welcome Darren Gough, whose legacy as a player and leadership experience make him an ideal choice for Lahore Qalandars. His insights and dedication to cricket align seamlessly with our commitment to player development and our vision for the future."



Spinners book NZ on 235 before India collapse

New Zealand lead the three-match series 2-0

MUMBAI: Ajaz Patel triggered a late collapse to lead New Zealand's fightback against India after Ravindra Jadeja's five-wicket haul booked the visitors on 235 on the opening day of the third Test at Wankhede Stadium on Friday. At the Stumps on Day 1, India were 86/4 with Shubman Gill and Rishabh Pant, unbeaten on 31 and one respectively. The hosts had a shaky start to their innings as they lost their captain Rohit Sharma (18) with just 25 runs on the board. Following the early hiccup, Yas-hasvi Jaiswal put together a defiant partnership with Shubman Gill to lead India's recovery. The duo added 53 runs for the second wicket until Jaiswal was cleaned up by Ajaz Patel on 30. His dismissal prompted India to send Mohammed Siraj as the nightwatchman to see off the remaining overs but Patel, fuelled with momentum dismissed him on a golden duck. The home side suffered another massive blow in the next over as star batter Virat Kohli (4) got run out, courtesy of a direct hit from Matt Henry.

Batting first, New Zealand managed to accumulate 235 runs despite Ravindra Jadeja's five-for. The visitors got off to an unwanted start to their innings as they lost in-form opener Devon Conway (4) early. Skipper Tom Latham was then joined by Will

Young and together they raised an important 44-run partnership for the second wicket. Washington Sundar provided India with a much-needed breakthrough by getting rid of Latham, who made 28. New Zealand soon slipped further to 72/3 as Sundar struck

again, dismissing Rachin Ravindra on five. All-rounder Mitchell then joined forces with Young and put New Zealand in a comfortable position through an anchoring 87-run partnership for the fourth wicket. Ravindra Jadeja broke the budding partnership by dismiss-

ing Young in an eventful 45th over which saw him removing Tom Blundell as well. Young remained a notable run-getter for New Zealand, scoring 71 off 138 deliveries with the help of four boundaries and two sixes. The back-to-back dismissals sparked a middle-order collapse, resulting in New Zealand slipping to 210/8. Meanwhile, Mitchell kept on the fight and ticked the scoreboard singlehandedly until falling to Sundar in the 66th over. He top-scored for New Zealand with a gutsy 82-run knock that featured six boundaries including three sixes. Ravindra Jadeja was the standout bowler for India, picking up five wickets, followed by Sundar with four, while Akash Deep made one scalp. For the unversed, New Zealand won the opening Test by eight wickets, recording their first win in India in 36 years before wrapping the series with a commanding 113-run victory in the second Test. The last time India got clean swept at home was in 2000 when they lost 2-0 to South Africa.



Briefs

PSX turns bullish, gains 1,893 points

ISLAMABAD: The 100-Index of the Pakistan Stock Exchange (PSX) turned around to bullish trend on Friday, gaining 1,893.08 points, a positive change of 2.13 percent, closing at 90,859.85 points as compared to 88,966.77 points on last trading day. A total of 465,865,841 shares were traded during the day as compared to 546,274,609 shares the previous trading day, whereas the price of shares stood at Rs 23.089 billion against Rs.24.117 billion on the last trading day. As many as 430 companies transacted their shares in the stock market, 220 of them recorded gains and 156 sustained losses, whereas the share price of 54 companies remained unchanged. The three top trading companies were Silk Bank Limited with 62,534,221 shares at Rs 0.94 per share, K-Electric Limited with 57,568,675 shares at Rs 4.67 per share and WorldCall Telecom with 27,214,192 shares at Rs1.22 per share.—APP

Gold declines by Rs2,500 per tola

LAHORE: After a slight decrease a day earlier, gold prices in Pakistan saw another major slump on Friday, reflecting global market trends. In the local market, the price of 24-karat gold per tola fell by Rs2,500, settling at Rs284,700, according to data shared by the local Sarafa Associations. Similarly, the price of 10 grams of 24-karat gold decreased by Rs2,144, taking it to Rs244,084. In the international market also, the price of gold dropped by \$25 on Friday, reaching \$2,752 per ounce with an additional premium of \$20. Silver prices in the local market also dropped sharply by Rs20, with the precious metal trading at Rs3,430 per tola, reflecting the recent changes in gold prices.—APP

Rupee gains 15 paise against dollar

ISLAMABAD: Pakistani rupee on Friday appreciated by 15 paise against the US dollar in the interbank trading and closed at Rs 277.70 against the previous day's closing of Rs 277.85. However, according to the Forex Association of Pakistan (FAP), the buying and selling rates of the dollar in the open market stood at Rs 277.25 and Rs 278.75 respectively. The price of Euro increased by 29 paise to close at Rs 301.97 against the last day's closing of Rs 301.68, according to the State Bank of Pakistan (SBP). The Japanese yen came down by 01 paise and closed at Rs1.81, whereas a decrease of Rs 2.97 was witnessed in the exchange rate of the British Pound, which traded at Rs358.05 as compared to the last day's closing of Rs 361.02. The exchange rate of the Emirates Dirham and the Saudi Riyal decreased by 04 paise and 03 paise to close at Rs 75.60 and Rs 73.94 respectively.—APP

SECP alerts public to surge in number of fraudulent trading platforms

ISLAMABAD: The Securities and Exchange Commission of Pakistan (SECP) warns the public regarding a surge in fraudulent investment schemes being promoted on social media platforms, including Facebook, Instagram, and WhatsApp. These schemes are falsely presented as legitimate investment advisory services or training courses with the intent to deceive people into investing their money in these fraudulent schemes, said a press release issued on Friday. These scams often lure individuals by making false promises of extraordinary profits with minimal risk, offering so-called "insider tips" in exchange for membership fees or investment via the advertised platforms.—APP

International Symposium on Laboratory Medicine

Shenzhen, China | October 27th, 2024

BEIJING: Former Minister of Health, Population Welfare Dr. Jamal Nasir along with Chinese and Pakistani participants at the International Symposium on Laboratory Medicine.

Iraq tries to avoid regional fight as militias fire at Israel

"The Iraqi delegation received a cold reception in Tehran ... The answer was: those groups have their own decision and it is their call to decide how to support their brothers in Lebanon and Gaza," said a senior Iraqi security official briefed on the visits

BAGHDAD: Nervously watching Israel's destructive campaigns in Gaza and Lebanon, Iraq is working to avoid being drawn into the growing regional conflict as Iran-backed armed groups launch attacks on Israel from Iraqi soil, sources familiar with the matter say. Two decades after the US-led invasion that toppled Saddam Hussein, Iraq is experiencing relative stability with high revenue from oil sales funding a service-based agenda that has turned much of the country into a construction site. Iraq does not have diplomatic relations with Israel and Prime Minister Mohammed Shia Al-Sudani's government is wary of regional conflicts that could affect its delicate balancing act between Washington and Tehran, both states it is allied with. Spillover from regional conflict resulted in months of tit-for-tat attacks between Iran-backed armed groups and US forces stationed in Iraq and the region that only subsided after Iran intervened in February. But Sudan's government has not been successful in a push to convince the Islamic Resistance

in Iraq — a coalition of Iran-backed armed groups — to stop firing rockets and drones at Israel, according to four sources in Iran-backed armed groups and two government advisers. Two visits to Iran by Iraq's top security officials in the past two months, seeking Tehran's help to rein in its allied Iraqi factions, failed, the sources said. "The Iraqi delegation received a cold reception in Tehran ... The answer was: those groups have their own decision and it is their call to decide how to support their brothers in Lebanon and Gaza," said a senior Iraqi security official briefed on the visits. Baghdad turned to Washington, asking US officials to intervene with Israel to prevent retaliation for the attacks, including one that killed two Israeli soldiers and wounded more than 20 on Oct. 4, the sources said, the first time such an attack has been reported to cause fatalities. "Washington was understanding of the repercussions of possible Israeli strikes in Iraq and pledged to help," said an Iraqi foreign ministry official. A spokesperson for the US embassy in Baghdad did not

immediately respond to a request for comment. Four militia sources said the Kataib Hezbollah and Nujaba groups, which are leading the attacks on Israel, have warned the prime minister against pressuring them to halt their actions and vowed to continue their attacks as long as Israel continued its Gaza and Lebanon operations. The issue has divided parties in Iraq's ruling coalition, all of whom are sympathetic to the Palestinian cause and view Israel as an enemy, though some differ over how involved Iraq should be in the regional confrontation. Shiite leaders discussed the risk of repercussions from attacks on Israel and possible Israeli retaliation during two meetings in October, said Ahmed Kenani, a Shiite lawmaker from the ruling alliance. Key players in the Shiite coalition view direct confrontation with Israel as counterproductive and potentially damaging to Iraq, according to four Shiite lawmakers. "Those groups who have the rockets and drones should go to Gaza and Lebanon to fight Israel rather

Yemenis rally to support Palestinian, Lebanese resistance

Sanaa: Hundreds of thousands of Yemenis have taken to the streets of the northwestern province of Sa'ada and elsewhere in the country, expressing solidarity with Palestinian and Lebanese nations and denouncing Israeli atrocities in the Gaza Strip and Lebanon. The demonstrators on Friday waved Yemeni, Palestinian and Lebanese flags, and carried banners in support of freedom and the Axis of Resistance. They held up portraits of martyred resistance leaders, including Hezbollah's former secretary-general Sayyed Hassan Nasrallah, and chanted slogans in condemnation of Israeli crimes against Palestinian and Lebanese peoples. In a statement, they called upon Arab and Muslim nations to stand up against Israeli atrocities, reiterating they will not abandon Palestinians and the Lebanese nation and will continue to support them fervently. The protesters roundly denounced Israeli acts of aggression and atrocities against the residents of Gaza, which are being carried out with the full support of the United States. They also praised the resilience and steadfastness of the Palestinians.—DNA

er than pushing Iraq toward destruction," said Iraqi PM adviser Abul Ameer Thuabain. Kataib Hezbollah, the most powerful of the armed factions, said Israel and the US would have to pay a price for Israel's strikes on Iran last week. Senior Iraqi security

sources told Reuters ahead of that attack that any strike by Israel against Iran outside what the sources called the established rules of engagement could prompt pro-Iran armed groups to significantly expand their attacks on Israel and US assets in the region.—DNA

UK urged to evacuate hospitalized children from Gaza

LONDON: A British charity has urged the UK government to evacuate 21 critically ill children currently in a hospital in northern Gaza, Sky News reported. The Kamal Aswan Hospital is besieged by Israeli forces and was recently raided by troops, who detained staff and left the facility with only two doctors to care for more than 150 patients. It was also targeted by an Israeli airstrike on Thursday. Its supplies are reportedly running low and many of its facilities are no longer operational. Project Pure Hope has called on the UK to facilitate the evacuation of vulnerable children trapped inside. "We are witnessing a humanitarian disaster of historic proportions," it said in a statement. "With each passing hour, the children's chance of survival diminishes without advanced medical intervention — intervention that cannot be provided under the hospital's current, catastrophic conditions." The charity said it has sufficient money to fund an evacuation of 21 children in critical condition at the hospital. It added that it held a meeting with UK Foreign Office staff this week to discuss its plans, but so far the government has not agreed to take in patients. "While other countries ... have opened their doors to these paediatric cases, the UK remains a notable outlier, having yet to implement any such programme," the charity said. The US, Switzerland, Italy Ireland and the UAE have taken in hospitalized children from Gaza since the start of the conflict over a year ago. Fears for the safety of people in the area around the hospital have grown in recent weeks amid an uptick in Israeli military activity and Israel's refusal to allow sufficient aid to reach displaced civilians. Charities have warned of famine and disease, and aid workers struggle to move around Gaza, especially to the scene of military strikes to help civilian casualties. Project Pure Hope's concerns about the fate of patients at Kamal Aswan Hospital have been echoed by medical charity Medecins Sans Frontieres, which said it is "deeply concerned" by the situation after one of its staff members was detained by Israeli forces. Israel claims that Hamas has been using the hospital, located in the Jabaliya refugee camp, as a base, and that it has found weapons stored at the facility.—APP

Eight dead as huge fire engulfs cooking oil factory

JAKARTA: Eight people died in a large fire at a cooking oil factory near the Indonesian capital Jakarta, local fire authorities said on Friday. Around 20 firefighting trucks are at the site and have contained the blaze in most areas of the factory, authorities said. Footage from Metro TV showed flames and billowing black smoke coming out of a building in the center of an industrial complex in Bekasi, a city on Jakarta's eastern edge. The report said roads had been closed around the factory. All of the bodies had been evacuated from the site, Suhartono, head of Bekasi's fire department SAID, adding that three other people were injured. But the number of casualties could still rise, he said. Local authorities are investigating the cause of the fire. The factory is operated by PT Primus Sanus Cooking Oil Industrial (Priscolin), said Suhartono.—APP

Weekly inflation slightly up for combined consumption groups

As compared to the corresponding week of last year, the SPI for the combined consumption group in the week under review witnessed an increase of 14.45 per cent

ISLAMABAD: The weekly inflation, measured by the Sensitive Price Indicator (SPI), went up slightly by 0.10 percent for the combined consumption groups during the week ended on October 31, the Pakistan Bureau of Statistics (PBS) reported on Friday. According to the PBS data, the SPI for the week under review in the above-mentioned group was recorded at 319.40 points as compared to 319.09 points during the past week. As compared to the corresponding week of last year, the SPI for the combined consumption group in the week under review witnessed an increase of 14.45 per cent. The weekly SPI with the base year 2015-16 = 100 covers 17 urban centres and 51 essential items for all expenditure groups. However, SPI for the lowest consumption group of up to Rs 17,732 witnessed decrease of 0.36 per cent and went down to 312.02 points from last week's 313.16 points. The SPI for consumption groups of Rs 17,732 to 22,888 also decreased by 0.40 percent however for consumption groups from Rs 22,889-29,517 and Rs 29,518-44,175 it increased by 0.18 percent and 0.32 percent respectively. The SPI for consumption group above Rs 44,175, decreased by 0.07 percent, according to PBS data. During the week, out of 51 items, prices of 12 (23.53%) items increased, 12 (23.53%) items decreased and 27 (52.94%) items remained stable. The items, which recorded major decrease in their average prices on a week-on-week basis included tomatoes (11.02%), chicken (10.57%), onions (1.68%), bananas (1.42%), sugar (1.20%), pulse mash (0.98%), gur (0.69%) and wheat flour (0.43%). The commodities which recorded major increase in their average prices on week-on-week basis included eggs (3.40%), garlic (2.95%), lpg (1.92%), mustard oil (1.49%), pulse moong (1.27%), firewood (1.09%), vegetable ghee 1kg (1.08%), vegetable ghee 2.5kg (0.50%), potatoes (0.30%) and curd (0.20%). On-year basis, the commodities that witnessed decrease included wheat flour (31.76%), electricity charges for q1 (20.32%), chilies powder (20.00%), tomatoes (19.37%), diesel (17.05%), petrol (12.77%), rice basmati broken (8.09%), cooking oil 5 litre (7.45%), sugar (7.16%), bread (5.55%), eggs (3.93%) and washing soap (0.32%). The commodities which recorded an increase in their average prices on year-on-year basis included , gas charges for Q1 (570.00%), pulse gram (83.11%), pulse moong (39.09%), powdered milk (25.57%), beef (23.53%), onions (17.95%), garlic (17.55%), shirting (17.02%), cooked daal (15.14%), mutton (13.68%), georgette (12.81%) and ladies sandal (12.52%). —DNA

New Delhi chokes in smog after firework ban flouted

The city is blanketed in cancer-causing acrid smog each year, primarily blamed on stubble burning by farmers in neighbouring regions to clear their fields for ploughing, as well as factories and traffic fumes. But air worsened Friday after a thunderous night of firecrackers lit as part of Diwali celebrations, despite city authorities last month banning their sale and use

NEW DELHI: India's capital New Delhi was wreathed in poisonous smog Friday, with air pollution worsening after a fireworks ban was widely flouted for raucous celebrations for the Hindu festival of lights, Diwali. New Delhi's traffic-clogged streets are home to more than 30 million people, and the city is regularly ranked as one of the most polluted urban areas on the planet. The city is blanketed in cancer-causing acrid smog each year, primarily blamed on stubble burning by farmers in neighbouring regions to clear their fields for ploughing, as well

as factories and traffic fumes. But air worsened Friday after a thunderous night of firecrackers lit as part of Diwali celebrations, despite city authorities last month banning their sale and use. City police had seized nearly two tonnes of fireworks before Diwali, but the crackers remained readily available for sale in neighbouring states. Many residents celebrated at home, holding a family meal and lighting small candles in praise of the Hindu goddess Lakshmi and symbolising the victory of light over darkness. Others launched firework rockets and booming crackers, rocking the

densely packed city throughout the night. Police are often reluctant to act against violators, given the strong religious sentiments attached to the crackers by Hindu devotees. Critics say arguments between rival politicians heading neighbouring states — as well as between central and state-level authorities — have compounded the problem. India's Supreme Court last month ruled that clean air was a fundamental human right, ordering both the central government and state-level authorities to take action. "Delhi's toxic air is killing us softly with its smog," the Times of India wrote in an

editorial last week, as the winter pollution returned. "It is nothing new, but what doesn't cease to amaze, year after year, is the state's stilted response." Levels of fine particulate matter — dangerous microparticles known as PM2.5 pollutants that enter the bloodstream through the lungs — surged to more than 23 times the World Health Organisation recommended daily maximum. Soon after dawn, pollutant levels topped 345 micrograms per cubic metre, according to monitoring firm IQAir, which listed air in the sprawling megacity as "hazardous". It rated New Delhi as worst in the world, just above

smoke-choked Lahore, 400 kilometres (250 miles) to the northwest. The New Delhi government has previously sought to cut pollution by restricting vehicle traffic, including a scheme that only allowed cars with odd or even number licence plates to travel on alternate days. Authorities have also imposed seasonal bans on construction work and on diesel-powered vehicles from entering the city. "The gravity of the problem is such that incremental changes are insufficient," the Indian Express wrote, criticising "an unfortunate lack of resolve from both the centre and state governments. —DNA

Pakistani rice offered at lowest in Indonesia's tender

JAKARTA: The lowest price offered in the international tender from Indonesian state purchasing agency Bulog to buy about 500,000 metric tonnes of rice was estimated at \$479 a tonne cost and freight (c&f) for rice expected to be sourced from Pakistan, European traders said on Friday. The lowest offer was said to have been made for 26,000 tonnes. No purchase has yet been reported and price negotiations are expected to continue in coming days, traders said. A decision is expected next week. Reports reflect assessments from traders and further estimates of prices and volumes are still possible later. Rice arrival in Indonesia is sought in November to December and the rice can be sourced from Thailand, Cambodia, Vietnam, Myanmar, Pakistan or India. Price offers were submitted on Friday. Two other offers of rice from Pakistan were the next lowest at \$484 and \$485 a tonne c&f, traders said.—APP

Opposition protests over Istanbul mayor's arrest

ISTANBUL: Turkish opposition parties called for protests Thursday at what they said was the politically-motivated arrest of an opposition mayor for alleged links to the banned Kurdish PKK militant group. Several hundred protesters rallied on Wednesday evening outside an Istanbul court where Ahmet Ozer, mayor of the Istanbul district of Esenyurt, was charged several hours after being arrested. Ozer belongs to the main opposition Republican People's Party (CHP), which denounced the allegations as "baseless". Both the CHP and DEM, the main pro-Kurdish party — which also slammed his arrest as a "political coup" — called demonstrators to rally at 4:00 pm (1300 GMT) outside Esenyurt town hall. But the police shut down the area, banning any demonstrations there, prompting organisers to shift the protest to a square several kilometres (miles) away. The interior ministry said Ozer was arrested for "membership of the PKK terror organisation" and confirmed appointing Istanbul's deputy governor to replace him. The PKK, which since 1984 has waged a decades-long insurgency against the Turkish state that has killed thousands, is blacklisted as a terror organisation by Turkey and its Western allies. But Ozer denied the charges when he appeared in court on Wednesday evening, the private NTV television said.—APP

Quds Force to stand by Hezbollah until Zionism eradicated

TEHRAN: The commander of the Quds Force of the Islamic Revolution Guard Corps (IRGC) has reaffirmed the force's support for the Lebanese resistance movement Hezbollah until the full liberation of the occupied al-Quds and the eradication of the Israeli regime. Brigadier General Esmail Qaani made the statement as he extended his felicitations on the appointment of Sheikh Naim Qassem as Hezbollah's new leader and commemorated the sacrifices of his predecessor, Nasrallah, as well as former head of Hezbollah executive council Hashem Safieddine, who were both martyred in Israeli airstrikes on the Lebanese capital of Beirut's southern district of Dahieh. "By the grace of God, the resplendent and struggle-filled path of the martyrs will continue with more speed and strength under the management and leadership of Your Excellency," Qaani added.—APP

Briefs

Swati remanded to judicial custody

COURT REPORTER

ISLAMABAD: An Anti-Terrorism Court (ATC), on Friday, remanded former senator and Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) leader, Azam Swati to judicial custody in connection with a series of protest-related charges. The court hearing was presided over by Judge Tahir Abbas Sipra, and other judicial forums heard multiple cases against the former Senator.

Swati was presented before the ATC, with his legal counsel, Advocate Ali Bukhari, representing him in the court. The prosecution brought Swati from the Islamabad High Court (IHC) to the ATC after the IHC annulled his previous physical remand.

The IHC directed the authorities to place Swati on judicial remand, citing legal requirements. The ATC then ordered his transfer to jail under judicial custody. Subsequently, Swati was presented before Judicial Magistrate Humaira Afzal, who, following IHC's instructions, remanded him to judicial custody.

Advocates for the defence contended that since October 5, Swati has been detained, facing approximately twelve FIRs. The defence further noted that these FIRs had not been disclosed in prior submissions to the IHC. In addition, the ATC has issued notices and summoned arguments from the prosecution on Swati's post-arrest bail applications in seven of the pending cases.

Punjab govt bared from issuing detention orders

DNA

LAHORE: The Lahore High Court has barred the Punjab government from issuing any detention orders until December 5. LHC's Justice Amjad Rafiq issued the ruling while hearing a petition filed by Advocate Azhar Siddique challenging the legal status of such orders. The decision noted that, according to the government lawyer, the government has issued 20,000 such king of orders since 2022, with 4,470 issued in 2023 alone. The petitioner's lawyer argued that the government used house arrest orders for political victimisation. He called for amendments in the relevant law under Article 10-A of the Constitution. After hearing the arguments, Justice Rafiq instructed the provincial government to refrain from issuing any house arrest orders until December 5. He also directed the lawyers to present arguments regarding the legal status of Section 3 of the law at the next hearing.

Death toll in Spain floods reaches 205

MADRID: The death toll from Spain's worst floods in a generation has climbed to 205, rescuers said on Friday, with the number expected to rise as more people are believed missing. Spanish rescuers opened a temporary morgue in a convention centre and battled to reach areas still cut off on Friday as the death toll from catastrophic floods rose to 205 people in Europe's worst weather disaster in five decades. In Valencia, the eastern region that bore the brunt of the devastation, at least 202 people have died, regional authorities said. Three have died in Castilla La Mancha and Andalusia. The number of dead is now almost level with the 209 who died during heavy floods in Romania in 1970. Floods in Portugal in 1967 killed nearly 500 people. Some 500 soldiers were deployed to search for people who are still missing and help survivors of the storm, which triggered a fresh weather alert in Huelva in southwestern Spain. - Agencies

Defence ministry granted Rs 1.8bn for aircraft overhaul

Finance and Revenue Minister Senator M Aurangzeb Chairs ECC Meeting



STAFF REPORT

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Finance and Revenue Senator Muhammad Aurangzeb chaired a meeting of the Economic Coordination Committee (ECC) of the Cabinet. The meeting was attended by Minister for Industries and Production Rana Tanveer Hussain, Minister for Power Sardar Awaiz Ahmed Khan Leghari, Minister for Planning, Development & Special Initiatives Mr. Ahsan Iqbal, Minister of State for Finance and Revenue Mr. Ali Pervaiz Malik, Governor SBP (virtual) and Chair-

man SECP (virtual), along with Federal Secretaries and senior officers from the concerned Ministries and Divisions. The ECC considered a proposal from the Ministry of National Food Security & Research for allocation of domestic and imported wheat stocks of PASSCO among wheat-deficient agencies/regions for Food Year 2024-25. The ECC discussed the issue threadbare and decided that domestic and imported wheat would be allocated and released by PASSCO based on allocation ratio decided by ECC on 1st February 2024, till full disposal of imported wheat stock, and all seven wheat-deficient agencies/regions would lift the wheat as per their

committed demand during the Food Year 2024-25. The ECC however directed that the wheat to be picked up by agencies/regions be tested beforehand for purpose of quality and fitness for consumption. The ECC considered and approved a proposal from the Ministry of Interior for grant of a Technical Supplementary Grant amounting to Rs. 252.711 million against the same amount surrendered by the Ministry of Housing and Works, for allocation to Capital Development Authority to ensure uninterrupted provision of civic services at the Prime Minister's Office (Public), Prime Minister's Office Internal and Prime Minister's Staff Colony. The ECC considered

and approved grant of a Technical Supplementary Grant to the tune of Rs. 1.8 billion to the Ministry of Defence for overhaul of engines of two VVIP aircraft being utilized for state duties with the President and the Prime Minister of Pakistan.

The ECC also took up and approved a proposal of Ministry of Interior for provision of Rs. 2.939 billion as Technical Supplementary Grant to Director General Immigration & Passports for purchase of two e-Passport Personalization systems and six desktop personalization machines for uninterrupted and smooth official business of the Directorate in the public interest.

The ECC also approved a proposal of the Ministry of Planning, Development & Special Initiatives for transfer of Rs. 30 billion budgeted for FY 2024-25 under the "Flood Response Emergency Housing Project", to Finance Division as Technical Supplementary Grant for onward release to Government of Sindh as per Finance Division's release strategy for development budget and after authorization by the Ministry of Planning, Development & Special Initiatives. The ECC meeting also deliberated upon a summary by National Accountability Bureau for a TSG for allocation of Rs. 376 million in terms of Article 84 of the Constitution of Islamic Republic of Pakistan 1973, in favour of NAB for meeting the expenditure in terms of Recovery and Reward Rules 2002, and approved it.

A proposal by the Ministry of Commerce for allocation of TSG amounting to Rs. 226.720 million to support its trade and investment missions in China was also considered and approved by the ECC.

Punjab CM, USAID discuss enhanced US-Pakistan coop

BUREAU REPORT

LAHORE: Punjab Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz Sharif Friday met with USAID Mission Director Veeraya Kate Somvongsiri to discuss strengthening Pakistan-US relations and cooperation across various sectors. American Consul General Kristin K. Hawkins and USAID Punjab Chapter representative AreeshaBano were also present at the meeting. The talks covered mutual interests, with both sides agreeing to enhance collaboration in trade, climate change, renewable energy, women's economic empowerment, healthcare, and education. Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz expressed Pakistan's interest in leveraging U.S. expertise in green energy and modern technology to combat climate change and reduce pollution. "We have introduced panic buttons and virtual police stations to protect women and launched modern internships for skilled human resources," she said.

American delegation visits Adiala Jail in Rawalpindi

Members of the US delegation included Irfan Jan, Mike Murphy, and Raheel Javed

MEHTAB PIRZADA

RAWALPINDI: A three-member delegation from the US Embassy visited Adiala Jail in Rawalpindi on Friday, where they were granted consular access to three detained American citizens. The visit included meetings with individuals held under the Foreign Act, according to jail sources. The delegation met with detainees Abid Malik, Sadiq Saeed, and Alex Pleado in the office of the Additional Superintendent, a meeting that lasted approximately one hour. Members of the US delegation included Irfan Jan, Mike Murphy, and Raheel Javed. Following their meetings, the delegation departed from Adiala Jail. The meeting took place days two days after the Biden administration confirmed that it received a letter from more than 60 United States (US) Congress members urging the White House to advocate for the release of Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) founder Imran Khan who is coincidentally also jailed in the same prison. On Tuesday, US State Department Spokesperson Matthew

Miller confirmed the letter's receipt during a briefing and stated that the administration would "respond in due course." The letter, led by prominent Congress members such as Ilhan Omar and Rashida Tlaib, called on President Biden to secure guarantees from Pakistani authorities for Imran's safety in custody. Miller further noted that the US supports a "sustained democracy" in Pakistan, adding that a recent meeting between US Deputy Assistant Secretary for Democracy and Human Rights Monica Jacobson and Pakistan's Human Rights Secretary in Islamabad focused on fundamental rights and freedoms.

The spokesperson declined to comment on claims that the release of Khan's wife and sisters from detention was linked to US involvement, stating only that discussions covered "support for a vibrant civil society and strong democratic institutions." Yesterday, a coalition of 160 parliamentarians expressed strong discontent over a recent letter from 62 US Congressmen, calling for a re-evaluation of the US commentary on Pakistan's political dynamics and urging Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif to address perceived external interference. In their letter to the prime minister, the lawmakers criticised the US legislators for what they deemed a skewed view of Pakistan's domestic politics. They argued that the letter exaggerates a political narrative that primarily serves the interests of a single political party, namely Imran Khan's PTI.



ISLAMABAD: Governor Punjab, Sardar Saleem Haider Khan, called on Acting President Syed Yousuf Raza Gillani, at Aiwan-e-Sadr. - DNA

CM Gandapur slams govt crackdown on PTI workers

SHAMIM SHAHID

PESHAWAR: Chief Minister of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Ali Amin Gandapur, has announced one-step promotions for government employees recently released after their arrest during protests in Islamabad. In addition to the promotions, Gandapur granted the employees a week's leave and a stipend of Rs 10,000, Express News reported. The announcement came as the arrested officials, including 34 police personnel, 7 TMAs, and 42 rescue workers, returned to Peshawar following their release. Additionally, it was reported that 86 prisoners were released from District Jail Attack late last night. Among those released were two PTI provincial assembly members, 46 Rescue 1122 staff, 25 police officers, and 13 municipal employees. These detainees had joined Ali Amin Gandapur's convoy during the protest and were released after their bail petitions were approved by the court. They had been arrested in various locations, including Attock, Rawalpindi, and Islamabad, facing multiple charges, including those under the Anti-Terrorism Act. Following the release orders, enabling their return, Gandapur personally welcomed the employees upon their arrival, presenting them with flower garlands as a gesture of support.

Beirut strikes suggest Israel's 'rejection' of ceasefire: PM

The office of Lebanese caretaker prime minister Najib Mikati on Friday denied that the US had asked Lebanon to declare a unilateral ceasefire, after two sources told Reuters that a US envoy had made the request to inject momentum into stalled talks

NEWS DESK

47 Palestinians killed in Israeli strikes

BEIRUT: Lebanon's Prime Minister Najib Mikati on Friday criticized Israel's "expansion" of its attacks on his country, saying they indicated a rejection of efforts to broker a truce after more than a month of war. "The Israeli enemy's renewed expansion of the scope of its aggression on Lebanese regions, its repeated threats to the population to evacuate entire cities and villages, and its renewed targeting of the southern suburbs of Beirut with destructive raids are all indicators that confirm the Israeli enemy's rejection of all efforts being made to secure a ceasefire," Mikati said. Mikati's statement came a day after Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu met with US officials to discuss a possible deal to end the war in Lebanon. The Lebanese premier added that Israel's diplomatic behavior suggested it was rejecting a ceasefire. The office of Lebanese caretaker prime minister Najib Mikati on Friday denied that the US had asked Lebanon to declare a unilateral ceasefire, after

GAZA: Forty seven Palestinians were killed and dozens injured, most of them children and women, in overnight Israeli bombardment of the city of Deir Al-Balah, the Nuseirat camp and the town of Al-Zawayda in the central Gaza Strip, the Palestinian news agency Wafa reported on Friday. The Gaza war began after Hamas-led militants attacked Israel on Oct. 7, 2023, killing more than 1,200 people and taking 251 hostages back to Gaza, according to Israeli tallies. Israel's subsequent assault on Gaza has killed more than 43,000 Palestinians and reduced most of the enclave to rubble, Palestinian authorities say. At least 46 Palestinians were killed in Israeli military strikes across the Gaza Strip on Thursday, mostly in the north where one attack hit a hospital, torching medical supplies and disrupting operations, the enclave's health officials said. Israel's military has accused the Palestinian militant group Hamas of using Kamal Adwan Hospital in Beit Lahya for military purposes and said "dozens of terrorists" have been hiding there. Health officials and Hamas deny the assertion. The health ministry in the Gaza Strip called for all international bodies "to protect hospitals and medical staff from the brutality of the (Israeli) occupation." Medical charity Médecins Sans Frontières (MSF) said on Thursday that one of its doctors at the hospital, Mohammed Obeid, had been detained last Saturday by Israeli forces. It called for the protection of him and all medical staff who "are facing horrific violence as they try to provide care." - Agencies

two sources told Reuters that a US envoy had made the request to inject momentum into stalled talks on a deal to end hostilities between Hezbollah and Israel. In a state-

ment to Reuters, Mikati's office said the government's stance was clear on seeking a ceasefire from both sides and the implementation of UN Security Council Resolution 1701, which ended the last round of conflict between the two foes in 2006

"Israeli statements and diplomatic signals that Lebanon received confirm Israel's stubbornness in rejecting the proposed solutions and insisting on the approach of killing and destruction," Mikati said in a statement. Since fighting in Lebanon escalated on September 23, the war has killed at least 1,829 people in Lebanon, according to an AFP tally of health ministry figures. On Wednesday, Mikati said US envoy Amos Hochstein had signalled during a phone call that a ceasefire in the Israel-Hezbollah war was possible before US elections are held on November 5. The same day, Hezbollah's new leader said the group would agree to a ceasefire with Israel under acceptable terms, but added that a viable deal has yet to be presented. During talks on Thursday, Israeli leader Netanyahu told US envoys Amos Hochstein and Brett McGurk that any Lebanon deal must guarantee Israel's longer-term security.

CDA, ADB to collaborate on emission reduction initiatives

Country Director Asian Development Bank (ADB) Emma Fan called on Chairman CDA Muhammad Ali Randhawa

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Country Director Asian Development Bank (ADB) Emma Fan called on Chairman CDA Muhammad Ali Randhawa to discuss avenues for mutual collaboration. Chairman CDA warmly welcomed Country Director ADB and highlighted CDA's commitment to advancing sustainable urban development through ADB's technical support and expertise. During the meeting, Chairman CDA emphasized CDA's strategic shift from auction of assets to sustainable development models, with a particular focus on Public Private Partnership model. He urged the need for ADB's expertise and technical support to effectively manage various proposals for joint ventures.

Country Director ADB affirmed ADB's support to Islamabad's development goals, offering technical expertise for key projects. It was briefed that the hiring process for international consultants and transactional advisors for the projects are underway to ensure the successful execution of these projects.

Germany to close Iranian consulates over execution

BERLIN: Germany will close the three Iranian consulates on its soil in response to the execution of German-Iranian Jamshid-Sharmahd, Foreign Minister Annalena Baerbock said Thursday. "We have repeatedly and unequivocally made it clear to Tehran that the execution of a German citizen will have serious consequences," Baerbock said, announcing the closure of the consulates in Frankfurt, Munich and Hamburg in a televised announcement. The execution, announced on Monday, had already provoked tit-for-tat diplomatic protests, with Chancellor Olaf Scholz calling it a "scandal". "The fact that this assassination took place in the light of the latest developments in the Middle East shows that (Iran's) dictatorial, unjust regime... does not act according to normal diplomatic logic," Baerbock said. "It is not without reason that our diplomatic relations are already at an all-time low," she said.

The closures will affect a total of 32 consular staff, according to the foreign ministry. Baerbock did not mention Iran's embassy in Berlin but said Germany would "continue to maintain our diplomatic channels and our embassy in Tehran". - Agencies

Objections removed from Imran Khan's bail plea

FAISAL SHEIKH

ISLAMABAD: Islamabad High Court has removed the objections on PTI founder Imran Khan's bail plea in Toshakhana-II case. IHC directed the registrar office to fix the case hearing on Monday. IHC Justice Miangul Hassan Aurangzeb heard the case today while Ayesha Khalid, Shaheena Shahab and others representing Imran Khan appeared before the court. Justice Aurangzeb inquired about the objections of the registrar on the plea. Counsel Ayesha Khalid stated that Imran Khan filed bail plea in the Toshakhana-II case. Justice Miangul remarked that prior judgment on similar cases followed the principle of consistency. He added that the applicant was a male in this case. Justice mentioned that Bushra Bibi granted bail as she was a woman and one application similar to this one was dismissed yesterday.